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**A STUDY OF BODY IMAGE AND COSMETIC SURGERY  
AMONG THAI FEMALE BEAUTY PAGEANT CONTESTANTS**

**TAVANUN BOONBONGKARN**  
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AMONG THAI FEMALE BEAUTY PAGENT CONTESTANTS**

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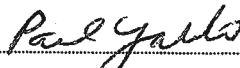
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KEY WORD : BODY IMAGE/ COSMETIC SURGERY/  
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TAVANUN BOONBONGKARN: A STUDY OF BODY IMAGE AND COSMETIC SURGERY AMONG THAI FEMALE BEAUTY PAGEANT CONTESTANTS: A CASE STUDY OF MISS THAILAND, YEAR 2000. THESIS ADVISORS: SUVAJEE GOOD Ph.D., PRASIT LERAPAN Ph.D., PAUL YABLO Ph.D., 105 p. ISBN 974-04-0256-9

In contemporary Thai society, the ideal of beauty emphasizing physical appearance has become prominent due to the mass media. Development of medical technology has made the alteration of one's physical appearance possible. The aim of this study is to examine the process underlying changes in body image relevant to cosmetic surgery among Thai female beauty contestants. This study used qualitative methods, including in-depth interview and observation. The informants were fifteen contestants of the Miss Thailand 2000 beauty contest who were chosen by stratified sampling and who were interviewed by the researcher between November, 2000 and April, 2001. The data was analyzed using line by line content analysis of the transcribed interviews.

The informants were divided into three groups according to their experience in beauty contests: those who participated in more than five contests, those who participated in 2-5 contests, and those who participated in this contest for the first time. In general, the informants in the first group had a negative body image before entering beauty contests. Four out of five participants in this group reported that after cosmetic surgery, the perception of their body image became positive. The informants in the second group had mixed perceptions. Two informants in this group had undergone cosmetic surgery before the contest. They reported that they were satisfied with the results of the surgery and that their body image had shifted from negative to positive. The other three informants in this group were satisfied with their appearance and felt there was no need to undergo cosmetic surgery. In the last group, none of the five informants had undergone cosmetic surgery. All of them felt satisfied with their appearance, and their body image did not change after the contest. Only one of the five informants in this group wanted to have cosmetic surgery after the contest.

In conclusion, it appears that for some beauty contestants, cosmetic surgery changed their body image from negative to positive. Rather than emphasizing physical beauty and cosmetic surgery as a means to achieve this, it is recommended that Thai society, including the mass media and beauty contest industry, place more emphasis on aspects other than physical beauty, such as knowledge and talent.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Problem Statement and Rationale

A pleasant or attractive appearance is considered by many to be an important constituent of personality. As well as being a desirable quality to develop, especially for a female. This good appearance basically depends upon physical characteristics present since birth or it can be adjusted and modified later in life. In case of beauty pageant contestants, they are more likely to undergo cosmetic surgery before attending a beauty contest. More than 50% of beauty queens in the Miss Thailand 2000 have undergone cosmetic surgery, especially high nose job (Yoosanon, 2000, personal communication).

Body image is the perception, picture and feeling in the mind about one's body's appearance, which consists of the influence of experiences, social factors, and environment from the past and present. This picture may be similar or differ from one's actual body appearance (Corsini:1994, Gail:1983, Schider:1935 and Atwater:1983). Body appearance not only concerns physical appearance but also personality and manners of action that may reflect a negative or positive view. Moreover, body image may change over time and it depends on unique factors such as society, environment, and experiences that affect each individual. Thus, body image allows one to see how the individuals perceive their bodies.

The body image can be divided into positive body image and negative body image. Someone who has a positive body image is satisfied with their body's appearance. On the other hand, those with a negative body image are unhappy with their body's appearance, and this may affect self-confidence and self-esteem and could lead to depression or psychiatric disorder. Moreover, feelings, behaviors, interpersonal relationships, decision-making ability, and life style also affected by a negatively body image, which is an important element of the personality (Rice, 1995).

According to societal ideals, beauty queens are considered to represent those who have attractive personalities and appearance. Good appearance includes proportional body shape, soft, smooth, and fair skin, large eyes, high nose, long legs, and long arms and so on. The contestants who enter beauty contests may have many different motivations. Some may want to win the prize, obtain more experience, travel during the beauty camp, or take this opportunity to enter the entertainment sector. For example, as movie stars, singers, or models; and for some, their motivation may be to become the wife of a person with a high position, such as Praphatsara Dhachapaiboon (Daily News, 22 March 00).

Beauty pageant contestants often have the prerequisite physical traits of beauty, height, and slenderness, as well as the motivation to be recognized for these characteristics. They likely have developed a positive body image by being complemented by friends and family. They thus want to pursue the path of fame based on appearance and attain the material and social benefits that can be gained through beauty contest participation.

Beauty contests are the ultimate venues in which beauty is evaluated according to the norm of beauty within society. The winner and contestants are rewarded by the belief that they represent the ideal of beauty in Thai society, which holds high regard for physical attractiveness. It can thus be expected that these contestants will have a body image that will be interesting to examine.

Beauty contests usually focus on physical appearance and personality rather than other factors such as educational background. Since appearance is so prominent, cosmetic surgery is an option for many who consider entering beauty pageants. In addition, they seek basic practices such as beauty training and attending beauty camps in order to gain a more attractive personality and appearance to display on beauty contest stages.

Currently however, people who choose to undergo with cosmetic surgery do so because it helps them to gain more self-confidence, higher self-esteem and a more attractive personality which they perceive as being important in present society. In addition, there are powerful social standards and cultural forces which value that women should be beautiful and attractive.

Many women desire to be beautiful and will pursue many activities that they think can make them more attractive, beautiful and charming. The cosmetic, perfume and fashion industries affect to this phenomenon. The American Society of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeons reported that approximately 94% of their patients are women (Hesse-Biber, 1996). The purpose of plastic surgery was originally to correct or modify congenital anomalies and acquired defects from trauma, tumor, and the aging process (Charoonsmitte T., 1985). The cost of cosmetic surgery in Thailand is extremely expensive and therefore it is not easily available to those with low economic status who desire to be beautiful. The rates for cosmetic surgery in Thailand include double eye lid surgery at 5,000-30,000 baht, high nose job at 8,000- 30,000 baht, and breast augmentation at 25,000-50,000 baht (Intamra, 1996:88).

It would seem that beauty contestants who are strongly motivated to enter the contest and desire to improve their body image consider obtaining cosmetic surgery. This study thus intends to examine ideas regarding body image and cosmetic surgery among beauty pageant contestants. Also, this study aims to investigate how the beauty contest processes influence cosmetic surgery among the contestants. The results will help us to better understand the typical Thai female beauty pageant's body image, that is how they perceive themselves and their bodies. It provided information on the nature of the desire to have cosmetic surgery, which has become increasingly popular in Thailand, and related characteristics.

## **1.2 Objectives**

### **1.2.1 General Objective:**

The aim of this study is to examine the processes underlying changes in body image relevant to cosmetic surgery among Thai female beauty contestants.

### **1.2.2 Specific Objectives:**

1.2.2.1 To study the body image of women who participated in Miss Thailand beauty contests.

1.2.2.2 To study the factors that affect decision-making with regard to cosmetic surgery among contestants in beauty contests.

1.2.2.3 To study the relationship between body image and cosmetic surgery and whether this will relate to the ideal of beauty held among contestants.

1.2.2.4 To describe the process of changing in body image among the contestants.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

1.3.1 What is the body image among contestants of the Miss Thailand contest in the year 2000?

1.3.2 What are important factors with regards to cosmetic surgery among Miss Thailand contestants?

1.3.3 Does body image have a relationship with cosmetic surgery among the contestants?

1.3.4 What is the process of changing in body image among the contestants?

### **1.4 Operational definitions**

**1. Body image:** the picture of and perception about the body's appearance in one's mind which reflects the body ideal that is influenced by experiences, social factors, and environment from the past, present and future.

**2. Cosmetic surgery:** refers to nasal surgery, facial surgery, facial implant, eyelid surgery, breast augmentation, breast reduction, liposuction, and silicone injection, which the contestants have undergone, plan to do or do not want to do.

**3. Contestants:** Thai females who participated in the Miss Thailand contest in the year 2000.

**4. Beauty contest :** refers to the Miss Thailand contest of the year 2000 and any beauty contest which the contestants have attended.

**5. Pre- contest:** time before the contestants had decided to entering the Miss Thailand contest of the year 2000.

**6. During the contest:** time when the contestants were attending the Miss Thailand contest process.

**7. Post contest:** period following the contest when the interviewer asked questions or conducted in-depth interviews. The contestants already obtained the results of the contest.

**8. Veteran group:** refers to the contestants in this study who attended any beauty contests more than five times before attending the Miss Thailand contest in the year 2000.

**9. Experiences group:** refers to the contestants who attended any beauty contests more than two times but not over five times before attending the Miss Thailand contest in the year 2000.

**10. New comer group:** refers to the contestants attending Miss Thailand in the year 2000 who had never before participated in a beauty contest.

**11. 'God-mother':** in Thai word is "Jow-mae" referring to the women who expert in sender the beauty queen into many stages of beauty contest and veteran in this field. Has her own beauty camp for training their contestants to compete in many beauty contests since district to national level as a commercial reason.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This study focuses on the process of change in terms of the picture and feeling of the physical body appearance in the mind, the appearance of beauty pageant contestants and attitudes about cosmetic surgery. The literature review is thus divided into the following seven main sections a) body image, b) factors related to body image and cosmetic surgery, c) cosmetic surgery situation and perception, d) beauty contests in Thailand, e) preparation of beauty contestants including cosmetic surgery, f) ideal of beauty and body image, and g) the conceptual framework.

#### **2.1 Body Image**

Many social science disciplines such as psychology, sociology and anthropology are concerned with the concept of body image. They each cover different aspects of body image. The term body image is abstract and is difficult to define and give a fixed meaning. Thus, multiple perspectives are reviewed to describe body image.

Corsini (1994) states that people are affected in a basic way by how they perceive their bodies and how they think others perceive them. This perception is related to societal standards and cultural concepts. It is a construct that has been used to understand everything from phantom limb phenomenon (sensations from amputated limbs) to the motivation behind eating disorders (physical appearance disparagement). It has been conceptualized in terms of several different phenomena with affective, cognitive, behavioral, and physiological manifestations. It has also been defined as a mind's eye view of the body, as a singular mental representation of the physical self, that may be modified by experience. J. K. Thompson and colleagues (1998) mention that the body image is a continuum of body disturbance that has gradually developed over time as a sponge phrase, absorbing many different connotations and meanings.

Stuart and Sundeen (1983) cited in Gail, (1983) have given the psychological meaning of body image as an unconscious attitude about one's individual body,

including perceptions in the past, and present and feelings of body shape, function, appearance, and potentiality of the human (Gail, 1983). Diekmann (1992) has described the difference between the term's body image and self-concept. Body image refers to a person's insight of his or her body while self-concept indicates how one feels about oneself.

Body image is the notion that in the mind eye's there is an idea of what the body is and what it looks like, and secondly, it is a physical experience. This physical experience is based on tactile sensations and on a sense of physical unity in and with the world. The body image consists of feelings we have about our bodies: strong or weak, large or small, beautiful or ugly, dependable or unreliable as they are. The common-sense approach to body image is to define it as "the picture of our own body which we form in our mind, that is to say the way in which the body appears to ourselves" (Schilder P, 1935, p.11).

Thus an individual's body image is the picture and evaluation of one's body and it is a basic part of one's self- concept. While cultural standards of beauty are critical in forming this self- evaluation, one's attitudes are even more influential in determining one's self- concept (Corsini, 1994). Body image can be re-conceptualized as "body images" to more accurately capture the diversity of the external/ objective and internal/ subjective components. Body images may be perceptions, thoughts, and feeling about body and bodily experiences (Cash & Pruzinsky, 1990).

Grayson (1951) argues that body image is unconsciously formed in childhood carrying with it investment energy derived from psychological processes. Atwater (1983) states that body image is a source of self -perception, including both what a person sees in the mirror and the manner in which people experience their own bodies. It is related to cultural standards of attractiveness, physical competence and gender. This cultural aspect of attractiveness is relevant to this study, and will be elaborated upon later.

As can be seen, there are many aspects to cover and describe the concept of body image. It can best be summarized as the picture and feeling about one's bodily appearance in one's mind which reflects body perception that is influenced by experience, social factors, and the environment from the past, present and future expectation. This picture may be similar or different from actual body appearance. It

may include a broad range of characteristics, for example, charm, sweetness, softness, prettiness, sexual aura and manner of action and may reflect a negative or positive view. Moreover, importantly, it may change over time.

For the purposes of this study, body image will refer to the picture and perception of one's body or self-image. Koff and Benavage (1998) conducted studies in breast size perception and satisfaction, body image and psychological functioning in Caucasian and Asian American collage women. They found that the figures were truncated at the hip thigh junction to focus attention more directly on the upper body, and the figures were modified to appear more ethnically neutral. Caucasian women rated themselves as having larger breast size and larger ideal breast size rating than Asian American women. It is interesting that the group did not differ on measures of overall appearance satisfaction.

## **2.2 Body image and thinness ideal**

Thinness has become almost synonymous with beauty in the current socio-cultural ideal (Striegel-Moore, McAvay, & Rodin, 1986; J. K. Thompson, 1990). In western culture, the societal sanctioned ideal is remarkably thin. Heinberg (1996) had noted as well that the ideal also endorses attributes such as white skin, tall height, youth, physical fitness, and health. Also widely discussed and investigated, the socio-cultural explanation has been criticized for lacking an explanation for the heterogeneity of body image experiences. One can assume that all women are exposed to societal messages, at least to some extent. However, body image discontent occurs on a continuum, with some women being relatively satisfied with their appearance whereas others may have extreme appearance disparagement (Thompson, 1998).

Although current societal ideals promote thinness, additional evidence suggests that women are pressured to achieve appearance goals that are inconsistent with thinness, namely, the possession of large breasts (J. K. Thompson & Tantleff, 1992), or are somewhat contradictory to thinness, such as a muscular physique (Striegel-Moor, Sliberstein, & Rodin 1986).

On the other hand, the ideal figure has become thinner whereas the average women's figure has become larger (Garner, Garfinkel, Schwartz, & Thompson, 1980);

it appears that girls and women continue to accept the thinner societal ideal as a goal. Unfortunately, this ideal is pervasive among women all ages (J. K. Thompson, Heinberg J., Altabe, & Tantleff-Dunn 1998). Collins (1991) found that expectation of thinness among girls might be evident as early as 6 or 7 years of age. As girl enter adolescence, they become more concerned with their appearance and the associated bodily changes and weight gain, continuing to adhere to the idealized societal standard (Freedman, 1986; Kelson, Kearney- Cooke, & Lansky, 1990).

### **2.3 Obesity and body image**

Obesity is a condition involving an excessive accumulation of fat or adipose (fatty) tissue in the body. Among men, it is prominent during their later twenties and thirties, and among women, it is seen during their forties and fifties. Longevity of women is only moderately associated with obesity. It is commonly believed that obese persons are emotionally disturbed and that they overeat to reduce their anxiety, depression, and other psychological conflicts. Schachter, Goldman, and Gordon (1968) found that obese person did not eat much more when they were anxious and did not show significant anxiety reduction as a result of eating.

Body image disturbance may, however, be related to obesity. Obese persons any perceive their physical appearance negatively (Issa I., 1980). Stunkard and Mendelson (1961) pointed out that in families where obesity is valued, self-esteem (and body satisfaction) could actually be enhanced by excess weight.

As with normal weight persons, the literature on body image in overweight persons involves the same wide variety of techniques for the measurement of accuracy of perceived body image or size estimation. The findings tend to be equally or even more varied (Polivy, Herman, and Pliner, 1990).

## 2.4 Factors related to body image and cosmetic surgery

### 2.4.1 Psychological factors related to body image and cosmetic surgery

It is useful to understand the relationship between body image and cosmetic surgery. There are numerous potential psychological influences on body image. Heinberg, (1996) has described developmental and socio-cultural aspects of body image disturbance. Sarwer et al (1996) believes that the relationship between self-esteem and body image is important in understanding the pursuit of cosmetic surgery because plastic surgery could be treatment for individuals who perceived disparagement.

Ozgur et al. (1998) theorized that persons who seek re-constructive surgery also seek psychological stability and an improvement in appearance that is more acceptable to society. Goldberg et al (1984) found that while breast reconstruction offers a chance to restore a near normal physical appearance, it also improves women's self-image as well. Dunofsky (1997) also found that patients who had undergone cosmetic surgery had a more positive body image than those who did not undergo cosmetic surgery. From this it may say that cosmetic surgery could help the person who had negative body image turned to gain more positive body image.

Self image is another factor related to seeking behavior for cosmetic surgery. According to Bergman's study (1990) she states the feminist stance on cosmetic surgery that " The fact that women extremely concern with physical appearance is expressed in increased incidence of beauty seeking behaviors such as eating disorder and addictive plastic surgery". She concluded that women appear to be more dissatisfied with their physical appearance than previous research has reported. According to her, beauty seeking behavior also seems motivated by women is fear of the rejection and contempt accorded to unattractive women by themselves as well as others. Their choice to undertake cosmetic surgery was the result of "women's low self-esteem and its many consequences, including obsessive concern with physical appearance. Devaluation of their other qualities and traits, and lower aspiration levels for other accomplishments, which would give them direct access to the rewards they seek through their beauty.

### **2.4.2 Socio-cultural influences on body image and cosmetic surgery**

The theory of social comparison also affects to body image by comparison processes which offer an explanation of how exposure to the socio-cultural thin and attractive ideal leads to increased body dissatisfaction (Heinberg & Thompson, 1992; Smolak Levine, & Gralen, 1993; J. K. Thompson, & Tantleff, 1991). This theory assumes that individual differences in a tendency to compare oneself with others, engage in upward comparisons, or choose inappropriate comparison targets lead certain individuals to be more vulnerable than others to sociocultural appearance pressures. If the comparison or feedback is in term of one's body, for example testing about weight, or even ambiguous information that an aspect of one's appearance is unattractive, one's body may become affected (J. K. Thompson, 1990).

Pinhas et al (1999) studied the effect of ideal female beauty on mood and body satisfaction. They examined 118 female university students who completed the Profile of Mood States (POMS) measure, The Body Part Satisfaction Scale (BPSS), and the Eating Disorder Inventory (EDI). They found that women's mood states suffered by viewing pictures in fashion magazines of models that represent a thin ideal.

The print and electronic media routinely report on the latest cosmetic procedures or celebrities most recently suspected of having undergone surgery. Often cosmetic surgery is portrayed as the pathway to having a face and body just like that of the models in magazine advertisements, and television commercials, and therefore the only way to directly address dissatisfaction with appearance. As such, Sarwer et al. pointed out that socio-cultural influences on body image may be relevant to understanding the relationship of body image to cosmetic surgery (Sarwer et al., 1996).

### **2.4.3 The mass media factor related to body image and cosmetic surgery**

Mass media is forms of communication that generate messages designed for very large, very heterogeneous, and very anonymous audiences (R. J. Harris, 1994). Mass media is omnipresent in America and most Western societies but has been harshly criticized for playing a powerful role in communicating the thin standard to the average woman (Mazur, 1986). Meanwhile, Schlundt and Johnson (1990) stated that women's magazines, television, radio, movies and advertising in our culture are

all giving women the message that to be loved, accepted, and successful, they must be thin and that thin equals beauty.

Halprin (1995) pointed out that mass media is constructed from appearance, but from a surprisingly narrow band of appearances. It always presents women as young, slim, and beautiful which is much narrower than the portrayal of men. The women's industry encourages women to conform to the narrow image of beauty by using the mass media to project the culturally desirable body to women (Rice, 1995).

A recent Psychology Today survey indicates the degree of influence the mass media has in promoting the cultural ideal, at least for women (Garner, 1997). Of 3,452 women responding, 23% indicated that movie or television celebrities influenced their body image when they were young whereas 22% endorsed the influence of fashion magazine models (Garner, 1997). In contrast only 13% and 6% of men reported an influence of movies, television celebrities or fashion magazine models, respectively.

