

THE PERCEPTION OF IDEAL BODY SHAPE IN KOREAN
SOCIETY

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การวิจัยครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาปรากฏการณ์เกี่ยวกับรูปร่างในอุดมคติของชาวเกาหลีใต้ในปัจจุบัน อันได้แก่ รูปร่างในอุดมคติของชาวเกาหลีใต้ทั้งเพศชายและหญิง และความหมายของรูปร่างในอุดมคติ งานวิจัยนี้ประกอบด้วยสองส่วน ส่วนแรกเป็นการศึกษาเพื่อระบุรูปร่างในอุดมคติของชาวเกาหลีใต้โดยใช้ การวิจัยเชิงปริมาณ นำเอาข้อมูลที่ได้จากแบบสอบถาม KGSS (Korea General Social Survey) ซึ่งทำการจัดเก็บใน พ.ศ. 2550 โดยมหาวิทยาลัย Sungkyunkwan และทำการวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลโดยใช้โปรแกรมสำเร็จรูป SPSS ส่วนที่สองของงานวิจัยเป็นการศึกษาการรับรู้ของชาวเกาหลีใต้เกี่ยวกับรูปร่างในอุดมคติ รวมถึงแง่มุม ความเห็นต่างๆ ที่ทำให้ชาวเกาหลีใต้มองรูปร่างในอุดมคติว่าเป็นส่วนหนึ่งที่ทำให้พวกเขาเหล่านั้นประสบความสำเร็จในชีวิต ในส่วนนี้นักวิจัยได้เลือกใช้การวิเคราะห์เอกสารต่างๆ ที่เกี่ยวข้องกับความเห็นที่มีต่อรูปร่างในอุดมคติของชาวเกาหลีใต้ โดยนักวิจัยได้เดินทางไปยังประเทศเกาหลีใต้และใช้วิธีการสังเกตในการเก็บข้อมูล เพื่อที่จะสามารถทำความเข้าใจจากแง่มุมของชาวเกาหลีใต้ได้ดีขึ้น

จากการวิจัยพบว่าชาวเกาหลีใต้ทั้งเพศชายและเพศหญิงในแต่ละกลุ่มอายุ ระดับการศึกษา ถิ่นที่อยู่ รวมทั้งระดับรายได้ ต่างมีความต้องการไปในทางเดียวกันที่จะลดน้ำหนัก ร่างกายของตนเอง ในปัจจุบันรูปร่างในอุดมคติของชาวเกาหลีใต้เป็นรูปร่างที่ผอม เพียว ซึ่งเปลี่ยนไปจากความชื่นชอบเดิมของสังคมชาวเกาหลีในอดีตที่ชื่นชอบรูปร่างท้วม ของทั้งเพศชายและเพศหญิง นอกจากนี้ ชาวเกาหลีใต้ในปัจจุบันยังมีความเห็นว่าการมีรูปร่างในอุดมคตินั้น เป็นปัจจัยหนึ่งที่จะสามารถช่วยให้พวกเขาประสบความสำเร็จในเป้าหมายตามที่พวกเขาตั้งใจเอาไว้ได้นอกเหนือไปจากการประสบความสำเร็จทางการศึกษา และความสามารถในการทำงาน

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The purpose of this research is to explain the situation about the ideal body shape along with the perception towards the ideal body shape of South Koreans in contemporary society. The research was composed of two sections. The first part was the quantitative research by using the data of KGSS (Korea General Social Survey) collected in 2007 by Sungkyunkwan University. SPSS program was used as data analysis tool for this part of study. The second part was the qualitative research. The researcher went to South Korea and collected the data by using observation method. For the analysis, the researcher reviewed the researches, related articles, and advertisements from South Korean online newspapers web logs, and the observation which described the perception about the ideal body shape in South Korean thoughts in order to understand the ideal body shape situation through South Korean eyes.

The research results found that the majority of South Koreans desire to lose their weights regardless of sex and age. South Korean preferred the slim body shape to the plump body shape, the former ideal body shape in Korean traditional society. Also, South Koreans both male and female have the idea that the ideal body shape can be one of the key success factors in achieving their goals besides the educational attainment and work ability.

Field of Study : Korean Studies

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1. Background and Rationale

At the present time, it is an undeniable fact that the influence of the United States causes an astonishing effect in various aspects in every country in the world. New trends originated from one country travel the globe within hours even minutes through globalization; a process by which regional economies, societies, and cultures have become integrated through a globe-spanning network of communication and trade¹. Likewise, South Korea, which has internationalized itself in recent years is also influenced by Western countries, especially by the United States.

At the beginning, in order to promote South Korea's good image and modernisation it followed a pattern as in other developed countries. The phenomena of Korea's modernization can be divided in to three aspects as follows:

1. Politics: South Korea pursued democratization which is deemed the fundamental component of the modernizing process after it had been in the shadow of military governments for over 20 years.

2. Economic: South Korea has industrialized itself by, firstly, supporting light industries (textile, garments etc.) along with encouraging the export sector. Later, it decided to develop chemical, electronics and automobile industries.

¹ Wikimedia, **Globalization** [Online], 6 May 2010. Available from: <http://www.en.iwkipedia.org/wiki/Globalization>

3. Culture: Korea was formally an agrarian society. Since the Korean War and the division of the country into North and South the country has embraced industrialization and western values. The influence of the United States has been massive. The way of life, Confucianism, and the feeling of collectivism that has long existed has become unstable by degrees since the condition of country changed. Due to the formative years of South Korea which adopted the American style, South Korean culture has undergone many changes including individualism and fashion trends.

Even though the issue about the consequence of the Korean War also the traditional collectivism idea, and the pride of being ethnically pure that still exists in South Korea and intensified the feeling of nationalism in South Korean minds. It cannot be denied that South Koreans have to face the new world phenomenon; globalization, they could not stand alone if they want to develop themselves to be more progressive and able to compete with other countries. Such condition led South Korea to push all efforts in every aspect of the country especially economic. As a result, the younger South Korean generations and especially people living in the capital city, Seoul, or other metropolis where the economy is highly developed in the American style (capitalism and materialism) become more and more Americanized. They think and live their lives more like Americans.

The modernization of South Korea has brought about changes in politics, economics and culture of the country, particularly, the way of thinking among South Koreans, which are now more towards individualism. South Koreans think and concern themselves about their living increasingly compared to the past. In South Korean contemporary society, there are so many new trends that cannot be described

by the prior mindset of Koreans. Such trends in one part accessed through the mass media from the United States to South Korea. One trend reflecting the change of South Korean traditional thought was that the ideal body shape changed from plump body shape to the American ideal slim body shape.

In the United States, the ideal body shapes of males and females are reversed. In male view the desirable body shape is a muscular V-shaped figure whereas the female desirable shape is thin and slim. This preference turned on a role model made by Americans, especially females, eager to reach that standard in order to gain self-confidence and be accepted by others. One factor promoting the trend is mass media. Since the majority of printing media and television choose female models that has a thin and slim shape as the primary image in almost every commercial. By repeating the ideal body shape to the viewers, the slim body shape was set as a standard body shape in American society.

The American female ideal body shape (1800s - present)

In the Victorian Era: the plump, fleshy and full-figured body shape was considered attractive. The female waist was made artificially tiny by corsets accentuating the hips and buttocks.

- In early 1900s: the hour-glass look was considered to be a good body shape
- By 1920: the thin flapper (bound breasts to achieve a washboard) look was preferred. The body fat was perceived to contribute to inefficiency and seen as a sign of self-indulgence.

- In 1950s: a thin woman with large bust line was considered most attractive. Marilyn Monroe set a new standard for women who now needed to rebuild curves they previously tried to bind and restrain.
- During 1960s: slenderness was the most important indicator for physical attractiveness.
- Between 1970 and 1990: an overall increase emphasis on weight loss and body shape in the content of popular women's magazines. There was a shift to using thinner, less curvaceous model in photo shoots.
- The 1980: beauty ideal remain slim but required a more tone and fit look. Women could no longer just diet into correct size; the new pressure was to add exercise to achieve the toned look. Around 1970-1980s, the thinner and taller look with no visible body fat was preferred.
- In 1990s: the ideal body shape was very slim with large breasts.
- By 2000s: the average model was 5 feet 8inch – 5 feet 11 inch tall below 120 pounds².

About twenty-five years ago, the average of female model weight was 8 percent less than of the average American woman³. Currently, the average female model weight is 23 percent lower than average weight; calculated by using the BMI (Body Mass Index) method The first calculation is using pounds and inches for weight

² The Site. **Body Image Timeline** [Online], 21 August 2010. Available from: <http://www.thesite.org.health-handwellbeing/wellbeing/bodyimageandselfesteem/bodyimagetimeline>

³ Student Nutrition (& Body Image) Action Committee. **Body Image** [Online], 6 May 2010. Available from: http://www.snac.ucla.edu/pages/Body_Image/Body_Image.htm

and height: $BMI = [\text{weight} / (\text{height} \times \text{height})] \times 703$, the second formula is using kilograms and meters: $BMI = \text{weight} / (\text{height} \times \text{height})^4$. In case if the result comes out lower than 18.5 = underweight, 18.5-24.9 = normal weight, 25-29.9 = overweight, over 30 = obesity⁵. According to this ideal body shape, only about 5 percent of American women have the ultra-long and thin bodied-type that is deemed ideal in the media but numerous women still aspire to that slim body shape⁶. As a result, they chose extreme diet programs which leads to the emerging of eating disorders such as anorexia bulimia. The reverse trends are seen with men. The average Playgirl centerfold man has shed about 12 lbs. of fat, while putting on approximately 27 lb. of muscle over the past 25 years⁷. Even though there is emerging an anti-slim body shape trend at present, the use of slim models is still normally found in advertisements and fashion show events.

The changes of the body shape trend in South Korea was not only from the American influence. There are other sources which must be considered as contributing to altering ideal body shape trends in South Korea. Internal factors such as government policies, the economic situation and new cultural trends also play a great role in the perception of South Koreans towards the ideal body shape.

The catalyst which started the ideal body shape change in South Korea was the falling of the military government. Under civilian governments since President Kim

⁴ About.com. **BMI Formula** [Online], 24 June 2010. Available from: http://www.pediatrics.about.com/od/bmi/a/06_bmi_formular.htm

⁵ U.S. Department of Health & Human Service. **Calculate Your Body Mass Index** [Online], 24 June 2010. Available from: <http://www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi/>

⁶ Student Nutrition (& Body Image) Action Committee. **Body Image** [Online], 6 May 2010. Available from: http://www.snac.ucla.edu/pages/Body_Image/Body_Image.htm

⁷ Ibid.

Young Sam (after 1988), the mass media in South Korea was more liberalized. It is able to operate more freely compared to the past. The message (ideal body trend) of America could come to South Koreans through various kinds of commercials (especially via the commercials of the diet industry; relating to a food regimen designed to promote weight loss).

In addition, the South Korean economic situation at present, compared to the past, has improved dramatically. Thanks to efforts led by President Park Chung Hee (since 1960s) who tried to industrialize South Korea by imposing many related policies (boosting exportation for example) which afterwards turned South Korea into a new member of industrialized nations. That led to the increase of employment rate of the country since both males and females were pushed into labor market

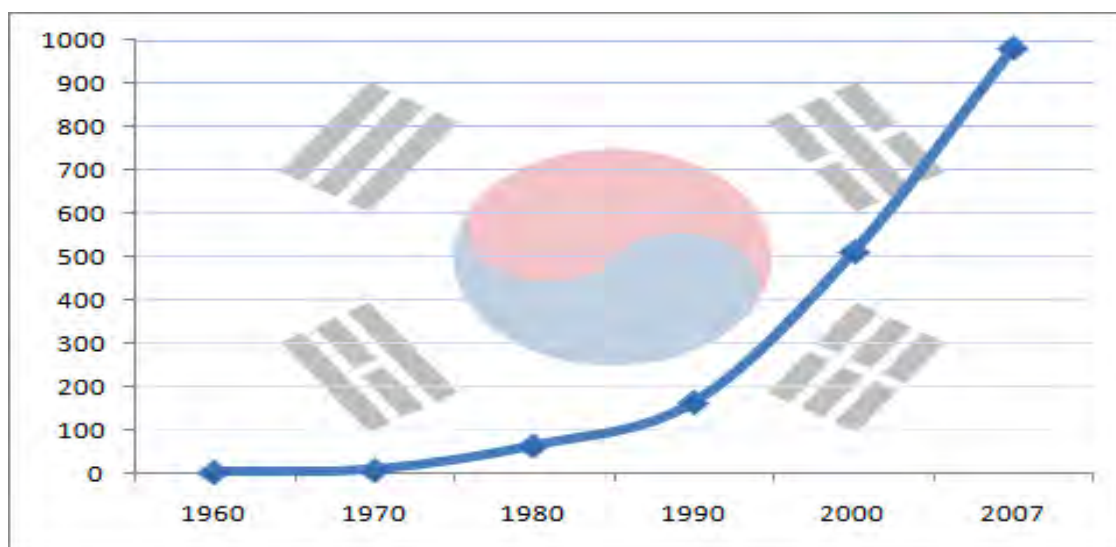


Figure 1: South Korea's GDP growth from 1960-2007 in billion US dollars⁸

⁸ Lakshmish. **South Korea's GDP growth from 1960 to 2007** [Online], 13 May 2010. Available from: [http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:South_Korea's_GDP_\(nominal\)_growth_from_1960_to_2007.png](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:South_Korea's_GDP_(nominal)_growth_from_1960_to_2007.png)

The fundamental reformation of the country (in political and economic spheres) is in the same pattern as the United States. It prepared South Korea to adopt the social trends from the United States. South Korean people have learned the American ideal body shape mostly via media (especially from models, movie stars and etc.) and assumed the slim body shape (or skinny body shape for female models in some cases) was the proper body shape in Americans' eyes. To achieve the modern look in all aspects, South Korean people have to follow such belief.

From the traditional Korean perception, the body shape of woman should be plump to show that the woman is healthy and able to reproduce; the most important duty of woman for society. As for men to look plump means the man is wealthy and from elite/wealthy class. Today, such belief has been changed.

Moreover, when considering inside South Korean society, there is also the emergence of an interesting trend that has an effect on all South Koreans regardless of age or sex. It can be recognized as the "Lookism trend". Lookism in South Korea is described as:

Look '과 'ism'이 합성된 조어로 외모가 개인간의 우열과 성패를 가름한다고 믿어 외모에 지나치게 집착하는 것으로, 외모를 한 사람의 인생이 성공하는 데 있어 주된 기준으로 간주하는 사회를 비판하는 의미를 담고 있다⁹. Which means appearance has a significant meaning to define one's success or failure. Having a good appearance is promising to have a good life and prospects.

⁹Daum.루키즘[Online], 4 July 2010. Available from: <http://www.enc.daum.net/dic100/contents.do?query1=17xxxx2309>

The influence of this Lookism trend grew stronger during the time. South Koreans accepted the trend and, at the same time, adapted it and intensified it to be more powerful. Lookism in South Korea is similar to the American trend in the aspect of concerning a slim body shape as the ideal. However concern about the beauty of face is relatively higher. Namely, lookism in South Korea is the trend that gives priority to one's outward appearance (beauty of face along with body shape) instead of intelligence and personality.

In South Korea there is the *Jjang* (the best) syndrome, which involves online voting by netizens – those in online communities and upload photos, which often lead to a “gateway towards stardom”. Various types of *jjangs*, such as 얼짱 (Ul-jjang; person who has best face) 몸짱 (Mom-jjang; person who has best body), have become “catchphrases in society, entertainment business and other areas” in contemporary Korea¹⁰.

The idea of having a perfect face, expressed by singers, actors and actresses, is to have a small V-shape, round-big eyes and high nose that reflect a sense of Caucasian style. The attractive body shape of females is a slim, S-line with a long slender leg. The attractive body shape for South Korean males mostly has to be in a good-firm shape of abdominal muscles (six pack abs) with a lean figure. This ideal body shape mostly reflects the body of teenage singers as well as actors and actresses, who achieve the ideal appearance by help from professional trainers and stylists.

¹⁰ Choi, J, “Living in Cyworld: Contextualizing Cy-ties in South Korea,” *Uses of Blogs* (2006): 175.

Due to such models, believed to have a good life and success in career, it makes many South Koreans, particularly adolescents, believe that achieving a good body shape (slim body shape with S-line) and good-looking face (small V-shape, round-big eyes and high nose) can lead them to success in their lives. They can obtain a good career and fair income, have a good quality of life, and possibly meet a proper partner in the same or upper class¹¹. Especially among urbanites living in the city that has high competition, this idea tends to be even more dominant. At present, South Koreans of all ages are concerned with their looks and will go to almost any length; punishing fitness regimes, taking dieting pills and plastic surgery, to ensure they are slim and attractive¹².

Consequently, it helped develop trends supporting the idea of achieving goals which are diets and cosmetic surgery. Nowadays, the word diet (다이어트) can be seen in almost every South Korean website as a pop-up advertisement or appearing on web search engines.

According to a survey by the National Statistical Office, showed South Korean men in their 20s skipped meals on an average of 3.81 times a month. Women in their 30s went hungry 2.6 times a month and men in their 30s 2.51 times a month. The

¹¹ Amber, Kim, **Lookism in Korea** [Online], 22 September 2010. Available from: <http://www.worldyannnews.com/news/articleView.html?idxno=59>

¹² The Chosun Ilbo, **A Country Obsessed with Looks** [Online], 6 May 2010. Available from: http://www.english.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2006/01/10/2006011061015.html

survey of 1,639 households nationwide on rice consumption and diet shows that female teenagers skip meals 2.21 times, more often than their male counterparts¹³.

Furthermore, South Korea, thanks to the survey by OECD, is the country that uses slimming pills and appetite suppressants ranks near the top place in the world despite an obesity rate of 3.5 percent, only a quarter of the OECD's average 14.6 percent. Production and import of the obesity drug (Sibutramine) rose 11 times from W4.4 billion in 2003 to W49 billion in 2008 (US\$1= W1, 140). The market of psychotropic appetite suppressants, categorized as narcotics by the International Narcotics Control Board, also grew four-fold.

It is a paradox that one of the countries in the world with the slimmest population consumes the largest amount of diet drugs. Furthermore, in a survey of 1,000 South Koreans aged 15 to 59 by Consumers Korea, 86 percent had gone or were on a diet in 2008, while 13 percent said that they resorted to diet pills. Even among people who have average weight also take diet pills while doctors prescribe them recklessly¹⁴. In case this situation continues, the possibility of facing the increasing numbers health crisis (eating disorders etc.) and also mental health problems (beauty and dieting addicted) are waiting particularly for South Korean adolescents and it will not be a desirable circumstance in a country with the intensively developing economy such as South Korea.

¹³ The Chosun Ilbo, **More Young Women Go Hungry to Lose Weight** [Online], 6 May 2010. Available from: http://www.english.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2006/01/10/2006011061015.html

¹⁴ The Chosun Ilbo, **Korea Overdose on Diet Pills** [Online], 6 May 2010. Available from: http://www.english.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2010/03/27/2010032700362.html

The South Korean government also plays a significant role in the dietary habits of its people which could cause a negative effect on the perception of ideal body shape of South Koreans. Recently, the government has waged a war against fat by announcing the policy that prohibits commercials of any fast-food that contained high-calories from broadcasting between 5.00 - 7.00 p.m. in order to halt the trend leading towards obesity particularly among South Korean children¹⁵.

In addition, the government also passed a labeling law allowing South Koreans to know ingredients and able to calculate the nutrition value (calories, fat, carbohydrate, protein etc.) to avoid over consumption. Moreover, the government also made many conscious efforts to maintain their traditional diet by mounting mass-media campaigns urging people to choose traditional food in support of the farmers, training thousands of extension workers to use traditional food and cooking methods, and, lastly, implementing programs to encourage the development of Korean style fast foods rather than American types¹⁶.

