

**ANTI-AGING BODY EXPERIENCES OF WOMEN  
IN THAI SOCIETY**

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THESIS ADVISORY COMMITTEE: PIMPAWUN BOONMONGKON, Ph.D.,  
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The objectives of this research were to study as follows: senses of body-self according to natural aging changes with increasing age; practices of anti-aging body managements and life experiences in diversity of women in Thai society. This research was a qualitative research conducted by accessing the data through the Ethnographic Approach using the Narrative Approach Methodology with Epistemology according to the basic philosophy of Feminism in accessing the knowledge and reality through the life experiences of women. Besides, in the narrative process, the reflection of experience between the researcher as a woman and the research participants known as intersubjectivity was present. In this study, the researcher selected the sample by purposive sampling from specific areas and also by snowball technique from the researcher's social network. The research participants in the sample group were women whose attributes belonged to the set-up criteria. Research ethics to protect the rights of the participants were considered throughout the study. The results of the study demonstrated that: 1. The sense of body-self of the female body which was the subjective experience of the body, both positive and negative, included the senses of body-self as reckless, inferiority complexes and worries, changes of the blood and circulatory system, undesirable appearances, reduction in passion and sexual attractiveness, as well as the medium of happiness and good-spirits, 2. The women's anti-aging practices to manage their body could be divided into 4 groups, which were: 1) the group that concentrated on self-care practice of exercising; 2) the group that preferred the consumption of products from popular culture rather than practice (by taking vitamins and supplements); 3) the group that focused on multiple anti-aging methods (the use of medical technologies as well as the consumption of products and services from popular culture; and 4) the group that preferred non-plastic surgery medicine technology. Women's anti-aging practices reflect self discipline without the control by the government's power. Instead, it is the power of knowledge from biomedicine as well as product advertisements. Women as agencies chose to manage their bodies and found the body-management methods which were appropriate for their life contexts in order to upgrade their statuses and to live in a better society. Middle-class women with higher economic and social statuses and greater purchasing power emphasized the importance of appearance management by linking youth with health and beauty, and they usually relied on the use of medical technologies which they thought were able to provide clearer and safer results as well as to reduce obstacles which prevented them from conducting their self-care practices. As for women who concentrated on self care or product consumption (by taking vitamins and supplements), they focused on internal body management for health rather than appearance. Lower middle-class women usually managed their bodies in a way that did not cost a lot of expense and tried to find the most appropriate way to fix and prevent health problems in the future. 3. As for the life experience of women from different life contexts, women's body-management to resist aging were necessary and important as an investment in the body in order to transform the self, to accumulated capital and to turn their body capital into other types of capital such as social and economic capital. This also included women's experiences with negotiation regarding the use of medical technologies, which was not able to resist aging as efficiently as self care from the inside since the latter could reflect external appearances. Policy recommendations are suggested to enhance quality of life of these middle age Thai women.

**KEY WORDS: BODY-SELF / BODY / ANTI-AGING / WOMEN EXPERIENCES / GENDER &  
SEXUALITY / BIO-POWER / PRACTICES / AGENCY / BODY INVESTMENT /**

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ประสบการณ์ร่างกายที่ต่อต้านความชราของผู้หญิงในสังคมไทย

ANTI-AGING BODY EXPERIENCES OF WOMEN IN THAI SOCIETY

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บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยครั้งนี้ มีวัตถุประสงค์ เพื่อศึกษาผัสสะตัวตนร่างกาย(senses of body-self)ที่มีความชราเปลี่ยนแปลงขึ้นอย่างธรรมชาติตามอายุวัยเพิ่มขึ้น, ปฏิบัติการ(Practices) การจัดการร่างกายในการต่อต้านความชราและประสบการณ์ชีวิตของผู้หญิงที่หลากหลายในการต่อต้านความชราในสังคมไทย การวิจัยชิ้นนี้เป็นการวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพ ดำเนินการวิจัยเข้าถึงข้อมูลแบบเชิงชาติพันธุ์วรรณนา(Ethnographic Approach) ใช้วิธีวิทยา(Methodology) การเล่าเรื่อง(Narrative approach) และญาณวิทยา(Epistemology) ตามปรัชญา รากฐานของแนวคิดสตรีนิยม ในการเข้าถึงความรู้ ความจริงผ่านประสบการณ์ชีวิตของผู้หญิง นอกจากนี้ในกระบวนการเล่าเรื่อง ยังมีการสะท้อนประสบการณ์ร่วมระหว่างผู้วิจัยในฐานะผู้หญิงกับผู้ร่วมวิจัย(Intersubjectivity)ในกระบวนการศึกษาวิจัยอีกด้วย กลุ่มตัวอย่างในการศึกษาครั้งนี้ เลือก แบบเจาะจง(Purposive sampling) ในพื้นที่สนามและเทคนิคSnowball จากเครือข่ายทางสังคมของผู้วิจัย กลุ่มตัวอย่างในฐานะผู้ร่วมวิจัย(Participant) เป็นผู้หญิงที่มีคุณลักษณะตามเกณฑ์ที่กำหนด มีการคำนึงถึงหลักจริยธรรมการวิจัยในการพิทักษ์สิทธิ์ของผู้ร่วมการวิจัยตลอดกระบวนการวิจัย ผลการศึกษาพบว่า 1.ผัสสะตัวตนร่างกายของผู้หญิงซึ่งเป็น ประสบการณ์อัตตะวิสัย(Subjective)ร่างกายตัวตน มีทั้งเชิงบวกและเชิงลบ 2.ผัสสะตัวตนในฐานะความประมาท ปมค้อยและความวิตกกังวล การเปลี่ยนแปลงของเลือดและระบบเลือดลม การลดลงของเส้นเอ็นและความตึงตัวของเส้นเอ็น และร่างกายอ่อนแอ 3.ปฏิบัติการจัดการร่างกายที่ผู้หญิงเน้นให้ความสำคัญกับวิธีการจัดการร่างกายต่อต้านความชราที่ทำได้เป็นประจำ แบ่งได้เป็น 4 กลุ่ม ดังนี้ 1) กลุ่มผู้หญิงที่เน้นเลือกการดูแลตนเองปฏิบัติตน ด้วยการออกกำลังกาย2)กลุ่มที่เลือกบริโภคสินค้าตามวัฒนธรรมประชานิยมมากกว่าการปฏิบัติตน(การกินอาหารเสริม)3.กลุ่มที่ใช้เน้นวิธีการต่อต้านความชราแบบผสมผสาน(Multiple methods) ใช้เทคโนโลยีการแพทย์และบริโภคสินค้าและบริการตามวัฒนธรรมประชานิยม(Popular culture)4.กลุ่มที่เน้นเลือกใช้บริการการดูแลรักษาโดยแพทย์แบบไม่ผ่าตัด(Non-Plastic Surgery Medicine) ผู้หญิงในฐานะผู้กระทำการ(agency) มีการเลือกตัดสินใจหาวิธีการจัดการร่างกายที่เหมาะสมกับบริบทชีวิตของตนเองเพื่อการได้เด้า เลื่อนชั้นสถานภาพตัวตนในสังคมที่ดีขึ้น ผู้หญิงชนชั้นกลางที่มีฐานะเศรษฐกิจสังคมสูงกว่ามีกำลังซื้อให้ความสำคัญการจัดการสภาพลักษณะปรากฏภายนอกโดยผูกโยงความอ่อนเยาว์เป็นเรื่องของสุขภาพและความงาม มักพึ่งพาการใช้เทคโนโลยีการแพทย์ที่เห็นว่า สามารถให้ผลลัพธ์ชัดเจนและความปลอดภัยมากกว่ารวมทั้งการละลายหรือไม่สามารถปฏิบัติการดูแลตนเองร่างกายตนเองได้ ส่วนผู้หญิงที่เน้นการดูแลตนเองหรือการเลือกซื้อสินค้า(กินอาหารเสริม)ได้ให้ความสำคัญการจัดการร่างกายภายในเพื่อสุขภาพมากกว่าสภาพลักษณะปรากฏภายนอก ผู้หญิงชนชั้นกลางระดับล่าง มักจัดการร่างกายโดยไม่ต้องมีการมีภาระค่าใช้จ่ายสูงรวมทั้งหาทางแก้ไขและการป้องกันภาวะทางสุขภาพในอนาคต ปฏิบัติการการจัดการร่างกายที่ต่อต้านความชราของผู้หญิงเหล่านี้เปิดเผยให้เห็นการมีวินัยควบคุมร่างกายตนเอง(bio-power) โดยปราศจากการบังคับจากอำนาจรัฐ โดยตรงแต่เป็นโครงการอำนาจชุดความรู้และปฏิบัติการทั้งชีวการแพทย์และสื่อโฆษณาของผลิตภัณฑ์สินค้าและบริการ 3. ประสบการณ์ชีวิตผู้หญิงผ่านเรื่องเล่าของผู้หญิงที่มีบริบทชีวิตหลากหลาย สะท้อนปฏิบัติการการจัดการร่างกายที่ต่อต้านความชราเพื่อการลงทุนร่างกาย เป็นทุนอื่นๆเช่นทุนวัฒนธรรม ทุนทางสังคมและทุนทางเศรษฐกิจ กล่าวคือ การลงทุนร่างกายในฐานะการเปลี่ยนผ่านตัวตน การสะสมทุนและแลกเปลี่ยนทุนทางร่างกายรวมทั้งประสบการณ์ชีวิตที่ผู้หญิงในฐานะผู้กระทำการ(Agency) ที่มีการต่อรอง(Negotiation) การใช้เทคโนโลยีการแพทย์รักษาสภาพลักษณะภายนอก ข้อเสนอแนะเชิงนโยบายเพื่อให้ผู้หญิงมีคุณภาพชีวิตที่ดี

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Patcharee Niamsri

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## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background and Importance of Problem**

According to the history of human society with the concept of Genealogy of Foucault, there was no static or rigid status of the definition of the term “Elderly Person”. The definitions have been changed according to social conditions and power of those who can define the meaning of a certain era (Kamjohn Louiyapong,2010).The definition of elderly people may be valuable and, in some periods, diverge in hunting and agricultural society. Anthropologists have indicated that elderly may not determine definite stage of ages. To become an elderly can signify both positive and negative meanings. It can indicate senior status, having knowledge and skills.In the society in pre-modern era, being an elderly may vary and be flexible by individual.

In the Thai society, the description of aging is socially defined that in the past aging people has been defined as old and senior without a specific determination of an age range. Some of the characterized terms conceal positive meaning. For example, the term “old” means to master or be proficient in something. Elderly or senior people formerly signified the enhancement of age, knowledge, and experiences according to the actual nature of long living (Somrak Chaisingkananont,2001). In the Thai society, seniority is more emphasized than that in the Western society (Frank J.Moore, as cited in Amara Prasertsin, 2007).In some societies, one set of ages may be considered better or given higher value and significance than the other set. In ancient Chinese society, elderly people or even the deceased ancestors are highly respected.Older people possess superior power over the younger in decision making. In contrary, in the American society the importance is given to the younger age than the senior group.As anthropologist Marvin Harris says, in America “being young people is much better than being old. Being an old man means keeping yourself on the shelf and become worthless...”(Harris, 1985:233,as cited in Amara Prasertsin, 2007).

Thai society has a certain level of hierarchy. Age is a part of arranging social ranking position together with various other factors. Elderly people are among the group of the people being respected by other people with less seniority (Wipawee Iemworamate and Achara Entz, 2005). The evidence proving that elderly individuals are being honored by their families and communities can be observed from various traditions expressing the respect of their children to the elders. A good example would be the Songkran Festival, which has been called differently in each different region. In the North East, for instance, there are festivals being practiced by the people in various occasions in each and every month of the year called “Heat Sib Song”. Songkran or Boon Songkran festival or “Heat Ha” is the fifth event in the twelve-month series (Isan and Indochina Club Naresuan University Phitsanulok,2005).

However, as Thailand stepped into modernization from mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century until mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century and the then Government has brought the National Economic and Social Development Plans into action, the definition of elder people has also varied according to the concept of the West. The aspect of the elderly has been changed. Old people were considered as vulnerable and in needs of cares from the Government. Nevertheless, though the trend of the aspect of the elderly has started to decline, but its implication within the Thai society did not significantly become negative (Kamjohn Louiyapong,2009).

As people get older, personal body identity changes naturally occur. The aging body occurred becomes the identity which reveals our individuality. It is an indicator representing the transition to Elderly (Vincent, 2003)and assigning the social roles of behavior with appropriate age (Normalization of Age) based on the traditions, values or beliefs inherited within the cultures of each society (Vincent, 2003; Amara Prasertsin,2007).In the earlier norms, there are mostly the compliance of time frame defined by the society for the ends through degeneration and death (Russo,1999, as cited in Chutima Prakatwuthisan,2010).

As for the values or beliefs that is the usual norm (Normalization) determining the importance and definitions of various matters in the society, it is referred as perceived by Foucault as discourse”. Discourse defines the notion of beliefs, deviation, values, and goodness through practices in the society that is repeatedly constituted such as policies and laws. It is used in order to keep the existence of a set of

knowledge and truth and widely spread until striving the status of hegemony over other discourses and become a conventional discourse (Rouse, J. ,1994)

The discourse that is the usual norm(normalization)structurally combines physical aging to prolonged age of a life course with intersected stages between gender and sexuality as well (Faircloth,Christopher A.,2003).Gender socially defined with the difference between womanhood and manhood through behavioral expectation and not by the qualification of biological origin (Suchada Thaweessit, 2007).It is on the other hand defined through social and cultural factors often attached only to the system of two opposite genders, femininity and masculinity. Therefore, each person must sexually impersonate strictly according to his or her physiological sexual origin. Many societies value male gender over female by using the desires of “man” to set how “woman” should behave. In addition, the gender norms are non-finite and differ in each different society, culture, social class, ethnic, and era (Tawatchai Pacheun and Pimpawun Boonmongkon, 2008) such as the role of a wife or a mother.

On the other hand, the term sexuality holds many definitions. For individuals and academic circle, there were several efforts to classify various issues related to sexuality into groups including sensuality, sexual intimacy, sexual identity, reproductive and sexual health, and sexualization. Moreover, the term was given a more concrete and obvious meaning covering feelings, thoughts, and behaviors associated with gender, charismatic heterosexual, being loved and having relationships with others in terms of sexual desire, love, sexual commitment, and sexual intercourse as well as the pleasure or satisfaction individually perceived from all senses – vision, taste, smell, and hearing (White, Bondurant and Travis, 2000:11, as cited in Napaporn Hawanon, 2012).In many societies, there is a relationship in a form of hierarchical power controlling expression and presentation under the ideological domination of heterosexual culture (Heterosexuality)(Faircloth, Christopher A.,2003). Gender and sexuality of female body are oppressed to lower value.