Sarwer et al. (1998) stated that the mass media and cultural ideals are factors that may influence body image. People compare their own appearance to fashion models, Hollywood celebrities, or super star athletes, and find that they come up short by comparison, resulting in increased body image dissatisfaction (Heinberg, 1996). Pruzinsky (1993) affirms the increasing demand of cosmetic surgery because of the social and cultural standards of beauty characterized in the mass media.

## 2.5 Cosmetic surgery situation and perception

Plastic surgery has a long history; it began in a long time ago, in the sixteenth century. At that time there was an epidemic of syphilis. These diseases, as a stigmatized disease caused the syphilitics to lose some part of their body, such as the nose. Then *chirurgia decoratoria* was used to rebuild the nose of the patient. This was the beginning of aesthetic surgery or plastic surgery. However, it disappeared in Europe until the eighteenth century, when syphilophobia began in Europe. After this, surgeons began to seek a new name. The argument between the words *reconstructive* and *aesthetic* reappears in the course of the nineteenth century. There were many names for cosmetic surgery which changed over time. For example, *autoplasty*, *plastic*

*surgery*, *Rhinoplastik*, and *beauty surgery* were the words used for cosmetic surgery. Finally, the popular worldwide term today is *cosmetic surgery* (Gilman, 1999).

The history of cosmetic surgery in Thailand can be traced back to 1957 to a group of Chinese who were not physicians. They performed such surgery only to correct abnormal physical appearances. At that time the medical community looked upon cosmetic surgery as being unnecessary. Later, in 1969 Thai doctors who graduated from the United States and Britain specializing in plastic surgery returned home and began working in both public and private hospitals. In 1972, the Plastic Surgeons Association of Thailand was established. By 1994 there were 103 members in the Plastic Surgeon Association of Thailand (Intamara, 1996). Plastic surgery is divided into two branches, one being Reconstructive Surgery and the other being Aesthetic or Cosmetic surgery (Wong, no year). The word "plastic" came from the Latin term "plasticus" meaning the mold, model or shape which can be modified and improved (Charoonsmit, 1985:40).

In Intamara's study (1996) on Thai women and cosmetic surgery, she found that cosmetic surgery is considered by beauty pageant to be a necessity for Thai women in our modern society to enhance their personality development. This is especially true as Thai women's status and role are rapidly changing from housewife and mother alone into working woman and housewife at the same time. Thus, women have to transform themselves according to their changing roles. For example, they must now be more concerned with their body shape, dressing style, cosmetic application, and now more easily consider undergoing cosmetic surgery. They feel that these actions improve their personality and allow them to gain more confidence in their employment and lifestyle.

A study on cosmetic surgery among Asian American women (Kaw, 1991) found that their decision to undergo nose bridge and double eyelids surgery was influenced by gender and racial ideologies. Moreover, medicine effectively promotes these racial and gender stereotypes and thereby reinforces the consumer-oriented societies as well as potential gain for the medical system if the patient encounters side effects and requires medical care.

Mahony (1998) reported that in England, most surgery clinics do not often explain clearly the associated complications and are motivated by profit rather than

providing services. In Thailand some surgeons perform cosmetic surgery without concern for the complications or dissatisfaction with the results (Boonthongloun, 1996). Information that the physicians should inform to their patients before performing cosmetic surgery is sometimes not clear and insufficient for the patients understanding. It seems that the physicians are more interested in obtaining financial reward than being concerned about the adverse side effects which may arise after plastic surgery.

As cosmetic surgery becomes more acceptable in Thai society among both males and females, more people are revealing that they have undergone cosmetic surgery. Many actresses and superstars have announced that they have undergone cosmetic surgery both before entering and while in the entertainment field. Moreover, there are many private cosmetic surgery clinics spreading rapidly throughout the country. These developments appear to reify the focus in Thai society on attractiveness and appearance, especially for women.

Boonthongloun (1996) notes that the major reason Thais undergo plastic surgery is because they want to be beautiful, improve their personality have high confidence, and become more attractive. Furthermore, some had plastic surgery without knowledge about how to prepare and take care of themselves before and after undergoing cosmetic surgery and did not obtain information and details of the procedures; the surgeon's qualifications, nor the complications that can occur during or after the surgical procedure.

Moreover, eye and nose defects or problems are also reasons to undergo plastic surgery due to the fact that their upper eyelid was too thick thus causing their eyelash stab their eyes. Therefore they have cosmetic surgery to cure their symptoms. They may have high nose bridge surgery to help pull up overly drooping eyelids. The belief in psychics, fortune telling, luck, fate, and astrology are also reasons reported for undergoing plastic surgery. Some interviewees reported, for example, that the fortuneteller suggested that if they have an improved nose shape then they would be more prosperous and have a happier life. An actress reported that following a nose bridge operation she received more work but after removing it she had no work so she reformed her nose again and subsequently received many jobs. Other reasons mentioned included family influence, peers, and advertisements. In some instances,

friends and relatives introduced and brought them to the surgery clinic where they had undergone their own cosmetic surgery. Some said that they were influenced by cosmetic surgery clinic advertisements in the newspaper and called for a consultation (Boonthongloun, 1996). People appearing on a television interview show stated that they decided to undergo cosmetic surgery since beauty and confidence is important in their work as they must appear beautiful to the public (Sanya's public TV program, 00).

## **2.6 Beauty contests in Thailand**

The history of the Miss Thailand contest can be divided into 5 eras with the first era in 1934-1940 and the second era in 1948-1954. The first Miss Thailand pageant was held in 1934 by the Thai government in order to celebrate the new constitution and the first Miss Thailand was called Miss Siam. It appeared that the government played a big role in this activity. Both the first and second eras were held underneath government control. The objective of this contest was to entertain and attract Thai people to join in the constitution festival. Another main objective was to disseminate the ideal of democracy in Por. Piboonsongkarm Marshal's era. He had been the Thai Prime Minister and at that time, the government policy was to facilitate and upgrade Thai women's status to be equal to men as other countries had done. It was hoped that women would be given more roles within the society so the Thai government used the Miss Thailand contest as a tool to support their policy.

The evolution of dress changed from the first era (1934) when the contestants wore a traditional Thai dress together with a breast cloth and long silk skirt. Next, in 1939 the contestants wore a Thai silk dress which exposed the back and a knee-length skirt. In 1940, the contestants wore sport suits, short pants and a sleeveless shirt which exposed the back. In 1950, the contestants wore a swimsuit for the contest.

Then at the end of the first era in the year 1939, the Thai government changed everything. The name of the country was changed from Siam to Thailand so the Miss Siam contest changed to the Miss Thailand contest in that year. The second era lasted from 1948 through 1954 when the government canceled this activity as well as annulled the constitution festival.

The third era began in 1961 and lasted until 1972. The beauty contest was organized at the Vajiravudh College Association's fair and was called Miss Vajiravudh. The aim of this time was to encourage the Thai people to recall His Majesty King Rama VI's graciousness and to entertain the people who came to this festival. At that time, the tourism industry was growing and related to the objectives of this beauty contest. Miss Thailand had become a public relations representative to other countries in terms of sending her to attend international beauty contests, such as the Miss Universe beauty contest. Thus, Thailand became better known among other countries. Later, former Prime Minister Prapas Charusatien, who was the association president, changed the name of the contest to Miss Thailand.

In the fourth era (1984-1999), the Miss Thailand contest was broadcast through mass media and communication technology played a big role in promoting the Miss Thailand contest. For example, newspaper, radio, and television broadcasts covered the contest. In 1961 the first TV broadcast of the Miss Thailand contest was shown on channel 4 and then in 1967 channel 7 became the next broadcaster and remained so for many years. The main objective of the Miss Thailand contest at this time was to select a representative of Thai women to the Miss Universe beauty contest. There were 36 Miss Thailands from 1934 to 1999. All of them promoted Thailand in many aspects to other countries, as was their duty. As can be seen, Miss Thailand is an honorable position in Thai women's perception.

In the fifth era (2000), the pattern of the Miss Thailand contest was changed and developed by the recruitment procedure. Miss Thailand was selected from the winners of provincial contests. Then the representatives from each province of the four regions, 76 persons, competed in the final round which was held in Bangkok at the Queen Sirikit National Convention Center. The final round was telecast by iTV (independent television station) instead of TV channel 7 in the middle of May 2000. The Vajiravudh Alumni Association still holds the right to organize the pageant. Also the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), Thai Women Council, Collaboration Foundation, Bangkok Metropolitan, and iTV were the main organizers.

According to a newspaper article, two students who were registered for both the Miss Thailand and Miss Thailand Universe contests reported that they wanted to gain experience from participating in a beauty contest. The winner of the Miss Thailand

Universe contest gained international exposure (The Nation, 22 Feb 00). Moreover, the prizes of the Miss Thailand Universe contest were 800,000 baht, a Nissan sedan, and a diamond crown and necklace, while the prizes of the Miss Thailand contest were 1,000,000 baht in cash, a car, and a diamond crown (The Nation, 9 Feb 00). Hence, the attraction of the prizes may be a major factor for contestants attending beauty contests due to their desire for money to support themselves and their family.

There are numerous beauty contests in Thailand ranging from the local to the national level. One of the major contests is the Miss Loy Krathong contest (Nang Nophamas) which has been established for the Loy Krathong festival, during which Thai people offer sacrifices to the god of the rivers or canals. Another major contest is the Miss Songkran contest which is part of the festival for celebrating the Thai Buddhist New Year.

Moreover, there are many beauty contests which have been established for special occasions. These include contests such as the Miss Motor Show for promoting motor show exhibitions, Miss University awards, Miss Internet, and so on. Not only are there numerous contests for women but there are now “handsome” contests for males; for example, Domon Man contest, Mr. University Award, Mr. Internet and so on. Recently, a new version of the beauty contest format that has attracted much attention from Thais is the transvestite contest (Miss Algaza and Miss Tiffany, both named after their respective cabaret shows). Thus, it is clear that the importance of the beauty image has been a part of Thai society for a long time and that Thais accept and enjoy it as a normal concept.

Thai people are most interested in beauty contests, both at the national and international levels. Much broadcasting time is devoted to cover such beauty contests as Miss Thailand, Miss Thailand World, and Miss World. The nation was extremely proud that two Thai women won the Miss Universe title (Arpassara Hongsakul and Pornthip Nakhirunkanok). In fact, this news appears to be of more interest to the public than such events as the nation becoming a NIC (Newly Industrialising Country), and an Asian economic miracle (Phongpaichit, 1989).

Furthermore, the aim of the Miss Thailand Universe is to send the winner to compete with the beautiful women who are the representatives of many countries in every corner of the world. Miss Thailand is another national beauty contest which

aims to send the winner as the representative of Thailand to promote, disseminate and expand Thai culture to nations world wide.

## **2.7 Preparation of beauty contestants**

There are numerous activities one must engage in before entering beauty contests. Chulee Jaiyong and Srivieng Tanchai, who are considered beauty queen godmothers in Thailand, have noted the need for cosmetic surgery, orthodontic work, beauty treatment, and dieting. In addition to physical preparation, mental preparation is important in learning how to project the necessary self-confidence and answering questions without hesitation (The Nation, 23 Feb 2000).

Beauty queen's godmothers are not only concerned about appearance; they also must find sponsors for the beauty queens under their tutelage. Thus, the sponsorships are used for supporting the costs of preparation, such as clothes, special study (singing, English language, dancing), beauty courses (skin treatment, hair treatment) and even cosmetic surgery, on which these is major emphasis.

It is interesting to note that the Thai perception of beauty queen characteristics has changed. Beauty is now not sufficient but the contestants should be intelligent and talented. In the year 1999, Thailand had an extraordinary Miss Thailand (Dr. Bird), a medical student who plans to be a psychiatrist in the future. Her award sparked great controversy and there were public arguments between members of Chulalongkorn University Psychiatric Department and the President of the Psychiatric Association of Thailand over whether she can be a psychiatrist in the future (The Nation, 4 Jun 99).

The controversy occurred because the Miss Thailand 1999 and it was feared that this position might intervene on her future received image as a psychiatrist. So some title psychiatrists did not accept her as a fellow psychiatrist and quoted the reason that the patient may not come to see her for the psychological problem but may come to see her as a Miss Thailand and stigmatize her as a beauty queen. This is point out that who going to entering in beauty contest especially in the nation level should has higher education because its trend to be the winner.

Among Thai beauty queens, there are many kinds of cosmetic surgery which they were performed for preparing to entering in beauty contest such as a following

The operation on the face:

- Cheek implants, which use malar implants for the augmentation of the face.
- Chin augmentation(mentoplasty), which uses implants.

Collagen and fat injections, which enhance the lips or plump up sunken facial features.

- Eyelid tightening (blepharoplasty), which tightens the eyelids by cutting away excess skin and fat around the eyes, eliminating drooping upper eyelids and puffy bags bag below.

- Face-lift (rhytidectomy), which tightens the forehead and raises the brow to minimize creases in the forehead and hooding over the eyes.

- Nose job (rhinoplasty), which changes the appearance of the nose.

The operation on the body

- Arm lift (brachioplasty), which tightens the skin of the upper arm
- Breast augmentation, which can either increase the size of the existing breasts or replace breasts removed through mastectomies (Gilman, 1999).

## 2.8 Cosmetic surgery and beauty contests

Cosmetic surgery plays an important role in beauty contests. Boontongluan (1996) has conducted research on the process of changes in women's body image and the image of beauty in Thai society and found that, since B.E. 2527 (1988), beauty queens increasingly began to undergo cosmetic surgery before attending beauty contests. Cosmetic surgery is presently widely accepted in the beauty contest sphere (Boontongluan, 1996).

This phenomena does not appear to be unique to Thailand as it has been reported that Venezuelan beauty queens often undergo cosmetic surgery before contests and they have been successful in reaching the final rounds of major contests such as the Miss Universe and Miss World contests (The Economist, 1996). Meanwhile, in Thailand a study of Boontongluan (1996) found that over 70 % of former Miss Thailand contestants had undergone cosmetic surgery.

## 2.9 Ideal of beauty and body image

“Beauty” is an abstract term, which is intangible and difficult to define. Beauty is a value that comes from human feelings (inward and subjective) rather than reason or knowledge (outward). The meaning of beauty changes according to culture, time, societal values, and individual differences (Yansabai, 1987). Societal values change because human society is founded upon beliefs and attitudes, which are dynamic and flexible. The constant passing of time is an importance factor which affects how one is evaluated and the concept of what is beautiful has been said to follow a cyclical pattern (Sutiphan, 1992). As in the newspaper article states about the Brazilian’s perception in breast size was changing from breast reduction into breast augmentation and trends of both men and women desired to have bigger breast size at least five centimeters bigger is popular these day. Because of the mass media has conveyed the message and show artists who have increased breast sizes (Bangkok Post, 25 Feb 01).

Wolf (1991) writes that “beauty” is among the most important desires of women. She argues that since women feel that men prefer a beautiful woman, they become preoccupied with creating a beautiful appearance. Women believe that beauty is important for their lives in terms of biological sexuality in the evolutionary context. Men have been said to pursue the goal of sexual conquest for reproductive purposes, and hence, beautiful women have been more successful in terms of procreation. The relationship between beauty and female sex is related to child bearing. However, the concept of beauty is not constant; political factors can determine what is considered to be beautiful, and in this new era beauty plays a large role in determining the amount of power women possess to negotiate with men (Wolf, 1991).

Lakoff and Scherr (1984) write that beauty is different in every way. It is not objectively demonstrable. One cannot count it, or objectively demonstrate for the satisfaction of all that A has it, or B doesn’t. A and B certainly don’t know, because the decision is not up to them. Their beauty is not theirs, but the result of judgments of others. Thus, it is clear that beauty also depends on individual perceptions and social judgement.

Beauty is a temporal experience; it is an individual feeling, which is often linked with the merit of the possessor. Moreover, beauty is a concept loaded with

preconceived standards, which individuals will seek to verify when choosing examples of what is beautiful. In addition, one individual may persuade another to agree with their own conception of beauty. Therefore, beauty is the agreement following social exchange, which may initially be grounded in individual bias.

The meaning of beauty in Thai is divided into two concepts, namely *krom-suay* and *krom-ngarm*. *Krom-suay* is the external or superficial aspect of beauty such as shape, face, and skin which can be seen from the outside. *Krom-ngarm*, on the other hand, refers to more internal or undefinable attributes, such as heart, mind, spirit and behavior, which are not initially apparent. Someone may possess *krom-suay* only without *krom-ngarm*, or conversely, someone may have *krom-ngarm* only without *krom-suay* (Sutipphan, 1992). There is a requirement that beauty queens possess both *krom-suay* and *krom-ngarm*, but it is difficult to define *krom-ngarm* in the short time the contestants are on the stage. Thus, while beauty contests strive to choose a woman with both *krom-suay* and *krom-ngarm*, they may not always be successful.

Thai society has an image of women as beautiful, pretty, delicate, and that men should provide good care for them (Kastead, 1992). In the past, women emphasized natural beauty, politeness, physical modesty, dapper appearance, and they refrained from placing anything on or doing anything artificial to their faces such as applying cosmetics or undergoing cosmetic surgery (Korbkijsosakoon, 1988).

However, Thai society has changed rapidly and with this, the image of women has changed. They are now expected to be sexy, attractive, admirable, charming, fashionable and to wear provocative clothes in order to display their figure, as can be seen in fashion magazines, advertisements, TV and of course in beauty contests (Boonthongloun, 1996).

## **2.10 Conceptual framework**

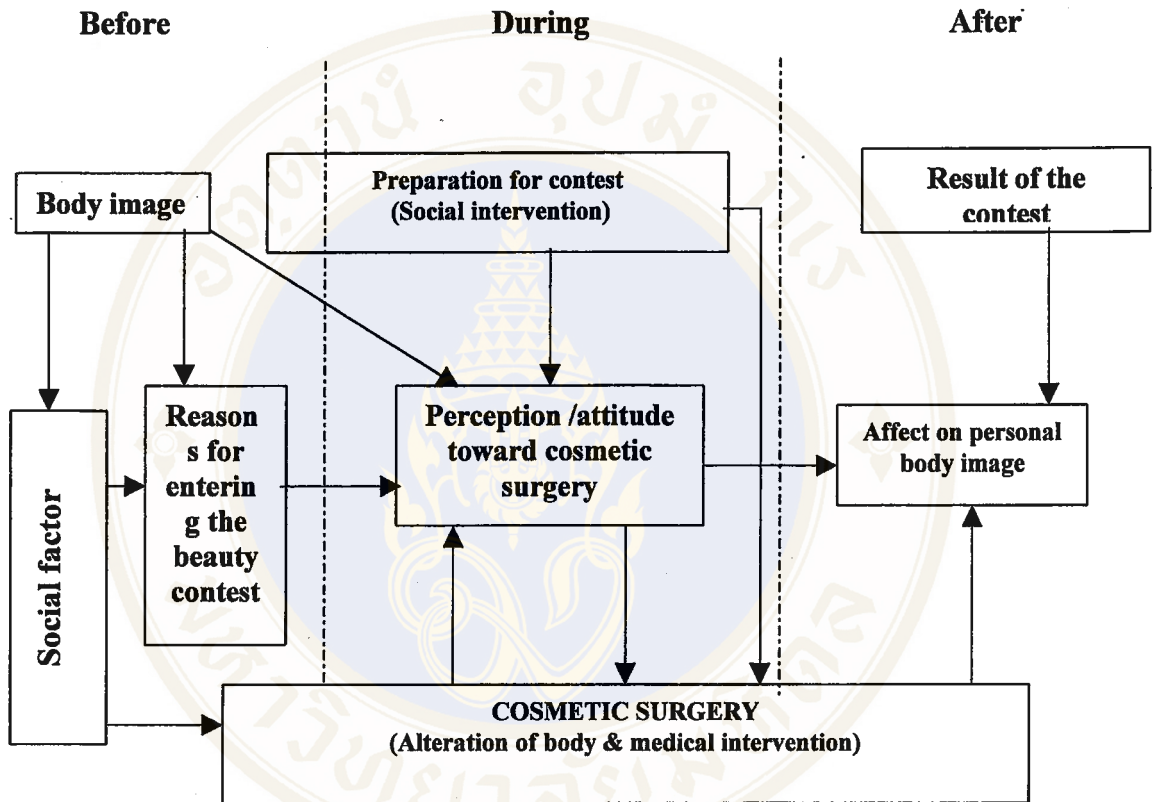
The conceptual framework of this study is based on the objectives of this study which are to study, the processes involved in changes in body image among female beauty pageants and on the literature review. In addition, the data collected in the field through in- depth interview shows that the conceptual framework should begin with the individual body image. Therefore the body image of each beauty contestant is

influenced by social demographic intervention from family members, friends or even 'godmother' who have often told her about their body appearance. Other was driven by motivations such as prizes. Additionally, this year the contestants no longer needed to wear swimsuits. This along with environmental experiences and individual reasons for example they were ready and beautiful enough or that they wanted to do something once in their life that if they could not do if they passed this age, are the factors cited by the informants for entering the Miss Thailand beauty competition.