As a result of the government's draconian measures, the negative image of being fat has been created. On the other hand, it indirectly sends a message to South Koreans to stay in a proper (20-25kg, calculated by using BMI formula) or thin shape (<20kg, calculated by using BMI formula). Thus, the government's action could be counted as one of the contributing factors encouraging South Koreans to be slim or make them think in a positive way to the slim body shape.

¹⁵ Dpa, Ians, **South Korea Bans Junk-Food Commercials** [Online], 24 May 2010. Available from: <http://www.blog.taragana.com/health/2010/01/19/south-korea-bans-junk-food-commercials-18452/>

¹⁶ WellnessOptions Publishing Inc., **The Rich Get Fatter, and Sweeter** [Online], May 24, 2010. Available from: http://www.wellnessoptions.ca/html/1/016/1_i16_2_main.html

For the cosmetic surgery industry, South Koreans choose this method to improve their looks especially for the face. South Koreans also consider this method as one of the solutions to fix body shape, such as increasing the size of their breasts, removal of fat from parts of body called “liposuction” besides using diet pills and exercise. Even though the number of people choosing this liposuction method and breast surgery is less than other types of cosmetic surgery, liposuction is ranked fourth according to the survey of Chosun Ilbo¹⁷. On account of the data mentioned, we can assume the trend in ideal body shape of South Koreans differs from the Korean traditional belief.

Up until present, there are many studies dealing with body shape but focusing only on female body shapes. Also, the reason supporting such notion is the result of the patriarchal dominance. Females, living in a society which gives the priority to males, have to reach the standard of ideal body shape set by males. Still, it cannot describe the situation took place in South Korea sufficiently due to the fact that outward appearance concerning phenomenon appeared in South Korean contemporary society regardless of sex and age ranges.

To understand the ideal body shape situation in South Korea, we have to be able to identify the ideal body shape of South Koreans both males and females by all age ranges, incomes and location. At the same time, able to define the significant meaning of the ideal body shape among South Koreans under circumstances which

¹⁷ The Chosun Ilbo, **Plastic Surgery All the Rage among College Students** [Online], 24 May 2010. Available from: http://www.english.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2009/09/08/2009090800228.html

ideal body shapes influenced externally (slim body shape trend) and inside the country (mainly focus on lookism trend along with related factors e.g. South Korean economic condition, government's dietary policies etc.). Moreover, if we understand the ideal body shape situation in South Korea, we will know what will be a problem is or what can be a problem in the future due to this outward appearance concerning phenomenon so we can prevent or solve the problem in time.

2. Research Question(s)

Research will emphasize:

2.1 Identifying ideal body shape of South Korean people at the present time which is externally and internally influenced by American slim body trend and Lookism trend in South Korea respectively.

2.2 Finding the significant meaning of the ideal body shape in South Koreans' perception.

3. Research Objective(s)

3.1 To identify the ideal body shape of South Koreans in contemporary society under the influences of:

- American slim trend affects the ideal shape of South Korean people (External factor).

- The Lookism trend as well as other supported internal factor(s) leads to the changing of ideal shape of South Korean people (Internal factor).

By relating the sex, age group, living place, education level, and income variables to the perception towards weight preference and the ideal body shape for describing the current trend of ideal body shape in South Korean culture.

3.2 To find the significant meaning of ideal body shape in South Koreans' perception.

4. Research Hypothesis(s)

4.1 Male and female South Koreans both desire to lose weight.

4.2 South Koreans, living in a big city, have more desire to lose weight than South Koreans who live in other areas.

4.3 The different perception towards ideal body shape of South Koreans related to age range.

4.4 The ideal body shape of South Korean male is a slim body shape.

4.5 The ideal body shape of South Korean female is a slim body shape.

5. Conceptual Framework

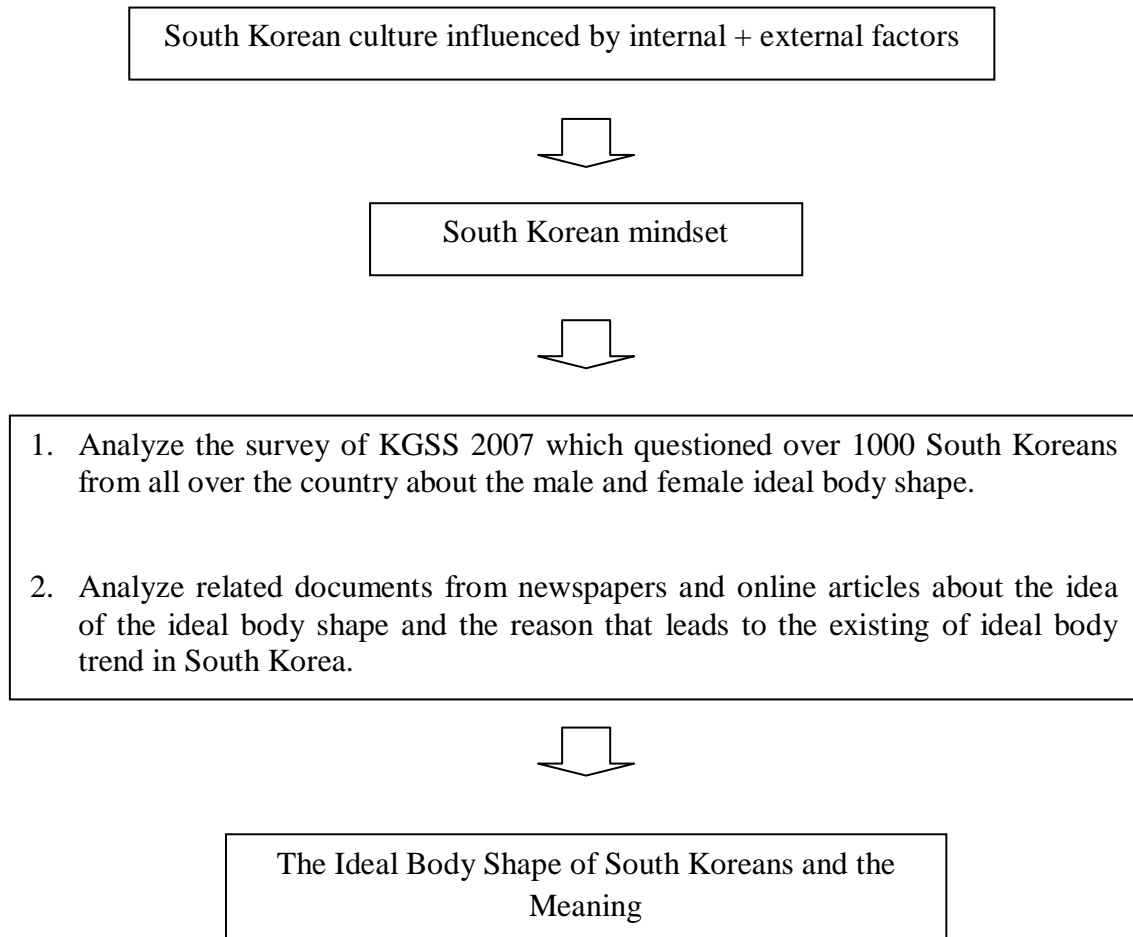


Figure 2: Conceptual framework

6. Research Significance

To be able to reflect the ideal body shape of present day South Koreans under the influence of external factors (widespread of American slim trends) and internal factors (especially the lookism trend) in South Korean society. To be able to identify the significant meaning of ideal body shape in South Koreans' perception for describing the obsession of South Koreans towards lookism more clearly. To make

South Korean people realized the current situation in South Korea that started to concern about outward appearance over the inner value of people. Finally, the researcher wishes this study to be used as a model or guideline for future research in other countries.

7. Operational Definition(s)

1. **Perception:** the process of attaining awareness or understanding of sensory information.

2. **Lookism:** the prejudice or discrimination on the grounds of appearance¹⁸. Lookism relates to preconceived notions of beauty and cultural stereotyping based on appearance as well as gender roles and expectations.

3. **Ideal body shape:** The value of body shape, associated with health and prosperity, differs in relation to a society's degree of industrialization. The ideal body type for both sexes is one that is predominantly lean mass. In contemporary society, for females, the ideal body shape is the "ectomorphic" body shape and for male the ideal is "muscular mesomorphy"¹⁹.

4. **Americanization:** the term used outside the United States to describe the influence of that country on the popular culture, technology, business practices, political techniques or language, of other countries²⁰.

¹⁸ Oxford dictionary, **Lookism** [Online], 4 May 2010. Available from: http://www.askoxford.com/concise_oed/lookism?vie-w=uk

¹⁹ Parizkova, Jana, Childhood Obesity: Prevention and Treatment (Florida: CRCC Press, 2000). Page185.

²⁰ Wikimedia, **Americanization** [Online], 9 June 2010. Available from: <http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Americanization>

5. Modernization: a model of an evolutionary transition from a 'pre-modern' or 'traditional' to a 'modern' society²¹.

6. Attractive body shape of South Korean females: a thin and slim²² body shape, S-line²³ with a long slender leg²⁴.

7. Attractive body shape of South Korean males: a good-firm shape of abdominal muscles (six pack abs) with lean figure, according to the poll of “Korean Entertainment top 20 best body stars”²⁵.

8. S-line: a body shape, which among South Koreans, used to describe a woman with a slim²⁶, ample breasts and buttocks when viewed from the side²⁷.

²¹ Wikimedia, **Modernization** [Online], 9 June 2010. Available from: <http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modernization>

²² Garcia, Cathy Rose A., **X-line: New Obsession for Young Women** [Online], 10 June 2010. Available from: http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/biz/2010/05/123_66605.html

²³ The Grand Narrative, **Korean Women Are Not Alphabets** [Online], 10 June 2010. Available from: <http://www.thegrandnarrative.com/2009/05/08/korean-women-are-not-alphabets/>

²⁴ Allkpop, **Best S-line Body among Female Celebrities?** [Online], 10 June 2010. Available from: http://www.allkpop.com/2009/08/best_s-line_body_among_celebrities

²⁵ Sookyeong, **Korean Best body Goes to Who?** [Online], 10 June 2010. Available from: <http://www.sookyeong.wordpress.com/2008/12/07/korean-entertainment-best-body-goes-to-who/>

²⁶ My Korean Diet, **S-line** [Online], 9 June 2010. Available from: <http://www.mykoreandiet.com/exercise-paradise/perfect-s-line.html>

²⁷ Asian Plastic Surgery Guide, **S-line** [Online], 9 June 2010. Available from: <http://www.asianplastic-surgeryguide.com/everything-else/svbodylines.html>

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The study “The Perception of Ideal Body Shape in South Korean Society” was conducted to develop concepts and ideas by reviewing various literatures on the relevant subject. There are two parts as follows:

2.1 Concepts and Theories

2.2 Related Research

2.1 Concepts and Theories

The related theory and concept used as a guideline to analyze information and data collected for this research are as follows:

2.1.1 Cultural Diffusion

2.1.2 Objectification Theory

2.1.3 Self-Objectification

2.1.1 Concept of Cultural Diffusion

Cultural diffusion is used in cultural anthropology and cultural geography to describe the spread of cultural items such as ideas, styles, religions, technologies,

languages etc. between individuals, whether within a single culture or from one culture to another¹. Cultural diffusion can be divided into three categories as follows:

- Direct Diffusion is when two countries are very close to each other, resulting in intermarriage, trade and even warfare.

- Forced Diffusion occurs when one culture subjugates another culture and forces its own customs on the conquered people.

- Indirect Diffusion emerges when traits are passed from one culture to another through a middle man, without the first and final cultures ever being in direct contact.

The indirect diffusion is very common in today's world. It is because of mass media and the invention of the internet. Indirect diffusion as well as direct diffusion can be applied to describe the coming of American fashion and body shape trends to South Korea. Since, at first, South Korea received assistance from the United States after the Korean War. At that time, South Korea and the United States became close. The indirect culture diffusion from United States showed up later in the period of mass media and internet developing especially for fashion or trends. This study, the researcher emphasized the dispersion of the American ideal body shape trend to South Korean culture.

¹ Wikimedia, **Tran-Cultural Diffusion** [Online], 4 November 2010. Available from: http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trans-cultural_diffusion

The American female ideal body shape (1800s - present)

Around the Victorian era the plump, fleshy and full-figured body shape was found attractive, waists were made artificially tiny by corsets accentuating the hips and buttocks. In 1900s-1950s, at the start the hour-glass look was considered to be a good shape, still, afterward slenderness became more fashionable. The preferred height was 5 feet 4inch tall with a weight of 140 pounds. By 1920, the thin flapper (bound breasts to achieve a washboard) was more preferred. Body fat was perceived to contribute to inefficiency and seen as a sign of self-indulgence. In 1950s, a thin woman with large bust line was considered most attractive. Marilyn Monroe set a new standard for women who now needed to rebuild curves they previously tried to bind and restrain. The ideal height in this period was 5 feet 8 inch tall and 132 pounds. In 1960s, slenderness was the most important indicator for physical attractiveness. The ideal model at that time was 5 feet 7inch weighed 98 pounds. Between 1970 and 1990, an overall increase emphasis on weight loss and body shape in the content of a popular women's magazine. There was a shift to using thinner, less curvaceous model in photo shoots. The 1980, beauty ideal remain slim but required a more tone and fit look. Women could no longer just diet into correct size; the new pressure was to add exercise to achieve the toned look. Namely, around 1970-1980s, the thinner and taller look with no visible body fat was preferred (5 feet 8inch and 117 pounds). In 1990s, the ideal body shape was very slim with large breasts (5 feet 10 inch tall and 110

pounds). By 2000s, average model was 5 feet 8inch – 5 feet 11 inch tall below 120 pounds².

The Coming of American Influence (Fashion and Body shape Trend) to South Korea

There is no specific article describing the coming of American fashion (the body shape trend) influence to South Korea. Still, the researcher tried to consider possibly relevant aspects of the topic which are the coming of Barbie dolls, the coming of American motion pictures, magazines, TV advertisements, and other forms of mass media to South Korea.

The Coming of American Barbie doll to South Korea: South Korea was selected to be the manufacturing facility of the Barbie doll from 1973-1978³ to save production costs for Mattel Inc. The Barbie doll models produced in South Korea⁴ were:



Malibu Barbie



Malibu Francie

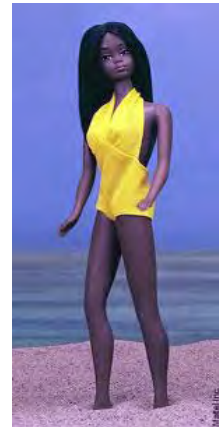
² The Site, **Body Image Timeline** [Online], 21 August 2010. Available from: <http://www.thesite.org/healthlandwellbeing/wellbeing/bodyimageandselfesteem/bodyimagetimeline>

³ Davison, D., **Barbie and Friend Guide** [Online], 28 October 2010. Available from: <http://www.dolls4play.com/barbid.htm>

⁴ Ibid.



Malibu P.J.



Malibu Christie

Figure 3: Barbie dolls model made in South Korea

Barbie was not sold directly in South Korea until the 1980s.⁵ South Korea was added to one of more than 150 countries where Mattel Inc. distributed its toy products.⁶ Owing to this, there was possibility of the American body shapes trend and clothing fashion trends was spread to South Korean especially to South Korean girls.

The Coming of American Fashion to South Korea: South Korea's early modern fashion started around 1950s with the new resources and ideas imported from foreign countries particularly the United States⁷. The bob hairstyle was the first seen in the motion picture from the United States called "Roman Holiday" in 1953, also the wide flare skirts and drainpipe pants. In 1955 a woman's magazine "Yeowon" was the

⁵ NAVER, **The Barbie Store, Seoul** [Online], 28 October 2010. Available from: <http://www.blog.naver.com/koguma88/70001614623>

⁶ The Great Idea Finder, **Invention of the Barbie Doll** [Online], 29 October 2010. Available from: <http://www.ideafinder.com/history/inventions/barbiedoll.htm>

⁷ KOREA.net, **Fashion Sense** [Online], 29 October 2010 Available from: <http://www.korea.net/detail.do?guide=28250>

first magazine to introduce western fashion in its “mode” section⁸. During the 1960s thick eyeliner, fake eyelashes and flared up hairstyles were popular. Men’s leather jackets sold well after the hit movie “The Barefoot Youth” in 1954. “Eui-sang” the fashion magazine was first published in 1968. Around the mid 1980s fashion brands from overseas appeared and local companies together with foreign makers made fashion in South Korean more vibrant⁹. In the late 1990s – early 2000s, an increased number of fashion magazines especially from the United States, for example Reader’s Digest (1978), Vogue (1996), Cosmopolitan (2000), GQ (2001), Vogue Girl (2002), W magazine (2003), and Allure (2003) were published¹⁰ also the introduction of color TV with commercials also increased the public’s interest of fashion in South Korea.

2.1.2 Objectification Theory

Objectification theory is based on the principle that girls and women develop their primary view of their physical selves from observation of others. These observations can take be from the media or through personal experience¹¹. Through the blend of expected and actual exposure, females are socialized to objectify their own physical characteristics from a third person perception, which is identified as self-

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Doosan Corporation, **Products & Services: Magazine** [Online], 29 October 2010. Available from: <http://www.doosan.com/en/services/magazine.page>

¹¹ Bartky, S.L., Femininity and Domination: Studies in the Phenomenology of Oppression (Routledge, 1990), pp. 26.

objectification¹². Women and girls develop an expected physical appearance for themselves, based on observation of others; and are aware that others are likely to observe them as well.

2.1.3 Self-Objectification

Self-objectification allows individuals to acclimate to the society where the objectification of female bodies is prevalent¹³. Self-objectification can increase elicited situations which heightens the awareness of an individual's physical appearance¹⁴. The presence of the third person is enhanced. Thus, when individuals know that others are looking at them or will be looking at them, they are more likely to care about their physical appearance.

In the case of the South Korean ideal body shape, the American body shape trend is reflected by the BMI rate of Miss Korea. The table below showed Miss Korea's height and weight along with the BMI result of each person since 1971 to 2010¹⁵. This table can be used as a guideline in order to understand the body shape trend from the 1970s to the present time.

¹² Kaschak, E., Engendered Lives: A new Psychology of Women's Experience (Basic Books, 1992), pp. 12.

¹³ Bartky, S.L., pp. 26.

¹⁴ Fredrickson, Barbara L. and Kristen Harrison, "Throwing like a girl: Self-objectification predicts adolescent girl's motor performance," Journal of Sport and Social 29: 82.

¹⁵ Hankooki.com, 미스코리아 히스토리 [Online], 29 October 2010. Available from: <http://www.misskorea.hankooki.com/history.php>.

