BEAUTY AND THE PERCEPTIONS OF
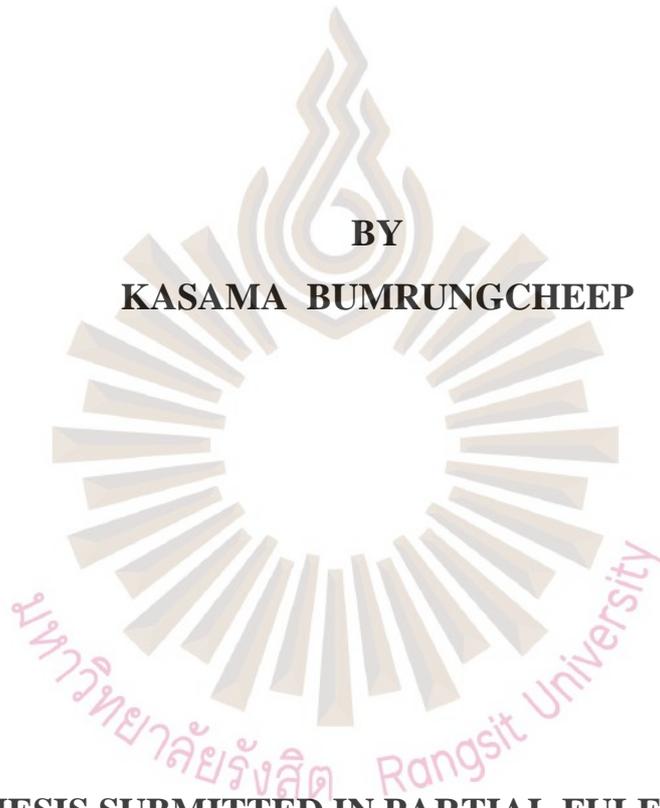# SELF-IDENTITY AND ESTEEM

BY

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
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Abstract

In this thesis, the author was aware of the impact of beauty standards. Beauty standards affects daily social life globally. Furthermore, mainstream media, online media, and advertising media are greatly involved in setting the standards for beauty, though most of these media platforms present only one aspect of beauty, specifically outer beauty, whether it is from a television program that encourages people to have cosmetic surgery or online media that presents beauty as an asset that is needed for the opposite sex to create interest. Therefore, people are at high risk of suffering from low self-esteem due to complex mental health issues. Beauty standards have made some people develop a poor self-image from having body shapes that are not within the standards. There are even various mental disorders that are negative consequences of these beauty standards, such as Body Dysmorphic Disorder. To prevent these effects, having healthy self-esteem with a healthy self-image is important. Many studies have shown that childhood is the age range during which self-esteem can be influenced and raised significantly because elementary schoolers can understand and be more accepting of their differences. Moreover, children can learn tolerance by playing cooperatively with toys. Thus, the researcher designed an educational toy like a puzzle of many different body parts. This educational toy can help parents and caregivers understand beauty standards and approach children to understand the diversity of different body shapes without judgment.

(Total 47 pages)

Keywords: Beauty Standard, Perceptions of Self, Identity, Self-image, Self-esteem, Educational Toy, Body Dysmorphic Disorder

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background

Nowadays, the social have pressure to normalized ideas about beauty to be identical. Many advertisements promote the image that a beautiful body is a perfect body. There is pathway to led to the standard that shapes us to be similar and be beautiful. That why People emphasize the body shape and determine some standards to be Beauty standards. Beauty standards are the individual qualifications one is expected to meet in order to embody the 'beauty ideal'. Likewise, society is also defined and tuned by beauty standards. This predicament forced people to be in this standard and adjudge themselves. People forced themselves to beauty like beauty standard but perfect bodies would be almost impossible to achieve as the proportions of the ideal body can only be achieved by using highly unhealthy means. People who out of standard be lack of confidence.

Beauty standard affect not only to people who out of standard but also people who force themselves to be into standard. That be risk of affect not only physical health but also mental health. According to (Cash & Szymanski, 1995) body image is relates to a self-perceived negative evaluation of a person's own body when compared to what this person considers the idealized body. While they defined the body dissatisfaction, negative thoughts and feelings about his or her body would show up and made he or she look down on themselves (Grogan, 2008). Feeling unhappy with one's appearance can spiral into body dysmorphic disorder (BDD) rather quickly (Philips, 2002). Some of those who suffer from body dysmorphic disorder will uncontrollably compare themselves to others. These is associated with low self-esteem. Kuck (2021) said demonstrate that low self-esteem is an important hallmark of BDD. Altogether, emphasize the importance of addressing self-esteem and corresponding core beliefs in

prevention. To increase self-esteem of people in our social that pressure to normalized ideas about beauty standard is turning their opinion of themselves how to value and respect themselves. On average, self-esteem is relatively high in childhood and drops during adolescence. (Robins, 2005)

By the way, self-esteem in children who already have high self-esteem decreases over time. To Focus on increasing self-esteem in children who in the part of identity stage be the best prevention. Learning about the different body shapes reduces self-judgment and thus does not reduce self-worth. Most of children learning by playing so educational toys is choice to use. Educational toys have become one of the tools used to approach children in many development stages, for example, cognitive, fine motor and gross motor, social, and emotional. (Goldstein, 2012) Besides that, educational toys also have become essential tools for children since they can be the tool that makes children interested and stimulated. Another way of children' learning is following the role-model. And their role-model are parent or caregiver. So this study focus on the educational toys which made parents and caregivers understand the beauty standards and can approach their children to understand the diversity of body shapes. With our educational toy parents and their children will respect every king of body shapes without judgment and blaming.