For example some informants cited the reason that they wanted to win and received the prize, or they reported that others such as the sponsors or the 'godmother' forced the beauty contestants to change their beauty ideal and personality. Meanwhile, the preparation to enter includes many methods such as beauty courses, beauty training, cosmetic surgery, and so on.

As body image is the picture and feeling of one's body in one's mind which comes from the experiences, environment and social factors, it can be expected that the body image of the beauty contestants will change over time, that is before they made the decision to enter the Miss Thailand contest, during the contest and after the results were announced by the committees. These processes could be expected to influence the body image of the contestants and also their attitude towards cosmetic surgery. By targeting the time before during, and after the contestants attended the Miss Thailand pageant, it may be possible to identify changes in the ideal of body image and attitude toward cosmetic surgery as influenced by the period of time and other factors that may influence their perception on body appearances.

The hypothesis of this study is that the body image of the contestants who entered the Miss Thailand contest change following the processes of the environmental change and their experience, including the concomitant social factors. The processes of changing body image among the contestants have motivated them to undergo cosmetic surgery in each particular time, before during, and after the beauty contest. On the other hand, the social intervention and whether the results of the contest have influence on the contestants's body image. Thus, it depends on each person individual background and attitude toward cosmetic surgery.



*Fig. 2.1 Conceptual framework of this study*

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Research design**

This study utilized qualitative methods in order to reflect the picture of and processes associated with changing body image. The qualitative design was used in order to uncover in-depth information and insight into the body image of the contestants. Thus, their perception about cosmetic surgery was also explored.

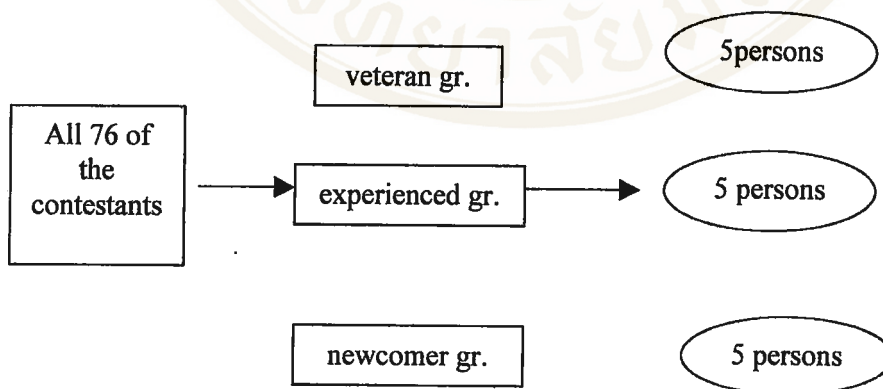
The Miss Thailand beauty contest in the middle of May 2000 was used as study field. This competition is one of the national beauty contests. The contestants who attended this program were representing the four regions of Thailand. In the year 2000, the Miss Thailand contest had a major change in the contest rules. The aim of the contest was changed to select a woman to be the representative of Thailand to work as a culture and tourism ambassador. Another change was that the Miss Thailand beauty contest organizers did not allow the pageants to wear swimsuit on the stage and in front of any mass media.

#### **3.2 Study site**

The location where this study was conducted was not flexible depend on where the contestants felt comfortable and convenience. Most of the samples were living in Bangkok and able to chose the place chosen for interviewing. Fourteen of the informants chose the quiet location and easy concentrate on the interview, for example, at their residence, the office, fast food or restaurant, library or hotel lobbies. Only one contestant interviewed via the telephone (Nakornrajchasi).

### 3.3 Sampling and sampling procedure

The total number of contestants who attended the Miss Thailand 2000 pageant was 76 persons. Background information (name, address, education background, and telephone number) was obtained from iTV (Independent Television station) which was the main organizer of Miss Thailand 2000. The stratified sampling method was chosen; the researcher divided the contestants into three groups by called all 76 contestants and asked about the experience in beauty contest before attending Miss Thailand contest. The veteran group was the contestants who had much experience attending beauty contests for more than 6 times. There were 23 persons in this group. The experienced group was the contestants between 2-5 times. There were 26 persons in this group. The newcomer group consisted of 27 informants for whom the Miss Thailand contest in the year 2000 was the first beauty contest in which they had participated. An in-depth interview was performed with a total of 15 contestants by sampling 5 persons in each group and the willingness of the contestants from each group.



**Fig 3.3 Chart shows the procedure of sampling**

Initially, the researcher asked for the cooperation and permission from the contestants via local telephone or mobile telephone and made an appointment for the interview individually in person. More than half of the informants postponed at least two times while some of them ignored the request and did not collaborate.

### 3.4 Data collection methods

3.4.1 This study is a qualitative study using an in-depth interview guideline as a tool together with observation performed during the interview. The target group or sample was the contestants who attended the Miss Thailand beauty contest in the year 2000. The researcher obtained information on the 76 contestants from iTV and then called to ask about their previous experiences in beauty contest and divided them into three groups according to the criteria of each group. Fifteen persons were chosen as the sample from among the 76 contestants. The interview was performed after asking for the willingness and permission from the informants. The researcher informed, explained and introduced her and the objective of this study was also explained.

Fifteen beauty contest participants were interviewed using an interview guideline covering the following themes: demographic information (age, education, socio-economic status), beauty behavior (dress, skincare, cosmetic usage, time and attention given to beauty behavior), influences on their conceptualization of beauty (family, friends, media), and definition, attitude, and feelings concerning beauty. The interviews were conducted at locations chosen by the participants; one contestant who lived in another province was interviewed over the phone. The duration of each interview took from one to one and a-half hours. Each interview was conducted as a two-way conversation to facilitate trust and disclosure. The researcher tried to be a good listener, and did not interrupt or influence the informant's perception in order to achieve valid and reliable data. The researcher allowed informants to talk freely about their feelings, habits, concepts and ideas. The ordering of the question was flexible depending upon the direction and flow of the interview.

During the interviews, the researcher observed the clothes, make up, personality, confidence, and beauty behavior of the informants. Instruments of data collection included in-depth interview guidelines, audio recordings, and field notes. The data collection lasted approximately five months, starting from late November 2000 to early April 2001.

3.4.2 A documentary Study was also used in this research to obtain information, data, theory, and the related research results; for example, from newspapers, printed matter, articles, critical columns, interview scripts, and other research and documents.

### 3.5 Data processing and analysis

3.5.1 The in-depth interview data analysis began manually during the data collection period. The interviews were recorded and then transcribed by the researcher and case summary contact sheets were made to explore the gaps in data collection. Analysis was done through line-by-line content analysis. Outlines were constructed to highlight themes, such as beauty behavior, factors related to cosmetic surgery, and self-image.

#### 3.5.2 Body Mass Index calculator

The researcher asked for high and weight of the informants and these data conducted for calculating BMI of all 15 informants. Ideal weights are generally calculated in terms of a quantity known as the Body Mass Index, defined by the formula

$$\text{BMI} = w / h^2$$

where  $w$  is weight in kilograms and  $h$  is height in meters. A BMI of about 20-25 is considered "normal", and a BMI of over 30 is considered obese. A recognized problem with the BMI formula is that it doesn't distinguish between fat weight and muscle weight. The weight chart given here uses the following values for BMI' to find ideal weight.

<b>Frame</b>	<b>BMI</b>
Small	21
Medium	22
Large	23

Search from [www.src.net.com/JavaGym/jgformulars.htm](http://www.src.net.com/JavaGym/jgformulars.htm), 2001

International agencies have now adopted BMI standards for underweight (i.e., <18.5), overweight ( $\geq 25$ ) and obesity ( $\geq 30$ ). There are no accepted % fat levels corresponding to these ranges despite increasing interest in quantifying body fat ([www.healthchecksyste.ms.com/tbmi2.htm](http://www.healthchecksyste.ms.com/tbmi2.htm), 1997).

### **3.6 Ethical consideration**

As ethical issues in this study were decisive, pseudonyms of the informants were used. Furthermore, any identifying characteristics of the sample that might affect them, for example names and positions were not disclosed. Informed consent for in-depth interviews was obtained and confidentiality was strictly maintained so as to protect their identities. All audiotapes were destroyed after transcription and all written records were destroyed after finishing the research paper.

### **3.7 Limitations of the study**

Furthermore, more than half were using their mobile phones during the interview for their business. This caused both the researcher and the narrator to have disconnected conversation and loss of concentration. Some locations chosen by the informants, such as fast food restaurants, were not suitable because they were crowded and noisy, which disturbed the interview and transcription.

At the same time, the researcher was working and also the informants were working and studying; often when the researcher was available, the informant was not, and vice versa. Scheduling was an obstacle for data collection.

According to the experience of the researcher in terms of in-depth interview skill, the researcher never had this experience before so the process of data collection still limited detailing.

Due to lacking of knowledge about teen culture and their language, the researcher found it difficult to understand the informants emotions and attitudes about the matter they talked about.

## CHAPTER IV

### GENERAL BACKGROUND OF BEAUTY CONTEST PROCEDURES AND THE CONTESTANTS

#### 4.1 Background information of the Miss Thailand

##### 4.1.1 The contest of the Miss Thailand in the year 2000

The Miss Thailand contest is a traditional beauty contest in Thai society; it has been conducted for over sixty years. During the first period, the emphasis was on promoting democracy in Thai society, but in subsequent periods, the focus of the contest was upgrading Thai women's roles in society. The Miss Thailand contest has been used as a tool to promote the roles and the image of Thai women abroad. Later, the image of Miss Thailand became more commercial as women began to be portrayed as sex objects in terms of wearing swimsuits in front of the audiences. For example, Miss Thailand was used as a fundraiser for the Vajiravudh Alumni Association, which sold tickets at a high price. Additionally, many sponsors have invested large sums of money in the contest so that they could gain advertising exposure through the contest, which has made the contest more commercial. Furthermore, Thai society has the ideal that Miss Thailand is the most beautiful, or ideal, for Thai women so that sponsors are eager to gain the widespread advertising exposure made possible by the popularity of the contest.

The Miss Thailand beauty contest, year 2000 was held and broadcasted in the middle of May in the year 2000 at Queen's Sirikit Convention Center. Tickets for this final round cost Bt 20,000 and Bt 15,000 (including dinner). All the tickets were sold. Seventy-six contestants who were the representatives of four regions walked and performed traditional Thai dancing on the stage and the contest also featured other performances from singers and movie stars. In terms of the Miss Thailand 2000

judgement procedure, there were 30 committees from different sectors who were invited.

The Miss Thailand pageant provided new experiences for the contestants, who gained new knowledge through the training camp and met new friends through participating in the pageant. The training camp prepared the women to behave politely and present themselves in a confident manner. Miss Thailand 2000 set a precedent by banning the on-stage swimsuit competition and by prohibiting sponsorship banners; the purpose of these changes was to deflect from the commercialized image of Miss Thailand as a sex object.

However, there were still sponsors supporting the contestants, and the tickets prices remained high; additionally, many 'god-mothers' sent their contestants to the Miss Thailand pageant for business and prize money. Furthermore, there were still connections between 'god-mothers' and some judging committee members, which influenced the outcome of the pageant. The informants reported that the large amount of prize money served as a motivation to attract them to enter the contest. This aspect of the contest also reflected a commercial, business-like image of the pageant. Although the main objective of Miss Thailand 2000 was to select the Thai woman who is the most beautiful and displays culturally appropriate behavior to serve as a culture and tourism ambassador, there are still elements of commercialism in the pageant.

Some informants reported that the Miss Thailand procedures were not transparent; their scores on the paper and interview were not reported to the contestants. The informants stated that they knew which contestant was going to win the pageant at the beginning. They reported that the contestant who won the post of Miss Thailand conducted herself differently throughout the pageant, for example, isolating herself from the other contestants.

#### **4.1.2 The objectives of the Miss Thailand contest**

1. To select a beautiful Thai woman who has knowledge and abilities and is suited for the position of Miss Thailand in the year 2000.

2. To spread the prestige and honesty of Thai women's roles to nations worldwide.

3. To choose a culture and tourism ambassador whose duty is to convey and promote Thai culture and tourist destinations.

4. To be the representative of Thai women and to perform her duty for Thai society and the Thai nation.

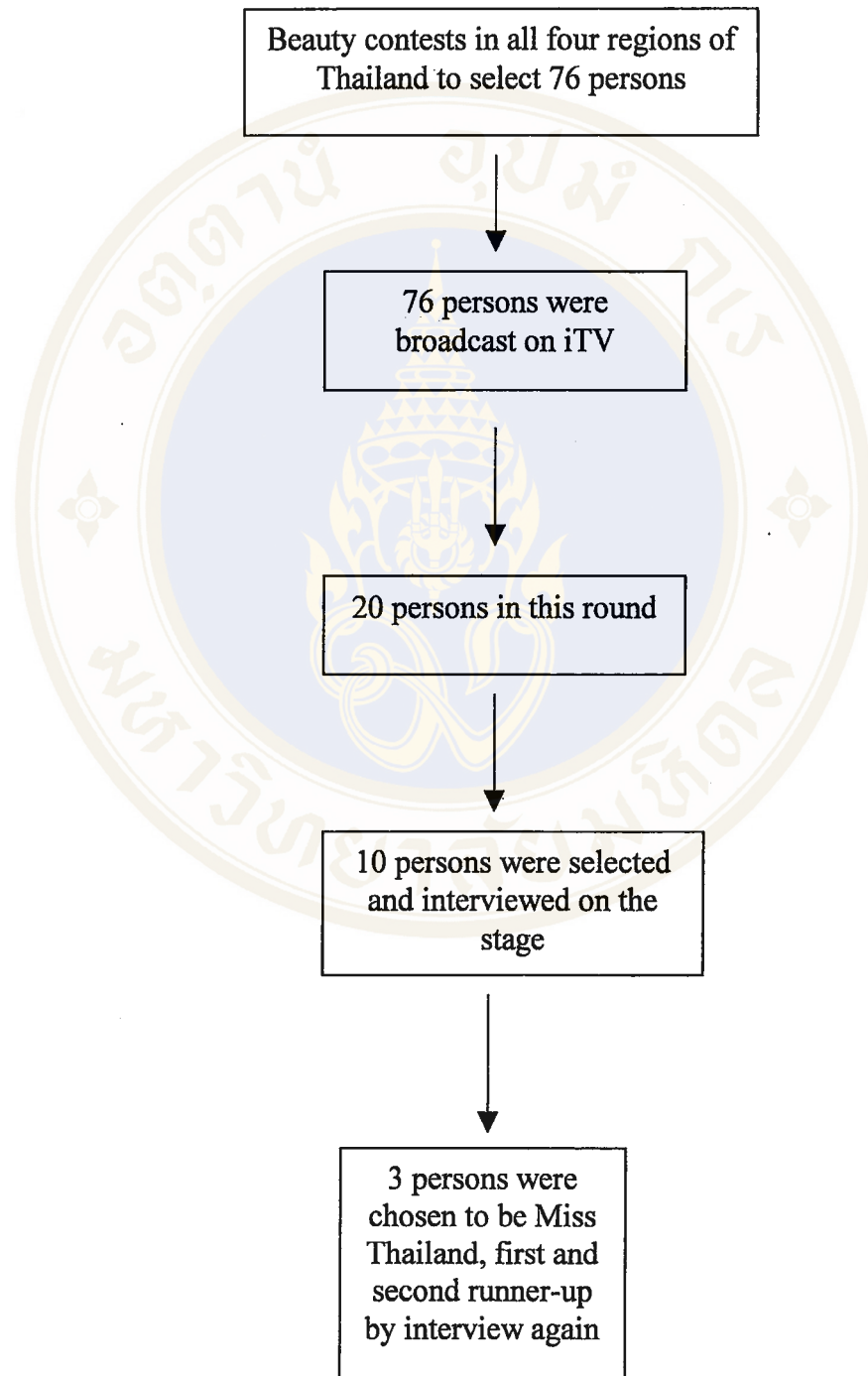
#### **4.1.3 Qualifications for entering the Miss Thailand pageant**

1. Must have Thai nationality since she was born and have domicile in Thailand.
2. Age must not be younger than 17 years old but not over 25 years old.
3. Over 165 cm. in height.
4. Must be single, never married nor have children.
5. Must have a Matthayom 6 or equivalent education; be naturally fluent in Thai.
6. Have never had a bad career or bad behavior that is socially stigmatized, such as prostitute.
7. Must be healthy without any infectious diseases, such as AIDS, TB (tuberculosis), flu and so on.

#### **4.1.4 Recruitment procedure for selecting Miss Thailand**

There were more than 500 applications though this figure was whittled down to 76 persons. Four steps of screening took place after the 76 representatives from each province of the four regions were chosen through a series of interviews and the standards of beauty laid down by the committees. All 76 contestants received their interview question beforehand in order to prepare their answer. Secondly, twenty persons were excluded in the second to last round. Third, ten persons were chosen to enter the final round and had to pass an interview with one question each. Finally, only 3 persons were chosen to be Miss Thailand and the first and second runner-up; these three contestants were given a final interview of one question each. There were six awards in this year's competition: Miss Thailand, first and second runner-up, Miss Photogenic, Miss Popular Vote (one Miss Popular from each of the four regions voted on by the TV audiences and over the internet), and Miss Personality. In this year (2000) Miss Thailand received two positions, Miss Photogenic and Miss Thailand.

*Fig 4.1.4 Chart shows the recruitment procedure in the Miss Thailand contest*





#### **4.1.5 Miss Thailand contest awards**

The prizes of the Miss Thailand contest in the year 2000 were as follows. Each of the 76 provincial representatives received 5,000 Baht. The twenty persons in the second to last round received 50,000 Baht. The ten persons chosen to enter the final round received 100,000 baht. The first and second runners-up received 300,000 baht. The winner, Miss Thailand, received 1,000,000 baht in cash, a car, a diamond crown and a diamond brooch given by the Vajiravudh Alumni Association and other sponsors.

#### **4.1.6 Miss Thailand contest camp activities**

The seventy-six contestants, who were the representatives of the four regions, stayed together in Imperial Queen's Park Hotel at a beauty camp. During the Miss Thailand contest camp, there were many activities for all contestants. For example, they practiced walking elegantly, smiling delightfully, and Thai dancing gracefully as presenting the characteristics of Thai women. They also received training in cosmetic application, hair setting, manners, and preparation for the performance on the stage. These activities aimed to polish every aspect of their presentation in the hopes of catching the judges' attention. During these hectic two weeks, the contestants also faced a barrage of questions from the media. Moreover, there were many social activities to promote the image of the beauty queens. For example, they visited Ban Bang Kae home for the elderly, Slum Klongtuai's kindergarten to treat and play with orphan children, and went to Wat Pra Kew to pay respect to the Emerald Buddha. The highlight of this camp was a trip to Pattaya for the iTV tape recording to be shown on the final day of the competition. This camp consumed 14 days, during which time all of the contestants lived together. When iTV first advertised and broadcasted the application procedures for the Miss Thailand contest 2000, it emphasized the prize and duty of Miss Thailand, which was to be a culture and tourism ambassador. iTV was expressing the idea that the "Miss Thailand contest is a stage to honor the prestige of Thai women".