Table 1: BMI result summarize of Miss Korea since 1971 to 2010

Miss Korea (Year)	Name	Height (cm.)	Weight (kg.)	BMI Result
1971	노미애 (Noh Mi-ae)	167	54	19.4
1972	박연주 (Park Yeon-joo)	170	58	20.1
1973	김영주 (Kim Young-ju)	167	52	18.6
1974	김은정 (Kim Eun-jeong)	169	53	18.6
1975	서지혜 (Seo Ji-hye)	168	56	19.8
1976	정경숙 (Jeong Kyoung-suk)	165	50	18.4
1977	김성희 (Kim Sung-hee)	167	50	17.9
1978	손정은 (Son Jung-eun)	167	49	17.6
1979	서재화 (Seo Jae-hwa)	167	51	18.3
1980	김은정 (Kim Eun-jung)	166	50	18.1
1981	이은정 (Lee Eun-jung)	168	53	18.8
1982	박선희 (Park Sun-hee)	166	50	18.1
1983	임미숙 (Lim Mi-sook)	171	55	18.8
1984	최영옥 (Choi Young-ok)	167	50	17.9
1985	배영란 (Bae Young-ran)	168	-	-
1986	김지은 (Kim Ji-eun)	170	51	17.6
1987	장윤정 (Jang Yoon-jeong)	169	53	18.6

Miss Korea (Year)	Name	Height (cm.)	Weight (kg.)	BMI Result
1988	김성령 (Kim Sung-young)	170	50	17.3
1989	오현경 (Oh Hyun-kyoung)	170	52	18.0
1990	서정민 (Seo Jung-min)	172	54	18.3
1991	이영현 (Lee Young-hyun)	170	51	17.6
1992	유하영 (Yoo Ha-young)	175	54	17.6
1993	공선영 (Gong Sun-young)	171	51	17.4
1994	한성주 (Han sung-ju)	170	49	17.0
1995	김윤정 (Kim Yun-jung)	173	50	16.7
1996	이은희 (Lee Eun-hee)	172	49	16.6
1997	김지연 (Kim Ji-yeon)	172	50	16.9
1998	최지현 (Choi Ji-hyun)	174	51	16.8
1999	김연주 (Kim Young-ju)	173	50	16.7
2000	김사랑 (Kim Sa-rang)	173	49	16.4
2001	김민경 (Kim Min-Kyoung)	168	48	17.0
2002	금나나 (Geum Na-na)	172	52	17.6
2003	최윤영 (Choi Yun-young)	172	52	17.6
2004	김소영 (Kim So-young)	168	49	17.4

Miss Korea (Year)	Name	Height (cm.)	Weight (kg.)	BMI Result
2005	김주희 (Kim Ju-hee)	169	49	17.2
2006	이하늬 (Lee Ha-nui)	173	51	17.0
2007	이지선 (Lee Ji-sun)	169	47	16.5
2008	니리 (Rina)	169	48	16.8
2009	김주리 (Kim Joo-ri)	171	52	17.8
2010	정소라 (Jung So-ra)	171	49	16.8

*from <http://misskorea.hankooki.com>

According to the table, Miss Korea contestants' BMI in the first 10 years showed that majority BMI were around 18.0 to 20.1, the normal rate. Only 2 out of 10 had an underweight rate, still there were very close to the BMI normal rate. During 1981 to 1990, the situation of the body shape trend in South Korea gradually started to change. The number of underweight Miss Koreas increased and the scale of BMI results in this period narrowed. After 1991 there were no Miss Koreas who had a BMI of over 18.0 (the normal BMI rate) and Miss Koreas with very low BMI, not over 17.0 appeared more and more since 1995. Winner with the lowest BMI result compared to the other winners in this beauty pageant, 16.4 was the winner in year 2000. Since the year 1991 to 2010, the winners of Miss Korea had BMI results only from 16.4 to 17.8 and the proportion between the winners who had BMI result in rate 16 and 17 were almost equal (9:11). The BMI results of Miss Koreas since 1971 to 2010 was

summarized into the graph below to be able to understand the overall situation more clearly.

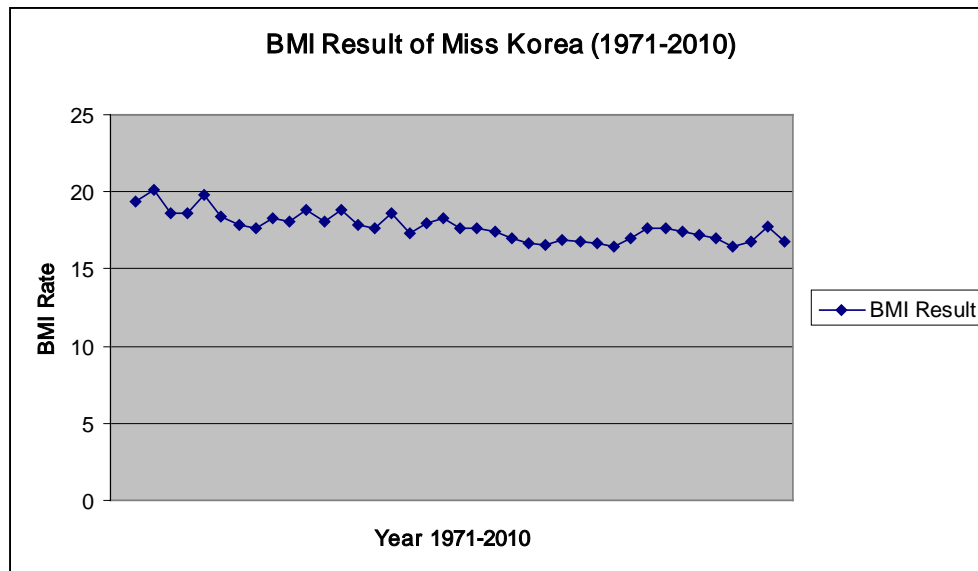


Figure 4: BMI result summarize of Miss Korea since 1971 to 2010

The trend of American body shape started to change at the same period of the coming of Barbie doll to South Korea. Moreover, during 1990s the American ideal body shape (very slim and large breasts) had BMI results of only around 15.8¹⁶ it conformed the BMI result of Miss Koreas in that time. The winners of Korean beauty pageants especially in late 1990s had BMI results of not more than 17.0. During that time, there was the top lowest BMI rate of Miss Korea beauty pageant has ever had. Also, when the BMI results of ideal body shapes in the United States increased to 16.7

¹⁶ The Site, **Body Image Timeline** [Online], 21 August 2010. Available from: <http://www.thesite.org/healthlandwellbeing/wellbeing/bodyimageandselfesteem/bodyimagetimeline>

in 2000s¹⁷, the BMI results of Miss Koreas increased. In the same period, American fashion magazines were imported to South Korea in increasing numbers by South Korean publishers; Doosan Corporation, Joongang M&B etc.

2.2 Related Researches

This research attempts to identify the situation of the ideal body shape of males and females in South Korea. To understand the situation, this author reviewed the research regarding perceptions of the ideal body shape and the idea of body shape in the United States, South Korea and Thailand. In this the researcher classified research into three parts as described below:

2.2.1 Research in factors related to the perception of ideal body shape

2.2.2 Research related to the perception of ideal body shape in foreign countries; the United States and Thailand

2.2.3 Research related to the perception of ideal body shape in South Korea

2.2.1 Research about related factors causing effect to the perception of ideal body shape

The author aims to present readers with the factors that can cause influence or effect the perception towards ideal body shape of people in various countries.

¹⁷ Ibid.

Gordon, R. A. *Eating Disorders: Anatomy of a Social Epidemic*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2000.

This book focused on the socio-cultural factors underlying the ascendancy of eating disorders in our by using the notion of and ethnic disorder as a frame work. Anorexia nervosa expressed a symptomatically the contradiction of female identity of the present, although the nature of the problems has changed considerably since the nineteenth century. However the anorexic did not so much mimic a physical illness, it manipulated her food intake and became obsessive about her body shape and weight. Anorexics and bulimics drew upon the common cultural vocabulary via latching onto the contemporary mania about dieting, thinness, and food control that have become endemic to the advanced industrial societies. They utilized these cultural preoccupation as defenses that enable them to escaped from unmanageable personal distress, most of which revolved around issues of identity. Anorexia and bulimia were socially patterned the fashionable style of achieving specialness through deviance and theses disorders generated fascination and repugnance, simply because they were closely tied to social contradictions experienced by all. Eating disorders were also ultimately political since they were so closely connected with the issue about the control of the female body and conformation to prevailing standards of beauty. Therefore, eating disorders took part in sexual politics and had been taken up in the name of the feminist cause.

Gordon discussed social, cultural and historical issues related to eating disorders as well as individual and familial psychology dynamics. He is less successful

at maintaining an analysis that intertwines social and individual; he seems ultimately to see social and culture as the main actors in this phenomena. Moreover, when we look through this book, Gordon highlights mainly females that led to sexual politics. Nevertheless, this logic cannot cope with the situation of anorexia and bulimia in males that also happened in advanced industrial society that, in my opinion, it is, somehow, more interesting because it is an overlooked topic that very few researchers are willing to deal with. From my point of view, the study about male perception towards dieting and thinness is necessary; owing to the present situation that unisex image (gender-blindness) gained more popularity especially among Asian people.

Jouhki, Jukka. (2008). "Korean Communication and Mass Media Research: Negotiating the West's Influence," International Journal of Communication, 2, 253-275.

Jukka used sources mainly from Korean journals. It stated that South Korean communication was under the influence from both internal and external factors. In the colonial period of Japanese rule, freedom of communication in Korea was strongly limited and maintained until the 1980s, after which the military government of South Korea was removed. Under the civilian government in 1990s, South Korean communications especially mass media was influenced by forces moving South Korea to be a modern state. Owing to this, new standards emerged along with images of "Westernization". Because of this influence, South Korean communication as well as mass media research in that time was affected by Western models particularly the United States, using funds offered by that country where most of South Korean

scholars graduated in doctoral degree level. South Korean education systems, due to this reason, were a mirror image of the United States that used empirical data as a vital source and focused on objective study. Even though, nowadays there are some South Korean scholars stressing on being “East” and applied more about subjective study. This study also argued about weak and strong signals of communication and mass media systems in South Korea. Although it was more modernized compared to the past, the same old beliefs, Confucianism; patriarchal culture, still existed particularly in the area of gender issues. Journalism, even now, was a man’s world in South Korea. Resulting from this, what was broadcasted or issued from mass media outlets in South Korea still carried such values and sent it to people unawares.

From this article, the strong point is that the researcher is concerned with internal factors along with external factors that influenced South Korean communication and mass media. It can show the causalities of what is exactly happening in that sector of South Korea not from only one side. Because of this, it implied that on one side the communication and mass media, nowadays, were influenced by Western ideas and on the other by a patriarchal culture.

Park, Hye-Kyung. (2008). “Nutrition Policy in South Korea,” Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Nutrition, 17, 343-345.

He stated that since the 1970s, the economic and social development in South Korea, along with dietary patterns, has obviously changed. Concerns for decreased in nutrition quality and physical activities among South Koreans, particularly young population, called for a need of a holistic approach in the national food and nutrition

policy. The National Health Promotion Act of 1995 included national interventions and programs to deal with nutrition-related chronic diseases and obesity prevention. A nationwide monitoring system, which included nutrition and health examination was being built and run by the Ministry of Health and Welfare and its affiliated organizations every three years. The Korea Food and Drug Administration (KFDA) was another key agency undertaking national food and nutrition policies. The KFDA recently promulgated a national strategic plan for improving food safety and nutrition, focusing on children. A nutrition labeling policy for processed food was managed by KFDA and various education programs were developed and disseminated to enhance the awareness of nutrition labeling. The agency also issues standards and regulates food for special dietary uses and the health functional food. The Rural Development Administration (RDA) was responsible for maintaining the food composition database. The National School Lunch Program was mainly governed by the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development. The above central government agencies along with regional health centers were making efforts to promote healthy eating habits in addition to constructing a healthy environment by making laws and programs and by research and social marketing.

From this article, dealing with the over nutrition situation of people in Seoul is easier when compared to a situation of under nutrition of people living in rural areas. It's because, in my opinion, to stop people that have ability to access the resources (food), by informing them that exceedingly consuming can cause unhealthy condition and also lead to various diseases, at the same time, which pattern of nutrition people

should take to be healthy, they can decrease amount of consumption as well as follow the proper pattern of consumption easily.

Thus, for under nutrition, this implies that people cannot access food adequately. It comes to the major problem that government or responsive ministry has to deal with. The government faced two major problems about the nutrition of South Koreans. Firstly, is to lessen overeating situation in urban areas. Secondly, is to improve the poor nutrition situation of people in rural areas. Still, South Korea's government too much focused on the problem of people in capital city relatively to rural area's problem. By enforcing laws about labeling and so forth the government is trying to solve the whole problem by using models mainly from the capital. According to this, that model could not work for solving the problem that has two totally different causalities.

Thianthai, Chulanee. (2006). "Influential Sources Affecting Bangkok Adolescent Body Image Perceptions," International Journal of Adolescent Medicine and Health, 18, 633-641.

The researcher focused on finding the causalities that affected Bangkok adolescents' body image perceptions by using questionnaires and in-depth interviews in collecting data process. The result showed eight sources that affected the body image perceptions of Bangkok adolescents beginning with magazines (24.43 percent), television (22.24 percent), peer group (19.36 percent), familial (17.23 percent), fashion trends (7.28 percent), the opposite gender (4.24 percent), self realization (3.88 percent) and health knowledge (1.34 percent).The researcher also stated that the result of this

study in Thailand was similar to the study of a Western case which indicated that mass media and peer group were the main factors. of

2.2.2 Research related to the perception of ideal body shape in the United States and Thailand

In order to understand the perception towards ideal body shape situation in South Korea, it is important for the reader and also the researcher to know the situation and trends in other countries.

Fallon, April E., and Rozin, Paul. (1985). "Sex differences perception of desirable body shape," Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 94(1), 102-105.

This study used a set of nine figure drawings arranged from very thin to very heavy figures and questioned 248 male and 227 female undergraduates to indicate their current figure, ideal figure, the figures which they considered to be the most attractive figure for opposite sex and the figure of the opposite sex that attracted them the most. The result showed that in male cases the current, ideal and the most attractive figures were alike. For females, the current figure was heavier than the most attractive figure which heavier than the ideal. Moreover, both male and female wrongly estimate about the most attractive figure viewed by the opposite sex. For men, they assumed that women preferred the heavier figure than the selected figure by women to be the most attractive figure. For women, the result showed in contrast. As a result, for men's perception towards their own figure kept them satisfied with their current figure while, for women, there was a strong pressure forcing them to lose

weight that resulted in the overwhelming amounts of women who had eating disorder problems compared to men in the United States.

Thianthai, Chulanee. (2008). "Do Male and Female Adolescents View Their Dissatisfaction with Body Parts in the Same Way?" International Journal of Adolescent Medicine and Health, 20(1), 33-39.

The purpose of this research is to learn how female and male adolescents view their dissatisfaction towards body parts, and how gender-related dissatisfaction towards body parts in Thai adolescents differs from those studies in Western countries. The researcher used survey questionnaires with 400 Thai male and female adolescents in Bangkok attending high school to freshman level (ranging from 16-19 years) and conducting in-depth interviews with 40 students to gain detailed data. This research found out that Thai female and male adolescents have different ideas towards dissatisfaction of their body parts. In Thai female adolescents' case, they are primarily concerned about their bodies in each part more meticulous and individually compared to male adolescents. In Thai male adolescents' case, they view their bodies as a whole and point out the dissatisfied body part to be problematic area (s). Overall results of this study were similar to Western studies especially that female adolescents showed greater dissatisfaction about their bodies than males and also have more pressure to fix the part considered to be a problem, still there were also some differences that can be seen in detail showing a variation on the gender-related dissatisfied body parts names, percentage to each body part/areas.

2.2.3 Research related to the perception of ideal body shape in South Korea

The researches in this part gave the idea about how South Koreans view the ideal body shape. To inform readers the general idea about ideal body shape taking place in South Korea.

Shim, Young-Hee. (1998). "Gender and Body Politics in Korea: Focusing on the Making of Feminine Body," Asian Women, 6, 19-57.

By using a framework of Foucault, Turner, and Bartky, which focusing on the changes in the images of the desirable female body, Shim divided the changes in gender and body in Korean politics into three periods. In the Chosun Dynasty when Confucianism was the main ideology for Koreans, the family lineage was important and women were considered as a means of reproduction. The image of the desirable woman was "women as mothers," and the reproductive body was preferred. In the industrialized era women's socio-economic participation increased but the gender division of labor continued. During this period, the reproduction function of women lost its previous value and love was emphasized. Within this context the image of desirable women changed to "women as wives" and sexually attractive pretty women were preferred. Contemporary society, with the development of sexual mass media, individualization developed the pursuit of self-identity as important. The images of desirable women changed into "women as career women" or "women as androgynous individuals," and the slender boy-like body was preferred.

According to this, the writer suggests that the body, particularly the female body, is "socially constructed," which means that very different female bodies are produced under different discursive regimes in Korea as elsewhere. The writer also

stated that women's interest in bodily appearance have the side-effect of hindering their development in social orientation or intelligence by turning their interests away from society to their bodies and by making women compete with each other. Owing to this, it seems that the main causality that makes South Korean women interested in dieting is being under patriarchal discourse which has changed over time.

Hong EK, Park SB, Shin YS and Park HS. (1997). "Body image perception and self-reported weight control activities in adolescent girls," Journal of the Korean Academy of Family Medicine, 18(7):714-721. Retrieved May 5, 2010, from Korea Med database.

Today adolescent girls seem obsessed with weight reduction. Effective and adequate education for weight reduction was not done in South Korea. So much information was accepted via mass media. Researchers have investigated body image perception, weight control activities and their side effects among adolescent girls. The above authors used questionnaires to find out about body image and weight control activities of middle and high school girls in Seoul in September 1995. The results showed that 88.6 percent of girls were not satisfied with their own height and 85.1 percent of girls with their own weight. 66.3 percent underweight students (BMI<20kg/m²) thought they were too fat and 98 percent of acceptable weight student (20kg/m²<_KBMI<25kg /m²) thought they were too fat. According to this result, most girls had body image disturbance. 42.4 percent of girls were trying to lose weight and 85.1 percent were trying to lose weight for reasons of attractiveness and 16.6 percent were trying to lose for health. Self reported weight reduction methods were,

exercise (31.6 percent), fasting (21.9 percent), diet (21.5 percent), mono diet (10.8 percent), laxatives (2.3 percent), and very low calorie diet (1.8 percent) Students who tried to lose weight for attractiveness selected more undesirable methods than those who tried to lose weight for health ($P < 0.01$). Most common route is via magazines, TV and newspapers. 43.4 percent of girls who tried to lose weight experienced side effects after weight reduction. Those were dizziness (71.3 percent), general weakness (51percent), apathy (26.5percent) etc. In summary, most girls had body image distortions. Useless weight reduction activities were done or planned and most of information was accessed via mass media. Researcher recommended that it is important to educate the girls to get an adequate body image and effective weight reduction programs are needed for health in adolescent girls.

According to this research, it stated that the mass media in South Korea caused a great influence towards the ideal body shape of South Korean female adolescents and led girls to use improper methods to diet in order to get the desired body shape. Besides, they overestimated about their body shape and wanted to be in a thin/slim shape as it was broadcasted on television or printed in magazines which afterward such a situation can lead to more serious health problems especially among female adolescents, for example anorexia bulimia etc.

To summarize, according to the reviewing of all literature above, the influences causing effects to the ideal body shape in the United States, Thailand were mass media and the socio-cultural factors. The perception of American and Thais towards body

shape was similar. In males, both American and Thai identified the preferred body shape similar to their current body shape or larger. For females, the American and Thai desired to be slimmer compared to their current body shape. This situation explained why females from both countries had more risk of eating disorders equate to males. South Korea was also in the same situation due to the studies. However, the study in South Korea about the perception towards ideal body shape mostly stressed the female body.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this paper, the researcher used data retrieved from two methods. First, a survey, Korean General Social Survey 2007 (KGSS 2007) collected by Sungkyunkwan University which was used to answer the situation of the ideal body shape of South Korean males and females. Second, observation used as a tool to interpret the meaning of the ideal body shape in South Korea. The guidelines of the study were:

3.1 Research Methodology

3.2 Data Collection and Analysis

3.1 Research Methodology

There were two kinds of methodologies used in getting the required information. For the first part of this research, the researcher applied quantitative research methods by using survey data of KGSS 2007. The researcher arrived at the data with the help of Professor Eun Ki-Soo who wanted to utilize the data. The researcher had the opportunity to analyze the data in 2010. For the second part, the researcher applied a qualitative research method by using the data collected from observations.

3.1.1 The survey (statistic data): The data of KGSS 2007 was used as an important source for identifying the ideal body shape of South Koreans into the actual

model regarded as the ideal body shape in South Korean contemporary culture to achieve the answer for research objective number 1 (to identify the ideal body shape of South Koreans in contemporary society). Moreover, the researcher was able to measure the satisfaction towards their body weights from the data. The researcher also used this method in hypothesis testing to answer questions which derived from previous researches and related articles.