Western biomedicine is a powerful institution holding justified authorities from birth to death (Vincent ,2003).Female body has been manipulated under the process of “Biomedicalization” in all ages of life including fertility, childbearing, menopause,and etc.(Berger,Gabriella & Wenzel,Eberhard ,2000).This is considered as a process of biomedicalization leading to deterioration of physical aging body,

defectiveness, and deviation according to biological theory. In the contemporary society, Western biomedicine has enhanced various medical technology solutions for anti-aging which help modify, maintain, cure, and adjust human body. Female body is the operational target for this medical technology of anti-aging and the anti-aging solutions of other various medical fields such as Dermatology, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, and Geriatric Medicine. All of them have been trying to create and define new diseases with the aims to manage the anti-aging body in terms of external appearance and the conditions and functions of internal organs to prevent defectiveness and sickness and promote healthy and long life. Biomedicine has created a new definition of the aging body differently from previous generations.

According to the concept in the book "Outline of a Theory of Practice" (1972), Bourdieu attempted to claim access to knowledge and truth by observing Practices Approach. The views of Bourdieu show that social structure determines the actions of an individual. At the same time, an individual as an agency is considered as an individual actor reproducing the structure of society, of which he called "practice". As said by Ortner, anthropologists have focused more on the study of practice and the idea has extended to the field of Linguistics as well as Social Sciences. Accordingly, the practice is itself the actions that occurred in the society (Ortner, Sherry B.,1984). Bourdieu focused on the expression of people in everyday life in terms of working, eating, sleeping, and spending leisure times. The roles of these actions are being practiced over and over through social interactions absorbed internally through the body (internalized) (Ortner, Sherry B.,1984). and defined the emotional feelings of the individual.

The practices of anti-aging in today's society significantly become concrete under the orientation of the biomedical paradigm of the health and well-being system of Thailand which focuses on health promotion, i.e., the exercise at a public sport playground such as an aerobic exercise at shopping malls or public parks which can be found typically in the communities of the Thai society. This is a consequence of the trend of health concern in terms of health protection and health promotion in a higher level. In order to reduce health care costs since the national economic depression or "Tom Yum Kung" crisis in 1997, the Government has continuously promoted the public aerobic exercise on public playground with concrete efficiency.

Currently, there are over 7,000 public aerobics exercise playgrounds covering all districts in Bangkok with easy accessibility for the public. In addition, several public youth centers have been built as modern arenas for people to come and exercise with numerous options of modern sport activities. At the moment, there are altogether 37 facilities across various districts throughout Bangkok.

In terms of practices, the use of medical technology in anti-aging by experts in social areas involves both the use of surgical and non-surgical procedures. Currently, the use of non-surgical medical technology is becoming popular. There are various types of this technology which can be applied to almost all over the body including face, skin and body from Botox injections, injectable filler treatment, laser treatment, radio wave therapy, ultrasound therapy, facial lifting and adjustment, and etc.

The market of anti-aging products and services in Thailand has grown tremendously with different types of operations such as fitness center business, cosmetic products and anti-aging supplements, facial and skin treatment clinics, anti-aging medical science, health-related business in hospitals including anti-aging centers of private hospitals. In Thailand, the anti-aging business is worth over four thousand million Thai Baht and growing rapidly. It has been estimated that the global anti-aging product market in 2013 would be worth more than 270,000 million USD. In particular, the market of cosmetics and skin care products was worth 333 billion USD, and the anti-aging products had the highest growth. (Brandage-Siamrath, 2013)

In addition, academic institutions also co-promoted with a mission to produce personnel support to the anti-aging business market as well. Mae Fah Luang University was the first academic institution of higher education to offer such courses in the graduate and doctoral levels concerning aging medical pathology including training and short courses and intensive courses on the use of various aging medical technology. This also involves an opening of a medical clinic offering anti-aging medical treatment as well. (Mae Fah Luang, 2012). Currently, some private universities are opening new courses on both anti-aging pathology and anti-aging science.

As for the production of consumer goods, marketing, media and advertising has become an important tool to "educate" people in society (Napaporn Havanon, 2012). It creates a set of knowledge and practice to stimulate consumers

demands for the products. Each product is made meaningful to the individual through various forms of media, not particularly for the used-value, but also for a matter of interpretation or definition system indicating the social status of their own (Featherstone, M., 1991).

These numerous created products and services have indicated both the problems and proposed solutions for the creation of personal identity. Identity creation process through the products has emerged and changed along the changing stages of life, such as in the step from adolescence to adulthood, the desire of creating personal identity through product consumption would also change. Consumption becomes an important approach to help people maintain the status of their existence in the society (Featherstone, M., 1990).

It becomes the principal of defining identity (Lupton, 1996). The struggle to obtain the supremacy over the monetary and symbolic power has become an important key to reproducing unique cultures of the people in their daily life (Featherstone, M., 1990; Slater, 1997, as cited in Napaporn Havanon, 2012).

Body is considered a medium of identity, an expression of identity (Turner, 1995) and an intermediate of experience as well (Shilling, 2003). Body and identity intertwine with each other. Identity cannot be detached from the body, but somehow not identical (Wiersma, E. C., 2007). Various practices in the society create numerous sets of knowledge and discourses absorbed internally through the body. The perception of most studies of the past academically adverted with the knowledge of the biomedical mainstream. The parallel discourses indicating the opposite of "old" and "young or youth" that impair the body as just an object of scientific knowledge are frequently reproduced. Moreover, the social practice through the body of women is often defined with a stereotype that is often neglected the perspective of individual subjective experience of the female body itself.

Senses of body-self is therefore an object of interest to make an understanding of the relationships of occurring practices in the society that has an impact to the determination of internal thought as a subjective experience which led to practices of anti-aging body management. However, the experience of senses of body-self is an aspect, thought, feeling, and emotion, changeable according to the social

life. On the other hand, the senses of body-self are also linked to the social structure as an agency of social actor presenting personal identity as well.

It is undeniable that most women in the world are threatened and pulled into the cycle of consumption of goods and services that make some advantages out of effeminacy. In addition, as the health paradigm has expanded to a wider perspective, having good health is not merely the absence of disease status only. Health care encompasses many dimensions with an emphasis on health promotion in a higher level. Having decided to create an identity through the advanced complex medical technology, women may face some unexpected impacts as a consequence. For example, the supplementation of hormone replacement therapy may stretch the risk of breast cancer (Chan et.,1998, as cited in Mehlman M.J., Binstock R.H., Juengst E.T., Ponsaran R.S.,& Whitehouse P.J.,2004.).There are numerous studies suggesting that hormone replacement therapy on both short-term and long-term basis is risky such as injection of stem cell substance which has not been verified by the medical community for the anti-aging treatment effectiveness, or getting side effects from the use of aging technologies including anti-aging fillers or Botox injections. As a result of the afore said body management of the women, there are both physically and mentally positive and negative effects including the risks of physical harms and inefficient treatment as well as the loss of economic resources.

The set of knowledge on the mainstream biomedical discourse observes aging body as deterioration and being objective with the same unification. Somehow, it lacks social context and conditions not considering the knowledge and the truth of the set of experiences from women's senses of body- self amidst the social world where such practices occur. Such an attitude inevitably influenced the development concept of health policy which is often based on stereotypes of women as an unchanged essence focusing on amelioration with impairment and negative perceptions. These perceptions inevitably affect the women's health policy in concerning to the resolution with quality and efficiency.

Therefore, from the above, the researcher saw that the issue of anti-aging body is very challenging to investigate and look for the answer to the questions with an aim to see women in the context of the Thai society with good health. The researcher, therefore, is interested in investigating the experiences of women's senses

of body-self, and the body management against aging of women through the experiences of using the popular culture products, goods and services and the use of medical technology in anti-aging as well as studying how the life experiences of women are with diverse contexts of life in the perspective of the Thai society?

## **1.2 Research Questions**

1. How are the experiences of women's senses of body- self like?
2. What are the practices of body management against aging of women in Thai society?
3. How are the contexts of life of women practicing body managements against aging?

## **1.3 Research objectives**

To study the anti-aging body experiences of women in Thai society.

### **Specific objectives of the research**

1. To investigate the experiences of women's senses of body-self
2. To investigate the practices of body management against aging through the series of experiences of women in using the popular culture products and services and medical technology.
3. To study the life experiences of women with diverse life contexts

## **1.4 Scope of Research**

This study was a qualitative research by accessing an Ethnography Approach. The analysis was based on the theory of post-structuralism including the concept of "Power and Knowledge" of Foucault and the concept of "Practice" and "Capital" of Bourdieu.

The research has limitations covering only the scope of body management against aging with the use of anti-aging popular culture products and services and the use of medical technology in non-surgical anti-aging treatment.

### **1.5 Contributions result from the study**

1. Deconstruct the knowledge from practical experiences of women using women's own experiences to create knowledge.

2. Create echoes of women's experiences as these experiences make people in society recognize the complex dimension of diverse subjective experiences of women and form solid foundation of mutual understanding leading to co existence creatively.

3. Make open space to the new methodology of knowledge persuasion such as using narrative methodology to study women's experiences.

4. Make open space to the series of knowledge and new social reality from women's subjective experiences in form of "Little Narrative" that had previously been overlooked by the society which is struck with the mainstream discourse of "Grand Narrative" to critically reveal the inequalities of power structure with the female body, unseen by the people in the society.

5. Apply the body concepts into practices associated with experiences to form policy development plan and programs related to women's health through creative ways of practices in the health system.

6. Create a guideline for further researches on women

### **1.6 Specific Definitions**

Experiences of senses of body-self refer to the thoughts, feelings, and emotions of a woman with the body, both internally and externally, that changes according to the natural aging process.

Anti-aging products and services in popular culture refer to what is produced or created to meet the demand and desire of anti-aging which is publicly

known and become a trend in today's society causing people in society to choose to consume, both in form of eating, utilizing, or being managed with care to protect, maintain and restore the natural signs of aging occurred on the body. In this study, the research has categorized them into major groups including food supplements and cosmetics product group and beauty salon services product group.

The use of non-surgical anti-aging medical technologies refer to the non-surgical methods of medical treatment against aging under a doctor's supervision to protect, maintain, and restore the natural signs of aging that occur to the body in the aspect of health and beauty including the hormone replacement therapy, Botox injections, filler injections, stem cell injections, laser treatment, radio wave therapy, ultrasound therapy, facial lifting and adjustment, and etc.

The practices of anti-aging body management refer to the actions, activities or events occurring from various body management procedures against aging. This includes anti-aging self-care practices such as exercising, using products and services and a treatment under supervisions of a local specialist or medical expert such as the use of medical technology in medical clinics and beauty institutes.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This study is carried out to understand the anti-aging body experiences of Thai women. Therefore, the researcher has conducted the literature review by considering related concepts and theories in order to use them as the guidelines of the study and the theoretical framework as follow:

#### 2.1 Body Concepts

##### 2.1.1 Biomedical Paradigm to Body

##### 2.1.2 Social Construction Paradigm to Body

##### 2.1.3 Body Dimensions

###### 2.1.3.1 Body - Self Dimension

###### 2.1.3.2 Gender and Sexual Body Dimension

###### 2.2.3.3 Consumer Body Dimension

#### 2.2 Power and Knowledge Concept of Foucault

#### 2.3 Practice and Capital Concept of Bourdieu

#### 2.4 Related Researches

#### 2.5 Research Framework

### **2.1 Body Concepts**

#### **2.1.1 Biomedical Paradigm to Body**

This paradigm is the biological view of the body. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, science greatly developed. The advanced scientific knowledge from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> century established itself as the highest level of knowledge, making the society believe that things that were explained by scientific knowledge were accurate, reasonable, neutral, reliable and true (Chanida Chitbandit, 2007). The body became a material for studying. The human body is like an organism, a body machine with each organ

having its own duty. This paradigm regards the body as biomedical body. The knowledge generated by this paradigm is based on the biological theory which views the elderly people and/or the bodies in the “senile” dimension when they aged (Westendorp and Kirkwood, 2007). The concepts founded on this paradigm believe that the aging process is natural and universal, and that it is not related to the culturalization process (Suchada Thaweesit, 2010). McPherson (1983) further demonstrated that, under the biological theory, there are sub-theories which support the viewing of senile condition, and that all of them are in accordance with the thinking method which explains that senility is the degeneration of the body. For example, (1) the genetic theory believes that senility is caused by heredity, and that it will reveal itself as people age, such as grey hair, bald head and hunched back; (2) the collagen theory believes that substances which are the components of bone issues increase and gather together, causing the collagen fiber to shrink as people age and resulting in wrinkles; (3) the auto immune theory considers that senility is caused by the fact that the body produces fewer immune substances. Instead, it creates more auto immune substances, making people more prone to diseases; (4) the error catastrophe theory considers that, as people age, their bodies slowly have more errors which will increase until the body cells deteriorate and expire and (5) the free-radical theory is based on the fact that human bodies, especially at old age, have very high level of free radicals, causing the genes to become abnormal and the collagen and elastin which are the protein components of connective tissues to lose their elasticity. (Kamjohn Louiyapong, 2010).

#### **2.1.1.1 Biomedicine in Aged Body**

The foundation of biomedical thinking method during the Enlightenment period in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was influenced by Descartes, a French philosopher who viewed the body and the mind separately. Therefore, biomedicine views the human body as if it is a body machine. The body is composed of subordinate organs with their own duties. There is also a comparison between the aged body and the young body.

Biomedicine uses the basis of biological paradigm to view the body. Under various theories, the aged body in the viewpoint of biomedical paradigm is, therefore, a body of deterioration or defect. For this reason, senility and aging are considered “deficient,” “incompetent,” or “deteriorating.” The nature of such definitions

appears in the description of aging. Biomedicine has made senility a process which causes biomedicalization. There is the definition, pathology, physiological causes and medical treatments of the elderly people. Biomedicalization has two dimensions, i.e., the construction of elderly people as medical issue and the operation as medical issue as well as related behaviors and policies. (Wiersma, E. C., 2007).

As Estes and Binney explained, biomedicine has an influence on public concepts and the public tendency to view the elderly people negatively. Western biomedicine has the power as a social control institution which explains about our bodies. It defines behaviors as medical problems and also doctors' responsibility in the treatment. Besides, the female body has been a target area of medical professions for many centuries. According to contemporary medical textbooks, the male gender is the standard for the measurement and evaluation of the female gender which is anatomically described as "smaller," "thinner" and "less developed" both in terms of physical strength and capability. Consequently, the female body becomes a target of various medical discursive practices more than males (Komart Juengsathiansap, 2007). The female body is a subject in biomedicalization at all stages of life, including reproduction period, motherhood, menopause, etc. (Berger, Gabriella & Wenzel, Eberhard, 2000)

Currently, western biomedicine has created the anti-aging technology which contributes to the advancement of knowledge which has developed into the anti-aging medicine. Youth has become the norm of medical discourses of this branch of medicine which has generated a set of knowledge about the management of body and aging. There is an establishment of the American Anti-Aging Association Medicine or A4M (Mykytyn, Courtney Everts, 2010). Additionally, it is claimed that the medical society knows the secret of aging, which comes from the deterioration of nervous system and hormones which have declined or become abnormal, genetics as well as free radicals (Chaleaw Piyachon, 2009:23-25). Such knowledge leads to various anti-aging approaches which may not be different from the past such as exercise and diet. Nevertheless, the difference is the aim to manage human "cells" using the "biomedical technology" which includes: (1) Stem cell and gene therapy; (2) Cloning for therapeutic purposes; (3) Nanotechnology and Nanomedicine in order to conduct researches and offer treatments at cellular level or smaller; (4) Regenerative medicine

which includes prosthesis and (5) Food technology, hormones and vitamins (Krisada Sirampuch, 2008).