1.2 Research Objective

    1.2.1   To design a collection of educational toys.

    1.2.2   To approach caregivers to understand beauty standards.

1.3 Scope of the study

    1.3.1   Study beauty standard and the side effect to the people. To understand the causes and how to prevent.

1.3.2 Find the information about educational toy and how to design the educational toy.

1.3.3 Designing educational toy.

1.3.4 Exploring the sampling and interview with their caregivers.

1.3.5 Developing the design to be effective educational toy from the sampling user.

1.3.6 Analyzing and designing educational toy to final prototype.
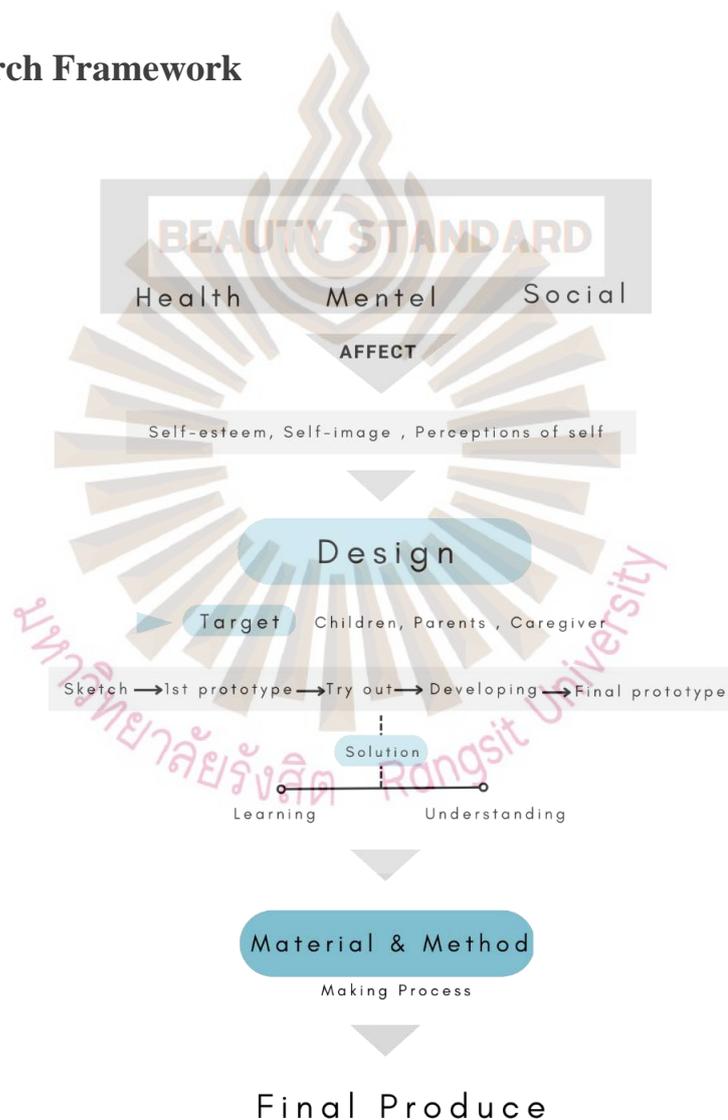
1.4 Research Framework

Figure 1.1 Research Framework

Source: Researcher

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Methodological

2.1.1 Beauty standard

The beauty standard is what any society recognizes as the ideal beauty. These standards can be influenced by a variety of factors, including cultural inheritance and the preferences of the opposite sex. As these ideals gain traction, they become widely accepted and promoted. Consequently, diverse cultures often possess unique beauty standards, though similarities may also exist. It's evident that the beauty standards we adhere to are entirely constructed by humans. Despite lacking any objective truth or empirical measurement of beauty, many still cling to these standards in an attempt to align themselves with societal norms. Some strive to meet or exceed these standards in order to gain acceptance or attract attention from others, particularly from the opposite sex (Hahn, 2019).

The idea of women's beauty has always been discuss a lot in society, and it's not just about how they look on the outside, how attractive they are. It includes things like skin color, body shape, hair texture and even the beauty that comes from their personality and character. Different people see beauty differently, standards can vary widely across different cultures, regions, and time periods (Melliana, 2006). Beauty standards can be influenced by factors such as media news, fashion, prehistory, family and social expectations, and they can have significant impacts on individuals' self-esteem.

In various cultures, including Thailand, there's a prevalent preference for fair skin and delicate features as the standard of beauty (AstroAlchemy, 2024), often

influenced by societal norms and media portrayal. Consequently, individuals with tanned, confident, and alluring traits may be deemed less suitable according to these established beauty standards, especially when compared to those perceived as fitting the ideal image for foreign partners.

When considering South Korean society, its beauty standards may not significantly differ from those of Thailand due to the influence of South Korean entertainment and beauty industries on Thailand's perceptions. However, in recent years, South Korean media has started embracing new concepts of beauty, emphasizing individuality while still valuing traits like a charming face, a fit physique, and stylishness (AstroAlchemy, 2024).

In the Western context, beauty standards haven't vanished entirely but have evolved from a singular ideal to encompass a variety of standards (Whitney, 2019). These standards vary greatly, from the hourglass figure popularized by figures like the Kardashians to tall, well-proportioned physiques with subtle tans. Additionally, there's recognition for plump yet stylish figures associated with role models like Ashley Graham, emphasizing health and confidence.

Figure 2.1 Beauty standards in children

Source: Trout, 2016

The impact of beauty standards can be profound. Facing judgment for not meeting these standards can be particularly challenging, extending beyond mere criticism to affect self-esteem and trigger comparisons to those deemed conventionally beautiful. Discrimination, whether intentional or not, can occur, leading to feelings of embarrassment and even mental health issues such as depression. In extreme cases, individuals may consider drastic measures like surgery to conform to societal expectations (Kaur,2023).

However, it's not only those who fall short of beauty standards who feel the effects. As society increasingly advocates for embracing diverse beauty, questions arise about the validity of these standards. This has sparked a backlash against those deemed conventionally attractive, with some resorting to sarcasm or belittling comments about their abilities. Interestingly, some individuals find solace in not conforming to these standards, believing that beauty is not their sole attribute (Clapper, 2021).

Ultimately, embracing differences unconditionally may be the key. Recognizing that every individual is unique and inherently valuable can help alleviate the harm caused by unrealistic beauty standards. It's about acknowledging that while beauty comes in many forms, it should not define a person's worth.

2.1.2   Self-image and self-esteem

The definition of self-esteem from Cambridge Dictionary is belief and confidence in your own ability and value refers to a personality variable that represents the way people generally feel about themselves.

Definitions of body image the idea from Cambridge Dictionary is that someone has of what their own body looks like include a person's perceptions, beliefs, thoughts, feelings, and behavior about his or her own body and cover one's body-related self-perceptions and self-attitudes (Kendra, 2023).

Body image and self-esteem is important, especially for young people linked to adolescence and puberty. Your body image, which is how you see yourself, and your self-esteem, which is how much you value yourself, are connected. If you don't feel good about your body, it can affect how you feel about yourself overall. High in body weight has been found to predict lower self-esteem in girls. This can lead to problems like trying extreme diets or developing eating disorders. Lots of things can influence how you feel about your body, like messages from the media or pressure from friends and family. But if you feel good about yourself, it can help you feel happier and healthier (O'Dea, 2012).

Figure 2.2 Sign you have low self-esteem

Source: Madelyn, 2024

In the early stages of childhood, youngsters typically exhibit robust self-esteem levels, which diminish gradually as they progress through their formative years. Researchers have suggested that this initial high self-esteem may stem from overly optimistic self-perceptions. However, as children undergo cognitive development, their self-assessments begin to incorporate external feedback and comparisons with peers. Consequently, they develop a more nuanced and realistic understanding of their academic abilities, social adeptness, physical appearance, and other personal attributes.

For instance, transitioning from preschool to elementary school exposes children to increased critical feedback from educators, parents, and peers, leading to a corresponding adjustment towards more subdued self-evaluations (Robins, 2005).

2.1.3 Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD)

The disease does not discriminate based on appearance. Some individuals may have it without even realizing it's a psychiatric illness. The concern with this disease is its potential to trigger other co-morbidities, particularly depression, which could escalate to suicidal tendencies without proper treatment. Hence, it's regarded as a dangerous condition requiring appropriate intervention. Most importantly, everyone should familiarize themselves with this disease to monitor their own health and that of others, preventing the condition from worsening and posing future risks (Phillips, 2004).