3.1.2 The observation (descriptive data): besides doing documentary research retrieved from books, online journals etc. which gave basic information about the ideal body shape situation overseas especially in the United States and South Korea. The researcher obtained recent articles related to the ideal body shape and the South Koreans' perception towards ideal body shape from online newspapers, advertisements, and web logs. These online articles and advertisements were collected while the researcher was doing observations in South Korea. The researcher was in South Korea about one month (7 July – 9 August 2010). The data was publicized during that time and could be traced back to within four years. The data collected by using an observation method gave the idea about the perception towards the ideal body shape in South Korea through South Korean eyes. The observation provided other sources besides questionnaires or research articles. This information helped the researcher to understand the social influence, specific behavior and perception of South Koreans.

In addition, while doing the observation the researcher also collected body shape figures in commercials, one of the influencing sources on ideal body shape generally advertised in South Korea, along with the current body shape of ordinary

South Korean people. The researcher collected the current body shape figures of South Koreans in order to be able to compare between the current body shapes and the ideal body shape in their perceptions. By doing the observation, the researcher could achieve research objective number 2.

3.2 Data Collection and Analysis

The data collecting and analysis in this research consisted of two kinds of resources and analysis methods:

3.2.1 The data from survey: the researcher used the data of KGSS 2007 collected by Sungkyunkwan University, South Korea which asking questions about the ideal body shape of South Korean males and females along with other social questions. The population and sample in this survey was both female and male South Koreans registered in South Korea and live in registered addresses during the data collection period in year 2007. The South Korean respondents were 18 years old and over. Defining the group of 18 years old and over as persons who can make independent decisions. Purposive sampling was used to select the South Koreans for interview. The purposive sampling came from criteria as follows:

- South Korean nationals age 18 and above
- Living in census registered area
- Willing to participate in the questionnaire

Owing to research objective number 1, this research aimed to study whether the different personal conditions of the respondents could cause different effects on the satisfaction towards their body weight and the perception towards the ideal body shape or not. To answer the research question, the researcher selected the data from respondents' basic variables including sex, age range, living place, education level, and household income level and matched each variable to the perception towards satisfaction in their body weights and towards the ideal body shape perception. By this the researcher was able to answer the research question and able to describe the results in each variable statistically.

The researcher used the SPSS program (Statistical Package for the Social Science) to calculate the raw data of KGSS 2007. The results were showed two kinds of statistic. First was in percentile, used to measure the satisfaction towards their body weight and identify the current ideal body shape of South Koreans according to different variables (sex, age range, living place, education level, and household income level) in hypothesis number 1, 2 and 4. The Chi-square was used as a tool to test research's hypothesis in required section (Hypothesis number 3).

3.2.2 The data from observation: the researcher conducted documentary research in identifying the influences causing effects on the characteristic of the ideal body shape in South Korean culture to understand the causes of ideal body shape changes in South Korea. For understanding the perception towards ideal body shape of South Korean people, the researcher observed online sources, advertisements, South Korean online newspapers and articles from online web logs (written by South Koreans for expressing their opinion about the importance of body shape in

contemporary South Korea) to be able to understand the meaning of ideal body shape to South Koreans through native eyes. The researcher also cross-checked data about the ideal body shape in South Korea in the period 2007 to 2010 to see whether there was any change or not. The data from KGSS used in this survey was conducted in 2007 and the data from observation by the researcher was collected in 2010. In addition, the researcher managed South Koreans' characteristics observation and made fieldnote during the data collection period to get the sample of their current body shapes.

The settings for observation were chosen randomly in three areas; Apgujeong-Dong, Myeoung-Dong, Sinchon and one water park "Everland Caribbean Bay" situated in Gyeonggi province. The researcher was in Apgujeong, Myeoung-Dong, and Sinchon area in the evening (7.00 p.m. to 9.00 p.m.) on weekdays to observe South Korean body shapes in general and the body shape of models in clothing, cosmetic and cosmetic surgery advertisements. The researcher visited Everland Caribbean Bay on 6th August 2010 (4.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.). During the observation the researcher temporarily suspended any personal esthetic and moral judgment to obtain a certain degree of objective understanding with foreign norms and tastes. Together with the observation, the researcher collected relevant objects/ goods for improving body shape or food containing low-fat ingredients.

Reasons for choosing locations listed above were:

- Apgujeong-Dong: this area is considered to be the centre of cosmetic surgery clinics and brand name shops. It was felt the researcher could observe affluent South Korean people.

- Myeong-Dong: this area is well-known for shopping. Many South Koreans, especially teenagers and young adults, come here to shop, have dinner, etc. To observe in this area, the researcher was able to get the data from South Koreans in a variation of ages but especially 18-25 year olds and young adults 26-39 year olds.

- Sinchon: There are many universities here, for example, Yonsei University, Ewha University, Sogang University, etc. According to this, the main types in this area that the researcher could get more specified data are South Korean students in the age range between 18 – 25 years old.

- Everland Caribbean Bay (situated in Gyeonggi province): the researcher observed this site as the data collecting period was the summer season, large numbers of South Koreans would come to this place to relax. The researcher expected to observe South Koreans from different age ranges in the water park; kids, teenagers, young adults, late adult, and elders since many of them took this chance for a vacation with their families. Also, in the water park the researcher was able to observe the actual body shape of South Koreans with less clothing.

The analysis for descriptive data using the observation method: the researcher applied related theories and reviewed the data from the fieldnote made while doing the observation to analyze in this section. During the observation, the

researcher observed, made fieldnote, and collected articles appearing in the mass media of South Korea related to the ideal body shape topic and extracted the ideas from those figures, messages, and articles. The researcher used the related theories and fieldnote to answer the question according to the research objective (to understand how South Korean people interpret the meaning of ideal body shape). For indentifying the reason why the ideal body shape trend emerged in South Korea, the researcher used the objectification theory, Self-objectification theory together with the data from fieldnote to explain the body shape situation. Also, the researcher applied the hierarchy of needs model by Abraham Maslow as a tool to interpret the ideal body shape preferring phenomenon in South Korea for describing the reasons that made the trend very popular and accepted by South Korean people.

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter is provided to describe the detail of data analysis. The study “The Perception of Ideal Body shape in South Korean Society” was conducted in two parts. First section, the researcher used the quantitative research obtained from the survey questionnaire. The sample size was 1430 South Koreans, living in the address registered in South Korean census registration. The descriptive statistical data analysis is determined by frequency counts and percentage distribution. The second section, the researcher applied the documentary research method by reviewing the various cases related to the topic of South Korean ideal body shape.

4.1 Quantitative research

The quantitative research is obtained from the survey by using questionnaires, conducted on one thousand four hundred and thirty one Koreans. This research studies about South Korean perception towards the ideal body shape and the significant meaning of the ideal body shape among South Korean people. The researcher divided the data analysis as follows:

4.1.1 Data base analysis: described the characteristic of respondents contained with sex, age range, education level, living area, and income level. The descriptive statistical data analysis is determined by frequency and percentage distribution

4.1.2 Hypothesis testing analysis: used to prove the invented presumption, based on South Korean ideal body shape in the current situation in order to address the situation about the perception of ideal body shape more specifically in South Korean culture. The researcher

utilized various variables; sex, age group, living area, education level, and income level, linked them to the perception of ideal body shape and weight preference in hypothesis testing for verifying the situation about ideal body shape related to those variables.

4.1.1 Data base analysis

This part used descriptive statistical data analysis which provided basic information about the following examples and their perception towards weight preference also the ideal body shape of each sex.

4.1.1.1 The results of data analysis about personal information of sample group

- Sex
- Age
- Location
- Education Level
- Household income

4.1.1.2 The perception towards personal weight of sample group

- Related to Age Range
- Related to Location
- Related to Education Level
- Related to Household Income

*All the tables were separated by sex

4.1.1.3 The perception towards male ideal body shape of sample group (divided by sex)

4.1.1.4 The perception towards female ideal body shape of sample group (divided by sex)

For the data analysis, researcher has set the symbol used in the analysis below

χ^2 is Chi - Square

Sig is Significant

df is degrees of freedom

4.1.1.1 The results of data analysis of sample group's personal information

a) The frequency and percentage of sex

Table 2: The frequency and percentage of Sex

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	660	46.1
Female	771	53.9
Total	1431	100.0

According to table 2 showed the sample group were 660 males or 46.1 percent. The female respondents were 771, 53.9 percent.

b) The frequency and percentage of each age range

Table 3: The frequency and percentage of each age range

Age (years old)	Frequency	Percentage
18-25	175	12.2
26-39	456	31.9
40-50	359	25.1
50-60	179	12.5
61 and above	262	18.3
Total	1431	100.0

According to table 3 showed majority of the sample group were people in 26 to 39 years old, counted 456 people or 31.9 percent. The second age group was people in 40 to 50 years old counted 359 people, represented 25.1 percent. Respondents with age 60 years old and above were 262 people, represented 18.3 percent.

c) The frequency and percentage of living place

Table 4: The frequency and percentage of living place

Living Place	Frequency	Percentage
Big city	403	28.2
Suburbs or out skirt	392	27.5
Small city or town	446	31.3
Country village	170	11.9
Farm or home in the country	16	1.1
Total	1427	100.0

According to table 4 the result showed the area of living place of sample groups. Majority of sample groups, 446 people, were living in small city or town represented 31.2 percent. The second area, sample groups lived in, was the big city with 403 people or 28.2 percent. Suburbs or out skirt area had 392 people, 27.4 percent. For country village area, there were 170 people represented 11.9 percent while Farm or home in the country area had 16 people calculated as 1.1 percent.

d) The frequency and percentage of education level

Table 5: The frequency and percentage of education level

Education level	Frequency	Percentage
No formal school	69	4.8
Elementary school	160	11.2
Junior high school	103	7.2
High school	408	28.5
Junior College	175	12.2
College	440	30.8
Graduate school (Masters)	61	4.3
Graduate school (PhD)	7	0.5
Others (private village school etc.)	7	0.5
Total	1430	100.0

In table 5, majority of sample groups had educational level in college degree which were 440 people, represented 30.7 percent. The second was high school level, there were 408 people calculated 28.5 percent. For junior college level, there were 175 people, 12.2 percent while people who educated in elementary school level were 160 people, represented 11.2 percent. The fifth, junior high school, had 103 respondents represented 7.2 percent.

Respondents had no formal school were 69 people, 4.8 percent. Graduate school (Masters) level had 61 people or 4.3 percent. Graduate school (PhD) and others level ranked equally with 7 people or 0.5 percent.

e) The frequency and percentage of household income level

Table 6: The frequency and percentage of household income level

Household income (Ten thousand Korean Won)	Frequency	Percentage
Not more than 299	689	48.1
300 – 599	514	35.9
600 – 899	127	8.9
More than 900	101	7.1
Total	1431	100.0

According to table 6 showed that most number of people in the sample group had household income in the range “not more than 299 ten thousand Korean won” (2,990,000) per month was 689 people represented 48.1 percent, the second group was 514 respondents with income between 300 – 599 ten thousand Korean won (3,000,000 – 5,990,000) per month, calculated 35.9 percent. There were 127 people or 8.9 percent who had household income 600 - 899 ten thousand Korean Won (6,000,000 – 8,990,000) per month. 101 respondents or 7.1 percent of sample group had household income over 900 ten thousand Korean Won (90,000,000) per month

4.1.1.2 The result of data analysis about perception towards personal weight of sample groups (divided by sex)

a) The frequency and percentage of male's weight preference classified by age range

Table 7: The frequency and percentage of male's weight preference classified by age range

Age Range	Weight Preference				Total
	Gain	Maintain	Lose	Don't care	
18-25	28	19	40	1	88
	31.8%	21.6%	45.5%	1.1%	100.0%
26-39	48	68	98	2	216
	22.2%	31.5%	45.4%	0.9%	100.0%
40-50	31	58	66	2	157
	19.7%	36.9%	42.0%	1.3%	100.0%
50-60	11	38	34	1	84
	13.1%	45.2%	40.5%	1.2%	100.0%
61 and above	22	53	32	8	115
	19.1%	46.1%	27.8%	7.0%	100.0%
Total	140	236	270	14	660
	21.2%	35.8%	40.9%	2.1%	100.0%

In table 7, Age range 18 – 25 years old answered wanting to lose weights most with 45.5 percent. 31.8 percent of the same age range answered wanting to gain weight. The choice wanting to maintain the current weights was chosen the third with 21.6 percent. Respondents in age range 26 – 39 years old wanted to lose weight most with 45.4 percent followed by the choice wanting to maintain weights, 31.5 percent. The third choice selected by this age range wanting to gain weights counted 22.2 percent.

The age range 40 – 50 years old wanted to lose their weights most, 42.0 percent. The choice wanting to maintain weight was answered in second place or 36.9 percent by this age range. Respondents in age 40 – 50 selected choice wanting to gain weight 19.7 percent. People in age range between 50 – 60 years old wanted to maintain their weight most with 45.2 percent and the choice wanting to lose weight ranked the second by 40.5 percent. 11 Respondents or 13.1 percent in the same age range chose wanting to gain weight choice. Lastly South Korean males in age 61 and above wanted to maintain their weights most, 46.1 percent. The second choice for the age range was to lose weight with 27.8 percent and the choice selected in third place was to gain weight.

The choice Age range answered wanting to lose weight most was between 18 – 25 years old calculated 45.5 percent. The second age range wanting to lose weight was males in age 26 – 39 years old, 45.4 percent. Age range between 40-50 years old answered wanting to lose weights in third place or 42.0 percent. The respondents answered the “don’t care” about their own weight appeared most in age range 61 years old and above, counted 57.1 percent of respondents answering “don’t care” choice. The “don’t care” choice used in this questionnaire reflected that although most of South Koreans concerned about their body shapes, some thought the body shape was not the topic they should care about for the living.

b) The frequency and percentage of female's weight preference classified by age range

Table 8: The frequency and percentage of female's weight preference classified by age range

Age Range	Weight Preference				Total
	Gain	Maintain	Lose	Don't care	
18-25	4	14	65	4	87
	4.6%	16.1%	74.7%	4.6%	100.0%
26-39	11	53	174	2	240
	4.6%	22.1%	72.5%	0.8%	100.0%
40-50	12	67	123	0	202
	5.9%	33.2%	60.9%	.0%	100.0%
50-60	9	31	51	4	95
	9.5%	32.6%	53.7%	4.2%	100.0%
61 and above	16	61	58	11	146
	11.0%	41.8%	39.7%	7.5%	100.0%
Total	52	226	471	21	770
	6.8%	29.3%	61.2%	2.7%	100.0%

According to table 8, female respondents in age range between 18 – 25 years old wanted to lose their weights most, 74.7 percent followed by the choice wanting to maintain weight with 16.1 percent. The choice wanting to gain weight was equaled by choice “don't care” at 4.6 percent. Majority of South Korean female respondents with 26 – 39 years old desired to lose weight with 72.5 percent. While the desire to maintain their weights ranked in the second place or 22.1 percent and the choice wanting to gain weight was chosen the third with 4.6 percent. Female respondents in age 40 – 50 years old desired to lose weight in the first place or 60.9 percent. The second choice selected by the age group was to maintain weight with 33.2 percent and

the third choice was to gain weight, 5.9 percent. Females with age 50 – 60 years old answered wanting to lose weight with 53.7 percent, the top choice. The second choice for the age group was to maintain weight or 32.6 percent. The third choice was to gain weight, 9.5 percent. The elders in age 61 years old and above selected the choice wanting to maintain weight in the first place or 41.8 percent. The same group ranked choice wanting to lose weight in second place or 39.7 percent and choice wanting to gain weight was the third with 11.0 percent.

The choice Age range answered wanting to lose weight most was between 18 – 25 years old calculated 74.7 percent. The second age range wanting to lose weight was males in age 26 – 39 years old, 72.5 percent. Age range between 40-50 years old answered wanting to lose weights in third place or 60.9 percent. The respondents answered the “don’t care” about their own weight appeared most in age range 61 years old and above, counted 52.4 percent of people answering “don’t care” choice.

c) The frequency and percentage of male's weight preference classified by living place

Table 9: The frequency and percentage of male's weight preference classified by living place

Living place	Weight preference				Total
	Gain	maintain	lose	Don't care	
Big city	44	69	78	3	194
	22.7%	35.6%	40.2%	1.5%	100%
Suburbs	31	60	79	2	172
	18.0%	34.9%	45.9%	1.16%	100.0%
Small C.	47	68	89	2	206
	22.8%	33.0%	43.2%	1.0%	100.0%
Country V.	18	31	23	7	79
	22.8%	39.2%	29.1%	8.9%	100.0%
Farm	0	7	1	0	8
	.0%	87.5%	12.5%	.0%	100.0%
Total	140	235	270	14	659
	21.2%	35.7%	41.0%	2.1%	100.0%

Male respondents living in the big city wanted to lose weight most with 40.2 percent followed by wanting to maintain weight 35.6 percent, the second place. The third choice for the age range was to gain weight choice with 22.7 percent. South Korean males living in suburbs area answered the wanting to lose weight choice in the first rank with 45.9 percent followed by the wanting to maintain weight choice 34.9 percent and the wanting to gain weight choice 18.0 percent. Respondents living in small city chose to lose weight most with 43.2 percent. The second was the desire to maintain weight choice, 33.0 percent. The third was to gain weight choice as 22.8 percent. Males from country village selected the wanting to maintain weight choice to be the first choice with 39.2 percent, followed by the wanting to lose weight choice, 29.1 percent. The wanting to gain weight choice was selected to be the

third place as 22.8 percent. South Korean males having the living place in farm ranked the willing to maintain weight choice at the top place with 87.5 percent. The second was the desire to lose weight choice, 12.5 percent.

Male respondents from suburbs area answered the wanting to lose weight choice most at 45.9 percent, followed by the respondents from small city area with 43.2 percent and the respondents from big city as 40.2 percent. Males living in small countryside and country village answered the wanting to gain weight choice at the top rank or 22.8 percent and males from big city answered this choice in the third place, 22.7 percent. Respondents from country village chose “don’t care” choice the most counted as 50.0 percent of people answering in the “don’t care” option.

d) The frequency and percentage of female's weight preference classified by living place

Table 10: The frequency and percentage of female's weight preference classified by living place

Living Place	Weight Preference				Total
	Gain	maintain	lose	Don't care	
Big city	12	61	130	6	209
	5.7%	29.2%	62.2%	2.9%	100%
Suburbs	9	64	145	2	220
	4.1%	29.1%	65.9%	0.9%	100.0%
Small C.	17	61	156	5	239
	7.1%	25.5%	65.3%	2.1%	100.0%
Country V.	12	36	37	6	91
	13.2%	39.6%	40.6%	6.6%	100.0%
Farm	1	3	3	1	8
	12.5%	37.5%	37.5%	12.5%	100.0%
Total	51	225	471	20	767
	6.6%	29.4%	61.4%	2.6%	100.0%

In table 10, majority of female respondent living big city wanted to lose weight which was 62.2 percent. The second place was the wanting to maintain weight, 29.2 percent and 5.7 percent of respondents from big city wanted to gain their weight. Female from suburbs area chose the lose weight choice to be the top choice with 65.9 percent while the other from the same area selected to maintain weight counted 29.1 percent and to gain weight 4.1 percent. Females from small city opted to lose weight to be the first by 65.3 percent. To maintain and to gain weight choices were chosen 25.5 percent and 7.1 percent respectively. Female respondents living in country village who

desired to lose weight were counted 40.6 percent followed by those who wanted to maintain weight 39.6 percent. The respondents from the same area decided for gain weight 13.2 percent. Those living in farm desired to lose and maintain weight were equal with 37.5 percent, counted as the top choice. 12.5 percent selected to gain weight.