### **2.1.2 Social Construction Paradigm to Body**

The outlook of Social construction paradigm is in contrast to that of the positivism paradigm which uses scientific methods to acquire knowledge. The latter considers that the use of scientific methods is the only way to gain real knowledge or accurate, universal truth. The social construction paradigm has adjusted the outlook on truth, from objectivity to the fact that the truth is something that human beings have created from their perception and interpretation (Napaporn Hawanon, 2007).

The social construction of the body in the viewpoint of social theory is different from the biological or biomedical body concepts in terms of position. The body is the center of social interaction which derives from the society, politics, economics, culture and environment. The body is the essential basis of social interaction. Humans act in response to the society's expectations as they are attached to people that they wish to interact with. Interaction is not valueless. The way that human beings interact with others will reflect the social structure which is shaped by social situations (Wiersma, E. C., 2007).

#### **2.1.2.1 The social Construction Perspective in Aged Body**

The social construction perspective in aged body is a viewpoint which believes that discrimination and disdain towards the elderly people really exist in the modern society. This statement derives from the fact that the negative image of the elderly people appears pervasively in the society; for instance, all types of media, governments' policies, regulations of law organizations which are related to retirement, social insurance system, medical system, insurance businesses as well as methods to explain the elderly's situations in academic papers from different branches which usually express concern about the increasing number of old people at present. These works consider that the upcoming elderly-society phenomenon may lead to social crises in many aspects, and that the government and the society must become alert in order to handle and respond to the situation appropriately and promptly (Suchada Thaweessit, 2010). This viewpoint is in accordance with that of

Estes (1991) who used to study the elderly people and claimed that being old is not a natural thing. Instead, it is socially constructed through “language” which helps to create the meaning (Estes,1991,as cited in Wiersma,E.C.,2007)The past result is the creation of negative meanings for the elderly people. More importantly, such images will have an influence on both individuals or old people themselves and also people in the society (Kamjorn Louiyapong, 2010).

### **2.1.2.2 Social Theory and Concept Perspective to Body**

Theorists under the social construction paradigm regarding the body presented various perspectives towards the subject, including Shilling’s concept which views the body as the unfinished biological and social phenomena, Mary Douglas’s concept which considers the body a receiver of social meanings and symbols,Turner’s concept which studies the body and its organization, Elias’s concept which focuses on the civilized body, Goffman’s concept which believes that the body plays a significant role as the media for the importance of self identity and social identity, the symbolic reaction concept which relates the body to social power and social relation, Bourdieu’s concept which views the body and the production of physical capital, Foucault’s concept which considers the body and the power, the knowledge and the discourse as well as feminism which views the body and the gender equality (Shilling,1993).

In this research,the researcher considers the body concepts of Foucault and Bourdieu in order to understand females’ anti-aging body experiences.

According to the “body” concept of Foucault, the body is viewed not only as the receiver of discourses, but it is also the social construction of discourses as well. Foucault’s work explains the body in the political and social context. Foucault viewed the body as a material and the target of power. Moreover, the body is a historical and cultural entity. The emphasis is put on 2 aspects of the body study, i.e., 1)the body and the institution which controls the body, which means that the body is a subject that is controlled by the power of external regulations and, therefore, is forced to rely on other people at all times. These regulations will create the body of knowledge through the conscience inside and lead to practice and 2) the philosophical explanation called epistemological view regarding the body which is

created by the society and exists in the discourses. In this case, the body is not only the center but also the connecting point of the daily-life activities and the power of social institutions. The viewing of body as the mode of bio-power which reproduces and ceases is done by various institutions which have the power to control. Therefore, the concept of “Docile body” means the dead body under the authority and the body control as citizen. The state will use codes, which include signs, numbers and symbols, to distinguish each person (Shilling, 1993:78; Saipin Suputthamongkol et. al., 1998: 32).

According to the mode of bio-power in the traditional society, the body was controlled by the disciplined force of oppression. However, in the modern society where people live in the consumerism culture, the body will be controlled by the building of motivation which creates desire. Under the management by institutions, the body in this era will be coated by a spell which makes people believe that the self is the center. People can use their bodies to communicate to others that they exist by expressing themselves in the form of self-care, treatment as well as their choice of being tall, slim, pretty and tanned (Foucault, 1980:57). The body in the 20th century is different from the past as it changes from the body which was dominated by strict, meticulous and stable discipline into the more flexible, free body without control (Mullika Muttiko, 2008). In the modern period, the pressure is different from the 18th century. These days, the control applies the positive method. Firstly, the body classification strategy which categorizes bodies into male-female, ill-healthy, civilized-uncivilized, etc. is applied.

Afterwards, the meaning and the ranking of the body may be created under this procedure which Foucault called “discursive practice.” Human beings will be controlled. Nevertheless, in Foucault’s opinion, such control is not perfect and absolute since the power network cannot control all dimensions of life (Shilling, 2005). Foucault has opened the channel for the analysis of the points that people use in the negotiation with the main discourse. Certainly, people use the body as an important part in the negotiation.

The body which appears in Foucault’s work does not permanently exist as a real body. This is because it is created by the society and will eventually become the vanishing body. The only thing that remains is the power that the discourse has left in the mind; that is, when the society (discipline, regulation,

knowledge) is brought into the body, the biological body condition will disappear and turn into anything that the discourse wants it to (Shilling, 1993: 79-80, as cited in Mullika Muttiko, 2008). However, in Foucault's work, the body is presented as an argument but the real study is missing (Wiersma, E.C., 2007).

The body according to Bourdieu's concept, Bourdieu paid attention to the study and explanation of "the body" as a source which contains symbolic value and also viewed the body as a form of physical capital. Therefore, Bourdieu's concept has some characteristics which are similar to the explanation by Elias in the subject of the creation of the civilized body.<sup>1</sup> Both of them emphasize the interaction between body development and social location of people. Nevertheless, Bourdieu put a main emphasis on the explanation of body in the contemporary society, while Elias principally analyzed the historical procedure in the creation of civilized body of people.

Bourdieu (Bourdieu, 1984) viewed the body as the unfinished project; that is, a human being can boost, improve and decorate his/ her bodies continually as much as the owner of the body/ that body wants. Also, the body can be compared to a kind of capital that Bourdieu called "physical capital," which can change into other kinds of capital.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Civilized body is Elias's concept which studies human body's process of becoming a civilized body. According to the medieval history in Europe during the late Middle Ages to the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, Elias's work demonstrated that the body which was often viewed only as a biological and social unit became the area which was managed by various sets of ideas. It was obvious in the Renaissance period which was the court aristocracy society ruled by the king. Individuals felt the need to become different from other people in the court in order to be the king's favorites. Therefore, they tried to make their bodies comply with the court's traditions so much that it melted into their sub-consciousness. Their manners both inside their personal perimeter and in public were watched and assessed by competitors and the court all the time, which caused individuals to practice behaving properly in order not to lose face and to eventually become accepted by the society (Shilling, 1993, as cited in Arattha Rangphueg, 2005).

<sup>2</sup> There are 4 types of capital: economic capital which includes money, products and services, social capital which includes social networks of which members exchange products and services between each other, cultural capital which includes education and symbolic capital which includes social fame and honor.

Besides, Bourdieu connected the body concept to his main concepts: habitus<sup>3</sup> and taste<sup>4</sup> since most of the habitus comes from the learning of the body. In the same way, taste needs to be specified by the body's expressions, for instance, proper dining manner, soldier's march, models' pose (Kanjana Kaewthep and Somsuk Hinwimarn, 2008:579).

Bourdieu was interested in the study of the relationship between the body and the inequality in the modern society. He paid attention to the analysis of the process in which the body became a product. In the modern time, the body is not only bought and sold in the form of labor, but it is also a subject for the analysis of how the body becomes "physical capital" which can change into other kinds of capital. Shilling added that the investment for the body is another way to create the "self" of the body owner. It makes people feel good about themselves and realize their capacity to control their bodies. This is because, even though they feel incapable of controlling the society which has become more complicated as time goes by, at least they can manage something about the size, shape and image of their own bodies" (Shilling,1993:7).When a person refuses to invest for his/ her body and let the body decline without any attempt to manage or control it, people will look at it as the negligence of that person's conscience, which could mean the loss of both self-esteem

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<sup>3</sup> Habitus is the disposition which includes the ways of using the body, ways of thinking, tastes, actions, feelings, etc. of individuals/ people who belong to each social field. On one hand, habitus has structures/ rules to control the disposition. On the other hand, habitus has a characteristic of an open system which can change at certain level within the mentioned regulatory framework. Also, habitus is a combination between the external structure and the nature inside the body. Regulations, methods of thinking, viewpoints are embodiments of the body. Therefore, habitus creates/ produces practices and presents them in an individual's own style which is generated from the combination of external structures/ regulations and internal processes of an individual. Consequently, habitus has both passive and active sides. Furthermore, due to its nature as an embodiment in the body, habitus works at unconscious level; that is, it can operate automatically. Habitus is not only a quality which is present at individual level. Simultaneously, it is also a characteristic of each group and class as well (Kanjana Kaewthep and Somsuk Hinwiman, 2008:568-574).

<sup>4</sup> Taste is the relationship between people and objects which are related to the creation/ production/ possession/ use of such objects to indicate the statuses of people in the society. It is the result of habitus (Kanjana Kaewthep and Somsuk Hinwiman, 2008: 574). Taste is a culture of upper-class people which appears naturally in their bodies. Taste is connected with social division such as class, gender, distinction between local people and urban people or between people with high education and those with low education. Therefore, taste is present in the social structure and is used for social distinction (Nice, Richard,1984)

and social status (Featherstone, M., & Hepworth, M., 1991; Hesse-Biber, S.N., 1996, as cited in Piyarat Panlee, 2006).

As for the practice with the body, Bourdieu explained that social practices enter an individual's body through learning. According to Bourdieu's thought, there are not only two ways of learning. The first way is education in schools, which is the straightforward way to give and gain knowledge with the help of perception and representation. This method of learning is at consciousness level, which is opposite to the second method which is mimesis/ mimeticism through models and familiarization. However, there is another method which exists between the two methods: structural exercise, which means the application of many practices altogether as a scheme such as rites, games or fighting, or it can be words like proverbs, sayings, poems, riddles, songs or items like equipments, etc. Such schemes of practice are arranged to connect with one another consecutively, continually and systematically under the same reason, which happens in people's real life, allowing children to memorize them easily and automatically.

Furthermore, Bourdieu suggested that practices that people learn since their childhood have implanted some beliefs in them. It is called "practical belief," which restricts people to truly believe only in the things that they have experienced and not the things that are beyond their experience, including facts or personal beliefs of other people which affect their practices. Since the practical belief is at "state of the body" level and not at "state of mind" level, it is not just visual representation or emotional expression like plays. Instead, the body really believes and feels in line with its expressions. The practices that are learned by the body will be embedded in human bodies firmly (Bourdieu, 1980, as cited in Jariya Sabchatanun, 2005).

### **2.1.3 Body Dimensions**

#### **2.1.3.1 Body-Self Dimension**

The issue about "self" in western concepts started to gain interest in the Renaissance. Before that, the human self could not exist under the

framework or doctrine of God (Apinya Feungfusakul, 2003). During the Scientific Revolution, human beings began to inquire more about the self.

The “self” in the mainstream psychology and the mainstream sociology explains itself as the result of socio-cultural structure such as social structure, social organizations, roles, norms or values, or that it is generated from a person’s inner strength such as id, impulse, the struggling and fighting of ego, the needs or the disrupted development of personality during genital satisfaction, etc. On the contrary, phenomenology views the “self” as a continual, ongoing process of consciousness: it is like the starting point of experience under the circumstances that are determined by each person’s life history (Kittipat Nonthapattamadul,2010).

Social science concepts at present ( Paritta Chalerm-pao-Koranantakul,2002:47) consider that, overall, concepts that are related to identity or self and subject are the things that generate ideas and actions. However, nowadays, anthropologists mostly agree that the self is not naturally-born, substantive or permanent. On the contrary, it is a type of constructed image formed by historical and cultural conditions as some anthropologists conclude that theories in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century will consider the self as an image which results from the attempt to mix diverse experience.

The researcher has conducted the literary review and found out that the body has an interrelationship with the self of the body’s owner. There are social scientists in the fields of sociology and anthropology who view the body and the self as connected to each other. Significant viewpoints are as follow:

In sociology’s point of view, Giddens studied “the self” from the idea of G.H. Mead and considered that Mead viewed “I”, “me” and “self” as reflecting and interacting with each other. However, Giddens reckoned that Mead’s analysis was not clear since it had not positioned the individual with the ability to interact and reflect back in the social structure. In Giddens’s opinion, the self had an influence on the others and the society, which could create a global social phenomenon (Giddens,1991:214) Giddens believed that the way to fill the gap in Mead’s social-psychological theory was the analysis about the agency and the structuration. Also, Giddens criticized Foucault’s viewpoint as Foucault still could not

analyze the relationship between the body and the agency in terms of the agency's intents and purposes at profound level.

In the modern society, the body is related to the self of individuals. The influence that the technology, the knowledge and the body has on one another makes us question about the meaning of our own body. In the book called "Modernity and Self-identity" (1991), Giddens put an emphasis on the analysis of "the self," the body and modernity by underlining the emergence of the self's new mechanisms. He explained that, in the high-modernity period or what he meant our present-day world, the self will be created with the reflexivity of self; that is, the self will be refined, adapted and modified and, at the same time, the self is the thing that refines and changes institutions in the modern society. This procedure will happen amidst a variety of possibilities and alternatives, which are the filtered options through abstract idea systems of experts in different fields in the society.

In the high-modernity society, the self and the body have become the reflexively organized projects which are scrupled by various complicated alternatives. Also, they are options without moral guidance to show us what we should choose. The reflexivity project of the self under the context of various alternatives also contains the fact that individuals have incoherent experience which has been reviewed regularly and continuously. Therefore, the self is created repeatedly through self questioning. Additionally, individuals still reposition their own self through self-narratives by linking them with the centered body.