Figure 2.3 Children's unrealistic beauty standards children
Source: Timothy, 2022

Also known as Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD), it entails a pervasive dissatisfaction with one's body and appearance, extending beyond societal norms and

classified within the obsessive-compulsive disorder spectrum. Individuals with BDD exhibit repetitive thoughts, dissatisfaction with their appearance compared to others, and compulsive behaviors like frequent mirror-checking and seeking reassurance from others, often consuming a significant portion of their day (averaging 3-8 hours) and impacting daily functioning, including work and learning. They may also resort to frequent cosmetic procedures in attempts to alter their appearance (Rajyaluxmi & Veale, 2019).

Otto, Wilhelm, Cohen, and Harlow (2001) found a point prevalence of Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD) of approximately 0.7% in a community sample of women aged 36-44 years. They speculated that the point prevalence in younger women might be higher, and the study did not investigate BDD in men.

Faravelli, Salvatori, Galassi, and Aiazzi (1997) found a similar community prevalence of BDD of around 0.7%. Another study in Italy found a yearly prevalence of BDD of approximately 1%. Additionally, 2% of patients undergoing cosmetic surgery were identified as having BDD, and 12% of patients at dermatology clinics in the USA were diagnosed with BDD.

The average age of individuals diagnosed with BDD is approximately 30 years, and symptoms often begin in adolescence and early adulthood (Gaze, 2018). It is more commonly observed in women than in men, and a significant proportion of patients with BDD are often unmarried, divorced, unemployed, and frequently have comorbid mental health conditions, especially depression.

The body part that patients are most anxious about is the face, focusing on specific areas such as the nose and chin (Abraham, 2021). The concerns may extend to other areas, with an average of about four body parts affected during the disorder. Symptoms often fluctuate. In children, symptoms may manifest as a refusal to attend school, while adolescents may have a history of few friends and exhibit avoidance behaviors. A common accompanying symptom is the 'idea of reference,' where patients

believe that others notice flaws in their body and perceive them negatively or humorously.

This preoccupation may lead to repetitive behaviors, such as prolonged mirror gazing, avoidance behaviors, and attempts to conceal perceived flaws, often by covering the face extensively. Additionally, patients may experience insomnia, depression, anxiety, social withdrawal, low self-esteem, and may resort to alcohol or substance use to cope. Some may undergo unnecessary cosmetic surgeries, and in severe cases, there may be suicide attempts with the patient not recognizing any abnormality in themselves. The usual treatment settings include mood disorder clinics, plastic surgery clinics, and dermatology clinics (Hunt, 2018).

Phillips (2002) found that the quality of life for individuals with Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD) is comparable to those with major depression, diabetes, and bipolar disorder. In males, symptoms may manifest differently, with a desire to bulk up or increase muscle size, known as Muscle Dysmorphia. This involves an obsessive focus on the need to increase muscle mass, feeling small despite the lack of evidence.

Olivardia, Pope, and Hudson (2000) studied weightlifting men with muscle dysmorphia, comparing them with those without. They found significant differences in body dissatisfaction, eating attitudes, prevalence of anabolic steroid use, and the lifetime prevalence of mood, anxiety, and eating disorders.

Pasman and Thomson (1989) measured body image and eating disturbance in weightlifters, runners, and sedentary individuals. Male weightlifters and runners scored higher in the desire for thinness, bulimia, body dissatisfaction, and the Eating Disorder Intervention score compared to other groups, with significant implications for work, social life, and avoidance of places associated with body exposure.

Grant and Kim (2000) interviewed psychiatric patients, including adults and children, and found that 13.1% received a diagnosis of BDD, often after being initially misdiagnosed with depression or substance abuse. Those with BDD often avoided

discussing their symptoms initially due to embarrassment or fear of being deemed irrational.
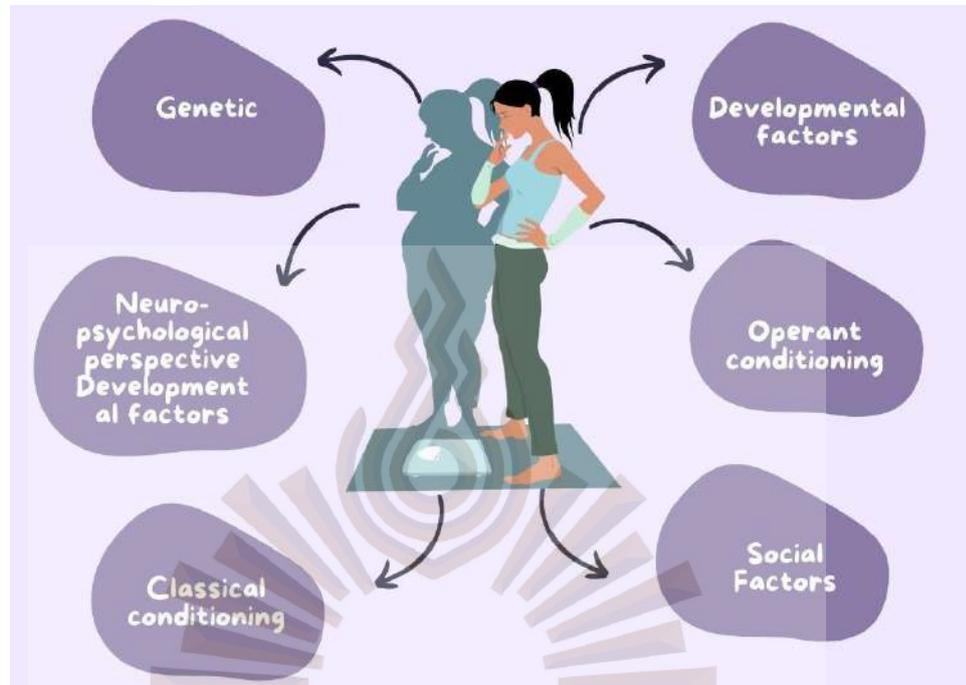

Figure 2.4 Body dysmorphic disorder (BDD)
Source: Harmony United Psychiatric Care, 2022

Otto (2001) noted lower accuracy in diagnosing BDD, as patients often presented in other medical departments or were brought in by relatives or friends, with many concealing their symptoms due to fear of being seen as irrational or self-absorbed. This could lead to missed diagnoses, emphasizing the need for effective screening questions, such as: Have you often thought about your appearance, especially certain body parts you dislike? Do you feel that these parts make you look disgusting or unattractive, with no one liking you? Do you think these disliked parts are clearly visible to others? How many hours a day do you spend thinking about these parts? Do these parts make you feel uncomfortable? How often do you check these parts, including looking in the mirror or touching them with your fingers? How anxious do you feel about these parts in social situations? Does it lead you to avoid socializing? Do these parts affect your dating or relationships with friends? Do these parts interfere with your ability to work, study, or perform daily tasks?