Female from suburbs area answered the wanting to lose weight choice in the top rate with 65.9 percent followed by those who living in small city, 65.3 percent. The third group answering the choice was respondents from the big city with 62.2 percent. The “don’t care” choice was selected most by respondents from big city and country village area as 30.0 percent each or 60.0 percent in sum of people selected the “don’t care” choice.

e) The frequency and percentage of male's weight preference classified by education level.

Table 11: The frequency and percentage of male's weight preference classified by education level

Education	Weight preference				Total
	Gain	Maintain	Lose	Don't care	
No formal school	3	9	5	1	18
	16.7%	50.0%	27.8%	5.6%	100%
Elementary school	12	26	14	5	57
	21.1%	45.6%	24.6%	8.8%	100%
Junior high school	9	19	13	0	41
	22.0%	46.3%	31.7%	.0%	100%
High school	37	60	73	3	173
	21.4%	34.7%	42.2%	1.7%	100%
Junior college	19	24	36	3	82
	23.2%	29.3%	43.9%	3.7%	100%
College	52	81	107	2	242
	21.5%	33.5%	44.2%	0.8%	100%
Graduate s. (Masters)	6	13	19	0	38
	15.8%	34.2%	50.0%	.0%	100%
Graduate school (PhD)	1	2	3	0	6
	16.7%	33.3%	50.0%	.0%	100%
Others (private village s.)	0	2	0	0	2
	.0%	100.0%	.0%	.0%	100%
Total	139	236	270	14	659
	21.1%	35.8%	41.0%	2.1%	100%

In table 11, male respondents with no formal school education desired to maintain their weights most which was 50.0 percent, followed by wanting to lose

weight will with 27.8 percent and to gain weight will with 16.7 percent. Respondents graduated elementary school level showed the same result with different proportion. The desire to maintain weight choice ranked the first with 45.6 percent followed by to lose weight choice 24.6 percent and to gain weight choice 21.1 percent. Those with Junior high school level chose to maintain weight with 46.3 percent and to lose weight 31.7 percent. The wanting to gain weight choice was selected the third or 22.0 percent. Male respondents graduated High school level opted the lose weight choice with 42.2 percent, the maintain weight choice with 34.7 percent, and the gain weight choice 21.4 percent. Respondents graduated junior college wanted to lose weight most or 43.9 percent, to maintain and to gain weight choices were answered in the second and third rank or 29.3 percent and 23.2 percent. Majority of males from college level wanted to lose weight, 44.2 percent counted. While the desire to maintain weight was selected to be the second, 33.5 percent and desire to gain weight ranked the third with 21.5 percent. Respondents with Master degree answered the desire to lose weight choice 50.0 percent. The second and the third choice for the people graduated Master degree level were the desire to maintain, 34.2 percent and to gain weight with 15.8 percent. Males finished PhD degree chose to lose weight most with 50.0 percent followed by to maintain weight 33.3 percent, and to gain weight 16.7 percent. All of those who graduated from private village school chose to maintain their current weight.

Respondent with no formal school education, elementary school, and junior high school were more likely preferred the desire to maintain their current weight. While those who graduated in higher level preferred the desire to lose weight choice most. The respondents answering “don’t care” choice existed most in the group of people graduated in elementary level, 35.7 percent.

The reason made both male and female graduated in high school and college level outnumbered those from other education levels was attributed to the policy¹ of Lee Myung-bak's government. According to Lee's policy in part 4: the purpose for making South Korea rich in talent, under objective number 14: to expand educational benefits listed the task number 66: Enabling every person to pursue a formal education regardless of income level. In task number 67 described the target to elevating citizens' academic levels and reducing educational gaps. Also, in task 70, Lee's government aimed to create an environment in which every citizen can engage in life-long education.

¹ KOREA.net, **Lee Administration's Main Policies** [Online], 10 October 2010. Available from: <http://www.korea.net/exploring.do>

f) The frequency and percentage of female's weight preference classified by education level.

Table 12: The frequency and percentage of female's weight preference classified by education level

Education	Weight preference				Total
	Gain	Maintain	Lose	Don't care	
No formal school	5	26	15	4	50
	10.0%	52.0%	30.0%	8.0%	100%
Elementary school	13	39	42	9	103
	12.6%	37.9%	40.8%	8.7%	100%
Junior high school	3	13	46	0	62
	4.8%	21.0%	74.2%	.0%	100%
High school	14	66	152	3	235
	6.0%	28.1%	64.7%	1.3%	100%
Junior college	6	24	60	3	93
	6.5%	25.8%	64.5%	3.2%	100%
College	11	49	136	2	198
	5.6%	24.7%	68.7%	1.0%	100%
Graduate s. (Masters)	0	6	17	0	23
	.0%	26.1%	73.9%	.0%	100%
Graduate school (PhD)	0	1	0	0	1
	.0%	100.0%	.0%	.0%	100%
Others (private village s.)	0	2	3	0	5
	.0%	40.0%	60.0%	.0%	100%
Total	52	226	471	21	770
	6.8%	29.3%	61.2%	2.7%	100%

According to table 12, female with no formal education preferred to maintain their current weight counted 52.0 percent while wanting to lose weight choice was ranked in second place with 30.0 percent. The desire to gain weight choice was selected the third, 10.0 percent. Females finished elementary school level answered the desire to lose weight choice most with 40.8 percent, followed by the desire to maintain weight choice 37.9 percent. The desire to gain weight choice ranked third place counted 12.6 percent. Respondents graduated junior high school level preferred to lose weight most with 74.2 percent. The desire to maintain weight choice selected the second, 21.0 percent while the desire to gain weight choice placed in third rank or 4.8 percent. The group of people finished high school level mostly selected the desire to lose weight choice, counted as 64.7 percent. The desire to maintain and gain weight choices were chosen 28.1 percent and 6.0 percent respectively. Female graduated junior college level preferred to lose weight in the first rank, 64.5 percent counted. The second choice for the group was to maintain weight choice, 25.8 percent and the third choice was to gain weight which was 6.5 percent. Female respondents graduated college level also chose the desire to lose weight choice to be the top choice or 68.7 percent. The second choice was the desire to maintain weight with 24.7 percent and the third was to gain weight 5.6 percent. Respondents of Master degree chose the desire to lose weight choice in the first rank with 73.9 percent. The desire to maintain weight was the second choice or 26.1 percent. The representative of the Doctor of philosophy level chose to maintain weight. 3 out of 5 of those who graduated the private village school selected the lose weight choice and the rest answered wanting to maintain their weight.

The majority of female from all education level desired to lose their current weight. Only females from no formal school and doctor of philosophy level who chose to maintain their current weight.

g) The frequency and percentage of male's weight preference classified by household income level²

Table 13: The frequency and percentage of male's weight preference classified by household income level per month

Household income (Ten thousand Korean Won)	Weight preference				Total
	Gain	Maintain	Lose	Don't care	
Not more than 299 (Low)	64	112	108	9	293
	21.8%	38.2%	36.9%	3.1%	100%
300 - 599 (Average -)	51	88	115	4	258
	19.8%	34.1%	44.6%	1.6%	100%
600 – 899 (Average +)	10	21	31	0	62
	16.1%	33.9%	50.0%	.0%	100%
More than 900 (High)	15	15	16	1	
	31.9%	31.9%	34.0%	2.1%	100%
Total	140	236	270	14	660
	21.2%	35.8%	40.9%	2.1%	100%

This table showed the percentage of male's weight perception towards their own bodyweight. The data was classified by the household income level of South Korean male respondents. Male respondents with household income not more than 299 ten thousand Korean Won (2,990,000 KRW) per month selected to maintain their own current weight with 38.2 percent, followed by the desire to lose weight 36.9 percent and the desire to gain weight 21.8 percent. Respondents with 300 – 599 ten thousand Korean Won (3,000,000 – 5,990,000 KRW) selected the desire to lose weight choice most with 44.6 percent. The desire to maintain weight ranked second

² The household income level used in this part based on the information obtained in 2007 from Statistics Korea, the central government organization for statistics.

with 34.1 percent and the desire to gain weight ranked in third place or 19.8 percent. Male respondents having household income between 600 – 899 ten thousand Korean won (6,000,000 – 8,990,000 KRW) answered the wanting to lose weight choice in the first place with 50.0 percent. The second place was the desire to maintain weight choice which was counted 33.9 percent while the desire to gain weight choice was selected in third place or 16.1 percent. Respondents with high household income level (over 9,000,000 KRW) per month chose the desire to lose weight choice most with 34.0 per cent while the desire to maintain and gain weight choice were answered equally, 31.9 percent.

Only the respondents with household income not more than 2,990,000 Korean Won who chose the desire to maintain weight to be the first choice for them while the respondents from other household income level had the desire to lose their weights most. Respondents from household income level not more than 2,990,000 Korean Won answered the “don’t care” choice most with 64.3 percent of people answered the same choice.

h) The frequency and percentage of female's weight preference classified by household income level per month

Table 14: The frequency and percentage of female's weight preference classified by household income level per month

Household income (Ten thousand Korean Won)	Weight preference				Total
	Gain	Maintain	Lose	Don't care	
Not more than 299 (Low)	29	118	233	15	395
	7.3%	29.9%	59.0%	3.8%	100%
300 - 599 (Average -)	16	73	164	3	256
	6.2%	28.5%	64.1%	1.2%	100%
600 - 899 (Average +)	5	22	38	0	65
	7.7%	33.8%	58.5%	.0%	100%
More than 900 (High)	2	13	36	3	54
	3.7%	24.1%	66.7%	5.6%	100%
Total	52	226	471	21	770
	0.7%	29.4%	61.2%	2.7%	100%

In the table 14, the table showed the percentage of female's weight perception towards their own bodyweight. The data was classified by the household income level of South Korean female respondents. Female respondents in the family with household income not more than 299 ten thousand Korean Won (2,990,000 KRW) per month wanted to lose weight most, 59.0 percent. The second choice was the desire to maintain weight which counted 29.9 percent, and the third choice was the desire to gain weight with 7.3 percent. The majority of female respondents from household with income level between 300 – 599 ten thousand Korean Won (3,000,000 – 5,990,000 KRW) desired to lose their weight counted 64.1 percent. Others from the same income level selected the desire to gain weight choice 28.5 percent. The third choice was the desire to gain weight selected 6.2 percent. The respondents with household income

between 600 – 899 ten thousand Korean won (6,000,000 – 8,990,000 KRW) answered the desire to lose weight choice 58.5 percent followed by the desire to maintain weight choice with 33.8 percent and the desire to gain weight choice, 7.7 percent. Female respondents from high household income level selected the desire to lose weight choice 66.7 percent. The desire to maintain weight choice was selected 24.1 percent and the desire to gain weight choice showed up with 3.7 percent.

Female respondents of all household income level chose the desire to lose weight choice as their most wanted choice unlike male case. The number of people answering the “don’t care” choice appeared most in household level not more than 2,990,000 Korean Won which was 71.4 percent of all who answered “don’t care” choice.

4.1.1.3 The result of data analysis about perception towards male ideal body shape



Figure 5: Male body shapes from KGSS 2007 questionnaire

a) The frequency and percentage of male ideal body shape according to male perception classified by age range

Table 15: The frequency and percentage of male ideal body shape according to male perception classified by age range

Age Range	Male Ideal Body Shape				Total
	No.1	No.2	No.3	No.4	
18-25	1	17	66	4	88
	1.1%	19.3%	75.0%	4.5%	100.0%
26-39	0	42	160	13	215
	.0%	19.5%	74.4%	6.1%	100.0%
40-50	0	28	117	12	157
	.0%	17.8%	74.5%	7.6%	100.0%
50-60	2	6	64	12	84
	2.4%	7.1%	76.2%	14.3%	100.0%
61 and above	1	27	64	22	114
	0.9	23.7	56.1	19.3	100.0%
Total	4	120	471	63	658
	0.6	18.2	71.6	9.6	100.0%

In table 15, most of South Korean male respondents in age range between 18 – 25 years old selected the body shape in choice number 3 (normal -) to be their ideal body shape with 75.0 percent. The second choice, 19.3 percent, for respondents in this age group was the body shape number 2 (normal +) and the third choice was the body shape number 4 (thin), 4.5 percent. Majority of male respondents, 74.4 percent, with age 26 - 39 years old chose the body shape in choice number 3 (normal -) to be their ideal body shape followed by the body shape number 2 (normal +) with 19.5 percent and the body shape number 4 (thin), 6.1 percent. Males in age 40 – 50 year old selected the body shape in choice number 3 (normal -) most, with 74.5 percent. The second choice chosen by the same age group was the body shape number 2 (normal +) counted 17.8 percent, the third choice was the body shape number 4 (thin) 7.6 percent. The respondents, 50 – 60 years old, answered choice number 3 (normal -) most, 76.2 percent. The body shape number 4 (thin) was selected second place with 14.3 percent and the body shape in choice number 2 (normal -) selected in third place or 7.1 percent. The elders, aged 61 years old and above, selected the body shape in choice number 3 (normal -) to be their first choice with 56.1 percent followed by the body shape in choice number 2 (normal +), 23.7 percent, and the body shape in choice number 4 (thin) was selected 19.3 percent.

The body shape from choice number 3 (normal -) was selected to be the first choice of the respondents from all age range. The body shape in choice number 2 was selected in second rank of every age group excepted for the respondents from age group 50 – 60 years old who preferred the body shape from choice number 4 (thin) to the body shape from choice number 2 (normal +).

b) The frequency and percentage of male ideal body shape according to female perception classified by age range

Table 16: The frequency and percentage of male ideal body shape according to female perception classified by age range

Age Range	Male Ideal Body Shape				Total
	No.1	No.2	No.3	No.4	
18-25	0	15	64	8	87
	.0%	17.2%	73.6%	9.2%	100.0%
26-39	0	51	169	20	240
	.0%	21.3%	70.4%	8.3%	100.0%
40-50	2	36	148	16	202
	1.0%	17.8%	73.3%	7.9%	100.0%
50-60	0	23	65	7	95
	.0%	24.2%	68.4%	7.4%	100.0%
61 and above	7	32	65	41	145
	4.8%	22.1%	44.8%	28.3%	100.0%
Total	9	157	511	92	769
	1.2%	20.4%	66.4%	12.0%	100.0%

According to the table, female respondent in age 18 – 25 years old preferred male body shape in choice number 3 (normal -) most, 73.6 percent. The body shape selected in second place was the body shape number 2 (normal +) with 17.2 percent and the body shape in choice number 4 (thin) appeared in third place or 9.2 percent. Female respondents from age group 26 – 39 years old answered male body shape in choice number 3 (normal -) most, 70.4 percent. The body shape in choice number 4 (thin) was chosen in the third place or 8.3 percent. Majority of 40 – 50 years old respondents answered male body shape number 3 (normal -) with 73.3 percent, the body shape in choice number 2 (normal +) answered in

second place or 17.8 percent. The body shape from choice number 4 (thin) selected 7.9 percent, in the third rank. The body shape in choice number 3 (normal -) was selected in first place, 68.4 percent, from female respondents in age group 50 – 60 years old. The body shape in choice number 2 (normal +) was selected in second place, 24.2 percent and the body shape number 4 (thin) was selected in third place with 7.9 percent. The female elders (61 years old and above) answer the male body shape in choice number 3 (normal -) to be male ideal body shape most with 44.8 percent. The body shape number 4 (thin) was selected in second rank or 28.3 percent and the body shape number 2 (normal +) was answered 22.1 percent, in third rank.

All female respondents preferred male body shape in choice number 3 (normal -) most, followed by the body shape in choice number 2 (normal +) and the body shape in choice number 4 (thin). Except for female respondents in age 61 and above who preferred male body shape from choice number 4 (thin) to number 2 (normal +).

4.1.1.4 The result of data analysis about perception towards female ideal body shape

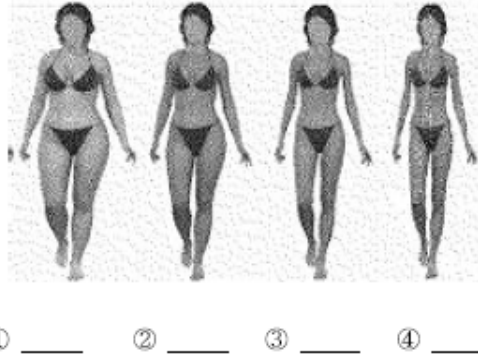


Figure 6: Female body shape from KGSS questionnaire

a) The frequency and percentage of female ideal body shape according to male perception classified by age range

Table 17: The frequency and percentage of female ideal body shape according to male perception classified by age range

Age Range	Female Ideal Body Shape				Total
	No.1	No.2	No.3	No.4	
18-25	1	4	71	12	88
	1.1%	4.6%	80.7%	13.6%	100.0%
26-39	1	47	151	16	215
	0.5%	21.9%	70.2%	7.4%	100.0%
40-50	0	41	106	9	156
	.0%	26.3%	67.9%	5.8%	100.0%
50-60	1	20	58	5	84
	1.2%	23.8%	69.0%	6.0%	100.0%
61 and above	0	31	68	15	114
	.0%	27.2%	59.6%	13.2%	100.0%
Total	3	143	454	57	657
	0.4%	21.8%	69.1%	8.7%	100.0%

According to the table 17, the body shape selected by male respondents to be female ideal body shape in top rank, 80.7 percent, was the body shape in choice number 3(normal -). The body shape in choice number 4 (thin) was selected in second place or 13.6 percent and female body shape from choice number 2 (normal +) was chosen in the third place with 4.6 percent. The female ideal body shape for male respondents in age 26 – 39 years old was the body shape in the choice number 3 (normal -), selected in first place with 70.2 percent. The second place was the body shape from choice number 2 (normal +), 21.9 percent. The third place was from choice number 4 (thin) with 7.4 percent. Male respondent from age range between 40 – 50 years old preferred female body shape in choice number 3 (normal -) most. The choice was selected by 69.7 percent of respondents in this age group. The female body shape which was selected in second place was the body shape in choice number 2 (normal +) with 26.3 percent and the body shape chosen in third place was the body shape number 4 (thin), 5.8 percent. Respondents from age range between 50 – 60 years old 69.0 percent, the majority, chose female body shape in choice number 3 to be their female ideal body shape. The body shape selected in second place by respondent from this age group was the body shape from choice number 2 (normal +), 23.8 percent, followed by the body shape from choice number 4 (thin) 6.0 percent. Male respondents in age 61 years old and above chose female body shape in choice number 3 (normal -) 59.6 percent, the body shape in choice number 2 (normal +) 27.2 percent, and body shape in choice number 4 (thin) 13.2 percent.

Majority of male respondents, from all age group, voted female body shape from choice number 3 (normal -) to be the top choice, followed by the body shape from choice number 2 (normal +) and the body shape from choice number 4 (thin).

Excepted for males in 18 – 25 years old group who chose female body shape from choice number 4 (thin) more than choice number 2 (normal -).

b) The frequency and percentage of female ideal body shape according to female perception classified by age range

Table 18: The frequency and percentage of female ideal body shape according to female perception classified by age range

Age Range	Female Ideal Body Shape				Total
	No.1	No.2	No.3	No.4	
18-25	0	3	63	21	87
	.0%	3.5%	72.4%	24.1%	100.0%
26-39	2	20	190	28	240
	0.8%	8.3%	79.2%	11.7%	100.0%
40-50	1	28	155	18	202
	0.5%	13.9%	76.7%	8.9%	100.0%
50-60	0	28	59	8	95
	.0%	29.5%	62.1%	8.4%	100.0%
61 and above	4	39	70	32	145
	2.8%	26.9%	48.3%	22.0%	100.0%
Total	7	118	537	107	769
	1.0%	15.3%	69.8%	13.9%	100.0%

In the table, female respondents in age 18 – 25 years old voted for female body shape in choice number 3 (normal -) most, 72.4 percent while body shape from choice number 4 (thin) was selected in second place with 24.1 percent and the body shape from choice number 2 (normal -) selected 3.5 percent. 26 – 39 years old female respondent also vote for body shape in choice number 3 (normal -) most with 79.2 percent followed by the body shape number 4

(thin) 11.7 percent and the body shape number 2 (normal +) 8.3 percent. For female respondents from age range between 40 – 50 years old selected female body shape number 3 (normal -) in the first rank, the second rank was the body shape in choice number 2 (normal +) with 13.9 percent. The third rank was female body shape number 4 (thin), 8.9 percent. Female body shape from choice number 3 (normal -) was voted most by respondents in age 50 – 60 years old, 62.1 percent. The body shape from choice number 2 (normal +) and number 4 (thin) was selected respectively with 29.5 percent and 8.4 percent. Female elders, 61 years old and above, selected female body shape number 3 (normal -) in the first rank or 48.3 percent, followed by the body shape number 2 (normal +) 26.9 percent, and body shape number 4 (thin) 22.0 percent.