Ten of the 15 informants reported that the 2-weeks training camp contained too much activity and little time for rest. They stated that they went to bed about 1 pm and then awoke at 4 am. Two of the informants stated that this camp was boring and

nonsense because some activities they already knew, such as training in the traditional Thai greeting. Furthermore, they had to perform this greeting properly in front of the media, which seemed like a fabrication. These informants stated that the aim of the activities was only to promote the image of Thai women as beauty queens who wear traditional Thai costumes and present themselves to the public in order to promote the image of Thais. On the other hand, four informants stated that they enjoyed these activities because they had a chance to meet many people, have new experiences and visit new locations. These four reported that they made many new friends among the other contestants during these activities. Two mentioned that they appreciated the opportunity to visit the elderly home, which in their perception was making merit by helping ease the loneliness of the elderly.

In contrast to the Miss Thailand pageant, another national beauty pageant, the Miss Thailand Universe awarded 800,000 baht, a Nissan sedan, and a diamond crown and necklace. During the contest the participants wore a swimsuit and paraded in front of the public and this was also telecasted. The winner of Miss Thailand Universe was sent abroad to compete among other international beauty pageant contestants in the Miss Universe pageant. The only two Thai winners of The Miss Universe pageant were Arpassara Hongsakul and Pornthip. Thus, the aim of the Miss Thailand Universe contest is emphasis on body appearance, body proportion, and modern looking beauties.

## **4.2 Socio- demographic backgrounds and brief case studies**

According to the qualifications of the Miss Thailand contest, the age of the contestants was between 17-25 years old while the age of the informants was between 19 and 25 years old. The mean age of the informants in this study was 22 years old.

In terms of education, three of the informants were currently studying in a master's degree program while eight were currently studying at the bachelor's level. The only informant who had already graduated with her Master's degree (from Australia) was the contestant who received the post of Miss Thailand. Another three informants had completed their bachelor's degree. One informant was planning to go to Canada to further her studies.

In terms of career, most of the informants (11) were students. Seven of these students also worked. The careers of the informants include model, actress, beauty queen, announcer, university lecturer and employee in a private company. Two informants, both of whom were in the veteran group who had participated in over five beauty contests, reported that being a contestant was their career.

The average income of the informants was 12,000 Baht per month. Most of the informants in this study came from the Central region; four of the informants came from other regions, two from the eastern region and another two from the northern region. No one came from Southern Thailand due to the fact that most of the contestants who were the representatives of this region were living in Southern region. It was difficult to reach the informants to perform in-depth interviews and if the researcher interviewed via a long distance call, it would not be suitable and proper for qualitative data collection. The socio-demographic background of the informants in each group can be seen in the following table 4.2.

**Table 4.2 : The socio-demographic characteristics among the three groups of informants.**

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Veteran</b>	<b>Experience</b>	<b>Newcomer</b>
<b><u>Age (years)</u></b>			
<i>19- 20</i>	2	1	-
<i>21-22</i>	-	3	3
<i>23-24</i>	2	1	-
<i>25</i>	1	-	2
<b><u>Education</u></b>			
<i>Bachelor's degree</i>	3	5	3
<i>Master's degree</i>	2	-	2
<b><u>Career</u></b>			
<i>Student</i>	5	3	3
<i>Model, Actress, Announcer</i>	2	2	-
<i>Employee in private company</i>	2	1	3
<i>Contestant</i>	2	-	-
<i>University lecturer</i>	-	-	1
<b><u>Income</u></b>			
<i>&lt;10,000 Baht</i>	-	-	3
<i>10,001-15,000 Baht</i>	4	1	2
<i>15,001-20,000 Baht</i>	1	2	-
<i>No information</i>	-	2	-

Categories	Veteran	Experienced	Newcomer
<u>Region</u>			
<i>Central Region</i>	4	3	4
<i>Northern Region</i>	-	2	-
<i>Eastern Region</i>	1	-	1
<i>Southern Region</i>	-	-	-

#### 4.2.1 Brief case studies of the informants

The details of all the cases in this study show diversity of their previous experience with contests as well as cosmetic surgery, post of the informants after the result of Miss Thailand, age, career, income, and also education level as displayed in the following table.

**Table 4.2.1 : Cases study background**

Group / background	Name/ Post	Age years	Career	Income (Baht)	Education	Cosmetic surgery history
<b>The veteran group</b>	Nui / 10 persons in the last round	20	Model (part time)	20,000	Studying Bachelor's degree level	-High nose bridge -Breast augmentation
	Nan / 20 persons in the second last round	25	Architecture (part time)	15,000	Studying master's degree level	-Belief in fifth element so not undergo cosmetic surgery
	Num / 20 persons in the second last round	19	Contestant & employee in private company (full time)	15,000	Studying Bachelor's degree level (part time)	-High nose bridge -Nose reduction -Breast augmentation -Double eye lids -Upper arm fat injection
	Wong / fail	23	Model & actress (full time)	15,000	Studying Master's degree (part time)	-High nose bridge
	Peng / fail	23	Contestant	15,000	Studying Bachelor's degree level	-Double eye lid -High nose bridge -Dental elongation -Upper arm fat injection

Group / background	Name/ Post	Age years	Career	Income Baht	Education	Cosmetic surgery history
<b>The experienced group</b>	Nid / 20 persons in the second last round	20	Announcer (part time)	11,000	Studying Bachelor's degree level	-High nose bridge
	Prae / won award	24	Full time working in private company	16,000	Graduated Bachelor's degree	-Not undergo cosmetic surgery
	Note / 10 persons in the last round	21	Model	20,000	Graduated Bachelor's degree & waiting for study abroad	-Nose reduction
	Noi / won an award	22	Student	Did not inform	Studying Bachelor's level	-No history of cosmetic surgery but in the old age probable
	Nong / fail	22	Student	Did not inform	Studying Bachelor's level	-No history of cosmetic surgery and does not want to do it
<b>The newcomer group</b>	Ning / fail	22	Student	8,000	Studying Master's level	-No history of cosmetic surgery
	Neng / fail	22	Full time working in private company	10,700	Graduated Bachelor's degree	-No history of cosmetic surgery

<b>The newcomer group</b>	Jeab / fail (long distance call)	25	Working in private company	11,000	Studying Bachelor's level	- No history of cosmetic surgery
	Ae / fail	21	Student	10,000	Studying Bachelor's level	- No history of cosmetic surgery
	Bee / final list	25	Lecturer	7,800	Graduated Master's degree	- No history of cosmetic surgery

#### 4.2.1.1 The veteran group: The informants who had participated in over five beauty contests.

Num; 19 years old, 175 cm tall, 58 kg., BMI 18.9. She came from Isaan, the Northeast region of Thailand. She used to be an athlete when she was in senior high school, so she has a good figure; she has participated in beauty pageants since she was 15 years old. Her family was willing to allow Num to enter the beauty contest even though she was young at that time. Num has been supporting her own education and cost of living, in addition to sending money to her family, since she was young. She began competing at the district level and then moved up to the provincial level; she entered every pageant near her hometown, where she had a private trainer. Her private trainer introduced her to the 'god-mother' in Bangkok who began to care for her as her own relative. Num moved to her 'god-mother's' camp. At their first meeting, the 'god-mother' stated that she did not expect to send Num to a beauty contest because Num was not attractive. After Num lived in the camp for 6 months, her 'god-mother' began to see Num's outstanding qualities so she took Num to have cosmetic surgery, double eyelid and nasal surgeries on three occasions. Num's 'god-mother' was knowledgeable about the doctors who performed cosmetic surgery well, and she gave Num the advance to pay for each surgery. The first surgery, high nose bridge, did not have a good result so she had a second surgery to adjust her nose. The third surgery was a nose reduction. In addition, she received an injection to make her arms more

full. After these surgeries, she continued to compete in pageants. Shortly before the Miss Thailand pageant, Num competed in Miss Thailand Universe. Her 'god-mother' took her to get a breast augmentation in order to prepare for these pageants; the surgery increased her breast size from 32 to 34 inches.

Num lived in her 'god-mother's' camp for three years where she was trained in techniques of walking, speaking, smiling, posing, and interviewing two days per week for four hours each day. Her 'god-mother' also pointed out her weak points and instructed her to avoid showing these points to the audience. In addition, the 'god-mother' took Num to have dinner with sponsors. The 'god-mother' emphasized education by sending Num for English lessons and voice lessons. At the time of the interview, Num was studying in a bachelor's degree program at the Rajabhat Institute, working in a car company, also working as a presenter, and competing in beauty pageants. She no longer lived in her 'god-mother's' camp; when her 'god-mother' had an appointment with a sponsor, model, or presenter, she would contact Num. Num felt a little bored because her 'god-mother' forced and controlled her to report her every step during the Miss Thailand contest via phone. Her 'god-mother' gave her many suggestions. Num also felt tired from the Miss Thailand Universe, which she had just attended one week before the Miss Thailand contest. The result of Miss Thailand was that she reached the 20 persons round (semi-final round).

Nui; 20 years old, 172 cm tall, 53 kg., BMI 17.9. She came from up-country in the central region and moved to Bangkok to study in a university in a bachelor's degree program. She began participating in contests when she moved to Bangkok and met a person living in her apartment who was a personal trainer. Before entering Miss Thailand, Nui had competed in more than five contests. Her family did not obstruct her from entering beauty contests. Nui had cosmetic surgery to create a high nose bridge before entering the Miss Yun-hee contest, established by Yun-hee hospital, which specializes in cosmetic surgery and is very famous in the aesthetic business; she spent her own money for this surgery. Nui won the Miss Yun-hee pageant and so she was sent to the Miss Thailand pageant as the representative of Yun-hee Hospital. This hospital promotes itself as a professional center for aesthetic surgery, which can be seen from their advertisement; for example, breast augmentation, nose job, double eyelid and so on. Previous to the Miss Thailand contest, Nui had breast augmentation,

from 29 to 33 inches, free of charge from Yun-hee Hospital. Subsequent to the Miss Thailand pageant, Nui continued to compete in other pageants. Nui also supported her own tuition fees and cost of living. The result of the Miss Thailand contest was that she reached the 10 persons round.

Nan; 25 years old, 168 cm tall, 50 kg., BMI 17.7. She was born and raised in Bangkok. She grew up in a Chinese family in the Chinatown section of Bangkok. She was crowned Miss Chinatown. Before entering the Miss Thailand pageant, her personal trainer sent her to many contests. The Miss Thailand pageant is her last competition since she is at the maximum eligible age to compete. She graduated with a bachelor's degree in architecture, was working as an architect, and was studying a master's degree in architecture. She has no history of cosmetic surgery; as she stated, she wanted to have cosmetic surgery because she has a square face but she believes in the fifth element, a Chinese belief according to which she will lose her money if she cuts her jaw. Nan also supported her own cost of living and educational costs. She did not want to disturb her parents about money as they have a Chinese-style commercial business and she is the eldest daughter. She reached the 76 persons round in the Miss Thailand competition

Peng; 23 years old, 172 cm tall, 51 kg., BMI 17.2. She came from Bangkok where she lived with her mother and brother. Her mother supported her since she was young. Her mother worked in a beauty shop giving herbal scrubs and had given Peng beauty scrubs since she was young. Because of her work, Peng's mother met a beauty queen who introduced Peng to a 'god-mother'. The 'god-mother' took Peng to beauty contests in many provinces when she was 16 years old. This 'god-mother' is also Num's 'god-mother'. The 'god-mother' took Peng for cosmetic surgery when she was 17 to create a double eyelid and a high nose bridge; the 'god-mother' also took Peng to the dental surgeon for dental elongation because she had been grinding her teeth since she was young. In addition, she had a fat injection in her arms. The 'god-mother' paid the advance for each surgery, which Peng would repay with contest prize money. Peng did not live with the 'god-mother', rather she lived with her own mother. She stated that she is weak in studying; she was studying in the second year of a bachelor's degree program. She also used the money she won in beauty contests to support herself and her family. Peng stated that her job was competing in contests, including

going to dinner with sponsors and being a model. Peng had just competed in the Miss Thailand Universe pageant one week before the Miss Thailand pageant. She reached the 76 persons round in the Miss Thailand pageant.

Wong; 23 years old, 171 cm. tall, 50 kg., BMI 17. She came from Bangkok. She lived with her family and started competing in pageants when she was 18 years old. When she was young, she participated in beauty activities at her school, such as cheerleader, traditional Thai performances, and parade participant. She stated that she liked Thai traditional dress. Because of these activities, she was invited to a beauty contest during a traditional Thai festival. She received the prize, which increased her confidence in her appearance and her beauty so she continued to enter contests. She also had a personal trainer. Her motivation for competing in Miss Thailand was to participate in a national level contest before she reached the maximum age. She is studying a master's degree in mass communication and she works as an actress and model. She reached the 76 persons round in the Miss Thailand contest.

**4.2.1.2 The experienced group: The informants who had participated in at least one but no more than five beauty contests.**

Nid; 20 years old, 170 cm tall, 53 kg., BMI 18.3 She came from Rayong. She was living in Bangkok at a mansion near her university. She is a student and is working as an announcer with an iTV travelling program. When she was in high school, she used to be a drum major because she was taller than other students. She attended three beauty contests before entering Miss Thailand. She was successful in all of the beauty contests in which she competed such as Miss Teen and Miss University League. Her reason for entering the Miss Thailand pageant was because she is the representative of Miss University League and the sponsor who supported her in Miss University League sent her to the Miss Thailand contest. Her mother was taking care of her and supporting her study and her living costs. Nid's mother also encouraged her to enter Miss Thailand and other beauty contests. Furthermore, her friends encouraged her to enter beauty pageants. She would like to support her living herself in order to assist her mother. Nid had undergone high nose bridge surgery when she was 15 years old because she had to enter the Miss Teen contest and her sponsor forced her by supporting all of the doctor fees. Otherwise her sponsor would not have

supported her in the Miss teen contest if she did not perform high nose bridge surgery. In the Miss Thailand pageant, she reached the 76 persons competition round.

Prae; 24 years old, 167 cm tall, 51 kg., BMI 18.2. She came from Chonburee. She was born and lived in Chonburee then moved to Songkra in the south of Thailand because of her undergraduate study. She was living and working in Bangkok in a private company. When she was an undergraduate student, she attended many beauty contests held at the provincial level. She received a good result from those beauty contests. Prae's family did not agree with her every time she wanted to enter beauty pageants. She supported herself and her family with some of her income. She applied to Miss Thailand because of her personal trainer's suggestion. She has not undergone any kind of cosmetic surgery and she also has a negative attitude toward cosmetic surgery. Because she did not agree with the women who undergo cosmetic surgery to improve their appearance she was concerned about the negative affect of cosmetic surgery rather than the beauty concern. Moreover, she reported that a good heart, great mind and proper manner were more important than beauty appearance for her. In the Miss Thailand pageant, she received the Miss Central Region Popular Vote, which was voted on by the TV audiences and via Internet.

Noi; 22 years old, 168 cm tall, 50 kg., BMI 17.7. She was the representative from Lumpang, northern region. She was originally born and raised in Bangkok together with her family but her residence registration was in Lumpang. She had competed in three beauty pageants around the northern area. When she was young she was always chosen to be a cheerleader. Noi received the Miss Northern Region Popular Vote, and she reached the 10 person round (last round). On the interview day, the researcher noticed that she was very beautiful and dressed differently than her friends, more fashionable and she exposed her abdomen. She came together with her friends and her boyfriend. Noi entered the beauty contest because of her personal trainer's suggestion. Her parents supported her and attended each contest in which she had competed in ordered to encourage and support her. She had no history of cosmetic surgery and her attitude toward cosmetic surgery was that it was the decision of each individual. Personally, she felt satisfied with her appearance so she saw no need to undergo cosmetic surgery. She had a neutral idea concerning cosmetic surgery.

Nong; 22 years old, 170 cm tall, 50 kg., BMI 17.3. She was the representative from Phitsanulok, Northern Region. She was originally born and raised in Phitsanulok. She was never interested in beauty contests before but her personal trainer, who knew her mother, invited and involved her to compete in beauty contests in her hometown, in neighboring provinces and in Miss Thailand too. In terms of her family background, her father is an airforce officer who has high ranking and who at first did not allow her to enter beauty contests because it may influence his working position but later agreed to allow her. Nong's mother supported her for the Miss Thailand pageant; her father did not prohibit her to enter. She is the kind of person who likes to talk frankly and directly. She did not undergo any kind of cosmetic surgery. Nong said she never thought about having cosmetic surgery even though she has weak points, her cheeks are too skinny and her thighs are too large. Nong was afraid of the result of cosmetic surgery, such as if she had a high nose bridge surgery, it might be distorted or out of shape and she would have to undergo surgery again. She stated that it would not be good for her to suffer with this kind of result that might occur to her if she would undergo cosmetic surgery. She also mentioned about the correction of cosmetic surgery which consumes a lot of money which in the end is more than the price of the first cosmetic surgery. Nong said she was a kind of person who has high confidence concerning her body appearance so there was no need to undergo cosmetic surgery. She was studying at the bachelor's level in Bangkok. In this Miss Thailand pageant, she reached the 76 person round. After Miss Thailand she planned to attend another nation beauty contest, the Miss Thailand Universe.

Note; 21 years old, 175 cm tall, 58 kg., BMI 18.9. She came from Bangkok and lived with her family. Her parents provided her education fees and she worked as a model as her part-time job. Because of her work, she had undergone nose reduction; her photographer told her that her weak point was her nose, which was too big. Note also thought that having a nose job was basic in Thai society because many people had performed this surgery. As can be seen in the society nowadays, there are many people who have performed nose jobs, especially in entertainment sector where nearly everyone has had a nose job. Furthermore, she stated that if the result was not good, she could take it off (silicone) and readjust more easily. In terms of eyelid surgery though, she felt afraid that the result might not be balanced and would be difficult to

adjust because it was a complicated job and required more skill on the part of the doctor than a nose job, Note said. She graduated from the bachelor's level with a good score in three and a half years of study before entering the Miss Thailand pageant. Note was waiting to go for further study in Canada in February 2001. Note had previously competed in beauty contests at the provincial level. Furthermore, she took part in a beauty camp to prepare herself to enter the beauty pageant by controlling her diet and using medicine. She had strong negative opinions about the procedures of the Miss Thailand contest and the committees because she felt that it was unfair for her that she missed the central region Miss Popular Vote. She felt that she should have received this Popular Vote prize even though she reached the last 10 person round.

#### **4.2.1.3 The newcomer group: Those informants participating in a beauty contest for the first time.**

Ning; 22 years old, 167 cm tall, 54 kg., BMI 19.3. She was originally born in and was currently living in Bangkok with her family. She graduated with a bachelor's degree from the faculty of engineering and she was studying a master's degree. The Miss Thailand contest was the first pageant for her. Ning had been invited by her mother's friend to enter the Miss Thailand pageant and at that time she had nothing to do because she had just graduated and was waiting to study in the Master's level. Ning had never taken part in cosmetic surgery except that she had undergone orthodontia for medical reasons. Her attitude on cosmetic surgery was that she had never thought about undergoing cosmetic surgery. She was satisfied with her body and felt there was no need to make any alterations. She reported that she was tall enough and good looking enough; in terms of her shape, she stated that it was not good and not bad so she thought it was satisfactory enough for her. Ning reached the 76 person round.

Neng; 22 years old, 167 cm tall, 46 kg., BMI 16.4. She came from Bangkok. Neng was born in and lived in Bangkok with her family. She was working in a private company. She had her personal trainer who guided her to enter the Miss Thailand pageant for the first time. Her mother supported her and she had nothing to do at that time because she had just graduated, did not have a job, and wanted to know how to be the beauty queen. She had no history of cosmetic surgery, but she said she wanted to have double eyelid and high nose-bridge surgery but her mother and personal trainer

did not allow her because they stated that her natural state was satisfactory. The researcher observed that her eyes and her nose looked good. Neng could not enter the 20 person round; she reached the 76 persons round. After the Miss Thailand pageant, she attended two other beauty contests.