The causes of this disorder remain elusive, though factors believed to contribute to its onset encompass: Genetic predisposition; Abnormalities in the serotonin system, supported by reports of positive responses to SSRIs; Traits like shyness, perfectionism, or an underlying anxious temperament, which may have a hereditary component; Family history of mood disorders, OCD, or substance abuse; Cultural and childhood adversity, including experiences like bullying, teasing, criticism (both regarding appearance and abilities), poor peer relationships, familial lack of support, and sexual abuse; Sensitivity to societal beauty standards, with a heightened emphasis on appearance; History of skin or other physical ailments causing embarrassment, like adolescent acne; Personality traits emphasizing introspection and avoidance; Occupations or educational backgrounds related to art or design; Triggering by medical illnesses, as observed by Gabbay, O'Dowd, Weiss, and Asnis (2002), who noted BDD emerging in two patients post-physical illness, potentially due to an inflammatory process impacting cytokines affecting serotonin levels; The psychodynamic model posits that BDD stems from displacing sexual or emotional conflicts onto unrelated body parts, utilizing psychological mechanisms like repression, dissociation, distortion, symbolization, and projection.

2.1.4 Children and caregiver

As individuals progress from infancy through adolescence to adulthood, they traverse various developmental milestones crucial to their holistic growth, encompassing physical, intellectual, emotional, and social domains. Hence, it is incumbent upon parents to offer encouragement, guidance, and opportunities for their children to navigate these developmental stages successfully. By facilitating access to activities that foster mastery of essential developmental tasks, parents play a pivotal role in nurturing their children's overall well-being and personal growth (McMahon, 2023).

Figure 2.5 Gaining knowledge through play
Source: Kris, 2020

The family plays a significant role in shaping a child's body image, with comments and attitudes about appearance influencing lifelong insecurities. Early exposure to body ideals, whether through compliments or criticism, can impact a child's self-esteem and contribute to mental health issues. Research shows that children as young as three are influenced by their parents' views on weight, leading to negative associations with larger bodies and awareness of weight control methods. Girls as young as five may engage in dieting. Parents should be mindful of the messages they convey about body image to foster confidence and positive self-perception in their children (Malik, 2022).

Body image begins forming at a young age, with a Ghent University study highlighting the critical period before age 11. Social media comparisons can lead to body dissatisfaction in preadolescents, but positive relationships with fathers can mitigate these effects. Parents play a crucial role in shaping children's body image by promoting acceptance of all body types and avoiding fat shaming (Bologna, 2020). Steps to foster positive body image include setting a positive example, monitoring media consumption, and having open discussions about body image.

2.1.5   Educational toy

Play is a dominant activity during childhood and is deemed essential for child development (Piaget, 1962). Among the various forms of play, playing with toys emerges as a pivotal choice for children at this age. The category of toys developed to aid educational processes is termed educational toys. These toys are designed to stimulate children's minds and promote their learning while they engage in play. Educational toys have become instrumental tools supporting children in multiple developmental stages, including cognitive, fine motor, gross motor, social, and emotional domains.

Research underscores the significance of educational toys and playtime in a child's development, as they accelerate learning. The concept of learning through play underpins the effectiveness of educational toys. Although learning isn't necessarily the primary motivation for children to engage with toys, play remains the predominant mode through which they learn and develop their ability to learn further (Kakana, 2018).

Figure 2.6 Ways children learn

Source: Burrows, 2021

Moreover, educational toys can foster communication and cooperation among children, parents, and families (Kesson & Brodin, 1992). Their effectiveness is further enhanced when parents or caregivers actively participate in play and discuss the activities and learning experiences with the children. Thus, the impact of play hinges on caregivers' ability to select appropriate toys that align with children's interests and developmental needs. While children play with their toys, caregivers can engage with them and encourage conversation about their play experiences (Yelland, 2021).

2.2 Case study

2.2.1 Divers Barbie by Mattel, inc.

Figure 2.7 Diverse Barbie
Source: Mattel, inc., 2015

Diverse Barbie is a line of Barbie dolls that aims to represent a more diverse range of races, ethnicities, body types, and abilities. Mattel has made efforts in recent years to create Barbie dolls that reflect the diversity of the real world, including dolls with different skin tones, facial features, body shapes, and abilities. These efforts have

been applauded for promoting inclusivity and representation in toys, allowing children to see themselves reflected in their playthings.

The introduction of Diverse Barbie dolls represents a positive step towards challenging traditional beauty standards. By offering dolls with a variety of body types, skin tones, and features, Mattel acknowledges and celebrates the diversity of beauty in our society. This initiative has the potential to help break down narrow beauty ideals and promote inclusivity, acceptance, and self-confidence among children.
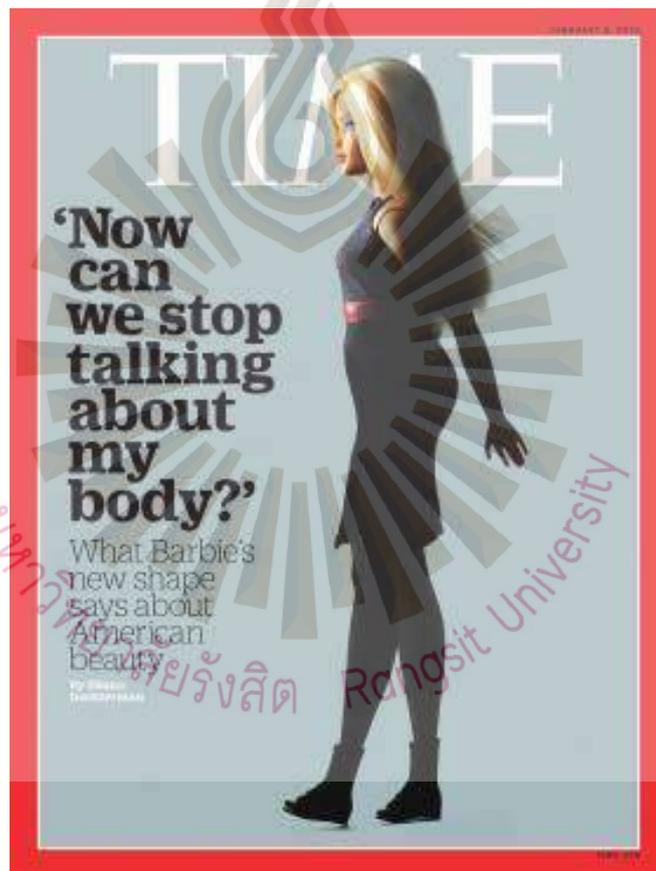

Figure 2.8 A Barbie for Every Body
Source: Aoki, 2016

Traditional beauty standards often present an unrealistic and narrow definition of beauty, often leading to negative impacts on individuals' self-esteem and body image, particularly among young people. By expanding their range of Barbie dolls to include more diverse representations, Mattel conveys a powerful message that beauty

transcends conventional norms of shape, size, and color. This initiative can foster a more inclusive and embracing perspective on beauty, both within oneself and towards others.

In essence, the introduction of diverse Barbie dolls promotes inclusivity and representation within the toy industry, enabling children to see themselves and their peers reflected positively in their play experiences. This shift has the potential to influence broader cultural perceptions of beauty.

2.2.2   Tappeto sensorial by Luca Martignon

Figure 2.9 Tapetto sensorial
Source: Runge, 2021

This sensory children's puzzle to create a toy following the principles by the Montessori method, emphasizing simplicity to effectively teach basic gestures and concepts to young minds. Our goal is to enhance its appeal to children, making it both functional and engaging.