Majority of female respondents from all age group voted female body shape number 3 (normal -) to be their ideal body shape. Respondents from age range between 18 – 25 and 26 – 39 years old preferred body shape number 4 (thin) to body shape number 2 (normal +) while the other from older age group preferred body shape number 2 (normal +) to number 4 (thin).

4.1.2 Hypothesis Testing

This part aims to find the current situation of the ideal body shape of South Korean people divided by gender, age range, living area, education level, and income in order to identify the ideal body shape of South Koreans in a present time. Also, to compare the South Korean current ideal body shape to the traditional ideal body shape of Korean people to see the conversion and to understand more about the ideal body shape situation in South Korea.

Hypothesis 1: South Korean both male and female desired to lose their weights.

Table 19: The frequency and percentage of male and female's perception towards weight preference classified by sex

Sex	Weight preference				Total
	Gain	maintain	lose	Don't care	
Male	140	236	270	14	660
	21.2%	35.8%	40.9%	2.1%	100.0%
Female	52	226	471	21	770
	6.7%	29.3%	61.1%	2.7%	100.0%
Total	192	462	741	35	1430
	13.4%	32.29%	51.78%	0.04%	100.0%

In table 19, found most number of sample group desire to lose weight. Male respondents answered wanting to lose weight 270 people or 40.9 percent while female answered 471 people, 61.1 percent. The experiment result of hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis 2: South Koreans, living in a big city, have more desire to lose their weight than South Koreans who live in other areas.

Table 20: The frequency and percentage of sample group's perception towards weight preference classified by living place

Living place	Weight preference				Total
	Gain	Maintain	Lose	Don't care	
Big city	56	130	208	9	403
	13.9%	32.3%	51.6%	2.2%	100%
Suburbs	40	124	224	4	392
	10.2%	31.6%	57.1%	1.0%	100.0%
Small C.	64	129	245	7	445
	14.4%	29.0%	55.1%	1.6%	100.0%
Country V.	30	67	60	13	170
	17.6%	39.4%	35.35	7.6%	100.0%
Farm	1	10	4	1	16
	6.3%	62.5%	25.0%	6.3%	100.0%
Total	192	462	741	35	1430
	13.4%	32.3%	51.8%	2.45	100.0%

According to table 20, most of respondents living in big city, suburbs, and small city wanted to lose weight while respondents from country village, farm mostly wanted to maintain their weight. The experiment result of hypothesis is denied since people living in suburbs, and small cities have more frequency which means they wanted to lose weight (57.1 percent and 55.1 percent respectively) than people living in a big city (51.6 percent).

Hypothesis 3.1: The different perception towards male ideal body shape of South Koreans related to age range.

H₀: The different perception towards male ideal body shape of South Koreans not related to age range.

H₁: The different perception towards male ideal body shape of South Koreans related to age range.

Table 21: The relation of sample group's perception towards male ideal body shape and age range

Age Range	Male Ideal Body Shape				Total
	No.1	No.2	No.3	No.4	
18-25	1	32	130	12	175
	0.5%	18.3%	74.3%	6.9%	100%
26-39	0	93	329	33	455
	.0%	20.4%	72.3%	7.3%	100%
40-50	2	64	265	28	359
	0.6%	17.8%	73.8%	7.8%	100%
51-60	2	29	129	19	179
	1.1%	16.2%	72.1%	10.6%	100%
61 and Above	8	58	129	63	258
	3.1%	22.3%	49.8%	24.3%	100%
Total	13	276	982	155	1426
	0.9%	19.3%	68.8%	10.8%	100%
Chi-square Tests					
	Value	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)			
Pearson Chi-square	101.265		0.000		

In table 21, Chi-square value from the analyzed result of the relation between male ideal body shape and age range is 101.265 with significant value equal 0.000,

lower than set value 0.05. The experiment result of H_0 is denied. Meaning the different perception towards male ideal body shape of South Korean people related to age range is significant statistically at 0.05.

Hypothesis 3.2: The different perception towards female ideal body shape of South Koreans related to age range.

H_0 : The different perception towards female ideal body shape of South Koreans not related to age range.

H_1 : The different perception towards female ideal body shape of South Koreans related to age range.

Table 22: The relation of sample group's perception towards female ideal body shape and age range

Age Range	Female ideal body shape				Total
	No.1	No.2	No.3	No.4	
18-25	1	7	134	33	175
	0.6%	4.0%	76.6%	18.8%	100%
26-39	3	67	341	44	455
	0.7%	14.7%	74.9%	9.7%	100%
40-50	1	69	261	27	358
	0.3%	19.3%	72.9%	7.5%	100%
51-60	1	48	117	13	179
	0.5%	26.8%	65.4%	7.3%	100%
61 and Above	4	70	137	47	259
	1.65	27.05	53.3%	18.1%	100%
Total	10	261	990	164	1425
	0.7%	18.3%	69.5%	11.5%	100%

Chi-square Tests					
	Value	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)			
Pearson Chi-square	92.388		0.000		

According to table 22, Chi-square value from the analyzed result of the relation between female ideal body shape and age range is 92.388 with significant value equal 0.000, lower than set value 0.05. The experiment result of H_0 is denied. Meaning the different perception towards female ideal body shape of South Korean people related to age range is significant statistically at 0.05.

Hypothesis 4: The ideal body shape of South Korean male is a slim body shape.

Table 23: The relation of sample group's perception towards male ideal body shape classified by sex

Sex	Male ideal body shape				Total
	No.1	No.2	No.3	No.4	
male	4	120	471	63	658
	0.6%	18.2%	71.4%	9.5%	100.0%
female	9	157	511	92	769
	1.2%	20.4%	66.3%	11.9%	100.0%
Total	13	277	982	155	1427
	0.9%	19.4%	68.8%	10.9%	100.0%

According to the table number 23, majority of sample group, males and females, preferred male body shape in choice number 3, male 71.4 percent and female 66.3 percent. The experiment result of hypothesis is accepted. South Korean males and females accepted the body shape from choice number 3 (normal -) to be their male ideal body shape. Male body shape number was selected in second place by both males and females, 18.2 percent for male and 20.4 percent for female. Body shape number 4 (thin) was ranked the third by male 9.5 percent and female 11.9 percent.

Hypothesis 5: The ideal body shape of South Korean female is a slim body shape.

Table 24: The relation of male and female perception towards female ideal body shape classified by sex

Sex	Female ideal body shape				Total
	No.1	No.2	No.3	No.4	
male	3	143	454	57	657
	0.5%	21.7	68.8%	8.6%	100.0%
female	7	118	537	107	769
	0.9	15.3%	69.6%	13.9%	100.0%
Total	10	261	991	164	1426
	0.7%	18.2%	69.3%	11.5%	100.0%

According to the table number 24, majority of sample group, males and females, preferred the female body shape in choice number 3 which male counted 68.8 percent and female 69.6 percent. The experiment result of hypothesis is accepted. In male case, they chose body shape from choice number 3 (normal -) to be female ideal body shape with 68.8 percent while selected the normal (+) body shape to be the second place, 21.7 percent. Only 8.6 percent of men chose woman in the thin body shape as the ideal body shape. For female, they also considered body shape from choice number 3 (normal -) to be their ideal body shape for 69.6 percent, followed by the normal (+) body shape in the second rank, 15.3 percent. 13.9 percent of South Korean women chose the thin body shape.

To sum up, according to the findings of hypothesis testing, Most of the male (40.9 percent) and female (61.1 percent) respondents wanted to lose bodyweight. Majority of respondents, not only from the big city, had the desire to lose weight. In addition, respondents from suburb areas and from small cities had more percentage wanting to lose weight than respondents from the big city (from suburb area 57.1 percent and from small city area 55.1 percent, the percentage of respondents from big city wanting to lose weight was 51.6 percent). People from country villages and farms preferred to maintain their weight. The difference of perception towards male ideal body shape was related to the age range. Respondents aged between 18 – 25 years old had more proportion in male body shape number 3 (normal -) when compared to the results of other respondents from the older age ranges. In other age ranges, the proportion of male body shape number 2 (normal +) was increased. However, respondents in age 61 and above voted for male body shape number 4 (thin) more than the body shape number 2 (normal -), 24.3 percent to 22.8 percent. The different perception towards female ideal body shape case also related to the age range. Respondents from age range between 18 – 25 years old also had more proportion in female body shape number 3 (normal -) most with 76.6 percent. This age group also preferred body shape from choice number 4 (thin) to body shape from choice number 2 (normal +) while other respondents answered in contrast. The elders preferred having more flesh to being skinny. The male ideal body shape voted by respondents from both sexes was the body shape number 3 (normal -) so called the slim body shape, male 71.4 percent and female 66.3 percent. The female ideal body shape voted by all respondents was the body shape from choice number 3 (normal -) or the slim body shape as well with selected 68.8 percent by males and 69.6 percent by females.

4.2 Qualitative research

In this section, the researcher proposes to identify the significant meaning of ideal body shape, as one of the key success factor in achieving goals (the meaning of goal in this research described as any mission of one's life, the mission to complete the needs which mostly related to the competition, not specified to one's final goal). To use the meaning as the supporting idea, explaining the reason why a body shape is preferred by most South Korean people called "the ideal body shape". To point out the vital component made the preferred body shape became the "ideal" body shape. The researcher divided the reviewed data into two parts as follows:

4.2.1 The ideal body shape as a tool in the preparing process for achieving one's goal

4.2.2 The ideal body shape as a key success factor made one succeeded

4.2.1 The ideal body shape as a tool in the preparing process for achieving one's goal.

This section the collected data were:

- Studies by South Korean researchers
- Articles in South Korean newspapers and South Korean web logs

The main source of the data came from online information sources. The researcher aims to analyze the collected data by using the related theories/concepts;

the culture diffusion, objectification theory and self-objectification theory to describe the South Korean ideal body shape.

In South Korean contemporary society, being thin or struggling to get the ideal body shape is a hot issue. Most South Koreans, particularly adolescents, struggle with weight issues regardless of sex. There are many cases exposed in the South Korean media showing that South Koreans mostly women died trying to lose weight:

For example, a South Korean girl in her 20s had an operation to control obesity by cutting out part of the stomach to bring her weight down from 90 kilograms, unfortunately, she died. According to her parents, she wanted to be slim and they agreed to her having the operation because they wish her to be happy with her looks afterwards, without knowing the dangers of this surgery³. In addition, a number of South Korean women have died in recent years while undergoing this surgery⁴. The second case, a girl, last name Oh, jumped from her 15th storey apartment to death since she could not stand gaining so much weight.⁵

³ NAVER, **Korean Women Live to Be Thin and Slim** [Online], 18 August 2010. Available from: <http://www.blog.naver.com>

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

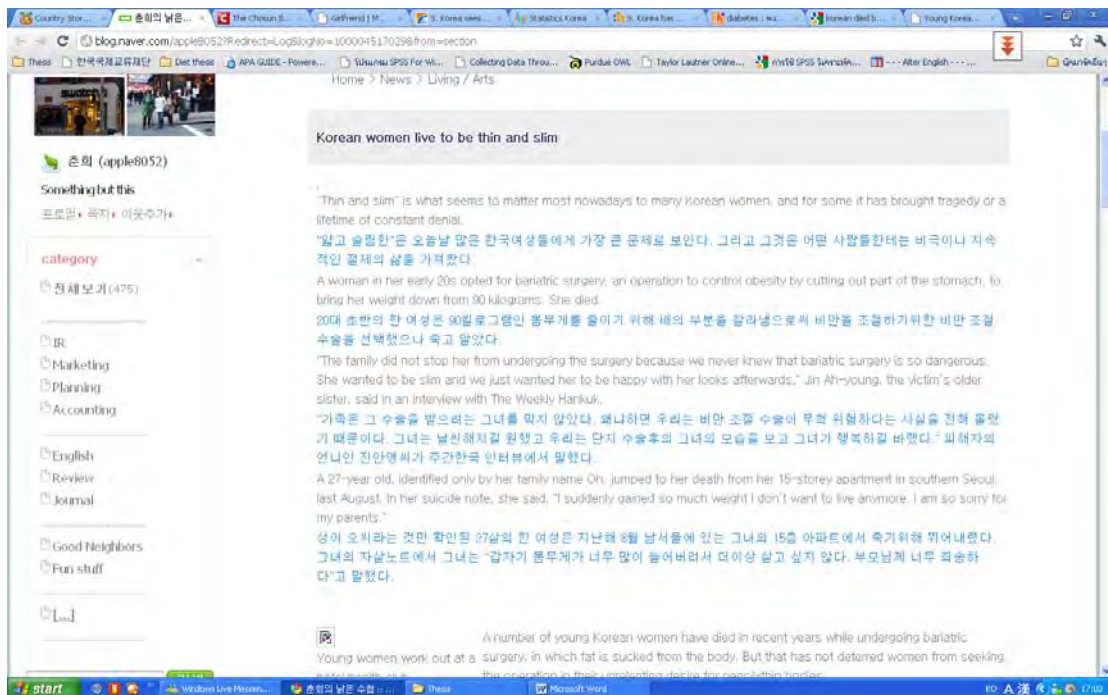


Figure 7: Website reported the deaths of South Korean female adolescents because of concerning too much about their body weights

The two sample cases of South Korean females who died from the desire to be in slim body shape, the body shape considered to be the ideal body shape in South Korean perception, represented the result of objectifying female ideal body shape in South Korean culture. The female body shape objectification, selecting the slim body shape as an ideal body shape for women, boosted up the will of South Korean women to achieve that ideal body shape. As a result, South Korean women started to objectify their own body shape. Some chose dieting to achieve the ideal body shape, some took dieting pills, and some applied the two methods at the same time. However, for those who could not follow the dieting schedule or were not satisfied with dieting result, they chose cosmetic surgery which was more dangerous compared to those first two techniques. The chosen cases pointed out how too much stress due to self-

objectification situation can arise. The first South Korean girl was willing to take any risk to get in the ideal body shape. The second girl, chose to sacrifice her life since she could not slim down her body shape.

From disclosed cases, together with the gradually growing of South Korean dieting market to around 2 trillion won (1.7 billion dollars)⁶ recently, we can assume how the pursuit of thinness affects lives of South Koreans. It is not only being thin to look beautiful. Thinness, to South Koreans, also has a meaning of a key success factor in achieving goals, as it is reflected in opinion expression of South Koreans. South Korean people believe a thin ideal body shape to be tool helping them to achieve their goals whether in their career or love lives. There are cases selected to support the ideal body shape as a key success factor idea listed below:

Case 1: According to the survey of AGB Nielson Media Research, questioned 500 South Korean men in 20s to 30s, showed that 86 percent of respondents believed outward appearance is important for their success. They agreed on healthy body and well-balance figure could increase their competitiveness. Only 43.8 percent answered they are happy with their current bodies. The way respondents chose to improve their bodies are controlling food intake, exercising regularly and dieting.

Case 2: According to the article from South Korean newspaper Joongang Daily, students who want to apply for the dance academy or dance program in a

⁶ Korea Joongang Daily, **Heavyweights Rebel Against Model-Thin Beauty Ideal** [Online], 19 August 2010. Available from: <http://www.joongangdaily.joins.com/article/view>

faculty of university the most important criteria are ability and appearance. Those applicants with best looks are usually the most successful. As Cho Yun-ra a professor of Chungnam National University said “I think the sense of thinner and taller people have an advantage because they could display dance technique better. When they lift up their legs, it shows more beautiful line as well as when they jump, they can jump higher since they weigh less”. For students, driven by teachers and parents, are eager to look beautiful and thin as much as possible. One female modern ballet student said:

“Almost everyone dances well but without exceptional skill you have to look good to stand out and to be selected”

“Every single student in school adopted special treatment for losing weight to appease their professor.”

Methods they choose to lose weight are prescription drugs, oriental medicines, acupuncture massage etc. which are expensive. One of ballet student said that she along with her classmates cannot help but to do it even though they knew it’s ruining their health. However, the most important thing for her and her classmates at the moment is a guaranteed future (on the stage)⁷.

Case 3: A poll by Career, a job listing website questioned 1,124 South Korean college students showed that respondents believed family wealth can seriously

⁷ Korea Joongang Daily, **While Their Friends Study, Dancers Battle to Look Thin** [Online], 18 August 2010. Available from: <http://www.joonangdaily.joins.com/article/view.asp?aid=2917118>

improve one's job prospects, make them able to spend more money on studying abroad or private education and help them to gain an affluent position that they can improve their looks via cosmetic surgery or costly diet⁸. If we saw this poll for the first time, we possibly do not notice anything. Lee Ju-ri who tried to apply for a flight attendant job nearly a year told to Joongang Daily that "Looks can be quite important in the flight attendant hiring process. Some girls had costly plastic surgery for more sophisticated, finer looks to get a job"⁹.

According to these articles, there is a linkage between the ideal body shape and the potential of achieving success in South Korean perception. Besides the feeling of being accepted by others in society, South Koreans also thought about being in ideal body shape could support them, the ideal body shape was considered as one of the key success factor in achieving South Koreans' goals. The idea of having good educational attainment, to have graduated from a foreign country and behaving morally was not enough to be successful. A good personality, and having the ideal body shape was counted superior even in the case of men. The objectified body shape in South Korea was applied to any competition particularly job applications. The entrance exam for the dance academy also included physical appearance as one evaluation principle. Moreover, the ideal body shape was determined to be one factor when seeking a partner.

⁸ Korea Joongang Daily, **Graduates' Dreams Meet Grim Reality** [Online], 18 August 2010. Available from: <http://www.joongangdaily.joins.com/article/views.asp?aid=2919446>

⁹ Ibid.

The ideal body shape also affects South Korean's love life. In a popular TV program about matchmaking, one male coed college student said "Height is a measure of competitiveness and I think a man with short height is a loser." In the same program, a woman also expressed "A man must stand at least 1.80 centimeters tall to be a potential date for me". Because of her answer a male hoping to date her had to give up since his height is lower than her expectations¹⁰.

That woman's expression matched the survey result which questioned 2,550 adults, indicated 73.8 percent of female put height as a priority when selecting a date partner. Another survey by Haitai Confectionary and Foods Co., Ltd. in June 2004, also showed the ideal height of South Korean men is 1.80 meters with weight 70 kilograms while for women it's 1.60 meters and 45 kilograms¹¹. By using the BMI formula to calculate, finding a result from those ideal body height and weight, the ideal South Korea male BMI is 21.6 (normal weight) and for female 16.5 (underweight).

The more interesting thing is among cosmetic surgery clinics, they selected slogans to promote their clinic and in the meantime to persuade South Koreans to undergo cosmetic surgery in an attractive way. For instance, Clinic W: a cosmetic surgery clinic in Busan uses the slogan "Small face, lovely breasts" and "4W; Warm service, Well facility, Wise experience and Winner life"¹².

¹⁰ The KoreaTime, **Tall Man Industry Thriving** [Online], 18 August 2010. Available from: http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2009/11/117_56421.html

¹¹ NAVER, **Korean Women Live to Be Thin and Slim** [Online], 18 August 2010. Available from: <http://www.blog.naver.com>

¹² The Grand Narrative, **Giving the Consumer What She Wants? Korean Women's Role in the Westernization of the Korean Media** [Online], 19 August 2010. Available from: <http://www.thegrandnarrative.com>



Figure 8: W Clinic website

Another clinic, Jeong Won plastic surgery, uses the slogan “Change your life with JW”¹³. The clinics sell the concept of surgery offering a more successful life to clients.