As a result, the self in Giddens's opinion is not the passive holism or is determined by external impacts. Besides, the self in the modern period is not the minimal self, but it is the experience of being confronted, crossed and forced to face the security in different social contexts. Such experience may be complicated or may have psychological impacts. For example, it may concern physical and mental discomfort and feelings of tiredness, weakness, hopelessness and desperation in life. Individuals' experience is acquired from the confrontation with the credibility of the society's concepts as well as the frameworks of technical knowledge (Giddens, 1991, as cited in Pornthip Netiparattanaku, 2007)

In the anthropological perspective, Margaret Lock and Nancy Scheper-Hughes (1987)<sup>5</sup> are anthropologists whose viewpoint was to use the body as the unit of analysis in their research under the critical anthropology approach. There are 3 levels of body analysis or 3 bodies, which are the individual body, the social body and the body politic.

The individual body is the generator of life experience. It is the part with soul and thoughts about the body and the self of our own. Its emphasis is on the embodiment through the body.

The social body is the use of body as the natural symbol of stories in connection with nature, society and culture. The critical interpretation will emphasize the finding of meanings between the social world and nature, which is the reflection of history and social relationship under different contexts. In the health dimension, when the body is ill, it will reflect the society of so much disharmony and conflict that the body cannot function perfectly as normal.

The body politic is the body under regulations, surveillance and control in terms of reproduction, work, leisure and illness. For instance, the government controls, creates regulations and surveys behaviors of the body at individual or group level in order to maintain the society's order. It is a control from birth to death. The body politic has controlled the population or the social body as well as created discipline for the individual body. In the industrial society, the control of the individual body and the social body is complicated.

Regarding the body politic, it can be seen that the government controls, creates regulations and surveys behaviors of the body at individual level or group level to maintain the society's order. In reality, the power relations are still well hidden between the individual body and the social body. In peaceful time, we will not see such power. However, when there is a crisis, a threat or the feelings of insecurity and instability in the society, the pattern of the power that controls the body is in

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<sup>5</sup> Scheper-Hughes and Lock recommended the emphasis on sufferer experience. Scheper-Hughes's research called *Death without Weeping* is an example of a research under the critical anthropology approach which studied oppressiveness and health in Brazil's slums. The research pointed out that health issues in Brazil resulted from inequality and exploitation in social structure. A great number of citizens were starving, lack of food and very stressful. Also, the mortality rate of mothers and newborns was higher than necessary (Komart Jeungsathiensap, 2005).

various forms and is hard to notice, to be aware of or to resist, especially the power pattern that has been changed into the verbal form which defines the meaning of the desirable, ideal body. The pattern of body control and management that can be found more frequently and spreads its scope farther nowadays is medicalization, which allows medical personnel to utilize their knowledge and proficiency (Lock, M., & Scheper-Hughes, N., 1990).

Nevertheless, the body study at 3 levels cannot be considered separately. Instead, the analysis must be done coherently. Besides, the use of concepts in the study is also different. The study of individual body applies the phenomenological epistemology, the study of social body applies symbolic concept and structuralism, and the study of body politic applies concepts post structuralism. The questions should be “why” and “how” in the issues of social construction.

#### **2.1.3.2 Gender and Sexual Body**

The “gender” concept was invented during the feminist current in the 1970s. This concept was developed from the basis of social constructionist theory. The acceptance of “gender” concept into anthropology in the early 1970s resulted in a great amendment of basic ideas which were used in anthropologists’ study of male and female issues, and it led to the development of feminist anthropology later on. Gender, therefore, means a set of ideas which is used for the analysis of behaviors and cultural meanings that the society applies to differentiate males and females. Gender is a basic social identity of humans which is sometimes called male and female identities. Such identities are not natural or biological properties which are born with human beings. They are, instead, cultural identities that the society creates and expects social members to obey and follow. Thus, gender identity is always defined and controlled by specific historical, social, political and economical contexts.

As for sexuality in the anthropological point of view, its definition spreads wider than sex issues and sexual behaviors of social members. It is more of a cultural aspect than a biological one. Sexuality has the same characteristics as gender; that is, they are diverse and flowing since both of them are the products of history, society, economy and politics. The meaning of sexuality in anthropological

study, therefore, includes sexual behavior, sex drive, desire, satisfaction and sexual taste. Simultaneously, it also covers sexual norm, expressions of social identities, love, stability, patterns and diverse reproduction, etc. The sexuality dimension overlaps and is deeply connected with the gender dimension (Suchada Thaweessit, 2007).

The word “sex” has unstable meaning. If used in the body context, it means sex that is defined by natural sexual characteristics which cannot be changed. As for “gender,” it means sex that is defined by social conditions or cultures which encourage the expressions of male and female roles. The society usually creates sets of opposite ideas, for example, body and mind or nature and culture. When comparing female and male genders, females are defined as inferior. In the western society, when masculinity is compared to femininity, the former will become the norm and the latter will become the other (Faircloth, Christopher A., 2003).

Judith Butler is a feminist theorist who referred to Foucault’s analytical approach in her explanation of people’s relationships under masculism. In her work called “The Body and Society,” Butler analyzed that the body of femininity and the body of masculinity were constructed in accordance with the norm through values, beliefs and languages which impeded human physical potentiality (Shilling, 2005). According to Butler’s point of view, human actions were not voluntaristic practices (Faircloth, Christopher A., 2003).

On the other hand, sexuality is the connection of beliefs regarding the meaning of sex. Sexuality comprises 3 major elements: desire, practice and sexual identity. The body which has its features defined as valuable or beautiful is actually the body in the sexual body dimension which is the sexually-attractive body. For instance, a sexually-attractive female body is young and slim, etc. (Faircloth, Christopher A., 2003).

An interesting research which studied gender and sexuality body in Thailand was conducted by Juthamanee Somboonsut (2004). This study explained about gender, age and the other of old women by referring to the double standard and the myths about gender that the society created for the elderly women. The analysis was divided into 2 aspects: physical and social ones.

Firstly, in the physical aspect, the myths and the double standard point out that women grow old faster than men. Also, when women get older

and become less interesting or less sexually attractive, they are worried about the changes that old age brings more than men, especially when consumer culture plays an important role in daily life. The body, therefore, is not only the combination of inborn physical features, but it is also an important thing that judges age. Besides, the body is used politically to develop into all branches of industry. In the capitalist society which emphasizes the body's strength, firm shape and lively lifestyle, senile characteristics are rejected. In the aspect of work which focuses on profit and breakeven point, good personality and elegant body become essential elements in job consideration. Secondly, in the social aspect, old people have to confront the double standard which causes inequality in the society, resulting in women's disadvantage (Juthamane Somboonsut, 2004).

### **2.1.3.3 Consumer Body Dimension**

The book called "Keyword" by Raymond Williams (1983) noted that the word "consume" has appeared in English since the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Its original meaning is "to destroy" or "to use up." As for the word "consumer," it has been in use since the 18<sup>th</sup> century in connection with the word "waste." Currently, the word "consumer" is used in the meaning of purchasing and using cultural products (Piyarat Panlee, 2006).

Consumer culture was born in Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was considered the start of production which caused consumption in widespread public, resulting in the emergence of shops, department stores and product displays in the forms that had never been witnessed before. Consequently, there was a state when consumers began to feel that they had freedom to choose and buy products according to their own desire and purchasing power. Product consumption spread to people of all levels and statuses. Consumption was stimulated by the practical section which caused people to have particular feelings towards styles and tastes about various things. Organizations and basic structures were set up; for example, forms of product placement in department stores, advertisement, media production, etc, which reflected the appearance of activities and the distribution of news and information with the consumers at the center.

Consumer culture is a relations system between human beings and products. Purchasing and selling products and services are not only important activities in human lives, but they also play a major part in the maintenance of social order, the control of human beings and the definition of various things under consumer culture. People tend to think that the center of living is the ownership of many things that happen simultaneously in order to be accepted and to live in accordance with their life contexts

Under the consumer culture, a great number of products and services have been produced. They present both the problems and the solutions for the creation of people's self. The process of self creation through products happens and changes in accordance with the alteration of stages of life. For instance, when a person changes from a teenager into an adult, his/ her desire to create the self through product consumption changes as well.

Each society has the mechanism to instruct its people about different types of consumption logics with the help of the media as a means to spread information. The media include books, magazines, films and TV programs. Advertisements in the media are presented in the forms of discourse, language system and symbolic system. As a result, the values that have been created seem like grand narratives that are usually found in the world of advertisement. Even though they are all around us, the repetitive presentation of images creates familiarity (Pimpawun Boonmongkon et. al., 2007).

According to Mike Featherstone in his writing called "The Body in Consumer Culture" (1982), Featherstone suggested that, since 1920, the development of movies, advertisements, commerce, consumption tastes and the feelings of youth and beauty became the things that connect desire with a variety of product consumption industries. Under such circumstance, the body was not only a vehicle for the fulfillment of desire, but it was also the presentation of the consumer's self. It was because the consumer's body needed to be covered with clothes, to eat and drink as well as to exercise as unfinished projects according to their own rights. Hence, the body was not ours alone. It also belonged to other people who could see us (Lyon, M. L., & Barbalet, J. M., 1994).

The body in the contemporary society is often viewed as a consumer product. There are people who criticize that narcissism in the western society puts pressure on the external physical body. Lupton claimed that the society in the late industrial era caused individuals to search for meanings from consumer products. Product consumption became the center of their self definition (Lupton,D.,1996). Later on, the modern consumer culture turns old people's identity into a marginal one. The society pays attention to youthfulness and young bodies as consumer culture presents and promotes youth as an ideal. The body displayed in the media is young-looking, and there is an emphasis on beautiful, perfect shape and the denial of senility as the driving force in the development of age-refusing industry. Middle-aged people are the targets of consumer culture. Business and product communities have been offering anti-aging products like hair color, skin nourishing cream and aesthetic surgery to resist aging since 1970s(Johnson,2008,as cited in Kamjohn Louiyapong,2010).Such products are under the customer culture's framework which focuses on the maintenance of youthful body. Also, it is possible to make changes in the body and keep it young by using technologies. Hence, the body is like a "robot" which can be amended (Featherstone,M.,&Hepworth,M.,2005:358-359).The awareness of youth specifies the characteristics of the desirable body which has created an immense ideology for body maintenance. For instance, exercise in women is the representation of the desire to reach the ideal of women with freedom and strength rather than the consideration of age resistance or life extension. In consumer culture, the body-maintenance culture in healthy products is promoted together with the body's desire for sexual attraction, which gains accomplishment in the female body marketing.

## **2.2. Power and Knowledge Concept of Foucault**

Foucault provided a theory for Poststructuralism school regarding the basis of how the way of power was conceptualized. Foucault criticized Marxism's power theory which was based on economic factors and defined the power as sovereignty that came from a certain place, was built from the center and was used as the government's tool to force people to follow. However, Foucault's power concept

concerned power relations which happened at specific places. In his theory, the power was not born from the ruling class and descended to the ruled. On the other hand, the power came from experts' knowledge, such as modernity, which spread in the society and existed in all places at all social levels (Lemert and Gilliam, 1982: 136).

In the modern society, power is expressed by various techniques of discipline, including surveillance, categorization and intervention by experts in the society. Gaze is an issue which continually appeared in Foucault's works, which include *Madness and Civilization* (Foucault, 1965), *The Birth of Clinic* (Foucault, 1973) and *Discipline and Punishment* (Foucault, 1977). Gaze is about the collection of data, the giving of information and the construction of discourses in such issues. According to Foucault, medical gaze considers human body as docile body. The body is viewed as a machine of which problems can be fixed. The medical professions have always been developing and inventing methods to control people's daily life from birth to death by watching our birth as well as our development from childhood to adulthood and, currently, to old age. Such observation is conducted through medical gaze using various equipments. Human behaviors have been studied continually for decades by medical personnel, including behavioral scientists, psychologists, biologist, etc.

Gaze is one of the power techniques which turn human beings into subjects as can be seen in the "Panopticism" technique. This method can make individuals and citizens follow regulations all the time in the same way that people who are being watched by the society cannot break any rule. This technique is applied by modern states to manage and control the society. Thus, anyone who is being seen and is aware of it needs to learn to control himself/ herself and follow the rules. In other words, this person has become his/her own subject just like patients who stay in hospitals under the surveillance of doctors and nurses and, therefore, must control themselves and obey regulations under the same norm. Thinkers in the Foucauldian school mentioned that healthcare at present tends to use the panoptic technique; for example, body examination by medical personnel, self health care policy and health control of the whole population in the form of public healthcare.

### **2.2.1 Bio-power**

The bio-power concept developed by Michel Foucault( 1981) in “The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1 pointed out that, since the 17<sup>th</sup> century, there had been changes in power concepts, from the right to life and death of individuals to the management and promotion of quality life. They were changes in the techniques of power usage in modern society. As a result, sovereignty which used to suppress life was gradually replaced by the power to promote wellbeing and survival from death.

Bio-power, or power over life and death, means the technique of using power to manage the population’s body and to make individuals follow discipline. Its mechanism starts from using power to create knowledge (for example, to define good health and practice which will lead to good health according to the set-up standard) in order to make the population aware of and think of things that should be practiced for their own good health. The practice according to the knowledge that has been passed to us turns our body into the object of inspection and surveillance, which is the control by unseen power behind the knowledge that we have received. For Foucault, the power will be highly successful if it can conceal its mechanism as much as possible (Foucault, 1981: 86).

Bio-power has 2 types of power poles, which are:

1. Anato-mo-politics of human body is a power pole which emphasizes the role of the body as a machine (Foucault,1981:139) that is, the production and control of human body under the efficient mandate using the power of disciplinary action implementation which spreads through family relations, educational institutions and workplaces. It has become a major principle which places the body in the system that focuses on efficiency as well as economic and social control. In other words, it creates the body of docility and utility.

In the medical scenery, the result of disciplinary action implementation in terms of treatment has become a political issue. Individuality is constructed on the basis of symptoms, diseases or ways of life. The control of such procedures is the main core of medical care. Politically, healthcare and elements of policy are important for the power expression of discipline. The individual body or the social body will be under surveillance of medical personnel with scientific knowledge who has the power to check the body, to ask questions about the body’s history and to

order the body to follow certain practice which leads to good health. Medical gaze is everywhere, and it gains acceptance since the objective of medical examination is to promote health and to encourage discipline in the society.

2. Bio-politics of population is another pole of bio-power which is used by the state to control and intervene in the population management. The body is the basis of biological processes (health issues, birth, death, longevity) which are in direct connection with economic and social conditions that are vital for the production system for the state. For example, an epidemic outbreak will reduce the number of labor, the population's longer life expectancy will cause the state to expand healthcare and offer social support to the elderly, etc. Social policies are visible strategies that are applied by the state when managing the population's life and health. Other invisible power techniques are, for example, the extension of healthcare system's control into the population's personal life as well as the distribution of knowledge and the definition of normal state and pathogenesis. Therefore, the state intervenes in the disciplinary action implementation in terms of educational system, public health regarding disease prevention and control, sanitation system as well as sufficient hygienic water and food provision by the methods of law enforcement and discourse creation so that the population becomes valuable as human resource.