Ae; 21 years old, 170 cm tall, 50 kg., BMI 17.3. She came from Bangkok. Ae was living in Bangkok together with her family. She was studying in the bachelor's level. The Miss Thailand was the first pageant for her. However, Ae used to be a model before entering Miss Thailand. She had not had cosmetic surgery. Her feeling about cosmetic surgery was that the risk of side effects after performing and when getting old is more of a burden; for example one may need to perform surgery again according to her physical changes. She voiced her opinion that the one who had undergone cosmetic surgery did not love herself because it caused inflammation, a kind of injury to herself, in addition to other side affects that may happen to her. Ae did not succeed in the Miss Thailand contest; she reached the 76 persons round.

Jeab; 25 years old, 171 cm tall, 51 kg., BMI 17.4. The researcher interviewed her via long distance call. She came from Nakornratchasima, Northeastern region. She was born in Nakornratchasima, lived with her family, was studying in the bachelor's level and was also working at the Telecommunication Information Company in Nakornratchasima. Jeab entered the Miss Thailand pageant as the first beauty contest of her life; her reason for entering was that she wanted to enter with her younger sister who competed in Miss Thailand as well. She had never undergone cosmetic surgery except orthodontia for a medical reason. Jeab reached the 76 persons round which she said was far beyond her hopes.

Bee; 25 years old, 168 cm tall, 64 kg., BMI 22.6 She came from Bangkok. Bee was a lecturer at Kasetsart University. She graduated with a Master of International Business from Australia. Bee had no history of cosmetic surgery but she had undergone orthodontia for a medical reason. When she was young, she considered breast lift, chin injection, and nose job. Bee had decided to undergo cosmetic surgery with chin injection before entering Miss Thailand because many people told her that if she had a slightly fuller chin, she would be perfect. However, she had no time to prepare and her father did not allow her to have cosmetic surgery because he did not want his daughter to get hurt striving to be a modern woman. She entered Miss

Thailand because her mother had convinced and begged her many times since she was seventeen years old. Bee's mother wanted to enter the Miss Thailand beauty contest when she was young but she said she had not been beautiful enough. It was Bee's mother's dream. Bee is the kind of person who takes care of herself and is an independent person. She received the Miss Thailand reward and Miss Photogenic from the Miss Thailand contest. Bee also said that she was working as Miss Thailand of the year 2000 and she had to take leave from lecturing in the university for one year while she was occupied with her post as Miss Thailand.

#### **4.3 Motivations and factors for entering the pageant**

There are many factors influencing the contestants to enter the Miss Thailand contest. Most of the contestants emphasized the prizes and the law of Miss Thailand contest this year that did not allow the contestant to wear swimsuits in public. Some of them focused on the post of the beauty contest which could assist her to enter the entertainment sector in the near future. On the other hand, there were some contestants who entered because they had nothing to do and wanted to gain a new experience which they never knew before; they did not hope for a post and prize, they just wanted to try something in their life which they could not find anywhere else.

Two of the contestants in the veteran group, those who had participated in over five pageants, advanced to the second to last round while one of these two then advanced to the semi-final round (ten contestants remaining) of the Miss Thailand 2000 contest. One change in the contest for the year 2000 was the exclusion of the swimsuit portion of the pageant subsequent to a change in the organizing body and aims of the contest. The aims of the contest were changed; Miss Thailand would no longer go on to participate in Miss Universe but would serve as a cultural ambassador for Thailand. One contestant in this group, Num, reported that she was unhappy with this change because she felt the swimsuit competition was the best way to display her figure; she perceived that her figure was perfect.

Most of the informants in the veteran group mentioned money as a factor which influenced their decision to participate in the beauty contest. They wanted to support their education and living cost. Two of the informants reported that they received an

advance from their 'god-mothers' in order to pay for cosmetic surgery; Num reported that she was required to share fifty-percent of her prize money with her 'god-mother'.

One of the informants in this group, Num, stated that every contestant wanted to be Miss Thailand. She said, "the money is very important for me." Num and Peng reported that they felt it was more difficult to get money from the Miss Thailand contest compared to other pageants because of the lengthy training camp for the Miss Thailand pageant. On the other hand, Nui reported that her costs of living were covered by the pageant during the training camp. She stated that she had decided to enter this contest because each round offered a large amount of prize money which could help her livelihood. Similarly, another informant in this group, Nan, stated that she had to pay her own tuition fee and did not want to ask money from her parents so she entered the contest in hopes of getting prize money.

One change in the rules for Miss Thailand 2000 was the elimination of the sashes worn by the contestants displaying the names of the sponsors. The reason for this change was that the pageant organizers did not want the pageant to be commercialized. In contrast, the Miss Thailand Universe pageant continued to allow sashes listing the sponsors. Two informants, Num and Peng, who participated in both pageants reported that they received 100,000 baht in sponsorships for Miss Thailand Universe while they only received 30,000 baht in sponsorships for the Miss Thailand pageant.

Four of the informants in this group reported that their motivation for entering the beauty contest was their desire to participate in a national level pageant, while the other informant stated that she felt prepared to participate in the pageant because she had a completely perfect record in education, grade point average, and previous pageant experience. Two of the informants (Note and Prae) reported that they had entered the pageant this year because the pageant no longer allowed the swimming suit competition. One of these informants, Prae, stated that she waited until the Miss Thailand pageant eliminated the swimsuit portion because she perceived that she did not have a standard figure. Nong also reported that wearing a swimsuit was not suitable for her because her lower body is big. In contrast, Noi and Note reported that they did not mind wearing a swimsuit in front of the audiences.

Two of the informants in the experience group, Prae and Noi, reported that money was a very important factor, more important than the prestige of gaining a position, influencing their decision to enter the pageant. In addition, Prae stated that her sponsor had given her money to enter the contest and she then paid her personal trainer 5,000 baht of this money. Two of the informants in this group, Noi and Nong reported that they hoped entering the contest would create an opportunity for them to enter into the entertainment sphere. Only Jeab gave the reason that entered this contest because she wanted to be her sister's friend due to the fact that her sister was also entering the Miss Thailand contest and Jeab also wanted to try.

In the last, the newcomer group, all the contestants were participating in a pageant for the first time. They reported that they wanted to try participating in a contest. Four of these informants (Ning, Neng, Ae, and Bee) mentioned that their family and friends suggested that they should have this experience once in their life. One of the informants participated in the contest to accompany her sister, who was also a contestant (Jeab). For this case the researcher thought that it was her alibi. Two of these contestants had recently graduated with a bachelor degree and at that time could not find a job, so they felt they had nothing else to do (Neng, Ning). The other two informants in this group were studying for a bachelor's degree (Ae and Jeab) and one informant was currently studying for a master's degree (Ning). None of the informants in this group mentioned the contest fees and prize money. They reported that they entered the contest for fun, not for the goal of winning a prize.

Bee stated that the elimination of the swimsuit competition was one of her main reason for entering the contest because of her status as a university lecturer; she said that "I should be careful about my image."

## **4.4 Body image and beauty perception before the contest**

### **4.4.1 Body image among the contestants before the contest**

There are many factors influencing the process of changing body image among the informants. For instance, their family background influences their perceptions of their body image and beauty behavior. The mother plays a very important role for daughters because the daughter will imitate the mother's behavior, especially those

behaviors related to the role of the female, such as way of dressing, styling hair and make-up and manners. Once the young women enter school, friends, teachers, and school activities influence their ideals of beauty. Some activities in particular, such as cheerleader, drum major and banner carrier, create the perception that those who hold these positions are more outstanding than others. Furthermore, peers play a very important role, especially in the teenage years when young people follow their friends' behavior. Informants imitate their friends' dress and make-up. Moreover, the mass media plays an important influential role on the body image of the contestants. For example, some of the informants stated that when looking at magazines, they desired to have a figure like the models. Most magazines have beauty columns which some informants reported that they read and followed the suggestions. Others reported that they like to read this column but do not follow the advice, while some reported that they are not interested in this column. It appears that the informants who have a negative body image will more easily follow the influence of mass media, peers, and 'god-mothers' and personal trainers who impact their thinking and body perception. This group of informants are those who are in the veteran and experience group. Most of those informants with a negative body image are influenced by environmental and social factors which motivate them to change their appearance. All of these factors influenced the body image of the informants before they entered the pageant.

#### **4.4.2 Informants' beauty perceptions**

Most of the informants in the veteran group perceive that beauty is based on outside appearance; they emphasize their figure and facial image. Num stated that beauty is "good shape and beautiful face without undergoing cosmetic surgery; a small face with big eyes, high nose, and proper shaped mouth; not too fat and not too thin" This is the beautiful body ideal in her perception and it should be naturally beautiful. However, she was born with a body which did not match her perception of ideal so cosmetic surgery was the way to make this ideal come true. Similarly, Peng said that the meaning of beauty refers to a beautiful face and appearance, including a good figure, fair skin, and good behavior." Nan stated that the concept of beauty is suitable for women; they should have full cheeks. She emphasized that beauty first refers to outer appearance and then after talking with a person, beauty encompasses their charm

and intelligence. Two informants, Wong and Nan, stressed that beauty is both inner and outer. Wong felt that beauty could not be defined because the concept is too wide. She stated that it includes a good appearance, personality and most importantly, it should be based on realistic perceptions of a complete person, body, mind, and soul. Wong stated that she must speak with someone in order to understand their thinking and then judge their beauty.

All the informants in the experience group defined beauty as encompassing elements of inner and outer beauty, including manners, speech, personality, figure and face. Note stated, "actually everybody is beautiful; it depends on opinion, some say that fair skin is beautiful while others say that black skin is beautiful. If you ask me, I do not want to be beautiful. I love to be cute more than beautiful." Nid said that the word beautiful implies firm, active women with a good shape and beautiful face; she also said that she prefers cute to beautiful. Prae commented that a beautiful woman should have good manners; beauty is not based only on outer appearance as some women are beautiful but do not have a good manner. She stated that for her the manners come first and next comes beauty. Noi stated that beautiful is natural; if someone is beautiful, one wants to approach her. While she gave her attitude toward cosmetic surgery that she won't undergo cosmetic surgery because her daily life was not only on the stage of the beauty contest but her life was an ordinary life. Furthermore, she was afraid of injury and side effects during the procedure and in the long run. Noi prefers that a woman act natural rather than posturing. Nong stated that beauty should be all encompassing; it should not emphasize solely on the face but should include overall appearance and personality.

Most of the informants in the newcomer group stated that beauty should be based on character or manners rather than appearance. They stated that natural beauty, rather than beauty augmented by cosmetic surgery, was more pleasant to view. Ning stated that beauty is tactfulness; one should know the proper time and place to display one's beauty or else one would appear strange or unusual. Neng said that beauty refers to a nice, clean face, good manners, and personality. She stated that she attends to both outer and inner beauty. Ae said that beauty includes good appearance, good personality, intelligence, cleverness, and looking good in all that one does. Jeab reported that beauty includes face and personality. Bee said "every woman is

beautiful but each woman should show her own personality to society. Most importantly, women should care for their bodies.” She also stated that some women may be beautiful, but after talking with them, they do not speak nicely; a beautiful woman should also be skillful in human relationships.

The informants in the newcomer group stated that they did not aspire to be more outstanding than other women. These four contestants made it through the initial pool of 200 contestants and they reported that they were satisfied to be included in the 76 contestants who took part in the pageant. This was far beyond what they envisioned they could do.

#### **4.5 Preparation of the pageant procedure before the contest**

In this year, some rules and recruitment procedures were changed. For example, the contestants would not take part in a swimsuit competition on the stage but still had to wear a swimsuit in front of all committees in the interview portion during the Miss Thailand camp. Thus, the committees could see their body shape and proportion more easily and clearly as it was a part of scoring. The Thai cultural belief is that Thai women should not expose their body in the public or in front of other people. Swimsuits are improper for Thai traditional culture. Thai women should dress politely in the public. In contrast, in Thai society currently there are many fashions which seem to be sexy and expose women’s body parts, such as mini skirt, tide shirt with a single line, and no sleeves and neck shirt. So the Miss Thailand contest in the year 2000 was the first initiative among beauty contests that banned wearing swimsuits in front of the public and mass media. The Miss Thailand pageant adopted procedure which emphasizes less on the body of women and focuses on culture and performance. The major aim of the Miss Thailand contest 2000 was to send Miss Thailand as a culture and tourism ambassador to other countries. Competing in the Miss Universe contest which was the former practice is not a major purpose of this year. The duty of Miss Thailand is to give information about Thai culture, arts and tourist destinations to other countries.

One informant in the veteran group, those who had participated in more than five pageants, Num, who had competed in many beauty pageants, stated that the Miss

Thailand recruitment procedure aimed to select a woman who has a high degree such as a doctoral degree of education, ability, and the perfect family status. She stated that this contest was not at all for selecting a beautiful woman. Num also mentioned that as beauty contests were her career, it was unfair for her to have no right to win because she had no chance for high education and to be born in a high family status. She had never won first prize in a national competition such as Miss Thailand and Miss Thailand Universe pageant and she stated that beauty pageants are not contests judging beauty but have more to do with education and family status.

The contestant in the experience group, Note, who advanced to the semifinal round, as well as two other contestants in this group, reported that they were not satisfied with the results of the pageant. They felt that that organizers had already chosen the winner who was going to receive the reward of Miss Thailand. Many informants in the other groups also reported that they were not satisfied with the results. They felt that the results were pre-determined and they did not agree with the winner's behavior towards her fellow contestants. They reported that she had unacceptably assertive behavior when compared with others, she did not have a good relationship with other contestants, she had too much confidence, and her manner of speaking seemed as if she did not care about other people's feelings. Note reported that she became angry and had considered quitting the pageant because she felt the process was unfair. She reported that the winner had cheated by placing pins in her shoes and placing the blame on other contestants.

All four of the contestants in the newcomer group reported that they felt the pageant was unfair and that the results were pre-determined. They stated that many other contestants were more beautiful but did not advance to the semi-final round. Two of these informants reported that they received training on posture, walking, and Thai traditional greetings during the pageant which had become part of their manner subsequent to the pageant. One of the four contestants reported that she was participating in other beauty pageants while three stated they would not participate in any more pageants.

Most of the informants reported that they were not satisfied with the contest process and results. They perceived that the results were based on politics; this may indicate that they felt the contest was not a real test of their beauty and ability. They

felt they played a minor role in the beauty competition and their presence merely completed the appearance of a actual competition. Meanwhile, there were some informants (Nui, Nan, and Prae) who perceived that the judges selected the right person to receive the Miss Thailand reward because she was perfect for the duty of the culture and tourism ambassador. On the other hand, Bee who won the post of Miss Thailand, said it depended upon personal thinking but she knew why she received this post. Bee said she replied with good and clear answers which differed from others in the 20 persons round and 10 persons round. Bee mentioned that her score was totally unanimous from the committees.

#### 4.6 Attitude toward cosmetic surgery among the informants

According to the interview, all of the informants mentioned that more than 60% of the contestants had undergone cosmetic surgery, or some said that nearly everybody had undergone cosmetic surgery this year; either double eyelid or high bridge nose and nose reduction, to correct their perceived deficient appearance. Table 4.6.1 shows the previous history of cosmetic surgery in each group.

**Table 4.6.1: Beauty Contest Participants according to Previous Experience in Beauty Contests and Previous History of Cosmetic Surgery**

Participation in Beauty Pageants	Previous history of cosmetic surgery	No previous history of cosmetic surgery
Veteran group	4	1
Experienced group	2	3
Newcomer group	0	5

In terms of cosmetic surgery procedures, among the veteran group, those contestants who have participated in more than five pageants, four out of five informants had undergone cosmetic surgery procedures, including nasal surgery,

double eyelid, breast augmentation, fat injection, and dental elongation. Among the experience group, two of five contestants had previously had nasal surgery.

However, types of cosmetic surgery are varied by their previous experience. Table 4.6.2 shows the types of cosmetic surgery that the informants had done before entering the contest.

**Table 4.6.2: Types of cosmetic surgery that the informants had performed.**

<u>Cosmetic history</u>	Veteran Group (4)	Experienced Group (2)	Newcomer Group (-)	Total (6)
<i>Nose job (nasal surgery)</i>	4	2	-	6
- High nose bridge	4	1	-	5
- Nose reduction	1	1	-	2
<i>Double Eyelid</i>	2	-	-	2
<i>Breast augmentation</i>	2	-	-	2
<i>Fat injection</i>	2	-	-	2
<i>Dental elongation</i>	1	-	-	1
<i>Do nothing</i>	(1)	(3)	(5)	(9)

There were many factors related to cosmetic surgery within the veteran group, those informants who had participated in over five beauty pageants. The four informants in this group who had undergone cosmetic surgery had all had surgery on their noses because all of them perceived that their noses were flat and not high enough. Two informants had surgery to create a double eyelid because they desired to make their eyes larger and have a more distinct eyelid. One of these contestants stated that she had cosmetic surgery on her eyelids because her eye sockets were too large such that her eyes became small and sunken when she smiled and that cosmetic (make-up) could not correct this problem. This same contestant also reported that her nose became too flat when she smiled so she had cosmetic surgery to create a higher

nose-bridge. This contestant reported that she was not satisfied with her body shape. She felt that her waist and hips lacked definition and curvature, but she was satisfied with her breast size. This contestant was pleased with the results of cosmetic surgery and reported that she now uses only a small amount of cosmetics (Peng).

Another informant, Num, who had surgery on her eyelids, reported that she had the surgery because the beauty contest rules forbid the use of clear tape to augment the eyes. She felt that her eyes were too small so she had taped her eyelids during a previous pageant. Two informants in this group reported that they had breast augmentation (Nui and Num). Both of them stated that their breasts size was not big enough and that their breasts were too flat for wearing the traditional Thai dress; one of these contestants mentioned that the rules of the beauty contest forbid the use of padding to augment breasts (Num). Another informant, Wong, mentioned that she wanted to have breast augmentation because she perceived that her breasts were too small and flat, but she feared the operation would make her breasts too large or that the surgery would be painful.

One informant in this group, Peng, reported that she had a dental elongation procedure because she had been grinding her teeth since she was young which made her teeth shorter. Peng's 'godmother' took her to the oral surgeon and paid for the procedure.

Two of the informants in the veteran group had participated in a training camp for pageant contestants; their training 'god-mother' advised these informants to have cosmetic surgery, instructed the participants on posture, smiling, and methods of gaining more points in the interview portion of the pageant. Furthermore, 'god-mothers' asked them to watch the previous beauty pageant contests in order to view their seniors who had experience on the stage (Num and Peng).

From the experienced group two of three informants had nasal surgery; Note created a high nose bridge while Nid had a nose reduction. One of these contestants who had nose surgery reported that her face was flat, which gave her nose the appearance of being too flat. She reported that she had surgery on her nose when she was 15 in order to participate in the Miss Teen pageant; she was the runner-up in this contest. She was satisfied with the results of the surgery, which made her nose appear more sharp and photogenic. She reported that the results of the surgery made her feel

better in terms of body appearance and confidence level. This contestant mentioned that although she had small breasts, she would not have surgery because her mother would not allow her and she feared harmful effects. She also mentioned that she perceived herself to be fat and so attempted to control her weight through medication. Due to lack of success in losing weight with medication and her mother's expressed concern regarding the safety of the medication, she changed her strategy to exercise and control of food intake. This informant reported that she had received many compliments from family and friends about her pretty face and she was chosen to be a drum major every year during her schooling. She stated that these compliments made her feel confident in her personality and appearance. Her perception was that she was not beautiful, but cute. This informant reported that beauty pageants were contingent upon many factors, including education, responsibility, fate, and beauty (Nid).