¹³ JW Clinic, **Clinic’s Slogan** [Online], 21 August 2010. Available from: <http://www.jwbeauty.co.kr/eng.php>



Figure 9: JW Clinic's advertisement in Apgujeong subway station

The increasing use of cosmetic surgery and the advancement of medical techniques were the factors intensifying the body shape objectification in South Korea. It supported self-objectification trends in South Korea beside the commercials of mass media. It made the self-objectification process more convenient. If they have the money South Koreans can achieved the ideal body shape. Nevertheless, for some who cannot pay, they had to face more and more comparison in every aspect of daily life. Consequently, they could be more stressful and depressive apart from the usual

stresses; economic hardship, domestic violence etc¹⁴. The feeling of stress could lead to the risks of physical ill health, mental ill health and could even increase the suicide rate of the country.

The media is a mediator exposing and repeating the idea of ideal body shape across the country. The idea considered the genuine body shape of South Koreans as a flawed body and Caucasian body is ideal one¹⁵ also took great part making South Koreans eager to change/improve their bodies to be better. South Korean models have been reconstructed to meet the prevailing standards of beauty which, if not totally white, are at least a melding of Asian and Westerners features; Caucasian look¹⁶.



Figure 10: South Korean cartoon and advertisement represented the Caucasian look

¹⁴ The Hankyoreh, **South Korea has Top Suicide Rate among OECD country: Report** [Online], 5 October 2010. Available from: http://www.english.hani.co.kr/arti/english_edition/e_national/158160.html

¹⁵ The Grand Narrative, **Korean Women, Part 3 (final): A Caucasian Ideal?** [Online], 19 August 2010. Available from: <http://www.thegrandnarrative.com>

¹⁶ Ibid.

In addition, the accelerant factor lies deep within every single South Korean for very long time is the influence of neo-Confucianism¹⁷. Because of neo-Confucianism, South Koreans eye family as a smallest unit part of the society. The sense of individual even though already introduced to South Koreans, it cannot completely remove the conformable sense rooted in South Koreans' minds. Particularly at the present time South Koreans have experienced the outside world through globalization. South Koreans are Americanized. The coming of Americans to South Korea, characterized them (Caucasians) as glamorous and sophisticated¹⁸.

Seeing Americans with a glamorous, sophisticated sense, could be an impulse for South Korean women of a low political and economic status¹⁹ to change to empower themselves via changing their appearances to be in a better position. According to ideas of conformism rooted in Confucianism, it helps boosting up the process of changing the current social trend²⁰ e.g. dieting to get ideal body shape trend, within South Korea particularly in the current competitive times.

¹⁷ The Grand Narrative, **Women's Bodies in Korea's Consumer Society, Part 1: Their Neo Confucian Heritage** [Online], 19 August 2010. Available from: <http://www.thegrandnarrative.com>

¹⁸ The Grand Narrative, **Giving the Consumer What She Wants? Korean Women's Role in the Westernization of the Korean Media** [Online], 19 August 2010. Available from: <http://www.the-grandnarrative.com>

¹⁹ The Grand Narrative, **Did Eve Have an S-line? Women as Walking Alphabets in South Korea** [Online], 19 August 2010. Available from: <http://www.thegrandnarrative.com>

²⁰ The Grand Narrative, **The Alphabetization of Korean Women's Body Type: Origins** [Online], 19 August 2010. Available from: <http://www.thegrandnarrative.com>

4.2.2 The ideal body shape as a key success factor made one succeeded his/her goal

This part the data also collected from online sources, similar to the data in 4.2.1 section. The gathered articles were in topics about the ideal body shape that made one successful to be used as the sample case supporting the ideal body shape as one of the key success factor ideas in South Korea.

Case 1: In a news column of website Nate.com²¹ stated that on April 30, 2010 the MBC's celebrity news program called "Section TV Celebrity Report" came up with the topic "Stars who became a hot topic because of diet". It ranked T.O.P from boy band "Big Bang" in the 11th rank after a picture of him being overweight was shown and became the talk of the town. However, prior to his debut as a singer, he was ordered by YG (the entertainment company T.O.P belongs to) to lose weight before his debut. Owing to this T.O.P has to shed more than 20 kilograms of his bodyweight in 40 days.



Figure 11: T.O.P's body shape before and after the singer debut

²¹ NATE, "빅뱅" 탐, 20 kg 다이어트 전 비만사진 "충격" [Online], 29 October 2010. Available from: <http://www.news.nate.com/view/20100501n06573?mid=e0102>

Case 2: According to the Chosun Ilbo²², Cho Young-Sun (40) gained a youthful body and fame by exercising. She said that after she started exercising, her life, and her whole world changed. Cho has two children and after giving birth to her second son she could not stop eating and she found herself go to 75 kilograms. Also, she experienced pains in her neck, shoulders and waist. Cho, at that time, was very depressed. She started avoiding going out whenever it is possible. A doctor at an Oriental medicine clinic in her neighborhood told her she was suffering from postpartum weakness, which had caused her muscles to atrophy and her bones to warp out of shape. The way to remedy the bone problem was chiropractice, while exercise could build the muscles back up. The clinic stressed that exercise is a must to help women recover from the condition. Cho immediately registered at a fitness center near her house, starting out not with the idea of losing weight but in the hope of eliminating the pain. She set a rule, no matter what happened that day she would spend more than two hours a day exercising. After two months, the pain in her shoulder and waist faded to the point where it became bearable. After another month, the pain went away, and she started to lose weight. But she wanted to go further and get back to the shape of her single days. She started to buy books and eat properly. The result is now there for all to see on the Web. One year after she started to exercise, she got down to 55 kilograms, and another seven to eight months later, she was closing in on her goal of 50 kilograms. "In the old days, I saw a funny-looking woman with a paunch and

²² The Chosun Ilbo, **Middle-Aged Woman Gains Youthful Figure and Fame** [Online], 18 August 2010. Available from: [http:// www.english.chosun.com/site/data/html](http://www.english.chosun.com/site/data/html)

sagging buttocks in the mirror, but these days I have found the meaning and vitality of life" said Cho²³.



Figure 12: Cho Young-sun after achieved her ideal body shape and got fame

There is a similar case of South Korean mother who changed her life due to exercising. Jung Da-Yeon is a woman who started the momjjang (perfect body shape) fad in South Korea²⁴. Jung was formerly a housewife, but she became famous after losing weight and gaining sexy body shape through physical training and exercise. She already wrote two diet books which became the top-selling book in Japan. In addition, she also released a DVD called momjjang diet. She as well was invited by the director himself to play a role in a TV series Aquarius morning drama as a fitness trainer²⁵.



Figure 13: Jung Da-yeon body shape before and after becoming famous

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ The Chosun Ilbo, **Jung Da-Yeon Released Workout DVD in Japan** [Online], 18 August 2010. Available from: http://www.english.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2007/06/18/2007061861009.html

²⁵ Asian Fitness Women, **Jung Dayeon** [Online], 26 September 2010. Available from: <http://www.asian-fitness-women.blogspot.com/2009/04/jung-dayeon.html>

These articles show the proof of ideal body shape led person to his/her success. They were apparently accepted by their appearances, their body shapes. Some can argue that the ideal body shape is not very important for them and it is not a key success factor to achieve their goal since they have thing, more important than the precious shape, helping them success such as having expertise in a very specific area etc. It cannot be denied for other South Koreans, who have nothing but ordinary knowledge and common ability, to consider the ideal body shape as a key success factor for their lives. By wanting to be a successful person the hierarchy of needs by Abraham Maslow²⁶ can describe causes of the situation.

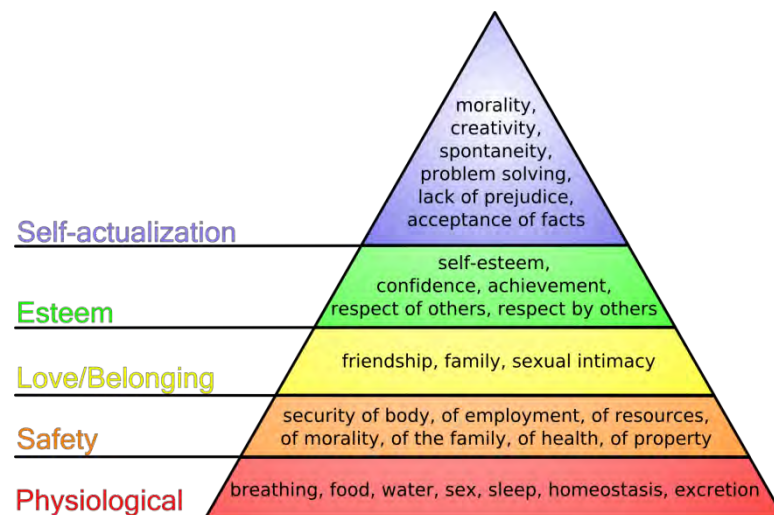


Figure 14: The hierarchy of needs by Abraham Maslow

Regarding the Maslow's Hierarchy of needs, human beings have needs divided into five steps. The basic first step is the needs of air, water, food, sleep, sex etc. Once they are alleviated they would think about other things. The second step, the safety

²⁶ Valued Base Management.net, **Hierarchy of Needs Framework** [Online], 5 November 2010. Available from: http://www.valuebasemanagement.net/leaders_maslow_hierarchy.html

needs, human beings need the security of home, family and freedom from fear. The next level, the love and belonging needs, human beings have a desire to belong to groups: clubs, work groups, religious groups, family, gangs etc. We need to feel loved and be accepted by others. Human beings need to be needed. The fourth step, esteem needs, there are two types of esteem needs. The first one is the self-esteem that results from competence or mastery of a task and the second is the attention and recognition from the others. In this level the wanting of admiration has the sense of the needs for power. The need for self-actualization is the fifth step of Maslow's hierarchy of needs concept. It is the desire to become more and more what one is, to become everything that one is capable of becoming. People who have everything can maximize their potential. They can seek knowledge, peace, esthetic experiences, self-fulfillment etc.

South Koreans in these articles were struggling at the second step and above step as classified by the concept. The wanting to be employed, be part of group in society, to be accepted were highlighted. South Koreans also have a traditional strong feeling of collectivism, being part of society and being accepted are vital. The key point of living in society successfully is to follow the social norm. Similar to the other sections in the society, in the issue of body shape, the ideal body shape in South Korea was also defined. In South Korea, being in ideal body shape not only extend the potential of successful job applications, being accepted and the ideal body shape also helps in finding a partner. Namely, the ideal body shape in South Korean's perception except for follow the social trend, it can be used as a tool helping people in achieving goals. The result from a number of surveys indicated to the same direction. We learnt

through the fact that many South Koreans are obviously struggling hard to get the ideal body shape to be accepted and seen as successful. South Koreans, at any cost, are ready to fight for it.

There was an example which this researcher experienced herself when talking with a South Korean male friend. He made fun of a South Korean woman who just about to go out to a mini mart near her house who had forgotten her make-up. Too much concern for her appearances makes South Korean women addicted to makeup. About the fashion of the clothes, it is very easy to define the fashion trend in South Korea. During the observation period of the researcher, it was summer season. All South Korean female adolescents and adults were keen to wear hot pants, T-shirts with sneakers or high heels. In one subway carriage, the researcher found five female adolescents wearing the same type of clothing hot pants and T-shirt with sneakers. It appears that South Korean people are very concerned about appearance especially for a woman.

Regarding to this section, we could understand the reasons to make South Korean people very concerned about their appearance. It is because South Koreans linked outward appearance to the success of their lives. The willing to be accepted and successful in life were the fundamental needs lie in every human being's mind according to the hierarchy of needs concept by Abraham Maslow.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The researcher focused on the study of the perception of South Korean people towards the ideal body shape, the definition, the factors and the meaning of ideal body shape through South Koreans' eyes.

Conclusion: results of the research

The ideal body shape of South Koreans has changed over time. In Korean traditional society, Koreans preferred the plump body shape reflecting their wealth and a good healthy condition. However, for people living in South Korean contemporary society, they identified the slim body shape of female and lean body with firm muscle (M-line: triceps and abdominal muscle) for male as their current ideal body shape. To study about this ideal body shape topic, researcher concerned all potential factors that could cause an effect on for understanding the situation more clearly. The researcher divided influential factors into two parts.

Firstly, the internal factor (government policies, economic system, and social trend) to understand South Korean internal environment. South Korea developing itself from traditional society (which based on the confucianism and the sense of collectivism) to be South Korea in a present time, that is more civilized, by mainly applying the American style (liberalism and capitalism) in the developing process. South Korea, by this change, altered itself in various aspects. For politic part, after the

liberalized of South Korea, the civilian governments came up with more clement policy especially for the mass media section. The oversea news or social trends, banned in the former times, are allowed to be broadcasted in South Korea gradually. For the economics, South Korea are now using the capitalism regime same as the United States. South Korean economic base changed, by the support of President Park Jung Hee, from agricultural to industrial base (especially IT section) remodeled the important factor of the country which afterwards it turned out to be great factor for improving South Korean's life condition. South Koreans' lifestyle also changed according to the effect from the change of first two factors. South Korean social trend was altered. Remodeling South Korean main fundamental factors to be more civilized by using American model, the idea of individualism was introduced to South Koreans.

After the remodeling, the situation of country became more competitive in every aspect; make a living, getting job even the opportunity in education, in order to achieve the goal each of them has to struggle by themselves. The feeling of collectivism in South Korea was blended with the sense of individualism bit by bit. In this research I would like to focus on the fondness of outward appearance since traditional period of Korea which will be related to the current competitive situation of South Korea.

In the former times, Korean people believed in physiognomy science adopted from China. The physiognomy is the science studies about the physical characteristic of people for example they believed woman with round face would bring luck to the family, or the ideal body shape of woman is a plump body shape etc. The idea to prophesy people by their outward appearances occurred since the traditional society

and still has an effect on South Korean people nowadays. In contemporary, Lookism trend is introduced to South Koreans and grows stronger during time passed. The Lookism trend in South Korea gives the same sense as the physiognomy in concerning outwards appearance of people both for the body shape and face. Still, the Lookism trend in South Korea nowadays has little difference compared to physiognomy. Lookism trend is a hybrid trend that combined the physiognomy idea but in the same time it used the ideal body shape that is currently popular in foreign countries (in this study the researcher used the American ideal type as a model) as the ideal type. The ideal body shape according to the Lookism trend also more related to the sense of achieving goal, the sense of competition not for the fortune as the former idea, physiognomy, mostly concerned. The transforming into new environment (politics, economics, and social trend) made South Koreans living under the social change phenomenon ready and able to adjust themselves for the new stage of South Korea.

Secondly, the external factor (American ideal body shape) influences by the help of mass media. As briefly mention in the internal factor part, the changing policy by civilian government to be more clement to mass media made South Koreans get the oversea information about news or social trend more easily compare to the past. As a result, in this case, the oversea social trend such as the ideal body shape trend of the United States was exposed increasingly to South Koreans.

In this research, the researcher wanted to defy what is the ideal body shape of South Korea in contemporary society and how South Koreans interpret the meaning of the ideal body shape to make us understand the reason why the idea about ideal body shape is very concerned by people in this country. Thus, the researcher divided

the research methodology into two parts. The first part the researcher used the statistic data from the questionnaire to indentify the current ideal body shape of South Korean male and female in different variables; sex, age range, living place, educational level, and household income level.

According to the quantitative research the average height of males is 1.77 meters and 1.70 meters for females. The average weight of male is 71 kilograms while female is 66.7 kilograms which make the average BMI of males 22.7 and 23.1 for females. The meaning of BMI value of both male and female showed that they were in a normal weight rank (18.5-24.9). From the study, majority of both sexes wanted to lose their weight and most of respondents answered wanting to lose weight lived in the metropolis and suburb areas.

About the ideal body shape, the majority answered the normal (-) shape and the rest answered in the same direction, for rather slim body shape. This research questioned 1,431 people from both sexes and age ranges 18 years old + so the results can represent South Koreans, not only for adolescents. The results reflect the change of ideal body shape of South Koreans from the plum shape to the slim body shape in South Korean society. The popularity of the slim body shape is obviously increasing.

For the later part of the paper, the researcher used the observation method to extract the meaning of the ideal body shape from South Koreans' point of view. According to the collected data (by using the observation method: surveys and articles of South Korean researches, newspapers and web logs), there are many reliable evidences indicating the possibility of the ideal body shape to be one of the key success factors leading South Korean people to achieve their goals.

By using objectification theory to study in this part, the outward appearance defied by people in society plays an important role in South Korean lives. The ideal body shape was identified by objectification process that it could become a very supportive factor in achieving one's goal. The objectification about ideal body shape caused great effect to people in the country. As a result, not only South Korean females but also males started applying this ideal body shape trend to their lives and this situation could be counted as the self-objectification process. This self-objectification process grows intensively particularly for females who take part in dieting, exercising, consuming dieting pills. They even underwent cosmetic surgery which made the value of the overall dieting market reach to 2 trillion won (1.7 billion dollars)¹. South Korean females believe that with the ideal body shape they can enhance self-confidence, get a job, be promoted at work and be popular among males². The same thinking started in South Korean males, believing the ideal body shape as a useful factor supporting their competitiveness.

To understand why this ideal body shape trend becomes very popular, the researcher used the hierarchy of needs model by Abraham Maslow to describe the situation. The reason made the ideal body shape trend widespread in South Korea could be described as the ideal body shape, according to the belief of people, could be a powerful supportive factor in achieving their goals and fulfilling their basic needs. For example, if one's goal was to getting a job, the ideal body shape would be concerned as one's supportive factor. In case, if succeeded, he or she also could fulfill

¹ Korea Joongang Daily, **Heavyweights Rebel Against Model-Thin Beauty Ideal** [Online], 19 August 2010. Available from: <http://www.joongangdaily.joins.com/article/view>

² NAVER, **Korean Women Live to Be Thin and Slim** [Online], 18 August 2010. Available from: <http://www.blog.naver.com>

the basic needs (according to Maslow's model) in his or her life whether in the safety level (employment) or in esteem level (achievement).

In phrase, the ideal body shape in South Korea was concerned as the vital factor for achieving one's goal. Completing the goal in this case related to the sense of fulfilling one's basic needs in life. Thus, the ideal body shape trend was accepted by South Koreans since the ideal body shape could lead them to the goal and at the same time make them able to complete their basic needs (the basic needs of human being).

In conclusion, the transforming of main fundamentals in South Korea by applying the American model could be considered as a preparing process for South Koreans to be able to adapt themselves to the new condition of the country. South Korean people at present adjust themselves to the new trend coming from the others countries. The idea of Lookism trend and the ideal body shape in South Korea could be presented as a sample case. South Koreans applied the former idea, physiognomy, and combined it with the new trend of ideal body shape from the United States. The Lookism in South Korea induced people to believe they could complete their goal by the help of ideal body shape (objectification process). Also, as there were evidences that the ideal body shape could make people succeeded, South Koreans give more and more priority to their appearances (self-objectification process). Moreover, the goal that ideal body shape could make one achieve was matched with the basic needs of human being (Hierarchy of needs model) as a result, it could dramatically gain acceptance from South Korean people.

General suggestion

According to the study South Koreans considered outward appearance very important for their lives and even pass on the idea of ideal body shape (S-line) to South Korean children via cartoon commercials, telling them what to eat in order to achieve S-line (for body shape) and V- shape (for face). Due to this, in the researcher's opinion, it is improper since they are still children who should be concerned things which are more useful for themselves than the appearance, for instance their education. The South Korean government should take action to control such a commercial since it implants false values, judging people from appearance, in children and distract them from more important values such as inner goodness. Moreover, South Korean government should become aware of the result of this ideal body shape trend that it's not only South Korean females who want to lose their weights in achieving the ideal body shape. South Korean males also have the same desire since the ideal body shape of South Korean males is base on the slim body shape with some muscle to look firm unlike the American males' ideal body shape. Under this situation, the possibility of finding males in a risk of health problem (eating disorder) in South Korea increases.