### **2.2.2 Resistance**

In Foucault's viewpoint as can be seen in his writing, "Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power" (Foucault, 1978: 95). There are no power relations without resistance, and the resistance is even more real and effective since it emerges exactly where power relations are expressed. Power resistance does not come from other places, but it is located right at the power (Chak Phachuphet,2003). Human beings do not fall into the totally-powerless state without any area to express their roles and actions. Instead, they spread everywhere around the power. This might cause the resistance to move its operating base to any place at any time and to have the characteristics of multiculturalism which can adjust the forms and the strategies in accordance with the power that it resists (Foucault, 1978, as cited in Chak Phachuphet,2003).

### 2.3. Practices and Capital Concept of Pierre Bourdieu

The practice theory of Bourdieu in “Outline of a Theory of Practice” (1990) which was first published in 1978 is an academic work which has a great influence on sociological and anthropological studies. His idea is the connection and combination between objectivism and subjectivism of human beings in action by explaining the relationship between the structure or the regulation of social practice and the humans in action who have ideas, reasons and freedom to make decisions to take actions at the level of experience that is expressed in everyday life.

Bourdieu realized the necessity to comprehend the operations at both levels, which are the structural level and the human-beings-in-action level (both as individuals and as groups). He was influenced by Durkheim who believed that the social structure system had power to determine human behaviors, and also by Marxism which believed that the mainstream ideologies and values were also controlled by the ruling class’s leading ideas and power mechanism.

However, he used 5 important tools in social analysis and comprehension, which were “practices”<sup>6</sup> , “capital”<sup>7</sup> , “field”<sup>8</sup>, “agency”<sup>9</sup> and “habitus”<sup>10</sup> (Winai Boonlue, 2002).

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<sup>6</sup> **Practices** The concept of practices or actions is about the things that we choose to do or can do which are influenced by the force within a territory under our habitus system. This concept can be explained by a game case that Bourdieu usually referred to as an example. A player will have his/ her own direction, understanding of the game’s rules and existing ability to play the game in that moment. The player will speculate or respond automatically according to his/ her habitus. Thus, we can clearly understand practices only in a certain territory, and we have to see the diversity depending on each person’s habitus. If someone wants to play in a territory without a habitus system as guidance, he/ she will not be able to participate in the game completely.

<sup>7</sup> **Capital** Apart from capital that gains acceptance from the society including money, power and prestige, each type of territory has its own particular capital. For instance, in the art territory, the value of art works rejects the measurement standard of the society in general. A famous artist may be poor. Bourdieu divided capital into many categories such as economic capital, social capital and cultural capital. Economic capital includes money or possessions, social capital includes statuses, positions or social network, and cultural capital is the potentiality of actions, which is the innate knowledge.

<sup>8</sup> **Field** is the network of relationship between people/ individuals and institutions. The concept of field is very important because it provides an area for the operation under one set of logics. Field is the boundary of a fight, the perimeter of a competition to scramble for resources, or even the source of a struggle to occupy an area and also to extend power over such area. To explain field, Bourdieu used the metaphor “field as the playing field.” The competition is not only to win over the opponent, but also

This research applied major concepts by Bourdieu, which are “practices,” “capital,” especially “capital” and “habitus.” In this study, the researcher has reviewed related literature as follow:

### 2.3.1 Practice

Practice is extremely vital for the explanation of social phenomena. Bourdieu pointed out that the society is formed with feelings and meanings because of human beings’ practice. Practice is the result of dialectical interaction which takes place all the time. It is like the center of perceptions, knowledge and actions between situations or environment in a field and habitus in a person. Practice, therefore, has reasons in itself (Bourdieu, 1990:91-94, as cited in Rungnapa Yanyongkasemsuk, 2007).

Thus, behaviors or practices happen naturally and can be well understood in certain conditions. Actors usually show their behaviors according to their comprehension of each situation, or it may be the feeling that tells them which behavior should be shown in which circumstance. Hence, emotions and elements of situations can be compared to equipments which help to steer actions. However, this statement does not deny that actors may have reasons before showing their behaviors, or that such behaviors are reasonable. Instead, it is an attempt to point out that

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to rule over/ to issue regulations in order to control the competition, the players and the game as well as to expand the area of competition. For example, in the territory of a social network’s membership area, the membership can be gained by the collection of items that are symbols of such group like clothes, equipments, etc. These things define the characteristics of the group’s membership. As for the territory of legal area which has a conflict between 2 parties, those who mainly claim the justification of legal practices need to question about who has the power to judge or has more right to righteous practices.

<sup>9</sup> **Agency** is the person who operates in the field. People who live in the same territory may have similar thoughts but not exactly the same or may have similar groups of capital. For this reason, the interaction between people in a territory has many overlapping roles that are related to each other.

<sup>10</sup> **Habitus** is each person’s capital which has been acquired through the accumulation of life experience that each of them has inherited through domestic transmission of capital. This basic social unit has become the foundation of value and taste development as well as that person’s pattern of behavior which will turn into the formation base. What Bourdieu called habitus (Robbins, 2000, as cited in Winai Boonlue, 2002) is the outstanding, specific features of external expressions or the direction of a person’s development which continues from childhood to adolescence. Social class and culture are also the background which has great influence on each individual.

behaviors have reasons behind them; that is, it consists of general rules, pre-decision, exemplary actions and habitual actions.

Consequently, the study of global society in the scope of “practice” is the learning of things that human beings do and the consideration of human beings as actors who take actions by emphasizing that human activities have objectives and meanings which can be adapted to suit changes. Human beings understand and show various kinds of behaviors in the patterns that are in accordance with what they comprehend. Their behaviors comprise the actors’ course of dispositions which have been compiled, allocated and constructed, and they tend to be alike in the society at certain times and with certain social groups. Also, behaviors have the tendency to become clear and permanent patterns and rules. In this aspect, the explanation regarding the similarities and the differences of practices is one of the duties of habitus (Rungnapa Yanyongkasemsuk, 2007).

### **2.3.2 Capital**

Capital<sup>11</sup> in the broadest meaning is the assets which can bring about more assets. It can be money, machines, equipments, buildings or other things that are not directly used for consumption but for advantages in production. Capital is one of the factors of production together with the other 2 factors which are land and labor. In *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary on Historical Principles* (1993), capital derives from the Latin word “capitalis” which originated from the words “caput, capit” which mean “head.” Capital, therefore, is directly related to trade and the ownership of

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<sup>11</sup> In modern sociology, the concept of “capital” is used in a broader meaning which goes beyond economic capital; for example, social capital, human capital, knowledge capital, wisdom capital and resource capital, etc. These concepts are based on the hypothesis which explains that the society consists of various elements that are diverse and complicated. The consideration of the economic dimension alone should not be enough for the comprehension of the whole society’s phenomena. In this context, the types of capital that Bourdieu studied, including cultural capital, symbolic capital and social capital, are mentioned (Chanida Sa-ngiumphaisalsuk and Nopporn Prachakul, 2007).

herds because, in the past, wealth was measured by the number of animals' heads in one's possession (Chanida Sa-ngiumphaisalsuk and Nopporn Prachakul, 2007).

Socially, the person who gave a clear explanation of capital which covers as many dimensions as possible is Karl Marx, a German philosopher who defined "capital" in the aspect that was related to social class. In his opinion, the characteristic of capital as something that can be collected to add value is the thing that creates the difference between classes, i.e., the owner of capital which is the bourgeoisie and the labor or proletariat. Such social relationship directly results from "capitalism," the system of production for the selling and exchanging of goods with a main focus on profits. The major driving mechanism of capitalism is the accumulation procedure (Chanida Sa-ngiamphaisalsuk and Nopporn Prachakul, 2007).

Capitalism started to play a prominent role since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, following the blooming of liberalism and industrial revolution which turned the bourgeoisie (merchants and self-employed people) into the group of people who possessed the greatest amount of resources for production. The bourgeoisie made use of capitalism to exploit the proletariat. In the book called *Das Kapital* (3 vol., 1867-1894) which presents the analysis of the detailed mechanism of capitalist economy, Marx specified that there are 2 types of capital: constant capital and variable capital. Constant capital includes non-human production factors such as factories and machines. The value of this type of capital will not change as the value used in the production process will be transferred to the merchandises. Hence, the value of capital owners' investment equals the value of the products. As for variable capital, it includes wages. The value gained from this kind of investment changes because there is the surplus value of merchandises as capital owners exploit the labor more than the value of the wages. For this reason, there is some labor which does not receive remunerations. This surplus value is the profit that capital owners collect and, therefore, their capital keeps increasing, resulting in never-ending wealth. Thus, the labor is forever dominated by this economic cycle if they do not rise up against the bourgeoisie (Chanida Sa-ngiamphaisalsuk and Nopporn Prachakul, 2007).

In Bourdieu's opinion, "capital"<sup>12</sup> is the heredity which is continually handed down. It can change its form which can be touchable or untouchable. Also, capital is the factor which determines social positions and possibilities of actors in the field. Inherited capital may or may not be objects as Bourdieu explained that capital is the labor which is collected in the form of objects or is included in people by individuals or groups so that they can create social power in the form of concrete labor or labor in people. Hence, capital is the power which is inscribed in objects' and people's structures. Also, it is a basic principle of common regulations in the global society (Bourdieu, 1997: 46, as cited in Rungnapa Yanyongkasemsuk, 2007).

Since the scope of "capital" is so broad, Bourdieu divided capital into 4 types, (Bourdieu, 1993: 31-35; Bourdieu, 1997: 46-75, as cited in Rungnapa Yanyongkasemsuk, 2007 ) which are:

1. Economic capital consists of capital in Marx's meaning and also economic possession which can help to increase actors' capacity in the society. At the same time, it can change into "money" straightforwardly and instantly. Besides, it may be turned into institutions in the form of property rights.

2. Cultural capital is divided into 3 forms, which are:

- 2.1 *Capital in embodied state* This form of capital exists in the form of permanent dispositions which usually appear as culture and need time to accumulate and gather together to take shape. This type of capital can change external wealth or material wealth into capital inside people which is embodied in habitus. The transformation of capital from one type to another cannot be done immediately by requests, offers of gifts, spending or exchanging. Instead, the acquisition of another type of capital depends on time, society and social class.

The significant feature of this type of capital is that it can decrease and disappear in people who have and use it due to their own physical capabilities and memories. Simultaneously, it is physically connected with people and leads to hereditary transmission when it is usually transformed or becomes invisible since it is the thing that

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<sup>12</sup> Bourdieu not only divided capital into sub-categories and explained about the pattern of each type of capital, but he also demonstrated that capital types can be interchanged and turn into other types of capital. The forms of capital conversion are different in each society and culture.

individuals add in the heredity by making it a primary condition in order to become cultural capital. It is not being aware of as “capital,” but it is a righteous ability. Moreover, it is the expression of capability which raises awareness in the area of marriage and in every other area that economic capital is not being aware of.

This form of cultural capital will be inherited through heredity, which is the capital inheritance which is best concealed. Nevertheless, the connection between cultural capital and economic capital is created through a medium called time. The difference in the ownership of cultural capital of each family can be seen in early ages when the accumulation and transmission of capital start.

*2.2 Capital in objectified state* This form of cultural capital has many characteristics, but it can only be defined as a property which is related to cultural capital in the combined form. This type of capital is made into objects in the forms of media or things like picture, writing, book, dictionary, monument, equipment, machine, etc. It can be expressed and inherited through objects such as the collection of paintings. In this case, the collection of capital can also be transmitted just like economic capital, but the thing that can be passed on and witnessed is the ownership of the paintings or the ownership of the painting consumption lifestyle. Therefore, cultural merchandises can be objects or symbols. Owners of equipments for production or capital need to find appropriate ways to collect and gather capital.

Capital ownership may have an ambiguous status. To illustrate, for those who are not the owners of equipments for production and profits from this type of cultural capital but are sellers of services or products, they will be categorized as the dominated group. However, if they can get profits from the use of particular forms of capital, they will be included in the dominating group because they belong to the group that embodies cultural capital of the dominating class which allows them to create works. Thus, when more cultural capital is added in the equipments for production, the strength of the collection by the owners of cultural capital will also increase. This form of cultural capital expresses itself in free manner. Even though products from past actions with their own rules transcend individuals’ will like language, such products cannot be reduced as each person wants them to. However, one must not forget that cultural capital exists both in the forms of object and symbol. The capital’s efficiency will be made suitable by actors, usage and practice.

2.3 *Capital in institutionalization state* This type of cultural capital is objectified or made concrete separately as it refers to the initial characteristic of cultural capital, and it will be understood as insurance expressed in the forms of certification, credential and examination. This means that cultural capital can be transformed under specific conditions. It may change into economic capital, or it may be modified into institutions in the form of educational qualifications.

This form of capital creates the difference between official knowledge which has its capacity guaranteed and normal cultural capital, resulting in the comparison between those who are certified and those who are not or even the exchange of cultural capital by substituting something for success. More than that, this form of capital also causes the creation of exchange rate between cultural capital and economic capital, i.e., “insurance of educational capital” by “value of money.” This is because the product from the exchange of economic capital into cultural capital which requires rareness, time investment and attempt has created value in the form of cultural capital for those who possess the same qualifications as others.

### 3. Social capital<sup>13</sup> consists of:

3.1 *Resources which are related to group members and social networks* The amount of social capital in possession depends on the size of socializing networks that actors can gather effectively. Thus, the quality of social capital in this part is created from the sum of relationship between actors rather than the group’s quality only.

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<sup>13</sup> Most sociologists will study social capital as the basis of reconciliation in the society, especially the concept by Robert Putnam (1993) which made the American political science community interested in social capital issues in the second half of the 1990s. Putnam suggested that the society will gain sustainable development and economic advancement not only from economic capital, natural resources or good political concepts, but also from social capital which includes networks, norms and trust. A society with social capital results from the existence of strongly-connected relationship networks on the basis of trust and shared norms. The consequence of having social capital is the cooperation to resolve various issues which also brings about economic development. Social capital has the same characteristics as economic capital, i.e., it can be collected, its amount will increase when used and, without being used, it will have no value (Chanida Sa-ngiumphaisalsuk and Nopporn Prachakul, 2007).

3.2 *The gathering of cognition and recognition* The attainment of the gathering of cognition and recognition concerns symbolic characteristics, and it can transform into symbolic capital.

Therefore, social capital is the sum of resources, actions or virtues. The amount of “social capital” possessed by actors depends on the size of socializing networks that actors can gather effectively and the amount of “capital” that is rightfully owned. This means that, for Bourdieu, social capital is built by social power and it depends on regular practice as well as intimacy in the society. However, “the existence of relationship network” does not come naturally or socially. Instead, it is the product of never-ending institutional attempt (Rungnapa Yanyongkasemsuk, 2007).