The other informant (Note) who had cosmetic surgery explained that she was a model and a photographer as well as her friends told her that her weak point was her nose, which was too big. She then did nose reduction to make it smaller. The one contestant in this group (Prae) who had no previous history of cosmetic surgery reported a negative attitude toward cosmetic surgery because she feared harmful side-effects and her mother would not allow her to have cosmetic surgery. Her perception was that her face was very small, thin, and bony, but that her body was fat. She reported that dieting controlled her body weight but her face then became too small. She received a post which was determined by audience vote, and she reported that she felt satisfied by the result of the pageant.

None of the informants in the newcomer group had previous experience with cosmetic surgery. Two of them (Ae and Bee) reported that they had an orthodontic procedure which was for a medical reason rather than a cosmetic reason. These informants did not perceive themselves to be beautiful, but only normal or good-looking. Both Ae and Bee reported that they were satisfied with their appearance so it was not necessary to alter their appearance. The informants in this group reported that they did not pay attention to their appearance because they felt they had many other areas of life on which to concentrate aside from their physical appearance, such as study and work. Ae also stated that the reason why she did not perform cosmetic surgery because there was the risk for her as she is getting older that it might have an

effect on her body. She said that those women who have undergone cosmetic surgery would have to perform another surgery later. Three of the four informants in this group (Jeab, Neng, and Ae) stated that they had to gain weight in order to participate in the pageant; they were not concerned with dieting during the beauty camp.

Jeab stated that during the Miss Thailand beauty camp, she ate more than usual. Similarly, Neng felt that she was too thin to wear the traditional Thai dress so she desired to gain more weight in order to have a plump figure. Ae reported that she was not concerned about the results of the pageant, reaching the 76 person round was enough to satisfy her; this was her reason for eating a large amount. On the other hand one informant in this group (Bee) stated that she did control her diet during the Miss Thailand beauty camp because she was so fat. Otherwise she might not be able to wear the contest dress, which was already prepared. They reported that this day they dressed according to the styles that they liked rather than copying fashionable styles. One of them who made the final list had to wear dresses chosen by the organizers but she said that she put her idea and requirement that in every dress the material should be made from silk (Bee). Bee used to consider cosmetic surgery but she stated that her thinking now was that she will not be on the stage or in the entertainment industry in the future, so it was not necessary to have cosmetic surgery.

The researcher asked about their perception of the differences between women who had undergone cosmetic surgery and those who did not perform cosmetic surgery. Some of them said that those who had undergone cosmetic surgery did not appear naturally beautiful and noticeable. Even though they paid a good deal of money and the cost of doctor fee was high, they can not have natural beautiful. Most of them desired to achieve a result which is as natural as possible.

Other informants said that if the result of the cosmetic surgery was good, it would be acceptable. If it was too exaggerated, they would not accept it. On the other hand, Bee and Ning stated that they agreed with the one who had undergone cosmetic surgery for increasing their confidence, particularly concerning body appearance.

#### 4.7 Beauty regimen and preparation for the contest

The veteran group, contestants who had participated in more than five beauty contests, reported many behaviors related to beauty regimen and contest preparation, including skincare, cosmetic surgery, and pageant training. Most of them reported that they had prepared for the beauty pageant by treating their skin with milk, herbs, mineral water, clay rich in aluminous mixed with lemon juice, AHA (Alpha Hydroxy Acid) treatment, and electrical stimulation. They also reported that they dieted and exercised. Two informants (Num and Peng) reported that they had received an injection in their arms to increase the appearance of muscle mass.

Three of the contestants in this group (Num, Wong, and Peng) reported that they began participating in beauty contests during their adolescent years. These three informants also reported that they had used cosmetics since senior high school; they began using cosmetics because they were participating in beauty pageants. Two of the women in this group (Peng, Wong) mentioned a connection between self-image and cosmetic usage; they felt that their image of their own personality and their appearance was contingent upon the use of cosmetics.

Four of the informants in the experience group, Note, Nid, Prae, and Nong, had a history of controlling their weight through medication. They reported that this strategy did not work so they changed their strategy to exercise and dieting. Another informant, Noi, reported that she began using make-up when she was twelve years old by following the example of grown women in her family. Noi reported that before entering the Miss Thailand pageant, she treated her skin with a mix of moisturizers to lighten the hair on her body. All five informants in this group reported that they tried to eat more vegetables and fruits. Note stated that she did not feel it was necessary to prepare for the pageant but that her mother had prepared her by giving her a skin mask and skin scrub treatment.

In the newcomer group of informants, four of the informants reported that they did not feel they had to apply cosmetics since the pageant was completed. One of these informants (Ae) lightly applied cosmetics and stated that she was simply using the free cosmetics she had received during the pageant. Another one (Jeab) mentioned

that she put on cosmetics to help her gain more confidence. Four of the informants in this group stated that they did not think it was necessary to have cosmetic surgery, while Neng had wanted cosmetic surgery for her eyelids because she felt her eyes were not balanced. Ning had also wanted surgery to create a high nose-bridge but her mother and personal trainer would not allow her to have cosmetic surgery because they said that her nose was totally perfect. However she was not satisfied with her nose. She felt that her face was too round and wanted to make her nose sharper. This informant had AHA skin treatment after the pageant so that she would not have to apply cosmetics. Although Bee entered the Miss Thailand because her mother forced and begged her and she reported that she did not pay much attention to her beauty, she had her own regimen using tamarind extracted, honey, and fresh milk mixed together and applied to her body for skin treatment. However, she would not control her weight by dieting because she said she needed much energy for her brain according to her job as she has to create and think a great deal as a lecturer. Bee chose exercise and took more fruit, vegetables, and drank a large amount of water rather than dieting.

#### **4.8 Contest results of the informants**

Two of the five informants in the veteran group, those who have participated in more than five pageants, advanced beyond the contest performance round containing 76 contestants from the four regions of Thailand but they ultimately failed to win the Miss Thailand contest. One of these women then advanced beyond the second to last round of twenty participants to participate in the last round of 10 contestants.

In the experienced group, those informants who have participated in less than five pageants, two of the five informants advanced beyond the round of 76 contestants to participate in the second to last round of 20 participants. One of these women then advanced to the last round of 10 participants and she received a Miss Popular post. Another women in the experienced group also received a Miss Popular post. Overall four Miss Popular prizes were given, one for each region, and the winners were chosen according to audience and internet vote from the pool of 76 contestants. In the newcomer group, one of five informants advanced beyond the round of 76 contestants.

She then advanced through all the final rounds to achieve the final post of Miss Thailand.

In conclusion, however from the observation of the researcher and according to the calculations of the Body Mass Index (BMI), the mean score of all informants was 18.1 which falls in the state of underweight. However, they perceived that they were fat. They attended a great deal to their appearance. In terms of their facial appearance, some of them perceived that they have a big nose or flat nose, so they had cosmetic surgery which made them feel better about their appearance and created a good self perception. Although some of the contestants felt that they had a problem with their appearance, they did not want to have cosmetic surgery because they feared harmful side effects or their families did not permit them to have cosmetic surgery. However in the future when they are older some of them reported that they may need cosmetic surgery. On the other hand, some informants had cosmetic surgery because those around them, mother, friends, colleagues, 'godmothers', or trainers, suggested that they should have surgery.

Some of the informants in the newcomer group, who have no history of cosmetic surgery, are satisfied with their appearance. None of the informants in the newcomer group have experience with beauty contests, and they did not compare themselves with other contestants as the informants in the veteran group and the experienced group did. Those who had pageant experience compared their appearance with other contestants, which may have led them to conduct cosmetic surgery. In contrast, only one of the contestants in the newcomer group planned to do cosmetic surgery in the future when she reaches an old age. The rest of the informants in this group reported that they did not attend to cosmetic surgery because they are satisfied with their appearance and body shape; it can be stated that they have a positive body image. Another one informant in the newcomer group who reported that she wanted to have cosmetic surgery after participating in the pageant said that she had compared herself to the other contestants during the pageant.

Some of the informants in the experienced group and the newcomer group explained that they did not undergo cosmetic surgery because their normal life did not take place on the stage. They felt that altering their appearance was not necessary;



they had enough confidence and satisfaction with their appearance. To be flawless women was important among some of the contestants who perceived that they were not beautiful enough and who decided to go to perform cosmetic surgery.

This study examined the general characteristics of the Miss Thailand contest and of the contestants, including their motivation for entering the contest, body image and beauty perception previous to the contest, preparations for the contest, attitudes toward cosmetic surgery, beauty regimen, and perception during the contest. In addition, it is important to explore the process of change in the informants' body image as a result of their Miss Thailand experience. This process of change was examined retrospectively by asking questions of the informants about their body perception and attitudes towards cosmetic surgery targeting the periods before, during, and after the Miss Thailand contest, the results of which are presented in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **BODY IMAGE AND PROCESSES OF CHANGING**

This study examined the ideas regarding body image and cosmetic surgery among the Miss Thailand beauty pageant contestants. This study aims to demonstrate how the beauty contest process influences decisions regarding cosmetic surgery among the contestants. Thus, this study will clarify the understanding of Thai female beauty pageant contestants' body image, or how they perceive themselves and their bodies. In order to present the processes of changing of body image among the informants, this study will be divided into three periods, which are pre- Miss Thailand contest, during the Miss Thailand contest, and post- Miss Thailand contest. Furthermore, the factors which influenced the contestants' body image will be explored.

#### **5.1 Body image before the Miss Thailand contest**

##### **5.1.1 Perception about body appearance and figure before the contest**

The perception of body and figure appearance among the contestants was mixed between negative and positive body image in each group according to the point in time. The time before the contest in all three groups was very important because it includes many factors that influence body image, such as the family members' teaching, school activities, peers, and mass media. Table 5.1.1 shows the situation of body image and beauty perception of each group.

**Table 5.1.1 The situation of body image and beauty perception of each group before entering the Miss Thailand contest**

Group / Period	Before
<b>Veteran Group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Negative body image</li> <li>- the role of the beauty camp and personal trainer ('god- mother')</li> <li>- 4 informants undergone cosmetic surgery (nose job, breast augmentation, double eyelid, and upper arms fat injection)</li> <li>- experiences in beauty pageant contest (economic reason)</li> </ul>
<b>Experienced group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Family members / school activities / peers played role in body image among the informants in this group</li> <li>- Personal trainer played role in body image among the informants in this group (Nid, and Nong)</li> <li>- Occupation / job influenced decision making to undergo cosmetic surgery (Note)</li> <li>- 2 persons undergone cosmetic surgery (Nid, and Note)</li> <li>- +,- body image mixed feeling (fat, small breast, ugly, beautiful)</li> <li>- Future expectation that would like to enter in the entertainment sector. (Noi, Nong)</li> </ul>
<b>Newcomer group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Family members / School / Peers played role in body image among the informants in this group</li> <li>- -, + body image mixed feeling (beautiful, ugly, and cute)</li> <li>- No history of cosmetic surgery</li> <li>- Not pay much attention to beauty</li> </ul>

**In the veteran group,** Num perceived that when she was young she had a big, flat nose, and large body because she was an athlete during high school. Additionally, she felt that she was too tall, with no hips, small arms, and small eyes. This was her perception of her body when she lived up-country, before she moved to live with the 'godmother' in Bangkok.

Nui said when she was a teenager, she perceived that she did not have a good figure; she felt that her breast were flat and her nose was flat. She never thought that she was beautiful, but just an ordinary woman since she was never chosen for special activities, such as carrying the banner in the school parade. After Nui left up-country and moved to Bangkok for studying, she met her personal trainer who took her to have plastic surgery to create a nose bridge in order to prepare for beauty contests. Following this surgery, she felt more beautiful than before.

Another informant in the veteran group, Nan, felt that previous to entering Miss Thailand, she perceived that she had Chinese eyes and a big jaw. She had considered having cosmetic surgery but did not proceed with surgery because of her belief in the fifth element, whereby she could not reduce her jaw.

Peng perceived that following surgery for double eyelid, high nose bridge, upper arm fat injection, and teeth elongation she felt a high degree of confidence. Peng stated that she has had large breasts since she was 15 years old and she felt satisfied with her breast size when she compared her size to the other contestants. When asked her body perception when she was young, Peng reported that she did attend much to beauty. She became interested in beauty when she began entering contests and observed the behavior of other contestants. Peng reported that after entering her 'godmother's' camp, she began to apply cosmetics. She stated that when she smiles, her nose disappears, so her 'godmother' took her to have surgery to create a high nose bridge. Peng recalled that although many people told her she was beautiful when she was young, she was not interested in her appearance.

Wong, when asked her self-perception when she was young, stated that she did not feel she was more outstanding than other friends. However, she did many activities in high school, and she had an opportunity to dress in traditional Thai costume, which she appreciated. She stated that she wanted to continue dressing in traditional Thai style. Wong reported that these activities gave her the opportunity to

enter the beauty contest, and the fact that she won the first contest which she entered boosted her confidence. Wong stated that she began entering contests when she was 16 so she began to apply cosmetics at this time in order to build up her personality and make her more beautiful. She stated that entering beauty contests at an early age was the factor that influenced her to attend to her appearance and take care of her body. At the time she began entering contests, Wong wanted to make her nose higher but her mother did not permit her to have cosmetic surgery. She felt that she had small breasts and asked her mother's permission to have an augmentation but her mother did not allow this either. Finally, Wong had cosmetic surgery to create a double eyelid because her mother gave her the money for the surgery and the surgeon, who was a friend of her mother, encouraged her to have the surgery.

**In the experienced group,** Note, before entering the contest, felt that she was really fat and she reduced her weight by attending a beauty camp where she used medication. Furthermore, seeing the other competitors at the camp motivated her to reduce her weight. Note is a model and many people, including photographers, told her she had a big nose, which created a problem with her work and decreased her confidence, so she decided to have cosmetic surgery to reduce her nose size. She felt satisfied with her height. Note reported that many people encouraged her to compete in the Miss Thailand contest.

Nid stated that the previous to entering the contest, she took medicine to reduce her weight and exercised, but she stated that she was not successful because after she stopped this regime, she became fat again. She stated that she was cute, with good manners, polite, and had small breasts. During high school, she was a drum major as she was tall for her age.

Prae reported that before she attended the contest, she did not feel that her figure was in proportion. She never applied cosmetics. She reported that she had taken diet medication but it did not work.

Noi stated that when she was young, she was a cheerleader each year of primary and high school, but she did not have confidence. She stated that she had a social phobia, which made her dislike walking in front of crowds; she stated that she had to walk together with her friends. Noi reported that she enjoyed watching beauty pageants on television since she was young and she memorized the names of all the

winners. She was impressed with the winners, but she never thought to be a beauty queen herself. Noi reported that she was interested in her appearance since she was young; she liked to watch and imitate her mother comb her hair, dress, and apply cosmetics. She reported that she began to apply cosmetics during the semester break of her junior year. She enjoyed applying cosmetics and applied make-up for her sister also.

Nong reported that before entering beauty contests, she felt that she had no cheeks, big legs, and was slightly fat.

**In the newcomer group**, Ning stated that since her youth, she never perceived that she was more outstanding than other friends. She felt that she was average.

Neng reported that before entering the contest, when she was in high school, she felt that she was fat so she reduced her weight by eating only fruit and vegetables. She stated that she did not consider herself to be beautiful at that time. She reported that she began to apply cosmetics during her second year of university.

Ae reported that before entering the pageant, she did not attend to beauty behavior, but she used to participate in activities in high school, such as cheerleading and carrying the school banner. She said that because of this activity, she felt that she was more outstanding than others.

Jeab stated that she was as pretty as her other friends were.

Bee reported that before entering the contest, she did not feel she was beautiful and did not attend to her appearance. Many people invited her to enter beauty contests when she was 17 years old, but she felt that she was too young and not prepared. During this year, she started applying cosmetics by imitating her mother and friends. During her first year of university, she was chosen as the star of her faculty. However, she did not pay attention to beauty, and her mother asked her to grow her hair and nails long because her character was like a boy. Bee reported that after this, she was a hand model for advertisements. When she was young, she thought that she might need breast augmentation and high nose bridge surgery because she noticed that she was not perfect. She said that she considered having cosmetic surgery before the pageant but she did not have time.

In conclusion, the body image of the informants before entering Miss Thailand showed differences between the three groups. In the veteran group, most of the

informants had a negative body image. The informants in this group were more attentive to appearance, and four out of five had undergone cosmetic surgery and they perceived that they were glamorous women after undergone cosmetic surgery. In terms of the experienced group, the overall picture of body image among the informants in this group is mixed between positive and negative body image. Two informants reported that they had a negative image before cosmetic surgery while their body image shifted to be more positive after surgery, but they still reported that they were too fat. The other informants in this group stated that they were satisfied with their appearance. Among the informants in the newcomer group, some perceived that they had a flat nose and they were too fat and wanted to be thinner. Meanwhile most of the informants in this group were satisfied with their appearance. None of them had undergone cosmetic surgery and they reported that it was not necessary for them.

### **5.1.2 Body alteration and cosmetic surgery**

A study by Boontongluan (1996) found that over 70 % of former Miss Thailand contestants had undergone cosmetic surgery. These findings may confirm that in the beauty queen sphere, cosmetic surgery appears routine among the contestants who participate in beauty contests as their career. The informants in this study reported that more than 60% of the Miss Thailand 2000 contestants had cosmetic surgery which confirms this data. Even though the procedures of Miss Thailand have changed to exclude the swimsuit competition and to remove the sponsorship banners on the contestants' dress, which implies that the contest is emphasizing values other than appearance, a large percentage of the contestants still had cosmetic surgery. Since this is the first year of the new procedures, the old standards, including the precedent of cosmetic surgery, may still be prevalent.

On the other hand, some of the procedures and regulations of the pageant encourage the contestants to undergo cosmetic surgery. These procedures include the prohibition of using tape on the eyelids and the practice of the private interview, during which the women must wear a swimsuit without padding, no makeup, and tie up their hair. In addition, the interview committee does not prohibit cosmetic surgery among the contestants. The informants stated that cosmetic surgery increased their

confidence to meet the interview committee without worrying about the application of makeup.

### **5.1.3 Factors to change body image**

#### **5.1.3.1 Social factor**

Family, school education, and peers can influence the beauty idea and the self-perception of people since their youth. Therefore, if families provide warmth and support to their children since their youth, this can make the children more strong in term of self-perception and self-confidence and lead to positive body image. Family support is important because it not easy for people to overcome the influence of the environment and social standards, such as from mass media and peers, when they are growing up.

#### **5.1.3.2 Economic factor**

From the observation and interview data, many of the informants mentioned money as a motivating factor for participating in beauty contests; they stated that they hoped for the prize more than the post. This is due to the fact that they have to support themselves for cost of living and tuition fee; moreover, they stated that they helped to support their families and did not wish to burden their parents. Those informants who mentioned money were mostly in the veteran groups and the experience group. This may be due to the fact that they were participating in contests as a source of income, and the national level contest distributes a large amount of prize money in each round which influenced their decision to participate in the Miss Thailand pageant. The informants stated that their desire to display a good appearance during the pageant, and subsequently to earn prize money as income, motivated them to undergo cosmetic surgery.

It can be said that participating in beauty pageants is one source of livelihood, which is more appropriate than other means, such as illegal activity, prostitution, or pornography. Furthermore, society accepts participation in beauty pageants, especially at the national level, such as Miss Thailand contest. Additionally, some of the informants participated in the pageant as an opportunity to live at a higher standard, such as staying in luxurious hotels, and to meet influential people. Some of

the informants also mentioned that the Miss Thailand pageant was a means to enter the entertainment industry as a singer, model, star, or announcer, positions in which they could make more money. It is also a common sentiment in Thai society that some beauty pageant contestants use their participation as a means to achieve higher status and income as a call girl.

Another motivation for entering the contest is to attain the pride and glory that accompanies winning a post. Some informants mentioned that cosmetic surgery could assist them in achieving this goal.