Figure 2.10 How to play Tapetto sensorial
Source: Runge, 2021

This puzzle/carpet embodies three fundamental concepts. Firstly, it teaches children seemingly simple gestures, such as buttoning, which can pose significant challenges in coordination and precision. Mastery of such tasks requires repetition to automate the process. Secondly, it enhances the child's tactile senses through various materials sewn onto the carpet tiles, forging a connection between the buttoning gesture and the textures of clothing. Lastly, it provides a designated personal space for play, fostering a sense of ownership and identity within the child as they identify the square as their own play area.

2.2.3 The blockpeople society by Kazuya Washio

Washio (2021) has crafted a collection of toy building blocks designed as abstract figures painted with a diverse array of skin tones. Named 'The Blockpeople Society', this inclusive set aims to spark children's imagination while fostering an early appreciation for diversity. To imbue them with a humanoid quality, Washio has equipped each block with human-like hands and feet, even including a small dog for added charm. With each block sporting unique hand and foot shapes, children can stack them creatively or arrange them to simulate human scenarios.

Figure 2.11 The blockpeople society

Source: Washio, 2021

Moreover, each block is assigned a different color, symbolizing the varied hues present in society rather than adhering to a single skin tone. This approach aims to reflect the rich tapestry of our real-world community within the toy set itself.

Figure 2.12 Washio produces these lifelike blocks

Source: Washio, 2021

Beyond their entertainment value, building blocks offer numerous developmental benefits for children, from enhancing creativity to sharpening cognitive skills. Seeking to augment these advantages, Washio infused his blocks with elements mirroring human society, enabling children to organically absorb insights into social dynamics and relationships through play. Through the act of stacking in diverse configurations, the designer hopes children will grasp the notion of different races supporting one another and blending harmoniously to form cohesive structures, imbuing the simple act of stacking with profound significance. Utilizing 3D printing technology, Washio produces these lifelike blocks, meticulously hand-polishing each one and applying acrylic paint to capture the full spectrum of human skin tones.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

3.1 Design concepts

The objective of this thesis is to approach caregivers to understand beauty standards and design a collection of educational toys. The creation of the educational toy is based on the concept of Body Dysmorphic Disorder, specifically the idea that one may dislike their appearance. It is also designed based on targeted primary school-age child development. This educational toy is therefore intended to help parents and caregivers understand beauty standards and guide children in comprehending the diversity of different body shapes without judgment.

3.2 Design process

3.2.1 Sketch design

Based on the researcher's study of information and case studies, ideas and concepts have been derived for the design, utilizing simple face shapes and body shapes such as geometric shapes and fruit shapes.
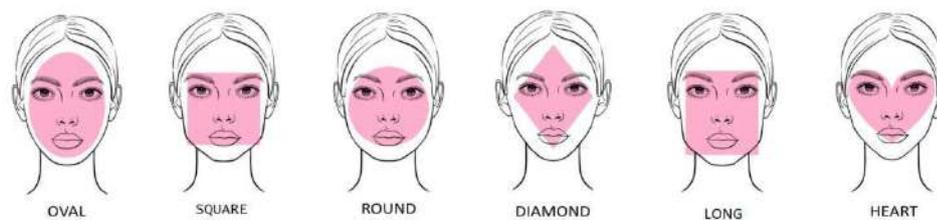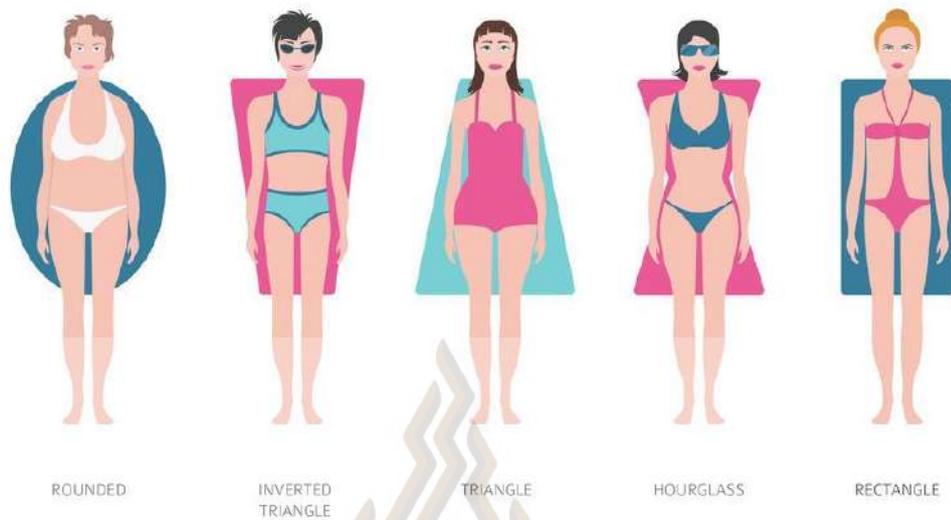