The example that Bourdieu often used to explain social capital is the family social unit. Inside this social perimeter, there is an operating mechanism which is the issue that Bourdieu paid attention to in the analysis of class differences and power domination, which is “inheritance process.” (Chanida Sa-ngiamphaisalsuk and Nopporn Prachakul, 2007).

4. *Symbolic capital* This form of capital can be acquired from almost everything that actors can feel and accept its existence such as honor, status and power. Symbolic capital may derive from the fact that individuals have economic capital as the basis, and that their symbolic capital can be changed in order to obtain economic capital as well. However, the retransformation from economic capital to symbolic capital will not succeed without complicity of every group. The important things are the driving force to acquire symbolic capital and the fight to protect it, which come from the dispositions that are created by habitus that have been relayed from birth and increased gradually by families and schools (Rungnapa Yanyongkasemsuk, 2007).

Symbolic capital is an efficient tool for the construction and the support of class difference in the society just like economic capital, and may even overpower it in some societies. This is because symbolic capital relies on the indoctrination of recognition and evaluation through socialization process since childhood. As a result, the habitus of individuals is in accordance with the structure of the society that they live in. Therefore, those who grow up in the society of the dominating class will have certain characteristics which are considered cultural capital, including taste, language, way of acting and manner that are specific features of their group. On the other hand,

those who have been raised in the labor's society will have different taste, language and manner. Unequal allocation of resources in the symbolic capital case is a structure that is hard to modify since the change can only be possible when it is the action at the level of recognition and evaluation that are deeply embedded in a person (Chanida Sangiamphaisalsuk and Nopporn Prachakul, 2007).

Cultural capital, social capital and symbolic capital<sup>14</sup> exist in people and cannot be reduced to equal economic capital. However, all types of capital can be acquired from "economic capital." The transformation of capital is not automatic. It requires an attempt and will show results in the long term.

Regarding the cultural capital concept,<sup>15</sup> Pierre Bourdieu conducted a profound analysis by extending the boundary of economic capital towards cultural resources, which can be considered in 3 aspects: capital in embodied state, capital in objectified state and capital in institutionalization state. The first type of cultural capital is habitus or inclination systems which have been implanted in individuals through socialization. Afterwards, these systems are built into recognition and evaluation structure which allows individuals have the potential to possess or consume cultural assets such as music, art and academic works. This is because the consumption of these assets can only be done through the comprehension of meanings or codes. Capital in the inclination systems must be accumulated since childhood by the investment in terms of time and money of parents, family members and people in the teaching professions in order to implant these things into people so deeply that

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<sup>14</sup> Symbolic capital is related to cultural capital since the possession of cultural capital often contributes to the generation of symbolic capital like good taste and knowledge, which will encourage people to have dignity and honor and, finally, to change them into economic value. Such practice must be under the condition that the value must not be revealed. "Non-profit," either in terms of power or economy, is always the principle of symbolic capital. In this aspect, it can be said that "symbolic capital is cultural capital or economic capital which is not accepted or recognized as economic." (Chanida Sangiamphaisalsuk and Nopporn Prachakul, 2007)

<sup>15</sup> Cultural capital is what people receive from socialization, and it becomes their personal qualifications that enable them to increase their value. It is usually blended in people's self and is expressed through behavior such as knowledge, taste and manner. It also includes assets of which value is not economic but can have economic value, for example, artworks, books and academic certificates (Chanida Sangiamphaisalsuk and Nopporn Prachakul, 2007).

they are invisibly assimilated and become personal characteristics which are often viewed as “natural” or “given by God.”

In another aspect, this type of capital can also be symbolic capital since it requires righteousness in the creation of value. Besides, its social condition regarding the obtainment or inheritance of the capital must have the characteristic of concealment or invisibility. This form of cultural capital is also related to economic capital because “time” is the important factor for the accumulation of cultural capital. Those who have time to develop this type of capital are usually groups of people who do not need to spend time building economic capital. The second type of cultural capital appears in the form of biens culturels which can be possessed and accumulated such as paintings, books, musical instruments, etc. Mostly, the appearance of value of this form of capital requires the relationship with capital in embodied state as well. The third form of capital is the certification from institutions which is accepted by members of the same community such as certificates of education. It is one of the means to obliterate the limitation of symbolic capital by “official” acceptance. This type of capital allows people’s educational investment to have concrete value and to create economic capital, especially in case of educational certificates which are valuable in the labor market (Chanida Sa-ngiamphaisalsuk and Nopporn Prachakul, 2007).

Bourdieu added cultural elements in the Marxist social analysis and proposed that economic factors alone cannot completely explain the domination phenomenon in the society.

According to Marx’s concept which suggests that inequality in the society results from unequal possession of economic capital, Bourdieu pointed out that cultural capital is also a significant factor that supports inequality in the society in the same way that social class comprises not only economic capital but also cultural capital, making it even more complicated in its details. Thus, categorized by the amount of capital in possession, there are 3 main groups of people: the dominating class which possesses the highest amount of economic capital and cultural capital, the middle class and the working class respectively.

Furthermore, there is a division inside each group according to the proportion of economic capital and cultural capital in possession. To illustrate, 1) the dominating class is divided into: a group with high cultural capital but low economic capital such as

writers, artists, university lecturers and academics, a group with high economic capital and low cultural capital such as big company owners and financiers and, finally, a group with balanced economic and cultural capital such as self-employed people and some senior managers. 2) the middle class is divided into a group with high cultural capital but low economic capital such as school teachers, a group with high economic capital and low cultural capital such as small business owners like sellers and craftsmen and, finally, a group with balanced economic and cultural capital such as junior executives, technicians, people who work in the media industry, monks and service providers. 3) the working class has no economic capital or cultural capital compared to the dominating class and the middle class. Nevertheless, Bourdieu's works hardly provide in-depth details about the working class since the issue that he wanted to emphasize is the procedure of the dominating class to maintain its power.

Bourdieu wanted to point out that culture is an important element of the society which tends to be excluded from the issue of power domination and social stratification despite the fact that, when considered closely, such area has an intense competition to dominate power. Bourdieu explained the power-domination competition using the concept of "champ" or "field" as he wished to reflect the image of a field in sports games which must be bet on. In this sense, the bet in the cultural field is cultural capital.

Cultural capital in each field is different depending on the field's specific characteristics which are the result of habitus composed from the recognition and evaluation structure that the field has implanted. However, the competition in the field that wagers on cultural capital must proceed smoothly with the help of gradual supporting processes so that the capital accumulation can be carried out forever without any protest. A strategy that actors or social groups use for the maintenance and enhancement of cultural capital is the rejection and concealment of economic or power dimension and the promotion of the "non-profit" principle as the objective of investment and actions in the capitalist culture (Chanida Sa-ngiamphaisalsuk and Nopporn Prachakul, 2007).

Normally, we can change economic capital into social capital and cultural capital, which is easier than the other way round. Nevertheless, we may search for or acquire some products and services using economic capital, while some products and services can only be gained by the use of social capital and cultural capital.

The concept of culture as a form of capital allows us to realize the dimension of power relations which is hidden in cultural resources, especially the potentiality of cultural capital to be changed or converted into symbolic power.

Bourdieu suggested that, in the industrial society, the major form of power and domination has changed from the use of force and violence into the use of symbols as a strategy to lure and dominate various groups of people. For this reason, Bourdieu was interested in the role of cultural procedures and cultural producers like leaders, teachers, writers, academics, etc. as well as institutions in the process of symbolic domination and the establishment of overlapping power relations in the society.

According to Bourdieu's viewpoint, symbolic power is almost as important as economic power. Symbolic power is the power to dominate people through legitimacy or what Marx called ideology. He defined "ideology" or what he called symbolic violence as the potentiality to create and push forward the patterns and the methods to understand and adapt oneself in the society by presenting economic and political power in the form that conceals or hides the real power. The use of power needs to have some kind of righteousness which generates "misunderstanding" or wrong realization regarding the use of such power. In Bourdieu's point of view, wrong realization is caused by pretentious rejection of economic and political benefits that are hidden in all kinds of activities (Rungnapa Yanyongkasemsuk, 2007).

### 2.3.3 Habitus<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> In the anthropological history, the first person who used the concept of habitus was Marcel Mauss (1872-1950), a French anthropologist who was influenced by the concept of hexis by Aristotle. Mauss mentioned about this issue in the article called *Techniques du corps* (Techniques of the Body) which was transcribed from a lecture during the seminar at the psychology association on May 17, 1934. In this article, Mauss tried to point out about the principle that he emphasized in all his work which suggested that phenomena that happen in the society can be considered by various viewpoints, including economic, legal, religious ones or other viewpoints. We cannot disregard any point of view since all of them are connected with one another as a system as Mauss called "all social facts" (*des faits sociaux totaux*), even daily-life activities which are related to body management like standing, walking, sitting and sleeping that are generally viewed as small, insignificant things for social analysis. The body is not just a nature's issue studied by biology and psychology, but it is also a thing that reflects the society and culture of individuals. Human behaviors that are in connection with body management are different depending on specific characteristics of each society. For example, French people's way of walking is different from that of the Americans, or the way people in the past swam is different from how people at present swim (Chanida Sa-ngiumphaisalsuk and Nopporn Prachakul, 2007).

The concept of habitus returns the ability to take actions to human beings in the society without overlooking the limitation of freedom in actions under the dominating structure. Bourdieu tried to point out that the consideration of society which is separated from the study of individuals cannot explain social phenomena thoroughly, especially in case of actions which are carried on as daily routines without individuals' awareness or what is called "habits." Habitus is created by social indoctrination. It is assimilated by individuals and is firmly and continually reinforced as long as individuals practice it. Hence, routines are not naturally born but they are determined by the thing called habitus (Chanida Sa-ngiamphaisalsuk and Nopporn Prachakul, 2007).

The role of habitus is not only the "determination" of actions as a structure, but it is also the "generator" (generateur) of actions in the form of practices. For this reason, habitus is not habitude or "custom" which means something that is done repeatedly and becomes a routine without the dimension of the ability to generate actions in the form of practice. What Bourdieu studied is not merely "repeated actions that become patterns."

The main characteristic of habitus is that it is generated by the implantation of recognition and evaluation processes in the society into people's body and mind until they merge into one. Therefore, individuals are considered the reflection of the society, not separated from the society. This issue is partly influenced by Aristotle's hexis and habitus found in Mauss's works. Bourdieu paid attention to the topic of body implantation as Swartz (1997) noted that the concept of habitus is developed from the Greek word "ethos" of which meaning includes proper routines. Besides, the Greek word "hexis" in Aristotle's works is also used. Eventually, the Latin word "habitus" is most used by Bourdieu since its meaning covers hexis and ethos. Another word which is usually found in Bourdieu's works in the contexts near habitus and has similar meaning is "disposition." In the book called "Outline of a Theory of Practice," (1977) Bourdieu mentioned that this word is the most appropriate choice for the explanation of the properties of habitus as disposition's system which consists of "structure" and "tendency." To illustrate, it means 1) the results of

organized actions, which is the meaning that is close to the characteristics of “structure.” 2) current conditions and habits (especially when connected with the body) and 3) inclination tendency, etc.

( Swartz, 1997: 103)

To analyze the issue of power domination and social class, Bourdieu applied the concept of habitus to explain that this phenomenon can continue without real resistance because all related parties, both the dominating ones and the dominated ones, have been indoctrinated by the same set of recognition and evaluation procedures in the society they live in. This implantation is too deep for people to become aware of it since it has been done through socialization during their childhood.

Habitus of people who create practice, therefore, is in accordance with their social structure. The indoctrination that is assimilated by the body is the main factor that makes habitus permanent and difficult to change. As a result, people from one social class tend to operate under the social frame of their own class and avoid opportunities, people and places that they are not familiar with. A person usually has a “sense of one’s place,” and that is how class differences can continue. Habitus of classes in this manner is habitus collective which makes everyone in each society automatically operate in the same direction just like “conductorless orchestration” (Chanida Sa-ngiamphaisalsuk and Nopporn Prachakul, 2007).

## **2.4 Related Researches**

Since the topic of this study concerns the body’s aging experience and age resistance of middle-aged women, the researcher has conducted a literature review and discovered that most social science researches in Thailand concerning aging are usually based on positivism paradigm which views the samples objectively. Consequently, the studies of subjective experience are still limited, and a research which directly concerns anti-aging experience of middle-aged women is still not found.

Nevertheless, subjective researches which focus on women’s stories concerning “aging” in various aspects of the research problem are found as follow:

The research on senility in the “gender” aspect was conducted by Juthamane Somboonsut (2004) under the topic of “Elderly Women, poverty, marginal: elderly female

beggar's street lives." This academic work was a thesis and a research which aimed to study and explain how the gender factor had an influence on old women's transformation into beggars and, after entering the beggar career, how these old women managed to struggle, adapt or survive in the urban society. In this study, Juthamanee Somboonsut selected old women who were 60 years old and above in Bangkok from the direct beggar career and also other careers that came with beggars. The result of the research demonstrated that the study in order to understand and explain the phenomenon of old female beggars could not absolutely point out a single cause since all factors were important and they overlapped, supported and were connected with one another. In sum, the poverty crisis in the family, the double standard regarding age and gender attitudes as well as the exclusion from the labor market contributed to the problem of old female beggars.