#### 5.1.3.3 Mass media factor

Stice's study presented that long-term exposure to ultra-thin magazine models doesn't lead to excessive dieting and body dissatisfaction in adolescent girls unless they already have concerns about their body image. Only adolescents who initially expressed body dissatisfaction experienced significant increases in dieting, depression and bulimic symptoms. Stice speculates that girls who have supportive families and friends may not be as influenced by the media. "Parents, peers and dating partners may play a somewhat more important role than the mass media because feedback from these sources about body size is more personal," Stice says. The girls who experienced negative effects from the magazines initially reported they felt pressure to be thin or lacked social support from their family and friends. Teens with poor body image might be more likely to read fashion magazines because they seek out thin-ideal media messages to learn more about effective weight-control techniques, Stice said (L. Rabasca). In contrast, according to the contestants who were interviewed for this study, the mass media, particularly fashion magazines, contributed to their ideal of thinness. Images in magazines portray women in swimsuits, and the contestants stated that they desired to have a body shape similar to a model's: slim, tall, and with good body proportion. Even this informant had stay with her family and had enough family and peers supported. Also, Halprin (1995) states that little girls are applying makeup in earnest imitation of their mothers, or the star that they see on television. Women's makeup is normally visible, even though the natural look is highly prized.

Two informants stated that they have viewed television programs about beauty pageants since their youth, and these programs were influential to their beauty

behavior. As Halprin (1995) states, the mass media has played a huge role in terms of women's appearance and beauty ideal. For example, from the media, magazines, in movies, and on television, those hypnotic images display a dream world which stands behind us when we gaze into the mirror and hover in critical judgement as we compare ourselves with others. Furthermore, some of the informants reported that they followed the advice of beauty columns regarding beauty regimen, while other informants stated that they did not follow such advice.

A woman is expected by the mainstream culture to be "naturally" beautiful, which means that she has maintained a specific body shape and tone as well as good skin and hair, all criteria that shift according to time and place, but are considered universal in each time and place. The use of the moral terms "good" and "bad" are applied to skin and hair. Furthermore, standards of appearance are used as criteria for hiring in business and in entertainment (Halprin, 1995).

#### 5.1.3.4 'God-mother' and personal training factor

As can be seen from the informants in group one and two, some of them had a 'god-mother' and/or personal trainer who took care of them and prepared and managed all aspects of entering beauty pageants. At each stage, the depth of training differs depending on the importance of each stage of the competition. For example, training for the district level requires little preparation. A 'god-mother' has many years of experience with beauty pageants; she can determine how to adjust and instruct each woman to be a beauty queen. During the training camp with the 'god-mother' the 'god-mother' will instruct the woman to achieve the highest post in the pageant, which is accompanied by a large amount of prize money. The 'god-mother' strategy involves travelling the country to observe beauty contests at the district and provincial level to select a contestant with promise. After choosing a woman, the 'god-mother' will invite her to compete in various beauty contests and, if the woman is from up-country, the 'god-mother' will ask her to stay in the 'god-mother's' house for full-time training. The 'god-mother' and the contestant will come to an agreement that any prize money will be shared 50/50. When the contestant stays with the 'god-mother', she is treated as a cousin and is expected to participate in housework. During the training period, the 'god-mother' will train her in appearance, personality, and style of

walking. In addition, the 'god-mother' will determine which of her contestants should have cosmetic surgery and will take the woman to a surgeon with whom she usually does business. The surgeon will offer a reduced price, and the 'god-mother' will advance the money to pay for the surgery. The informants reported that the 'god-mother' strongly convinced them to conduct cosmetic surgery, rather than first asking the informants if they desired cosmetic surgery.

Another duty of the 'god-mother' is to secure sponsorship support for each stage of the contest. She will bring the contestants to meet sponsors over dinner and she will ask the sponsors to provide money for beauty treatment and other contest preparation. The 'god-mother' also send her contestants to special courses, such as English instruction, singing, dancing, and so on, since the national level pageants require a display of talent.

Another preparation for the contestants targets weight reduction. Many strategies are used, such as medication, dieting, exercise, and sometimes abstaining from food. The 'god-mother' also asks the contestants to have various skin treatments, such as skin scrubs, milk bathes, and mineral treatment. At the national level, especially, the 'god-mother' will instruct the contestant to view the videos of previous contests and list the questions asked in the interview portion.

The 'god-mother' will determine which of the women under her care will attend each pageant. Usually one of the women with previous pageant experience will be chosen to attend the national pageant; according to the qualifications of national level contests, the women who receive a prize or post at the national level cannot participate in other pageants during their period of duty, usually one year. Therefore, the women cannot make more money for the 'god-mother' if they hold a national level post.

Additionally, the 'god-mother' has widespread networks and often has social connections with members of the judges' committee so she may be able to intervene to influence the judges' decision. On the other hand, she may influence the judges at the national level not to choose her contestant because she wants to send the contestant to earn money in other pageants. Therefore, the 'god-mothers' must exercise judgement to choose a contestant who is prepared and likely to achieve a high position for national level contests.

The 'god-mothers' emphasize study during the training period; they feel there is no need for the contestant to quit her schooling. According to the contestants, the 'god-mothers' stated that they did not want the contestants to quit education since this is so important for their future life after they pass the age at which they are eligible to participate in beauty contests. The 'god-mother' assists the contestants to support themselves and their families. Most of the contestants who are living with 'god-mothers' moved from up-country. In contrast, those contestants who live in Bangkok will come to the 'god-mother' house for training for part of the day.

From this data, it can be seen that the 'god-mother' plays an important role in forming the appearance of the contestants. Her views and instructions can influence the body image of the contestants since she has extensive experience with beauty pageants. The 'god-mother' is engaged in a commercial business; her goal is to make money. In addition, the contestants under her care follow her instruction in order to gain sponsorship and possibly win prize money.

In terms of personal trainers, they do not have as much influence on the contestants as 'god-mother's because they do not have a camp. They give suggestions and strategies to the contestants and share the prize money, the proportion of which is decided by agreement between the trainer and the contestant.

## **5.2 Body image during the Miss Thailand contest**

The body image and perception among the contestants during the contest were also mixed in each group and the factors that influenced body image during this time were the social comparison and the activities of the Miss Thailand beauty camp as shown in Table 5.2.

**Table 5.2 The situation of body image and beauty perception of each group during the Miss Thailand contest**

Group / Period	During
<b>Veteran Group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Positive body image</li> <li>- High self confidence and did not compare with others</li> <li>- No need to do cosmetic surgery</li> <li>- Some still not satisfied with themselves</li> </ul>
<b>Experienced group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- High self confidence/ some compare with others</li> <li>- +, - with body appearance (fat, big leg, shorter)</li> <li>- Some perceived that have to look good all the time (Mass media).</li> </ul>
<b>Newcomer group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- +,-with body appearance</li> <li>- High confidence/ some compare with others</li> <li>- began apply cosmetic (make-up)</li> </ul>

**5.2.1 Perception about body appearance during the contest**

**In the veteran group;** Num reported that while competing on the stage during the pageant, she felt she had a healthy body, and she felt that this was suitable for Miss Thailand, since she must wear traditional Thai costumes. Her perception was that her breasts were a perfect size. Nui reported that she compared herself to the other contestants in the pageant and felt dissatisfied with her figure because her shoulders are narrow and hunched. Another informant in veteran group, Nan, reported that she did not compare herself with others during the contest as this would make her lose her confidence. Peng reported that during the contest, she had high confidence. Following surgery for double eyelid, high nose bridge, upper arm fat injection, and

teeth elongation she felt a high degree of confidence. Peng stated that she has had large breasts since she was 15 years old and she felt satisfied with her breast size when she compared her size to the other contestants. Wong stated that during the contest, she observed that many contestants had cosmetic surgery, but this did not encourage Wong to have surgery. She stated that she has high confidence about her body appearance and does not wish to put any foreign substance in her body.

**In the experienced group:** Note reported that during the contest, she felt she had no shape; her figure was straight, without curves while her legs were big and long. Overall, she felt she had a good body proportion. She stated that she naturally had a big body structure and wide shoulders so during the contest she dieted because she perceived that she was a bit fat. Nid stated that during the contest, she attempted to reduce her weight because she felt she was fat. However, she reported that when she compared herself to other contestants, she was thin. Prae stated that during the contest she desired to be thinner. However, when she loses weight, her face becomes too skinny and bony. Prae reported that when she compared herself with other contestants, she felt that many other contestants were more beautiful than herself, but she told herself to have high confidence or she would not reach her goal. Prae reported that the night she received the prize, she had a cosmetic make-over and she felt confident, but the last night, she lost her confidence because she felt the make-up artist did not do a good job.

Noi reported that during the contest, the other contestants noticed that she checked her appearance in the mirror very often. She stated that this was because the media followed every step of the pageant so she had to look good at all times. She said that she did not compare herself with the other contestants because she did not want to lose her confidence.

Nong did not compare herself with the other contestants, and she felt that the experience of participating in the contest was enough for her.

**In the newcomer group,** Ning stated that when she was competing in the pageant, she did not compare herself to others as she felt that there were many beautiful women who were not in the pageant. Neng reported that during the contest, she observed that many contestants had cosmetic surgery and this made her desire to have double eyelid surgery because her eyes were not balanced. In addition, she

wanted to have a high nose. She was afraid of getting fat because then she would not be able to wear the dress which the organizers prepared for her so she dieted during the pageant. She reported that when she compared herself with other contestants, she felt that she was shorter and this made her lose confidence.

Ae said that during the contest, many contestants told her she was very thin and her shape was suitable to be a model, not a beauty queen. Jeab stated that during the contest, she compared herself with others and she felt that many of the contestants looked good. She reported that she noticed that she was not beautiful enough. She felt that she was fat at that time because she had gained 4 kilograms. However, she said that she was proud to be a representative of the Isaan, or Northeastern region, in the pageant, and stated that she was as pretty as the others.

Bee reported that during the contest, she compared herself to others and wondered why there were so many beautiful women in the pageant. She observed the flat abdomens of the other contestants which made her think that she should reduce her weight. When she became one of the ten finalists, she perceived that she was not the most gorgeous, but she had high confidence that she did well during her interview. Bee reported that before entering the contest, she trained in public speaking. She said that she was aware that the effective manner to communicate with others was with a concise message.

One influential aspect of the Miss Thailand contest was the beauty camp, which lasted for 14 days. During this beauty camp there were many activities related to public relations and preparations for the stage performance. The informants reported that they had no time to focus on some aspects of beauty behavior, such as exercise and skin treatment, during this camp. However, they did apply cosmetics in order to look good for the media, which was a constant presence at the activities. In addition, the contestants were being scored by the mass media during this period.

During the contest on the stage, some of the informants reported that they compared themselves with other contestants. However, most of them did not compare themselves because they did not want to lose their confidence. The informants who did report comparing themselves with others appeared to have low self esteem as a result of such comparison; they reported that after comparing, they felt they were too fat or too thin, their breasts were too small or their abdomen was too big. They stated

that after comparing themselves, they began to consider having cosmetic surgery. On the other hand, a few informants who compared themselves with others came to the conclusion that those contestants who had cosmetic surgery did not look natural, their features were too exaggerated. In contrast, those informants who had undergone cosmetic surgery before the contest reported that they had high confidence on the stage and had a positive body image because they felt satisfied with their features, such as their breasts and face, and their body proportions.

### **5.2.2 Factors related to changed body image during the contest**

#### **5.2.2.1 Beauty training camp's activities**

The Miss Thailand beauty camp focused on beauty training, including instruction on manners appropriate to Thai women. Some of the informants reported that they applied this knowledge to their lives after competing in the pageant. Furthermore, some of the informants stated that as a result of this training, they turned to apply cosmetic in order to improve their appearance. Most of the informants who reported this behavior were in the newcomer group, those participating in a pageant for the first time. These women easily integrated the beauty behavior of other contestants into their own lives because of the environment and social standards which emphasized physical appearance. However, informants in the veteran and experience groups, who had previous experience with beauty pageants, were accustomed to such activities and appeared to be less influenced by the training camp.

#### **5.2.2.2 The social comparing**

According to the informants some of them did compare themselves with the other contestants and these made them have low self-esteem as they were not satisfied with themselves and began to think about cosmetic surgery or had perceived themselves in a negative manner. Thus, their body image changed following their perception and their satisfaction.

From the results, the most important factor which influenced body image among the contestant during the contest was the social comparison while beauty camp activities plays the next important role.

### 5.3 Body image after the Miss Thailand contest

#### 5.3.1 Result and perception of the contest among the contestants

In spite of cosmetic surgery or other training, not all the contestant received the same result of the contest. The success rate of the contest is high in the experienced group and lower in the newcomer group. Table 5.3.1 shows the result of the contest.

**Table 5.3.1 The result of the Miss Thailand contest among the informants**

Post / Group	Veteran Group	Experienced Group	Newcomer Group	Total
<i><u>The position of the contestants</u></i>				
- Fail the contest	2	1	4	7
- 20 participants in the second last round	2	1	0	3
- 10 participants in the last round	1	1	0	2
- Won an award or final list	-	2	1	3

According to the results of the Miss Thailand contest, 8 informants could reach the second final round, semifinal round and final round while another 7 informants failed. Most of them who did not receive any prize reported that they were not satisfied with the process of judgement and strategies of the organizers to select and judge Miss Thailand. They perceived that it was already set up. In contrast, for the informants who won a prize and post, they did not mention that the judgement strategies were unfair. Moreover, they were satisfied with the results.

### 5.3.2 Perception of body image after the contest

After the results, some contestant changed their body image while others did not change. Table 5.3.2 briefly depicts the perception of each group after the contest.

*Table 5.3.2 Brief perception of each group after the contest*

Group / Period	After
<b>Veteran Group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Positive body image</li> <li>- Stick on the image of beauty queen</li> <li>- No need for more cosmetic surgery</li> <li>- But blaming the judgement procedure</li> </ul>
<b>Experienced group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- +,- with body appearance</li> <li>- Cosmetic surgery was not important for them</li> <li>- Some continue beauty contest</li> </ul>
<b>Newcomer group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- satisfy with their body appearance/ some not</li> <li>- Apply cosmetics (post)</li> <li>-Wanted to perform cosmetic surgery/ but some did not want to</li> </ul>

The researcher asked about the informants' body perception after the committees had judged who received Miss Thailand and the first and second runner-up, also including other prizes such as Miss Photogenic, Miss Popular Vote and Miss Perfect Manner.

**In the veteran group**, Num perceived that she has a perfect shape and figure, tall, healthy and curvaceous body, following breast augmentation. Nui reported that her body did not have a good proportion, even though she was one of the final ten finalists of the pageant. She felt she needed to improve her figure by decreasing her

abdomen size. Another informant in veteran group, Nan, still felt that she did not have a good body proportion because her abdomen was large. She desired to be taller; she was 168 centimeters but she preferred to be 170 centimeters. Peng perceived that it was not necessary to have a complicated beauty regimen; she applied a small amount of cosmetics. She stated that she still attends parties with her 'godmother' and sponsors; her 'godmother' prepares her dress and instructs her to apply cosmetics. Peng reported that she has to look good all the time. Wong reported that although following the committee's decision, she did not receive any prizes, she did not blame herself or her body appearance. She stated that the procedure for judging was unfair and did not have clear standards. Wong reported that she is satisfied with her appearance and body shape.

**In the experinced group,** Note, who was one of the ten finalists, stated that although she was successful in the pageant, she felt that she had big legs. However, she is satisfied with her waist and hips; she reported that she is also very tall which makes her outstanding from the other contestants. Note's mother encouraged her to look her best all the time since she was one of the finalists, but Note stated that she feels satisfied with her appearance which she feels is good but not outstanding. Nid stated that she wants to become thinner. Additionally, she reported that she has small breast. She stated that she has a small body but a fat face. Her desire is to look good, and not necessarily to be beautiful all the time. Prae reported that her confidence is nearly 100 percent since she received a prize in the Miss Thailand contest. She stated that she projects a good personality so people chose her to won vote prize but she still feels that she is fat. Now she must apply cosmetics every time she goes out since she won a prize and her parents and other friends up-country expect her to look good all the time. Furthermore, she feels that is she meets her friends while she is out, she will feel shy if she is not wearing cosmetics since she already received won a prize in the Miss Thailand contest. Currently she is working in a private company; she is always chosen to be the representative of her company for special occasions. Noi stated that after the contest she is satisfied with her face and body, but she still feels that she is a bit fat when she compares herself with her friends or when she cannot fit into clothes. She reported that most of her clothes are fit and expose her navel so she perceives that she is fat if her abdomen appears too big. Nong stated that she is an ordinary woman

and she never thought that she is beautiful. She perceived that she had big legs. Nong reported that she is satisfied with herself and does not believe that she will ever have cosmetic surgery. She stated that as a human being one should be satisfied with the things our parents gave to us from birth and cosmetic surgery is not the way to make one beautiful forever.

**In the newcomer group,** Ning stated that when she compared herself with others, she felt her body was bigger. However, she reported that she was satisfied with her figure and appearance. Neng reported that after the results of the pageant, she felt that she was very fat because she was preparing to compete in another contest, a Loi-kra-tong festival beauty contest. For this contest, she had to wear a Thai traditional contest which looked better if she appeared to have a health body, so she gained weight in order to prepare for the contest. Neng reported that after participating in Miss Thailand, she pays more attention to her appearance, takes care of herself, and has more confidence because she feels there is no need to compare herself with others. However, she wants to be thinner because she has a round face. She also desires to have a cosmetic surgery on her nose but her mother and her personal trainer will not allow it, and she wishes that she was a bit taller.

Another informant in the newcomer group, Ae, reported that after the contest she began to apply cosmetics; when she participated in Miss Thailand was the first time she applied make-up. She received many cosmetics that she wanted to use. She stated that she was not beautiful but cute, and many people also told her this. She felt that she was fat and wanted to lose weight. Ae reported that when she looked at magazines and saw models, she desired to have the shape of a model.

Jeab stated that she felt she had a round face, and she wanted cosmetic surgery but was afraid of harmful effects. After beginning the Miss Thailand contest, she practiced the behavior which she was taught at the beauty camp. She felt that since she was in Miss Thailand, she must conduct herself like a beauty queen including improving her personality because many people would observe her and notice that she used to be a beauty queen. However, after participating in the pageant, she changed her attitude; she feels that she is an ordinary person.

Bee, who was in the final list, reported that many people said that she should reduce her weight and receive an injection in her chin. However, she did not do this

because she stated that she would not be on the stage at all times. Furthermore, she stated that she would not uphold this status all her life, so she did not perform cosmetic surgery, but she did reduce her weight. She stated that although she controlled her weight, she is not thin because she has to have a firm figure and healthy body suitable to wear a traditional Thai costume. According to her post, she has to wear traditional Thai costumes in the public for promoting Thai culture and as a symbol of a Thai lady. She stated that a woman who wears a traditional Thai costume should have big hips, small waist, and full breasts. Likewise, a Thai poem states that "Thai lady should have waist 36' inches and breast 35' inches. She said that the organizer prepares the dress for her, which made her feel frustrated because the clothing was not her style. Bee reported that she attends more to applying her make-up more neatly than before because she cares about the feeling of Thai people who have high expectations of the beauty of Miss Thailand. She stated that as she received the final list prize she has to be attentive to the views of others and behave in a manner fitting with her post. Bee reported that she adjusted herself a great deal in order to be Miss Thailand. She said that she has many characteristics, which she displays at different times. Bee perceived that she has big thighs, and even though she had reduced her weight, her thighs and upper arms are still big. Bee stated some of the contestants were satisfied by the outcome of the Miss Thailand contest while others were not satisfied. However, she said that she received the post because she replied well during the competition and gained a higher score than the other contestants.

In the period after the results of the Miss Thailand contest were announced until the researcher interviewed the informants, the informants in the veteran group, most of whom had undergone cosmetic surgery prior to Miss Thailand, did not experience shifts in their body image. They still held the same positive body image that they had developed following cosmetic surgery: beautiful body shape, good proportion, suitable curves, and big breasts. Even though none of these informants won a high post in the contest, they had a positive body image. They perceived that the cosmetic surgery they had previously undergone was sufficient; they did not plan to have further surgery. Most of the informants in this group perceived that they must display an impressive appearance because they had participated in a national level beauty contest and planned to continue entering beauty contests. Additionally, they had to meet with

sponsors along with their 'god-mothers' in order to raise support for their participation in beauty contests.