Figure 3.1 Face shape
Source: Kate, 2022

ROUNDED INVERTED TRIANGLE HOURGLASS RECTANGLE
TRIANGLE

Figure 3.2 Female body type

Source: A7880S, 2018
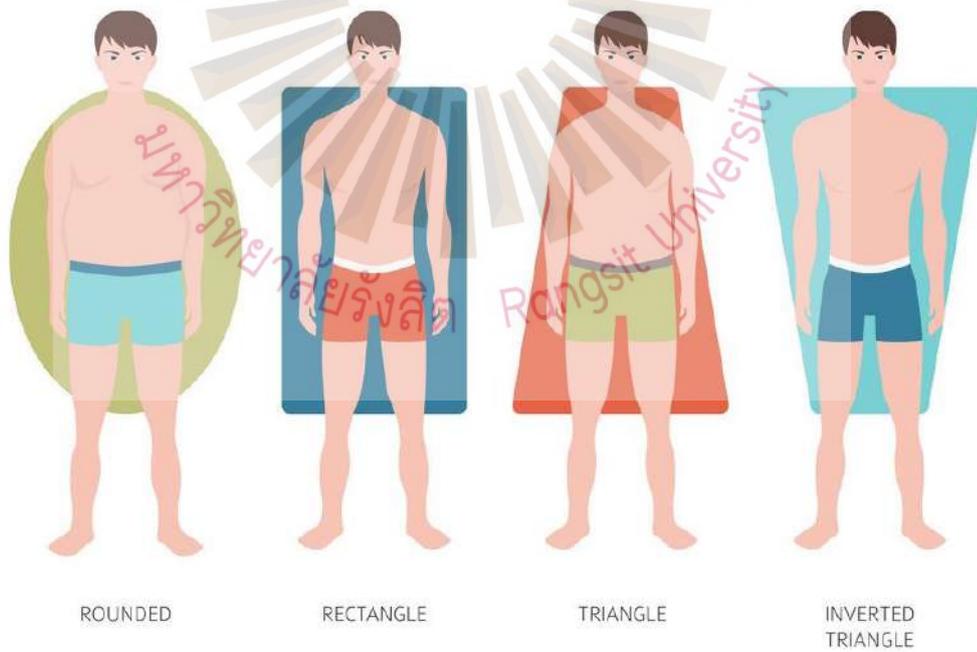

ROUNDED RECTANGLE TRIANGLE INVERTED
TRIANGLE

Figure 3.3 Male body type

Source: A7880S, 2018

Once the idea became simplified, the researcher created the first sketch using easily recognizable shapes from the aforementioned sources, and also introduced animals to enhance interest.
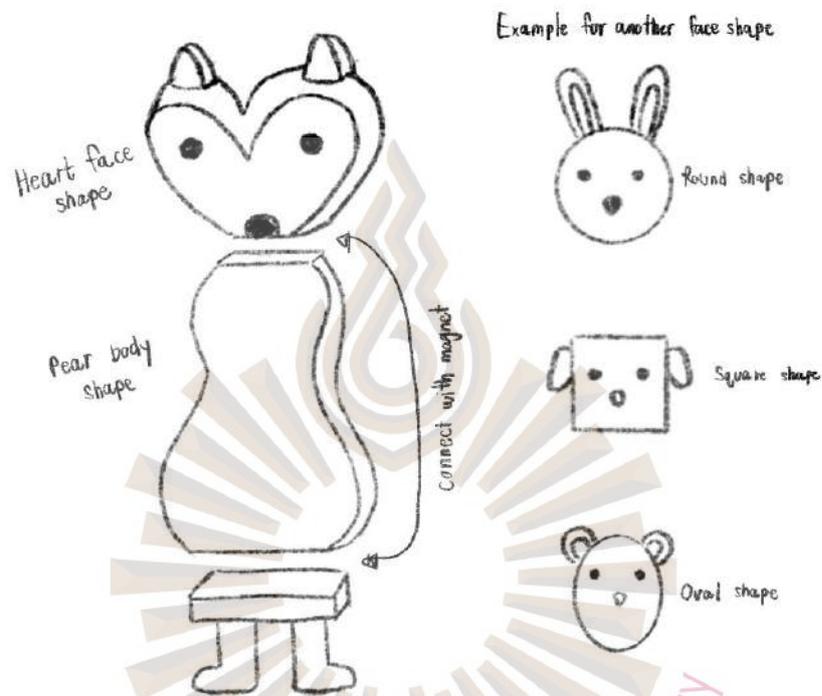
Figure 3.4 First sketch idea
Source: Researcher

The specialist provided feedback that the figure still appeared beautiful, which contradicted the theme of beauty standards and seemed overly exaggerated. Questions arose about why only tall, short, thin, or fat representations were not considered. Consequently, the researcher conducted further research and encountered the topic of Body Dysmorphic Disorder, prompting the incorporation of this concept into a new sketch.
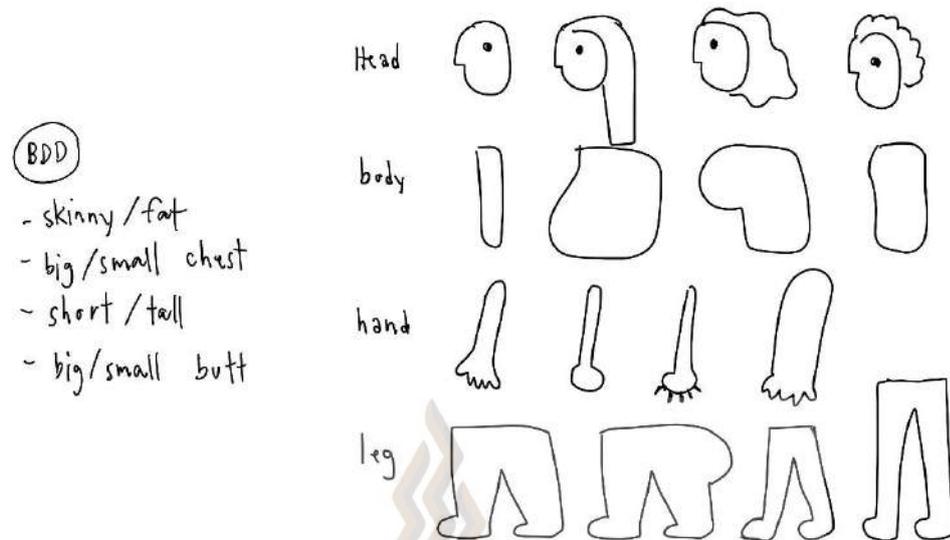
Figure 3.5 2nd sketch idea

Source: Researcher

The researcher presented second sketch and consulted with their specialist once more. The specialist suggested interviewing 10 families of children and their parents. Consequently, the researcher made some edits to the work before conducting the interviews, aiming for greater diversity. However, upon realizing that the variations were insufficient, third sketch was created.

Figure 3 .6 3rd sketch idea

Source: Researcher

In the third sketch, the researcher removed certain parts, such as the arms, deeming them too complex and irrelevant to the intended purpose. However, additio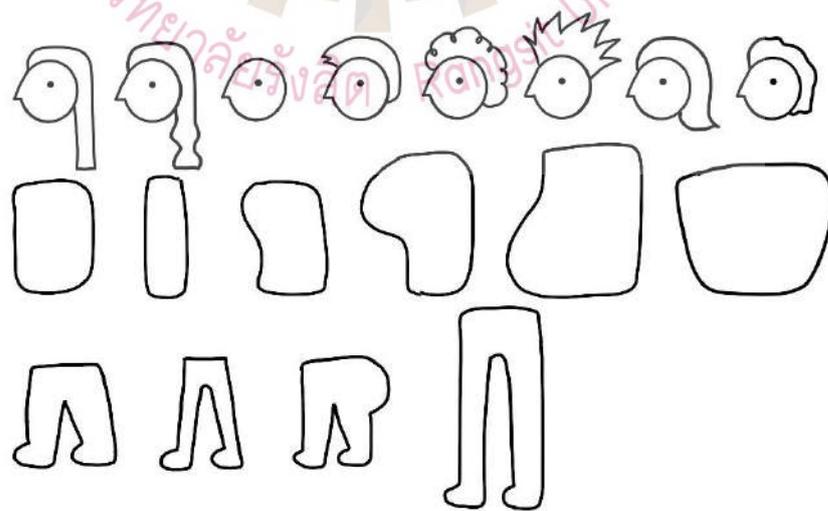nal body and head parts were included to align with the concept of the first sketch. Subsequently, the researcher printed out the third sketch and cut out each part to bring them to interviews with children, allowing them to try playing with the pieces.