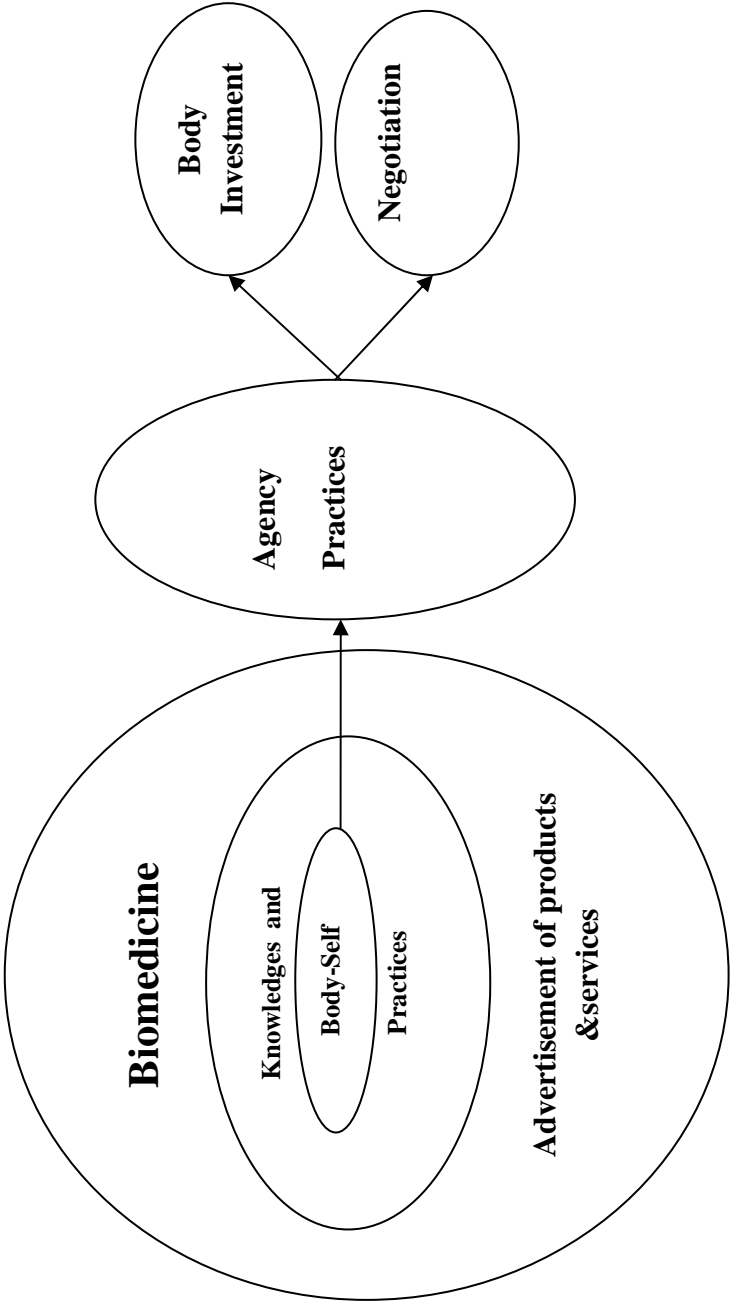
The research on senility in the "self" aspect was conducted by Ruangrong Chanwuttitham (2004) under the topic of "The Elderly in Governmental Home for the aged : Life and Self." This academic work discovered that the self of old people had low, invaluable status. As for the aspect of the construction of meaning and representative image of "identity" and "dimension of consumption," related researches include the work of Parnjak Thongparn (1997) which studied " Elderly people images in the TV Advertisements" and also the work of Pornpan Somboonbut (2006) which studied "Representation of elderly women in the TV dramatized documentary "Khon Khon Khon" Both researches demonstrated senility in the positive and negative dimensions, both as wisdom and consumption. The wisdom referred to cultural inheritance and motherhood. In this dimension, the value of old people in Thai society was revealed. As for the "consumption" dimension, it referred to the selling and marketing which was considered constructed identity under the framework of consumerism. Therefore, old age was defined as the targeted group which consumed products, dimension of consumption and representative of ever-lasting stability.

In Thailand, researches which directly study anti-aging experiences of middle-aged women can hardly be found in the social science branch. A study in Thailand which explored a similar topic but in the beauty aspect is the research by Siraya Summawart (2007) on "The Construction of Reality of Beautiful and youthful body performing." The objective of this study was to reveal that the truth about beauty beyond age was constructed under the ideologies of dominant male ideology and capitalism.

As for researches from overseas which study aged body of old women, most research topics concern medical intervention. According to the literature review, there are not so many directly-related researches, but there are some under similar topics. For example, the research by Pliner, Chaiken and Flett (1990) discovered that the appearance was the thing that old women considered important. Rodin et al. (1984) conducted a longitudinal study and found out that weight was the thing that created concern among old women after loss of memory. Furman (1997) conducted an ethnographic study on salon's culture and discovered that old women were worried about external physical change that came with senility, and that it was a major factor which influenced their self-esteem. Dinnerstein and Weitz (1998) studied worries and conflicts which concerned the change of appearance of old women. Fairhurst (1998) conducted a study on the elderly women and found out that, while old ladies were aware of the criteria which defined beauty and youth, their aged body's experience was not the main theme which was generated by negative feelings. Instead, it was shaped by the meaning that those old people attributed to being old. Internal feelings are important for sexual attraction which is different depending on race, class and sexual orientation

The study which is related to the issue of aged body in females is the research by Laura Hard Clarke on "Older Women's Bodies and the Self: The Construction of Identity in Later Life." This research studied the influence of perception, sexual attraction, health and function on old women's identity. The data collection was done by a semi-structured interview with participants whose ages were between 61 and 92 years old. The result of the study demonstrated that the body's experiences were both the mask and the capture of self which destroyed the challenge of image reflection and the feeling of youth in women.(Clarke, Laura Hurd,2001).

**2.5 Research Framework**



**Figure 2.1** Research Framework

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study was a qualitative research which applied the ethnographic approach, the narrative approach methodology with epistemology which was in accordance with feminism's basic philosophy in order to access the knowledge and the truth through women's experiences with an aim to turn such experiences into knowledge. The knowledgeable people in the viewpoint of feminism are those who are not secluded from the subject of the study as well as those who are being studied. In the narrative process, the reflection of experiences between the researcher as a woman and the research participants known as inter subjectivity was present.

This qualitative research have objectives as follow: 1) the sense of body-self which naturally body change according to increasing age;2)practices of women's body management to against aging;3)women's anti-aging experiences in various life contexts in order to comprehend the thoughts, emotions and subjectivity in age resistance of women as the agencies who make a decision to anti-aging practices which happen in different context in the Thai society.

In this chapter, the researcher would explained the area context, the selection of samples who participated in the research as the research participants, the data sources, the data access, the ethical considerations, the data analysis and the presentation of data as well as the period of study. The researcher used aliases for areas, research participants and key informants to conform to the ethical considerations and the protection of rights for individuals who were involved in this study in order to prevent possible effects.

### **3.1 Area Context**

According to the literary review, in most societies, women who against aging use different anti-aging methods, from simple practices of self-care in their lifestyle to consuming products and using services in order to manage their bodies to

against aging. In the society nowadays under the capitalism economic system, the power of goods and service consumption has a great influence on the alternatives and the ways of life of people in the society. The researcher has chosen Bangkok Metropolitan Region as the area for this study for 2 reasons. The first reason is that Bangkok Metropolitan Region is the capital and the center of the country's development in almost every aspect. Therefore, it is the area in the Thai society where there are a great number and a large variety of investments and businesses, both in products and services. Thus, the area of Bangkok Metropolitan Region is suitable for this research. The second reason is that the researcher was born, lives and grows up in Bangkok. Therefore, the researcher expects to use her own self in the dimensions of female gender, age and area in the inter subjectivity process with the research participants who are females in Bangkok Metropolitan Region in this study.

Due to the researcher's basic data survey, it was discovered that most women who apply different anti-aging methods with their bodies including self-care practices like exercise and the consumption of products and services are usually found in areas like public parks or public exercise venues, medical clinics and facilities, massage places, spas, full service salons, market and advertisement areas of anti-aging products such as cosmetics and supplements.

### **3.1.1 Public Parks, Exercise Venues and Public Youth Centers**

Metropolitan Region and found out that there are many of them located in the border areas between Bangkok and its neighboring provinces, which are residential areas rather than business and commercial zones in the city centers. Such areas have many public exercise venues. Some of them are exercise fields only for evening aerobics which is organized in small department stores like Big C and Tesco Lotus. Some of them are public parks under expressways where people go to do various kinds of outdoor exercise. Finally, the researcher acquired the data about exercise venues apart from the ones that the researcher already knew in such areas from the researcher's friends and discovered that there is an exercise venue where families, both adults and kids, go to exercise and do recreation activities during weekdays and weekends. It is both a public park and a venue for different kinds of exercise, both indoor and outdoor, as well as recreation activities. The researcher, therefore, chose it as the area of this study.

The researcher chose a specific area which is the exercise venue that is both a public park and the government's youth center situated in the same territory. The reason for selecting this specific area is because it has enough females who come to do activities in the park and in the public youth center's building which provides specific areas for different types of exercise particularly for women who are mostly interested in self care, including yoga room, aerobics yard and also areas for children to do recreation activities such as sports activities, art activities, music activities and dance performances inside the public youth center. At this place, the researcher found women from various economic and social statuses, lower-middle class to moderate and upper middle class. Additionally, the researcher lives in a residence in the neighboring area of this place, making it possible for the researcher to enter the area as a common person who is interested in exercising. It also has possibility in terms of research period.

### **3.1.2 Surrounding context areas with anti-aging products and services such as medical clinics, massage places, spas, full service salons, market and advertisement areas of direct-sale anti-aging products such as cosmetics and supplements**

Apart from the main area which is the public exercise park and youth center, the researcher also surveyed various surrounding context areas such as massage places, spas and full service salons. The researcher found out that, such areas not only provide anti-aging services, but they also offer anti-aging products and act as market and advertisement areas of direct-sale products like cosmetics and supplements. These places are surrounding context areas which are used as the sources of both primary and secondary data. They produce sets of knowledge and practices in the society which have an impact on the anti-aging experience of women who enter such context areas.

The researcher entered these areas which are the sources of primary and secondary data. The primary data include the interview with key informants as service providers and owners as well as both participant and non-participant observation. On the other hand, the secondary data include the analysis of documents, magazines which present news and data about anti-aging ,advertisements of products and news documents which promote government-supported activities from 2011 to 2013. All of them are acquired from the area context that the research participants shared their experiences.

### **Medical Clinics**

There are a great number of private medical clinics which provide anti-aging treatments and care throughout Bangkok Metropolitan Region.

The participant observation was conducted by an in-depth interview a doctor, the key informant who provides anti-aging medical services in an anti-aging and aesthetic skin clinic which is located in a hospital under the supervision of a famous university which has created Thailand's first anti-aging curriculum to produce personnel at higher-education level. The clinic offers specific anti-aging services as well.

The service area of the clinic provides free advertising documents which recommend the specific anti-aging curriculum, manuals which provide basic knowledge about anti-aging medical procedure and technology as well as standing banners which promote foreign-branded anti-aging products and technologies. In addition, the clinic sets up the waiting area for service users which has a variety of magazines, especially popular women's magazines in Thailand like Dichan, Praew and Kwanreun, magazines of which main contents concern health and beauty such as Cheewajit and Cosmetic & Anti-Aging as well as other Thai and foreign magazines which provide information and advertise about anti-aging technologies, anti-aging medical businesses and doctors who are specialists in this area.

### **Massage Places and Spas**

A massage place and spa is located in the neighboring area of the exercise venue of this study. They are less than 10 kilometers away from each other. The massage place not only offers massage service, but it also has a corner which displays international branded supplement products in the form of direct sale.

The owner of the place narrated the story about the history of her business. One of her customers introduced her to those products, and so she subscribed to become a member and joined the direct sale business. For her, taking the supplements will help to "resist aging." She also told the researcher about the anti-aging knowledge according to local beliefs regarding women's circulatory system in conjunction with western medical knowledge of hormones. She said that "*Women are different from men. Our hormones are different, and we have periods. We have to eat to expel our waste.*" She also claimed that after taking those supplements, her excretory system

worked well. Her former symptoms like allergy, runny nose and panting all disappeared. As she shared her experience with the researcher, her cheerful face showed her great confidence in her words which emphasized the products' properties and positive effects on her body.

### **Full service salons**

Full service salons not only offer facial and hair beauty services, but they also provide anti-aging facial skincare services using modern technologies and equipments just like the services at medical clinics.

The researcher conducted a survey at many full service salons, and one of them belongs to the researcher's friend who has been in this business for 18 years and owns 2 branches. This place is where the researcher conducted the participant observation and the interview with key informants by entering the salon as a customer who came to use the anti-aging face massage service. Full service salons usually offer anti-aging services using modern technologies similar to the ones that are offered by medical clinics. The difference is that, at medical clinics, the service users will see the doctors first, and the use of anti-aging medical equipments is under the supervision of conventional medical doctors. On the other hand, at full service salons, the services are offered by staff members who are trained to technologies like Grefas face massage, ultrasonic massager which helps to push vitamins and collagen into the skin, IONTO machine, etc.

According to the participant observation, full service salons usually have a corner which displays products for women to buy such as cosmetics and supplements as well as advertising documents of the brands that the salons represent as retailers. Anti-aging consumer products are also on display in the salons to attract customers' interest and stimulate their desire to purchase. Besides, many salons promote their direct-sale cosmetic and supplement businesses that they represent and manage.

Moreover, the salons provide books and popular women's magazines for service users to read. Apart from knowledge and useful information, the contents of these books also include advertisements of anti-aging products and services.

### **Direct-sale market and advertisement areas of cosmetics and supplements**

According to the researcher's survey, there are so many direct-sale market areas of cosmetics and supplements in Thailand. Therefore, the researcher chose the direct-sale market and advertisement areas of cosmetics and supplements which are widely recognized. They are 2 brands in total, a local one and an international one.

The local direct-sale brand which offers anti-aging cosmetics and supplements is owned and copyrighted by Thais. It is a brand that Thai people know and are interested in consuming its products. The locations of its market and advertisement areas scatter at various strategic points throughout Bangkok. This brand offers a great variety of cosmetics and supplements for its members through direct sale, especially many ones that claim to have anti-aging properties.

The international direct-sale brand has established its market in Thailand continually for almost a decade. In 2011-2012, this brand dedicated itself to the marketing and the building of the brand's reputation particularly as a provider of anti-aging supplements.

To conduct the participant observation, the researcher entered the market and advertisement areas as a customer who was interested in the products. The researcher was directly contacted by a salesperson from the network that the researcher knew in order to arrange an appointment. This direct-sale brand is centrally-located in a building for rent near a well-known educational zone. This building has many floors which are divided into different zones, including restaurants, famous brand-name products, businesses and art exhibition by groups of people and organizations. This building is situated in the city center among large, leading department stores in Thailand, and this international brand specifically declares itself as the provider of anti-aging products. The company rents the whole floor of the building and uses it as the direct-sale store and marketing area. The brand organizes promotional activities to promote and advertise its products according to its monthly and annual activity calendar. In the mentioned area, there are people coming to do many different things such as the direct selling and buying, the meeting with direct sales team and the appointment between interested customers and salespeople in charge during the promotional period, etc.

## **3.2 The Selection of the Sample**

### **3.2.1 The Selection of the Sample :Research Participants**

According to the literary review, the anti-aging experience usually happens to aging women who are mostly in their middle age and are facing natural body changes into old age. Thus, the researcher set up the criteria for the selection of samples by focusing on women aged between 45 -59 years old in Bangkok Metropolitan Region.

Nevertheless, after entering various context areas and talking with key informants who are doctors, owners of full service salons, owners of massage places and spas as well as owners of Thai medical product business, it was found out that there are more women who are interested in using anti-aging services, and that they start early. Women apply various methods to resist aging even when they have not reached their middle age. For this reason, the researcher adjusted the age criterion to focus on those who are 35 years old and above.