According to the informants in the experience group, their body image was mixed between negative and positive. Prae, one of the two informants in this group who received a post in the contest, perceived that she had to display a beautiful appearance; she felt she had to wear cosmetics and dress in a manner suitable to her post and the work responsibilities of her post. This focus on beauty behavior and appearance was different from her manner before she entered the contest; previously, she did not focus much on her appearance. Prae and the other two informants in this group who had not had cosmetic surgery continued to be satisfied with their appearance, and they perceived that cosmetic surgery was not necessary. The two informants in this group who had undergone cosmetic surgery were generally satisfied with their appearance but perceived that they were slightly fat and had big legs.

Within the newcomer group, there was also a mix between positive and negative body image. One informant who compared herself with other contestants wanted to have cosmetic surgery after attending the Miss Thailand contest; she continued to participate in contests after Miss Thailand pageant. The informants who had a positive body image before the contest continued to have a positive image after the contest. They perceived that they were good looking but not beautiful; they were satisfied with their appearance, and they stated that there was no need to undergo cosmetic surgery. The informant in this group who received the post of Miss Thailand reported that she had to change her appearance according to the organizers who prepared her clothes and applied her cosmetics. She stated that she had to follow the advice of the organizers because her post requires that she present herself in public as a representative of Thai women, which required that she always look beautiful in order to avoid disappointing the people of Thailand. She reported that this was different from her behavior previous to the contest when she was not very attentive to her appearance.

### **5.3.3 Further alteration of body and cosmetic surgery**

Currently, cosmetic surgery appears to be a normal procedure in Thai society at large as can be seen from the abundance of cosmetic surgery clinics around the nation,

especially in cities. In addition, government and private hospitals also have a department of surgery, of which cosmetic surgery is a branch. However, most of the patients in the government hospitals who have undergone cosmetic surgery do so as reconstructive surgery for burns, accidents, or cleft lips. In contrast, the private sector emphasizes aesthetic purposes more than reconstructive purposes. These days, some of the private hospitals target aesthetic sensitivities by presenting pictures of successful surgery results, such as comparing before and after pictures of women who have had surgery. Such presentations are marketing strategies in magazines and newspapers. Furthermore, some private hospitals, such as Yan-hee Hospital, have established beauty contests of their own to convince their clients to undergo cosmetic surgery. These hospitals emphasize cosmetic surgeries by using slogans such as 'beauty under the doctor's hands'. Cosmetic surgery is a good business as there are currently many patients conducting cosmetic surgery in these hospitals.

Now the status of the doctors in the private hospitals and clinics has shifted so that they are providers, or sellers of a product, and the patients are the clients. According to the informants who have had cosmetic surgery, they reported that some contestants undergo cosmetic surgery without first gathering information about the potential positive and negative outcomes of cosmetic surgery. They are not aware of the possible future effects of cosmetic surgery, which includes infection during or after the procedure, unsatisfactory results due to the skill level of the surgeon, limitations on activities after the surgery, or increased vulnerability to injury. In addition, the literature reports that some patients experience infection and fluid build-up, which must be treated or drained. Some clients are not satisfied with the results of the surgery, and subsequently have another surgery, which expends more time, pain, and money. Therefore, cosmetic surgery does not have the sole outcome of beautification, but may also involve pain, injury, and great expense in time and money.

Some informants reported that the 'god-mother' who brought them to have cosmetic surgery had contacts with the surgeons in the clinic. The god-mother takes many contestants to the same surgeon; she is a good customer for the clinic. The god-mothers are aware of which clinic to take the contestants for various procedures; for example, one clinic may be good for high nose bridge surgery whereas another clinic is known for breast augmentation. However, some informants reported that they

searched for information on their own before making a decision regarding the best clinics for certain types of cosmetic surgery; they consulted friends, previous contestants, or searched in beauty magazines. Their first priority is to choose a popular, famous and well known clinic, and their second concern is the price. According to the informants, they were not knowledgeable about the qualifications of the surgeon. In Thailand, surgeons who specialize in cosmetic surgeon must be certified and member of the Plastic Surgery Association of Thailand. Some of the informants who decided to undergo cosmetic surgery reported that they went for a consultation with the surgeon, but the surgeon convinced them to have surgery without explaining the possible negative side effects.

Some informants reported that they have high confidence in modern medical technology and the skill of surgeons, which influenced their decision to undergo cosmetic surgery. According to the researcher's observations and the interview data from the informants, informants who have had cosmetic surgery are likely to have subsequent surgeries without considering any negative effects, but rather focusing exclusively on improving their appearance through surgery.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

#### **6.1 The body image of the informants who participated in Miss Thailand**

The informants in all three groups were mixed between positive and negative body image. The changes in body image over the process of the beauty contest depended on many factors. One influential factor is the self-esteem of the informants; those with high self esteem were not easily induced by the social environment. Those with high self-esteem had their own perceptions of the ideal of beauty and were confident in their own appearance. Therefore, those informants with high self-esteem, even if they had previously participated in beauty contests and were exposed to ideas of beauty from media, peers, and family, remained satisfied with their appearance. On the other hand, the informants with low self-esteem, which was concomitant with low self confidence, were easily influenced by the social environment. For example, the mass media presents the ideal of beauty that creates a social standard of physical beauty. Those informants with low self-esteem were more likely to undergo cosmetic surgery as an alternative means of matching with the social expectations of beauty.

Furthermore, there were informants who previously had a positive body image but whose body image suffered as they compared themselves with other contestants during the beauty contest process. During the beauty camp, specific societal expectations of beauty were prominent and came to dominate the thinking of the contest participants. Moreover, those who received a post in the Miss Thailand contest were influenced by the roles and responsibilities of their posts, which changed their beauty behavior and body perception. Due to the fact that they must present themselves to the public as a representative of Thai women, they felt they must look beautiful for all occasions.

## 6.2 The factors with regard to cosmetic surgery

Almost all the informants in the veteran group had undergone cosmetic surgery because their 'god-mothers' and personal trainers convinced them. These informants used their appearance to earn money by entering beauty contests. Therefore, these informants were influenced by economic factors. Another influential factor was the standards of beauty contests, which upheld the ideal of gorgeous beauty queens. Furthermore, after undergoing cosmetic surgery, these informants perceived that their confidence increased and they reported more satisfaction with their body image.

Two informants in the experience group were induced towards cosmetic surgery. One informant was influenced by her career as a model and the comments she received from her colleagues regarding her appearance. She reported that comments about her nose influenced her decision to undergo cosmetic surgery, while another informant had undergone cosmetic surgery under pressure from her sponsor for a previous beauty contest. This informant bowed to pressure from her sponsor, whereas if she had higher self-esteem and a strong standpoint, she would not have followed the suggestion of her sponsor. Her reason for undergoing cosmetic surgery was to improve her appearance and gain more self confidence.

In the newcomer group, none of the informants had undergone cosmetic surgery. Only one informant reported that after attending Miss Thailand, she would like to undergo cosmetic surgery; this influence was a result of comparing herself with other contestants. There were different ideas among the informants in this group regarding cosmetic surgery. Those who agreed with cosmetic surgery cited the reason that cosmetic surgery could improve appearance and increase self confidence if the result was not too exaggerated. However, others perceived that cosmetic surgery was not necessary for their life; one should be satisfied with what one has been given from birth. They did not desire to be glamorous in appearance, rather natural beauty was sufficient for them. From the group which has negative body image trend to undergo

cosmetic surgery rather than the person who has positive body image did not undergo with cosmetic surgery.

### **6.3 The relationship between body image and cosmetic surgery**

As can be seen from the informants in the veteran group who had a negative body image and body perception which led them to have cosmetic surgery, there were a number of factors impacting their decision to undergo cosmetic surgery. One factor was their negative body image and perception while the other factors included pressure from 'god-mothers' and economic motivations. Their major aim in undergoing cosmetic surgery was to improve their appearance and body image. They perceived that cosmetic surgery assisted them in gaining more confidence. Therefore, it can be concluded that cosmetic surgery played an important role in improving self perception and self-esteem.

### **6.4 The processes of changing in body image**

From the results of the interviews with the informants and observations during the interview, the researcher concluded that some of the informants in the veteran group, the experienced group, and the newcomer group, which includes both women who have had previous experience with beauty pageants and those who have no experience, overall, were not satisfied with their shape and figure. They perceived that they are fat and do not have a good body proportion. As Halprin (1995) reported, many women experience their own bodies as a disguise for the body itself. However, the informants who had cosmetic surgery, which is all four informants in the veteran group, are satisfied with the results of the surgery. They feel more confident and brave to compete on the stage and in society. Some of them still reported that they feel fat when they compare themselves with others or they perceived that their abdomen is a bit large.

However, during the contest, the contestants must train in a beauty camp to learn about manners, walking, eating, setting their hair, and cosmetics. All of these activities increased the informants' attendance to their appearance because they desired to gain a post and money in the pageant. During this time, the constant attention of the mass media, which promoted the contestants in the newspaper and television, created pressure for the informants to present themselves as beautiful women during the two weeks of the camp.

The process of the beauty camp impacted their thinking even after the conclusion of the pageant. One example is the contestant who never applied cosmetics before the pageant but followed a habit of wearing cosmetics after the pageant. An important formative experience was the competition on the stage when the informants had to walk in front of the judges and audience. The informants reported telling themselves to have high confidence which would lead them to success, but at the same time, some of them engaged in comparison with others which made them lose their confidence. When they compared themselves with others, they felt they needed to improve some aspect of themselves. This process led to the decision to have cosmetic surgery in some cases. However, for those who were satisfied with their appearance and had a positive body image, they would not easily conform themselves to the environment of the pageant.

The body image of the contestants following the conclusion of the pageant when the judges announced the winners until the present time differed from case to case; regardless of whether they received a prize, some informants felt the need to adjust their appearance to the image of a beauty queen by presenting their best appearance at all times. Other informants who did not receive a prize reflected on the reasons why they did not win, which led to a negative evaluation of aspects of their body. According to the interviews, the majority of informants stated that they could predict the outcome of the pageant before the judges announced the decision; they attributed the outcome of the pageant to the pageant procedure and so the outcome did not affect their body image. For those informants who received a post, they reported that they must behave in a manner which is suitable to the post, even if this behavior is not natural for them.

The one of the informant in the experienced group, who did not have cosmetic surgery, but received the post, reported that she felt she had to maintain her status and look good every time. She went out by using cosmetics; she reported that her parents told her she should look nice because she had received a prize. This informant also stated that her work in a marketing position for a broadcasting station, which put her into contact with many people, required that she maintain a good appearance. As Halprin (1995) reported that the deprivation of power that goes along with treating a woman as an ornament may evoke reaction deep in a woman's body. This research shows the relationship between entering the Miss Thailand contest, the competition process and cosmetic surgery, which played a big role in self- image among the beauty queens.

## **6.5 Recommendations**

### **6.5.1 Beauty contests in Thailand**

Thai society accepts beauty contests; there are many viewers of contests, both in the audience at the performance and as the audience watching the televised broadcasts. Since Miss Thailand is such an influential and popular pageant, it should emphasize not only beauty, but also the intelligence, knowledge, and ability of Thai women. The appearance of Miss Thailand should be natural; the committee might consider selecting a winner who presents a natural appearance rather than a woman who has had cosmetic surgery. If the winner has had cosmetic surgery, this will influence other women in Thailand to consider altering their appearance in such a manner.

Some of the qualifications of the contest may be altered; for example, contest organizers should consider whether a Miss Thailand who has had cosmetic surgery would be consistent with the goals of representing the roles of Thai women. Additionally, promotions for the contest should not emphasize the prize money, the business aspect, but rather should focus on the purpose of the contest to choose a cultural representative for Thailand.

### **6.5.2 Cosmetic Surgery**

There are many cosmetic surgery clinics and departments both in government and private institutions. Counsel and advice should be neutral at such clinics such that the patients are informed of both the positive and negative aspects of cosmetic surgery. The surgeons, as physicians, should display morality in their work by giving information and counsel which is in the best interest of the patient, rather than attempting to simply sell their services. Additionally, cosmetic surgery should be performed primarily for re-constructive purposes rather than aesthetic purposes. Some advertisements exaggerate the results of cosmetic surgery by portraying an unrealistically positive result. Clinics and hospitals, which practice cosmetic surgery, should convey the truth through advertising. Furthermore, the government should regulate the advertising to ensure that it is neutral.

### **6.5.3 Mass Media**

The manner of presenting women in mass media, such as newspapers, magazines, and television, encourages people to focus on physical appearance. The influence of the media creates the ideal of physical beauty as the most socially desirable standard for women. In contrast, the mass media might consider emphasizing qualities in a more balanced manner. This could encompass a wide range of qualities, such as intelligence, work ability, and compassion.

In general, there are problems with consumer rights in Thailand. Since cosmetic surgery presents possible health hazards, a concerted effort should be made to thoroughly educate the public about cosmetic surgery. Physicians, educators, and concerned citizens should form a group to act as a watchdog agency to monitor the messages of the mass media concerning women, health, and beauty and to protect consumers from misleading messages, such as exaggerated advertisements for cosmetic surgery. Additionally, beauty contests, which are televised, should highlight intelligence, talent, and knowledge rather than physical beauty.

### **6.5.4 Counseling services for women**

The public needs to be educated about some of the benefits that counseling services can provide, especially in the case of women. Counseling services for women

should be more widely available throughout Thailand. Such services could be offered through hospitals, schools, and hotlines to assist women with various problems of living, including concerns about body image and self esteem. Counselors who provide such services should be sensitized to the role that the mass media and society plays in promoting physical appearance. They should be trained to address such issues as eating disorders and dissatisfaction with body image, and they should have knowledge about the advantages and disadvantages of cosmetic surgery in order to advise women who are considering cosmetic surgery. Group activities and seminars could also be offered to adolescents and women to focus on the development of skills, abilities, and values, rather than physical beauty.

### **6.5.5 Recommendation for further study**

1. Further research should utilize methodology which includes more than only in-depth interview. Future studies should utilize a scale to measure body image or other scoring items to collect both qualitative and quantitative data in order to gain a more clear result in terms of body image.

2. The sample groups for further study should include both contestants and average women who have never attended a beauty pageant before in order to compare the ideal of beauty and self-perception in terms of body image, that is how the average women perceive themselves compared to how the beauty queens perceive themselves. It may be the same or different between the groups.

3. Moreover, further study should cover a larger sample in order to gain an expanded range of individual differences in body image, for example, among Thai adolescents or among Thais in the entertainment industry.

4. The process of study should begin during the contestants' application to Miss Thailand and follow the contestants over the course of the training camp and pageant in order to examine the process of change in body image and self perception as related to cosmetic surgery.

5. Further study should examine the power of 'god-mothers' related to body image of the beauty contestant and the societal feeling toward 'god-mothers' as a big business and commercial training.

6. Further study should utilize body image among the previous Miss Thailands to determine whether the post of Miss Thailand has an influence on their life style in terms of body perception and body appearance.

In general, it appears that the informants who had participated in more than five contests were very concerned with their beauty regimen. In addition, four of the five informants in this group had cosmetic surgery, while two of the three informants in the experience group who had participated in no more than five contests had previous experience with cosmetic surgery. Most of the informants who had cosmetic surgery reported that their aim was winning a prize in the beauty contest. The emphasis placed on the concept of beauty as linked with physical appearance was reported more often in the group of informants who had participated in over five contests. Two of the informants reported that they had a 'god-mother' to train them for the contest; both of these informants had cosmetic surgery and both of them reported that they now have a positive body image and high confidence with their appearances because of the cosmetic surgery.

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**APPENDIX A**

Questionnaire No.....

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SCREENING**

1. What is the reason to enter Miss Thailand contest?
2. How do you feel about the result after the committees had judge?
3. Do you still wanting to enter in other beauty contests in the future?  
Yes .....  
No .....
4. Have you ever taken any beauty camp group or do you have personal beauty trainer before entering Miss Thailand contest?  
Yes ..... (If yes how was your preparation?) .....  
No .....
5. Have you ever undergone with cosmetic surgery?  
Yes ..... (If yes what part of body you did cosmetic surgery?).....  
No .....
6. When you did cosmetic surgery do you think that it can helps you to win?  
Yes .....  
No .....
7. Did or did not do cosmetic surgery do you think it has an affect to the result of the contest? .....
8. Do you want to modify or adjust your body part by cosmetic surgery?  
Yes ..... (If yes what part of your body) .....  
No .....

## APPENDIX B

### IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDELINE

#### 1. Identification

Date of interview .....

Time of interview start ..... Time of interview end .....

Represent from (province and region) .....

#### 2. Background information

Age (completed years) ..... Years

Highest education achieved .....

Occupation (before enter contest) .....

Occupation (currently) .....

Income (baht /month) .....

Supporter (living cost expense)-- self-support / parent, kin or others.....

Who is the main provider of your household .....

Number of family members .....

#### Body-Self in-depth interview guidelines( during contesting)

- Body size – chest, waist, hip

*Before* .....

*During* .....

*After* .....

- How do you think that you have appropriate proportional figure in terms of physical appearance?

*Before* .....

*During* .....

*After* .....

- What kind of physical activities do you engage in, to improve your body shape?

*Before* .....

*During* .....

*After* .....

- What kind of activities do you do to increase your physical strength?

*Before* .....

*During* .....

*After* .....

- How do you like the way you look yourself in the mirror?

*Before* .....

*During* .....

*After* .....

-Do you think that your body is sexually appealing?

*Before* .....

*During* .....

*After* .....

- How important is it that you should look good always?

*Before* .....

*During* .....

*After* .....

- How do you feel about your appearance in a mirror?

*Before* .....

*During* .....

*After* .....

- How are you deliberately developed a healthy lifestyle?

*Before* .....

*During* .....

*After* .....

- When you stood together with many contestants how do you feel about your physical appearances?

*Before* .....

*During* .....

*After* .....

- How much confidence do you have about your body appearance?

*Before* .....

*During* .....

*After* .....

***Preparation before contest (actual)***

How did you prepare before attending Miss Thailand contest?

Do you have sponsor?

Who influence you for entering this Miss Thailand contest?

Did you live in any beauty camp before you attended this contest?

Who is the owner of this camp?

How they train you to get a beauty queen?

What are the activities involved?

What was the process of Miss Thailand camp before beginning of the contest?

***Perception and attitude toward cosmetic surgery***

- (When you attended Miss Thailand) Have you ever thought of doing cosmetic surgery?
- When you met with other contestants how was your confidence in terms of your body appearance? And did you want to do cosmetic surgery?
- What do you think about the people who undergo with cosmetic surgery?
- How do you think about the contestants undergo cosmetic surgery before entering contest?
- How is the result of cosmetic surgery? (In general)

- What is your opinion about this sentence “cosmetic surgery can create your physical appearance that you want to be”?
- If you have a chance to do cosmetic surgery for free of charge do you want to do it?
- What part of your body that you want to do cosmetic surgery first?
- How do you think in terms of beauty with women who performed and did not perform cosmetic surgery?
- Before you went to undergo with cosmetic surgery did you find out the information about it? How?
- What is the first and second concerning when you make your decision to undergo with cosmetic surgery?
- Who play a big role to influence on your decision making to perform or not perform cosmetic surgery to you?

### **Body image**

- When talks about beautiful lady who do you think about?
- How is she beautiful in your view?
- What is beautiful means in your opinion?
- What do you think about your body appearance?  
*Before* .....  
*During* .....  
*After* .....
- How different of your body picture following time?  
*Before* .....  
*During* .....  
*After* .....
- When do you begin to concern yourself in order to make you beautiful?
- How are you doing when you want to be beauty?
- When did you begin to apply make-up and use the cosmetic?
- How you dressed when you have to go to night party? Do you satisfy with your appearance when you dressed like this? Why?

- When you was young does anyone told you that you are beauty or cute? Who and How?
- When you was young have you ever attended in any beauty activities such as cheer leader, Drum major and so on?
- How did you feel after you had attended in this kind of activities?
- If some one told you that you are not beautiful how do you think?
- How do you think that you have to had good appearance or good looking all the time.
- Do you think that cosmetic is necessary for you?



## BIOGRAPHY



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