3.2.2 Interview

Table 3.1 Results of the interview

Name (Age)	Gender	Selected part (reason)		
		Head	Body	Legs
Irin (5)	Girl	Select according to her gender.	Look like herself.	Look like herself.
Lion (5)	Boy	Select according to his gender.	Want to be in the future.	Want to be in the future.
Wanmai (8)	Girl	Select according to her gender.	Look like herself.	Look like herself.
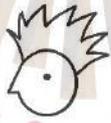
Table 3.1 Results of the interview (Continued)

Name (Age)	Gender	Selected part (reason)		
		Head	Body	Legs
Nano (8)	Girl	Select according to her gender.	Want to be in the future.	Look like herself.
Khawhom (8)	Girl	Look like her mom.	Look like her mom.	Look like her mom.
Khawkwan (8)	Girl	Select according to her gender.	Look like herself.	Look like herself.
Nun (9)	Boy	It's cool.	Look like himself.	Look like himself.
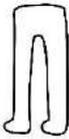
Table 3.1 Results of the interview (Continued)

Name (Age)	Gender	Selected part (reason)		
		Head	Body	Legs
Nampueng (9)	Girl	Select according to her gender.	Look like herself.	Look like herself.
Aum (10)	Girl	Select according to her gender.	Look like herself.	Look like herself.
Tao (10)	Boy	Look like his favorite cartoon character.	Want to be in the future.	Want to be in the future.
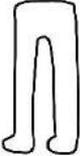
From the interview, we can observe that almost all children choose parts that are similar to themselves or aspire to be in the future, or that they have seen in figures like their parents or in cartoons. It is evident that family and environment influence children's decisions when selecting various parts. Based on the children's feedback, they expressed a desire for additional parts, expressed interest in having clothing options, and wished for a more tactile experience as the paper used was not appealing to them.

During the interview, a challenge emerged: some parents or caregivers struggled to grasp the concept of beauty standards. When addressing older age groups, particularly those over 30 years old, the researcher found it necessary to offer more detailed explanations. Additionally, engaging children who are addicted to mobile phones proved to be highly challenging. Furthermore, they showed little interest in this toys, viewing them as mere paper. While five-year-olds are beginning to develop cognitive functions and critical thinking skills, they may not be fully matured. Therefore, the researcher intends to shift the target audience to elementary school-aged children, specifically those aged 7 to 11.

3.3 Final prototype

Based on the research findings and insights gained from interviews, the researcher has made final revisions to the piece. Notably, the decision was made to remove the head from the hair element. This adjustment stems from the child's preference for a head with hair corresponding to their gender during the interview. However, the researcher seeks to steer clear of gender-specific elements in the work, ensuring that children's choices are not influenced by gender. Consequently, the researcher revisited the initial concept and opted for simple geometric shapes, maintaining clarity for both children and parents. Furthermore, additional details have been incorporated into the torso and legs to enhance variety and realism.
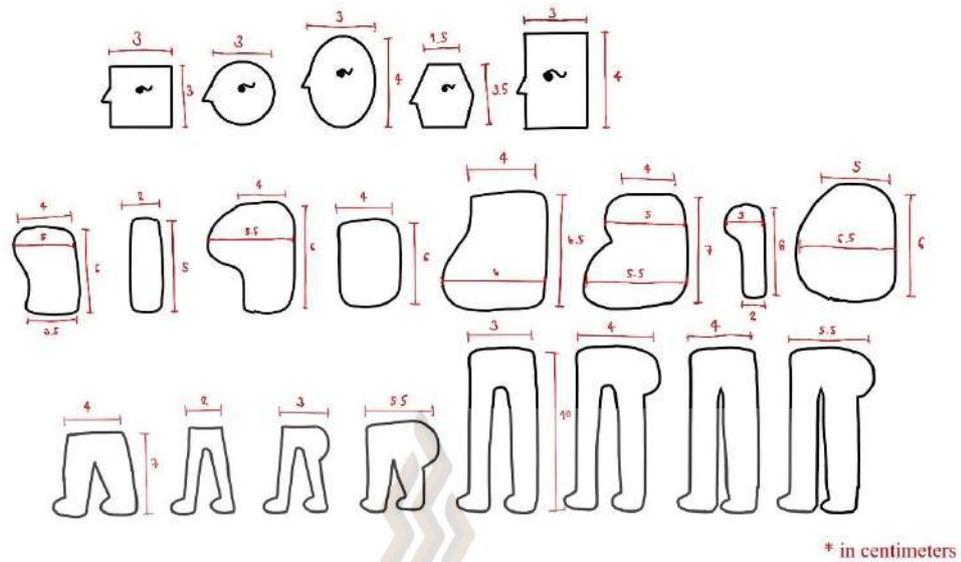
Figure 3.7 Final design
Source: Researcher

In the process of designing educational toys, the researcher has diligently adhered to the essential principles, including considerations such as size and materials. Taking into account feedback from interviews where several children expressed a lack of interest in paper-based toys, the researcher made a deliberate shift from paper to wood for the materials used in the work. Additionally, the researcher ensured that the size of the toys was carefully selected to meet appropriate standards.

Chapter 4

Research Results

4.1   Principals of design

As the researcher's study indicates, one of the primary issues associated with low self-esteem is the prevalence of beauty standards. Furthermore, these standards can have numerous effects on both the mind and health. In response to this, the researcher has chosen to utilize educational toys as a solution. Educational toys are fundamental to children's learning and development, as they enable learning through play. Each play session offers a fun learning experience, allowing children to explore their potential. Parents or caregivers play a crucial role in children's playtime. It's important for caregivers to understand the child and actively engage in play, rather than leaving the child alone with toys. This interactive play not only reinforces the benefits of educational toys but also holds significant value for children. Consequently, our educational toys have been designed to help parents and caregivers address beauty standards and foster an understanding of diverse body shapes among children, without judgment.

4.2   Design components

All educational toys must prioritize safety for children, both in terms of material and size. It's imperative that the materials used in educational toys are non-toxic, as highlighted by Cronan (2018), who emphasized the importance of art materials being lead-free and meeting ASTM D-4236 standards set by the American Society for Testing and Materials. Additionally, toys should meet specific size requirements to minimize choking hazards; they should have a diameter of at least 1¼ inches (3 centimeters) and a length of 2¼ inches (6 centimeters). It's essential to avoid small objects such as marbles, coins, and balls with a diameter of 1.75 inches (4.4 centimeters) or less.

As Kate M. Cronan emphasizes, the researcher prioritizes child safety, evident in their choice of materials for the toys. Balsa wood was selected due to its numerous favorable qualities: it is lightweight, being a soft wood suitable for model-making, easy to work with, and exceptionally strong relative to its weight. Additionally, balsa wood readily absorbs water, features a fine texture, and is easily polishable, boasting a natural, appealing light brown hue akin to paper. These attributes render it ideal for the researcher's designs, as it allows for easy decoration through painting, sticker application, and more. Moreover, wooden toys align with environmental sustainability goals and boast longevity. Being readily available and non-toxic, balsa wood poses no harm to children during play, making it an excellent natural material choice. The crucial aspect is that the wood still aligns with the premise of my thesis, asserting that beauty is subjective. Hence, utilizing wood with diverse and distinctive patterns serves to exemplify this notion.