Future work suggestions

In this research, the factors influenced the perception towards the ideal body shape in South Korea were from both outside and inside the country. The external factor was the fashion trend via the commercials broadcasting by mass media. The internal factors were from government policy and social trends. The influence of the

ideal body shape trend has affected mostly South Korean adolescents, females, people living in the big cities and the surrounding areas. South Korean males were also changing their perception towards the ideal body shape. They tend to approve of a slim body shape even for male's body shape as it reflected in the research. If this trend continues to grow, the potential of eating disorders found in males could increase. Any future study should focus on the study of male perceptions towards the ideal body shape to understand the cause and able to predict the any risk that could have in the future. For these coming problems could be resolved or prevented in time. For the South Korean government, the department with authority in screening the commercials should concentrate more on the over claim advertisement of the products. Since the commercials in television and advertisements and content in magazines play a significant role in the issue of perceptions towards the ideal body shape of South Koreans.

Perception towards ideal body shape in other countries is also interesting. The focusing on outward appearance in South Korea can be noticed in Thailand as well especially among female adolescents. Moreover, due to the Korean wave spreading into Thailand in recent years there is possibility that the ideal body shape trend of South Korea could affect Thai people. The slim figure of South Korean actors, actresses and singers could be seen as a model for Thai people to follow in order to look fashionable and beautiful. Many new released cosmetic slimming products imported from South Korea to Thailand open new market in Thailand such as slimming shower gel etc.

In Thailand, the focusing on dieting and outward appearance occurred without knowing the exact meaning of such trend. Whether there is a significant purpose in doing so or just to be fashionable and beauty. If possible, interested researcher can use data from this thesis compare Thailand or other countries where the same phenomenon occurred in order to understand situation, recognize the causes and for the government to be able to protect the problem according to ideal body shape concerning situation in that country.

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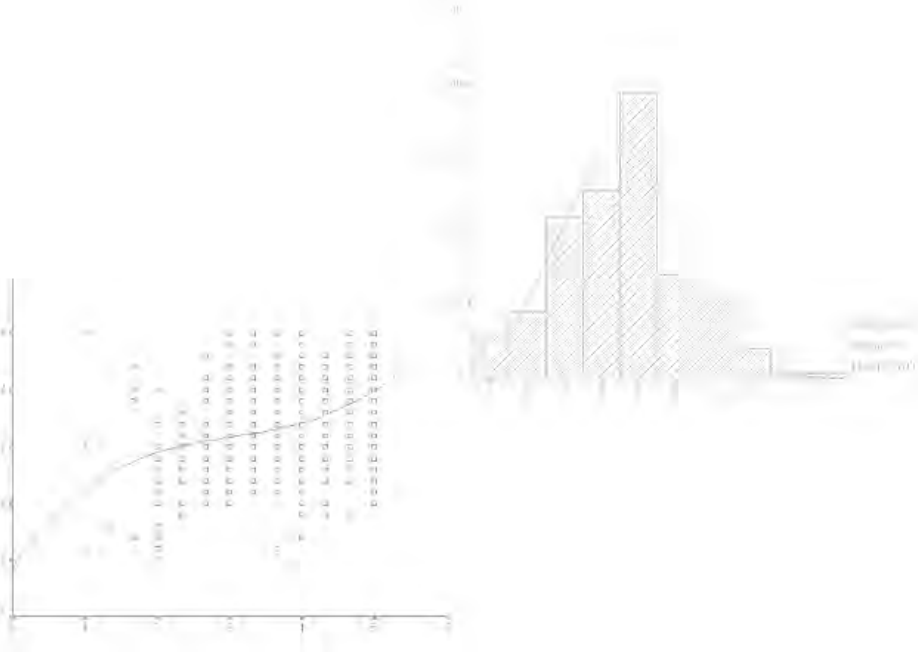
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APPENDICES

Appendix A: questionnaire

 <small>KOREAN GENERAL SOCIAL SURVEY</small>	<table border="1" style="display: inline-table; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td colspan="3" style="text-align: center;">Block ID</td> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">Household ID</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> <td style="width: 20px; height: 20px;"></td> </tr> </table>	Block ID			Household ID						
Block ID			Household ID								
<h1>2007 Korean General Social Survey</h1>											
											
<p>Survey Research Center, Sungkyunkwan University</p> <p>53-3 Myungryun-Dong, Jongno-Ku, Seoul 110-745, South Korea (Tel.) +82-2-760-1270 (Fax) +82-2-744-6169 (E-mail) src@skku.edu (Web) http://www.src.re.kr</p>											

28. What is your religion?

___ ① Buddhist ___ ④ No religion (GO TO Q29)

___ ② Protestant ___ (77) OTHER (SPECIFY _____)

___ ③ Catholic

(IF YOU HAVE A RELIGION)

28.1 Do you call yourself a strong, or not a very strong follower of your religion?

___ ① Strong ___ ③ Not very strong

___ ② Somewhat strong ___ (8) DON'T KNOW

29. Which of the categories below comes closest to the type of place you are living in now?

___ ① A big city ___ ③ A small city or a town ___ ⑤ A farm or home in the country

___ ② The suburbs or outskirts of a big city ___ ④ A country village ___ (8) DON'T KNOW

30. Which social class do you think you belong in?

___ ① Lower-lower ___ ③ Lower-middle ___ ⑤ Lower-upper ___ (8) DON'T KNOW

___ ② Upper-lower ___ ④ Upper-middle ___ ⑥ Upper-upper

31. During the last few years, has the financial situation of your household been getting much better, somewhat better, stayed the same, somewhat worse, or much worse?

___ ① Much better ___ ④ Somewhat worse

___ ② Somewhat better ___ ⑤ Much worse

___ ③ Stayed the same ___ (8) DON'T KNOW

32. Compared with South Korean families in general, would you say your family income is-far above average, above average, average, below average, or far below average?

___ ① Far above average ___ ④ Below average

___ ② Above average ___ ⑤ Far below average

___ ③ Average ___ (8) DON'T KNOW

33. Within the next 10 years, do you think the financial situation of your household will be getting much better, somewhat better, about the same, somewhat worse, or much worse than now?

___ ① Much better ___ ④ Somewhat worse

___ ② Somewhat better ___ ⑤ Much worse

___ ③ About the same ___ (8) DON'T KNOW

34. In our society there are groups which tend to be towards the top and groups which tend to be towards the bottom. Below is a scale that runs from top to bottom. Where would you put yourself on this scale?

___ 1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___ 6 ___ 7 ___ 8 ___ 9 ___ 10 ___ (88)___

* The choice highlighted with the red block was the choice used in quantitative analysis part

※ Now, I would like to ask you about how much education you and your family members have received.

40. What is the highest level of school you have attended?

<input type="checkbox"/> (00) NO FORMAL SCHOOL <input type="checkbox"/> (08) OTHERS (EX. SEODANG)	<input type="checkbox"/> (01) Elementary school <input type="checkbox"/> (02) Junior high school <input type="checkbox"/> (03) High school	<input type="checkbox"/> (04) Junior college(Two or three-year course) <input type="checkbox"/> (05) College (Four-year course) <input type="checkbox"/> (06) Graduate school (Masters) <input type="checkbox"/> (07) Graduate school (PhD)	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
	40.1 Did you graduate from this school, or are you currently attending?		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> ① Graduated	<input type="checkbox"/> ② Dropped out	<input type="checkbox"/> ③ Currently attending
	<input type="checkbox"/>	40.2 In what grade did you drop out? GRADE	40.3 What grade are you in? GRADE

41. What is the highest level of school your spouse has attended?

<input type="checkbox"/> (99) NO SPOUSE <input type="checkbox"/> (00) NO FORMAL SCHOOL <input type="checkbox"/> (08) OTHERS (EX. SEODANG)	<input type="checkbox"/> (01) Elementary school <input type="checkbox"/> (02) Junior high school <input type="checkbox"/> (03) High school	<input type="checkbox"/> (04) Junior college(Two or three-year course) <input type="checkbox"/> (05) College (Four-year course) <input type="checkbox"/> (06) Graduate school (Masters) <input type="checkbox"/> (07) Graduate school (PhD)	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
	41.1 Did your spouse graduate from this school, or is s/he currently attending?		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> ① Graduated	<input type="checkbox"/> ② Dropped out	<input type="checkbox"/> ③ Currently attending
	<input type="checkbox"/>	41.2 In what grade did s/he drop out? GRADE	41.3 What grade is s/he in? GRADE

42. What is the highest level of school your father has attended?

<input type="checkbox"/> (00) NO FORMAL SCHOOL <input type="checkbox"/> (08) OTHERS (EX. SEODANG) <input type="checkbox"/> (88) DONT KNOW	<input type="checkbox"/> (01) Elementary school <input type="checkbox"/> (02) Junior high school <input type="checkbox"/> (03) High school	<input type="checkbox"/> (04) Junior college(Two or three-year course) <input type="checkbox"/> (05) College (Four-year course) <input type="checkbox"/> (06) Graduate school (Masters) <input type="checkbox"/> (07) Graduate school (PhD)	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
	42.1 Did your father graduate from this school, or is he currently attending?		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> ① Graduated	<input type="checkbox"/> ② Dropped out	<input type="checkbox"/> ③ Currently attending
	<input type="checkbox"/>	52.2 In what grade did he drop out? GRADE	52.3 What grade is he in? GRADE

43. What is the highest level of school your mother has attended?

<input type="checkbox"/> (00) NO FORMAL SCHOOL <input type="checkbox"/> (08) OTHERS (EX. SEODANG) <input type="checkbox"/> (88) DONT KNOW	<input type="checkbox"/> (01) Elementary school <input type="checkbox"/> (02) Junior high school <input type="checkbox"/> (03) High school	<input type="checkbox"/> (04) Junior college(Two or three-year course) <input type="checkbox"/> (05) College (Four-year course) <input type="checkbox"/> (06) Graduate school (Masters) <input type="checkbox"/> (07) Graduate school (Ph. D)	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
	43.1 Did your mother graduate from this school, or is she currently attending?		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> ① Graduated	<input type="checkbox"/> ② Dropped out	<input type="checkbox"/> ③ Currently attending
	<input type="checkbox"/>	43.2 In what grade did she drop out? GRADE	43.3 What grade is she in? GRADE

48. Before taxes and other deductions, what is the total average monthly income of your household? This includes all sources of income (ex. work income, interest or dividends, property income, rent, pensions, welfare support, or the money personally provided by somebody) from all household members including yourself. (IF THE RESPONDENT DOES NOT HAVE A REGULAR MONTHLY INCOME (EX. FARMER), DIVIDE THE ESTIMATED ANNUAL INCOME BY 12. MAKE SURE TO INCLUDE THE INCOME OF EACH FAMILY MEMBER LIVING WITH THE RESPONDENT MENTIONED IN Q38)

APPROXIMATELY: _____ MAN(10,000) WON (CODE NUMBER: _____) (88) DON'T KNOW

※ The following questions are related to your free time, that is, time you are not occupied with work or household duties or other activities that you are obliged to do.

49. How often do you do each of the following activities in your free time?

SHOW CARD	Daily	Several times a week	Several times a month	Several times a year or less often	Never
1) Watch TV, DVD, videos	①	②	③	④	⑤
2) Go to the movies	①	②	③	④	⑤
3) Go out shopping	①	②	③	④	⑤
4) Read books	①	②	③	④	⑤
5) Attend cultural events such as concerts, live theatre, exhibitions	①	②	③	④	⑤
6) Get together with relatives	①	②	③	④	⑤
7) Get together with friends	①	②	③	④	⑤
8) Play cards or board games	①	②	③	④	⑤
9) Listen to music	①	②	③	④	⑤
10) Take part in physical activities such as sports, going to the gym, going for a walk	①	②	③	④	⑤
11) Attend sporting events as a spectator	①	②	③	④	⑤
12) Do handicrafts such as needle work, wood work, etc.	①	②	③	④	⑤
13) Spend time on the Internet/PC	①	②	③	④	⑤
14) Take a nap	①	②	③	④	⑤
15) Drink	①	②	③	④	⑤
16) Go to a Karaoke	①	②	③	④	⑤
17) Go to sauna, hot spring, "zzimzilbang" (Korean style hot sauna)	①	②	③	④	⑤
18) Talk on the phone with family, friends, or relatives	①	②	③	④	⑤

50. When you are involved in free time activities to what extent do they enable you

SHOW CARD	Very much	A lot	Somewhat	A little	Not at all	Can't choose
1) ... to be the kind of person you really are?	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑧
2) ... to strengthen your relationships with other people?	①	②	③	④	⑤	⑧

74.1 Just to recall for you, yesterday was...

___ ① ...a weekday or working-day ___ ② ...a day off or a holiday

74.2 At about what time did you get up yesterday?

___ AM ___ o'clock ___ minutes
 ___ PM

74.2 At about what time did you go to sleep yesterday?

___ AM ___ o'clock ___ minutes
 ___ PM

75. Could you please tell me your...

1) Height ___ cm

___ (888) I don't know

--	--	--

2) Weight ___ kg

___ (888) I don't know

--	--	--

76. Would you like to...

___ ① Gain weight

___ ③ Lose weight

___ ② Maintain your current weight

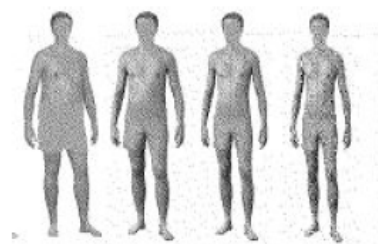
___ ④ I don't care about my weight

77. Which of the following pictures comes closest to your conception of an ideal shape of a man and a woman?

SHOW CARD

1) Man

2) Woman



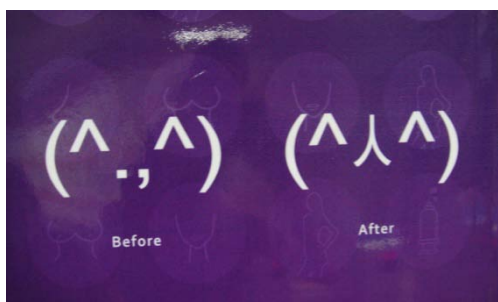
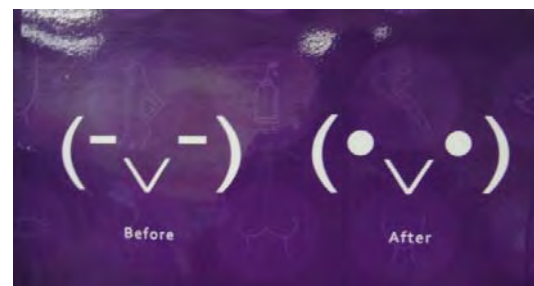
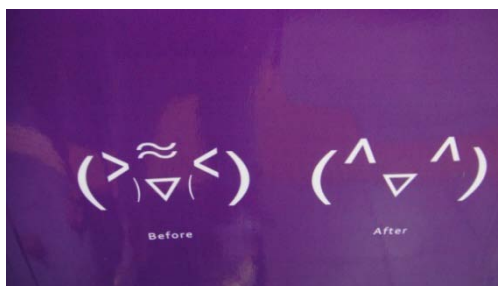
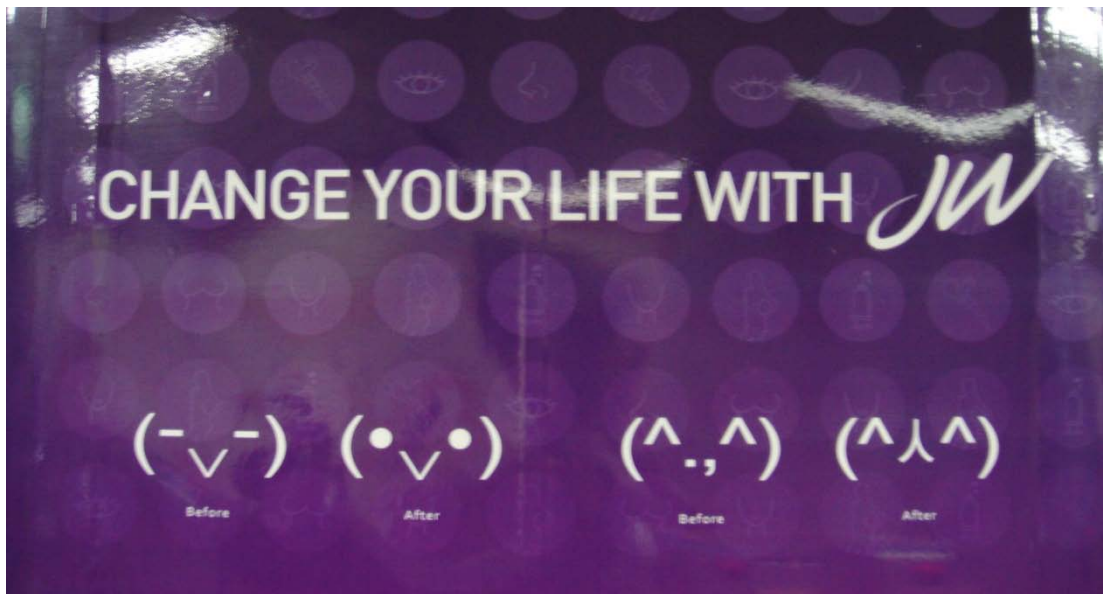
① ___ ② ___ ③ ___ ④ ___ ① ___ ② ___ ③ ___ ④ ___

✱ Next, I would like to ask your opinions about arts and popular culture.

78. From the list of occupations presented below, please select all that you consider to be artists.

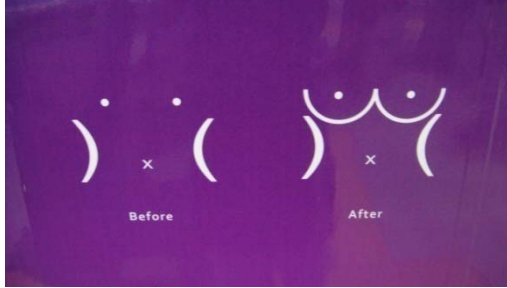
Appendix B: figures collected from South Korea during the
researcher's observation period (July-Aug)

South Korea's cosmetic surgery clinic (Jeong Won Clinic)



The Advertisement of proper body shape by JW Clinic

(Found in Apgujeong subway station)



Jelim plastic surgery and aesthetic



Jelim's advertisements



Models of water park advertisements

Water world



Caribbean bay



Waiting ticket



Entrance ticket



55,000 Korean Won: person

The example of body shapes found in Caribbean Bay



Models from clothing advertisements





Summer promoting advertisement

(Found in subway line 4)

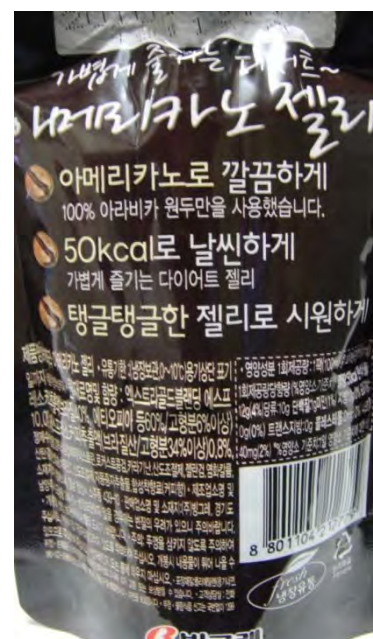


Dieting food in South Korea

South Korea's Dunkin Donuts special health product



Americano jelly (low-fat)



Lotte gum “I’m Different”

(No sugar and promoting exercising)





Slimming product



Etude House slimming product

BIOGRAPHY

NAME	Miss Duangporn Comlertluck
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