In creating educational toys, consideration must be given to the materials used. Additionally, the researcher must take into account the appropriate size for children in elementary school, as this age group typically exhibits longer attention spans, enhanced curiosity, evolving physical abilities, and the beginning of understanding how to use various organs. This age range constitutes the target demographic for this research. The researcher has designed the toys to be of a safe size, ensuring they are larger than the body's organs. It's common for children to put objects in their mouths, noses, and ears, presenting potential dangers if the toy is too small. Safety is of paramount importance, as emphasized by the researcher's study on the size of children's toys, which recommends a diameter of at least 1¼ inches (3 centimeters) to mitigate risks.
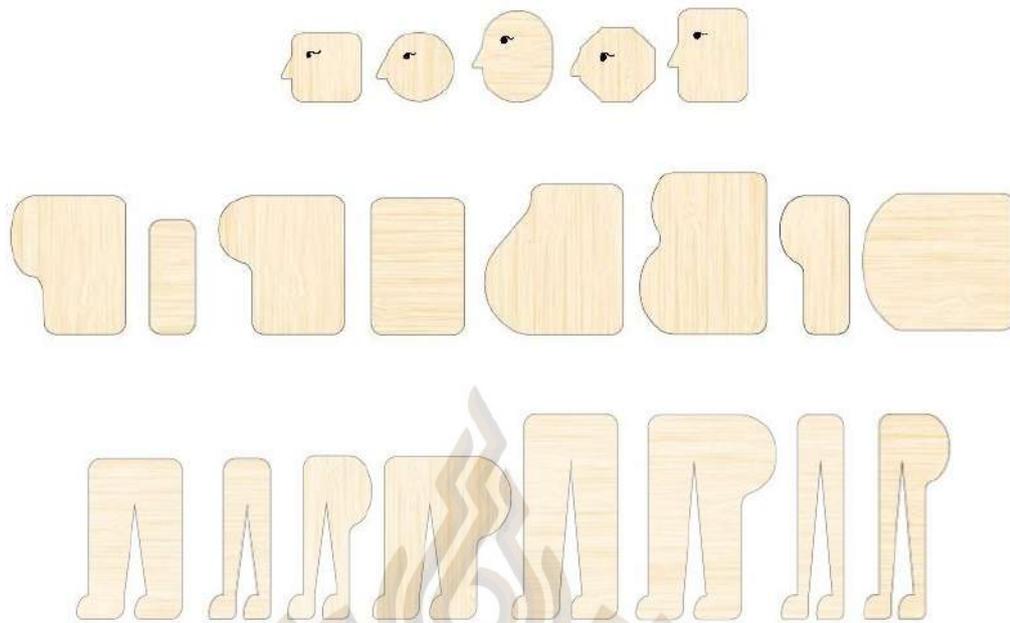
Figure 4.1 Toy design ideas based on Body Dysmorphic Disorder

4.3 Final Product

This concept is rooted in Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD), considering contrasts like Skinny/Fat, Short/Tall, Big/Small chest, and Big/Small butt, to better visualize a person's silhouette from a side view for enhanced clarity.

Figure 4.2 Collection of educational toys

This educational toy is a type of building set designed to enhance children's development by fostering imagination through a variety of interchangeable pieces. These pieces can be assembled to create different personas according to the child's preference, aiding in brain training and focus improvement. With a total of 21 pieces - 5 head pieces, 8 body pieces, and 8 leg pieces - the toy maintains a simple shape concept for ease of understanding. The use of magnets to connect each part ensures safety, high heat resistance, a smooth surface, and easy cleaning, making it suitable for this design's purpose.

Figure 4.3 The parts are connected together by magnets

Children can decorate this toy by painting it or sticking on stickers, etc. Decorating and painting are activities through which children can freely express themselves, encouraging the exploration of their feelings, thoughts, and imagination, fostering creativity, and enhancing the dexterity of their Fine Motor Development. These activities also promote relaxation, alleviate emotional pressure, and contribute to a sense of well-being. Moreover, they stimulate the growth and development of children's brain cells, facilitating positive interactions with parents or caregiver.

Figure 4.4 Children can decorate the toy

The name of the toy is 'Be you tiful.' researcher chose this name as a playful play on words, conveying the message that one is beautiful when embracing their true self. Additionally, the researcher designed a logo that features easy-to-remember shapes, bright colors, and a playful, lively aesthetic, which aligns well with the essence of childhood. Most importantly, researcher aims to represent a joyful life and foster high self-esteem through the toy's design.

Figure 4. 5 Logo "Be you tiful"

Researcher selected a gem-shaped package due to the inherent qualities of gems—luminosity, beauty, and value—which resonate with the essence of the thesis concept. The package is designed to compartmentalize the interior space into three parts: head, body, and legs, facilitating easy toy collection. Additionally, the back of the box includes instructions on how to play and tips for an enhanced playing experience.

Figure 4.6 Front of the package

Figure 4.7 Back of the package

Figure 4.8 Inside the package

Figure 4.9 Easy to collect toys

Figure 4.10 Educatinal toy "Be you tiful"

Chapter 5

Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

The beauty standard reflects society's idealized notion of beauty, influenced by cultural exchanges and gender-defined criteria. As these standards gain traction, they become ingrained and widespread, shaping norms within each culture, albeit with variations. This underscores that the beauty ideals we embrace are subjective constructs, divorced from objective reality or measurable benchmarks of beauty. Despite this, most individuals conform to these standards, striving to meet or exceed them to gain societal approval or attract romantic interest. This thesis underscores the significant impact of beauty standards on various facets of health, psychology, and societal dynamics. Numerous studies indicate that self-esteem and body image can undergo profound shifts from childhood onward. In light of this, the author has developed an educational toy aimed at fostering healthier self-esteem and body perceptions, recognizing the importance of addressing these issues from an early age.

This educational toy collection comprises 21 building pieces designed to enrich children's development. Each piece fosters imaginative play, allowing children to transform them into various forms as per their creativity. Assembling these pieces not only stimulates cognitive skills and concentration but also facilitates holistic development effectively. Crafted from environmentally friendly wood, this toy boasts durability and longevity. Its natural composition ensures safety for children during playtime. Moreover, wood is readily available, making it a sustainable choice. Additionally, this educational toy invites children to unleash their creativity through decoration and painting, offering a platform for self-expression. Complete with detailed instructions and vibrant, user-friendly packaging, this toy set provides both guidance and excitement for young minds.

Moreover, after the survey, it was found that parents or caregivers did not understand the word "Beauty standards". However, parental involvement is considered an important factor in child development. Therefore, using this toy with a caregiver will be more advantageous and effective than children using it themselves. In terms of promoting the development of children in many aspects, including body, brain, intelligence, analytical thinking, problem-solving, concentration, including controlling emotions so as not to be impatient and quit playing halfway. Caregivers can guide your children to become more confident and assertive. In this study, it can be seen that the authors had to explore scientific and humanities research to understand design issues and also to understand caregivers and children to get toys that could improve beauty standards.

5.2 Recommendations

5.2.1 Society must recognize the gravity of beauty standards, as they can lead to serious repercussions such as depression or Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD). Such consequences can have profound effects. Therefore, parents must instill positive self-beliefs in the younger generation, fostering self-confidence.

5.2.2 Beauty standards often act as barriers, limiting opportunities for many individuals in various spheres like employment, social interaction, and even relationships. Each person deserves equal treatment, irrespective of their physical appearance. Embracing diversity and promoting self-expression regardless of one's body shape or appearance is essential.

5.2.3 Given the opportunity, the researcher aims to enhance this toy set by incorporating a wider range of figures, including various outfits, wigs, or even animal-shaped heads. This diversification could not only capture children's interest but also offer them a broader spectrum of imaginative play possibilities.

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