Consequently, the researcher amended the criteria for the selection of samples by changing the age range and the anti-aging methods which do not have to be “medical technologies” only. The sample, therefore, have the following characteristics:

1. Females aged between 35-60 years old.
2. In terms of economic and social status, the sample must belong to all middle class (lower, moderate and new upper middle class).
3. The sample must apply self care , use “anti-aging” products and services and medical technologies.
4. The sample must consent to the giving of information under the ethical operation of the study.

According to the basic survey by the researcher, groups of women are often found in public exercise areas, medical service areas and other product and service consumer areas. Women usually have different area contexts in terms of lifestyle, and one woman may be found in many areas and not just one. Since the researcher could not access the research participants beyond the specific areas, parks

and youth centers, the researcher also applied the snowball technique for the selection of research participants.

In this study, the researcher selected the sample by purposive sampling from specific areas and also by snowball technique from the researcher's social network such as friends, relatives and acquaintances who knew people with the characteristics as specified in the set-up criteria. The researcher's friend network was asked to introduce people who belonged to the mentioned criteria to the researcher and allow the researcher to form a relationship with them so that they gave consent to become the participants of this study.

**3.2.2 Snowball Technique** The snowball technique was applied to select the research participants from the researcher's social network such as family, relatives, friends who used to study in the same institutions and acquaintances from other social areas as well.

Regarding the use of snowball technique, the researcher's social network includes friends who used to study nursing in the same institution during undergraduate years. The social network of these friends usually covers seniors, juniors and colleagues in the nursing professions. Most of them are a lot of women who spread into different areas. After graduation, some of the researcher's friends remained nurses or worked in medical service areas such as hospitals and other medical facilities, while some of them changed their careers to work in many other fields such as teachers, flight attendants, freelancers, owners of full service salons, owners of face massage salons, etc.

Furthermore, the researcher had an opportunity to get to know friends in other social areas, including relatives and people who became friends with the researcher by taking the same hobbies. During the researcher's area survey from April to July 2012 along the route in Bangkok Metropolitan Region, the researcher had a chance to visit different places and came across an announcement of the government's non-formal and informal education center which was located in a private university not far away from the public park and youth center. This non-formal and informal education center opened free courses for people in general who were interested in massage career, Thai traditional dessert career, etc.

Due to the fact that the training area of these free, short courses was located near the public park and youth center, the researcher was interested in joining the Thai traditional dessert activity since it was an opportunity to get to know more of the new female friends from other social areas. There was a chance that the researcher might find women who lived in the neighborhood and was interested in joining the free, short course, and that they might have the possibility to become part of the researcher's social network which could be connected to the research's area context. Hence, the researcher decided to apply for the short career-building course which lasted a week. There, the researcher had a chance to meet new friends outside the familiar social frame. The visit to such area allowed the researcher to create new relationships. In this social area, the researcher might find middle-age women who belonged to lower and upper middle class. Regarding the social network in this area, the researcher had an opportunity to build connections as a trainee of a free career course which was joined by a diverse group of almost 20 middle-age women. These women lived inside and outside the area and came from different of life such as sellers, housekeepers, unemployed people or even former secondary school teachers.

The researcher got to know Kru Wan (alias) who used to teach in a famous private secondary school. She lived in a luxury housing in that area. During the free, short training, the researcher built up a close relationship with Kru Wan who became familiar and intimate with the researcher. During the conversations, Kru Wan realized that the researcher was studying and preparing for a research. Afterwards, Kru Wan was the person who introduced the researcher to research participants who belonged to the criteria and consented to become the research participants of this study.

### **3.2.3 Research Participants**

The researcher discovered that the samples who were selected as the research participants of this study have different contexts. The 4 participants from the public youth center area context with low and middle social statuses are Khun Pom (alias) who is a housewife, Khun Oh (alias) who works in her family business, Khun Maew (alias) who has early retired and Khun Nong (alias) who is unemployed. On the other hand, there are 5 research participants from the friend, acquaintance and relative network by the snowball technique, which are Khun Jin (alias) who works in her

family business and direct-sale business, Khun Nadia (alias) who owns a restaurant, Khun Luk (alias) who has a private security business, Khun Nuan (alias) who is a supervising nurse and Khun Fern (alias) who is a secretary and a tutor. It can be seen that the research participants in the second group have quite high social statuses and moderate to very good economic statuses. Overall, the research participants from the snowball group have higher statuses than the ones from the public youth center area as shown in Table 3.1

**Table 3.1** Demonstrates basic information of the research participants.

Name	Age	Education	Status	Occupation	Practices of Anti-aging body Management
1.Khun Pom	40	High School	Spouse	Housewife	Exercise
2.Khun Oh	54	Elementary School	Spouse	Family Business	Exercise
3.Khun Maew	58	Bachelor’s Degree	Single	Early-retired Teacher	Exercise
4.Khun Nong	54	High School	Single	None	Exercise
5.Khun Jin	52	Bachelor’s Degree (Continuing Program)	Single	Family Business/ Direct Sale	Food Supplement
6. Khun Nadia	38	High Vocational Certificate	Spouse	Private Business	Products and services from popular culture (cosmetics and supplements) and medical technologies
7.Khun Luk	42	Bachelor’s Degree	Spouse	Private Business	Products and services from popular culture (cosmetics) and medical technologies
8.Khun Nuan	52	Master’s Degree	Single	Civil Servant	Medical Technologies
9.Khun Fern	40	Master’s Degree/ Overseas	Spouse	Private	Medical Technologies

### **3.3 Data Sources**

In this study, the researcher has applied many methods to access the sources of data, which can be divided into primary data and secondary data.

#### **3.3.1. Primary Data Sources**

##### **3.3.1.1 Conversation and Narrative**

The researcher talked to the female research participants as an interlocutor who empowered the informants and allowed them to have freedom to narrate their stories. As a result, the narration was done freely. Simultaneously, the researcher involuntarily shared her personal experience and feelings in some related topics and was involved as an understanding listener in the conversations regarding the anti-aging experience of women from a youth center and from the researcher's friend network using snowball technique.

A narrative or narration is a method of studying which is the specific storytelling by a person in the form which is similar to a conversation. Other qualitative methods include in-depth interviews, group conversations and autobiography. (Pimpawun Boonmongkon,2008).Narration is humans' basic way of defining experience. In the narration and the defining of experience, a narrative is a medium between the internal world of thoughts and feelings and the noticeable actions of the outside world as well as the shared words (states of affair) (Mattingly,C.,& Garro, L.C., 2000). Narratives are used in various contexts. Psychologically, they have been used in the treatments from the past until the time of contemporary society (Mattingly,C.,&Garro, L.C., 2000). Medically, a narrative is the understanding of experience, meaning and illness of patients. In addition, in the society which often degrades the value of feelings and physical expressions and cherishes the value of verbal self-expressions, a narrative is also a basic method for the access of body experience and is essential for the comprehension of experience (Becker,1997, as cited in Mattingly, C., & Garro, L.C., 2000).

An important principle for the conversation with narrators is the relationship based on the foundation of understanding and equality without pressure or judgment. During the conversation, both the researcher and the narrator should be in a comfortable atmosphere. The researcher is not a questioner and the

narrator is not a respondent. Instead, it is the atmosphere which stimulates the reminiscence of stories and the communication through narratives.

In the narration, the narrator is considered the subject who cannot separate his/ her emotions, feelings and thoughts from the stories. Therefore, a narrative's duty is to respond to and reveal the mechanisms of social structure which dominate individuals. The form of a narrative not only reflects the narrator's characteristics, but the structure of the narrative itself can also show the relationship between the people, the perspective on language, the self and the world of the narrator (Elliott, 2005:1049-1075, as cited in Napaporn, 2009). A narrative comprises sets of various stories which happen in a person's life. A person will choose stories which are important to him/ her, remember them and retell them in the planned structure. A narrative, therefore, is not constructed from life which has the characteristic of objective reconstruction. Instead, it is the life according to a person's perception. Thus, a narrative derives from the narrator's life experience and consists of stories that are chosen for narration (Webster & Mertova, 2007:71-78, as cited in Napaporn, 2009).

The relationship between the researcher and the narrators is the intersubjectivity shared world. The knowledge gained, therefore, reveals the philosophy behind narration that reality is constructed (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Hence, it refuses comprehensive knowledge and grand narratives. Instead, the attention is paid to stories of insignificant people who construct knowledge in their own ways in specific contexts. Each human being creates his/ her own experience. People build up their life experience through interaction both by first-hand experience and by the reinterpretation of experience on the social and cultural basis (Chai Pothisita, 2007). People will define various experiences in their lives and organize them into chapters, episodes or scenes through narration. Thus, the narrative method of studying supports the revelation of multiple realities and allows insignificant people in the society to reflect their own self. It is the truth in the relativism point of view; that is, reality is not real in itself, but it is the truth which is constructed through the context and the background of the narrator. These stories reflect the social structure which dominates the narrator as well as the interaction with such structure through the narrator's own interpretation.

During the conversation between the researcher and the narrators, the power relation is undeniably formed. In many cases, the atmosphere of the conversation may turn the narrators into the researcher's objects of studying. However, the power is constructed and may transfer between the researcher and the narrators (Alex & Hammarstrom,2007:169–176, as cited in Napaporn,2009). The researcher's attempt to take notice of the situations or the concepts which arise during the conversation from different perspectives, which is the reflexivity process, will help the researcher to realize the power relation while talking. Such realization will affect the adjustment of attitude during the conversation in order to create a more equal atmosphere. Everyone has different points of view towards different events that happen. Therefore, the stories that the narrators choose to narrate depend on the context, the listener and the desire of the narrators. The sensitivity to the situations and the flexibility during the conversation of the researcher play an important role in the creation of equal atmosphere and affect the stories of the narrators. The researcher, therefore, co-creates narratives. Hence, the researcher's attitude during the research procedure should be reflected in the analysis and the interpretation of the narratives as well.

### **3.3.1.2 Participated and Non-Participated Observation**

The researcher has involved in the study, the learning, the observation and the participation in group activities in the main area of study which is the youth center and also in related surrounding context areas which consist of a hospital's anti-aging and aesthetic skin clinic, massage places and spas, full service salons and the institute of Thai aesthetic medicine.

**3.3.1.3 Interviewed with Key Informants** which are doctors from a hospital's anti-aging and aesthetic skin clinic, cosmetic surgeons as well as obstetricians and gynecologists from a menopause clinic at a government's hospital, owners of massage places, spas and full service salons, the owner of anti-aging products from the institute of Thai aesthetic medicine and PR staff at medical clinics.

## **3.3.2. Secondary Data Sources**

**3.3.2.1. Documentary Research** The researcher have collected a variety of documents, including popular women's magazines, foreign magazines which advertise cosmetic and supplement products, advertising documents of direct-sale anti-aging products, cosmetics and supplements as well as documents which provide the information about activities which are supported by the government's free trade policy in cooperation with private anti-aging product and service businesses in the surrounding context areas.

- Dichan, Praew, Kwanreun, Cheewajit, Cosmetic & Anti-Aging, manuals which introduce, promote and advertise both local and foreign direct-sale businesses, especially anti-aging products from 2012 to 2013.

### **3.4. The Data Access**

Regarding the methods of data access in the study and the comprehension of women's experiences, the researcher has confronted many obstacles in the data access and learned to modify the situations.

#### **3.4. 1. Field area Selection**

According to the survey before entering the field area, the research's targeted samples do not have clear social areas for congregation. Each woman has different way of life. To access the data of middle-age women who belong to a specific social area context with clear congregation is difficult. Each woman leads her life differently. Therefore, as mentioned earlier, the researcher applied 2 methods of sample selection: 1) the field entry into a specific area, which is the public youth center, Bangkok as a member. This place has areas for exercise such as yoga room; 2) snowball technique, which helped to introduce the samples who match to the research's criteria on the survey route

#### **3.4.2. Field Entry**

##### **3.4.2.1 Researcher as an Explorer**

After entering the field, the researcher surveyed basic data both in the main area and in the routes which are related to the surrounding contexts. Informal conversations as well as participant and non-participant observation were conducted.

#### **3.4.2.2. Researcher's Search for Advisers**

After selecting the main field, the researcher conducted an observation of the field's environment which was the park that surrounded the public youth center, Bangkok. Afterwards, the researcher started to enter the public youth center as a service user and acquired information concerning the public youth center's services and how to access them from the PR staff. The researcher had to follow the regulations by signing up to become a member.

Before entering the yoga room, the researcher waited outside the room first to look for someone that the researcher could talk to and ask about basic information. As a newcomer who did not know the regulations of the yoga class, the researcher went to ask people who practiced yoga after the class was finished, which was the first time that the researcher got to know existing members of the yoga class and form relationships with people in the field.

As for the use of snowball technique, the researcher tried to look in the friend network to see if anyone knew people who matched the criteria and could introduce them to the researcher so that the researcher would have an opportunity to get to know them, to introduce herself and to ask for their consent to become the research participants.

#### **3.4.3. Research Operations**

##### **3.4.3.1 The Beginning of Relationship and Conversation**

During the research operations, the researcher started to form relationships in the way that reduced the power gap and created equal relationships using both body language and spoken language. In the first entry into the field, the researcher used body language such as smile and eye contact to greet and create social relationships in general. As a new member of the public youth center and a researcher who started to get to know the research participants from the friend network, the

researcher used the pronouns according to Thai culture which pays respect to senior system. Generally, in informal areas where we find our acquaintances, we will greet them by using the pronoun and the name prefix “Pi.” As for those who are younger or at the same age, the pronoun “Khun” is often used to show respect before forming relationships.

During the conversation with the women in the field, there was an issue about the creation of conversational attitude which was sensitive to negative feelings and also emotions that might cause reproducibility of negative feelings in the researcher’s word choices.

The researcher, therefore, made an attempt to use neutral terms to start with. For instance, when the researcher began to talk about the anti-aging experience of the research participants in the yoga room, the researcher tried to use neutral terms, words and languages that could convey the same meaning and understanding without reproducing negative feelings to the research participants. For example, “How does your body change as you age? What are your methods of self care?” Then, when the conversation continued to the point of discussion which especially concerned anti-aging methods, the researcher used the terms “the methods to make one feel good and look young” instead of “anti-aging methods” etc.

#### **3.4.3.2 Continuance of Relationship and Conversation**

The continuance of relationship and conversation is essential for good data access. The researcher did not maintain the continuance of conversation without obstacles: a sample who was introduced to the researcher through the social network using snowball technique refused to have continual conversations with the researcher.

This research participant mentioned her tight personal and work schedules which made it difficult for her to allocate time for the conversations with the researcher. As a result, the researcher’s appointments to have conversations with her were rejected continually even though she agreed to narrate her stories the first time. The research participant claimed that she did not have time, and that it was inconvenient for her to meet the researcher since she just changed her job although the researcher tried to adjust time to make it convenient for the research participant.

Eventually, the conversation with this participant was terminated. This case made the researcher learn and try to find the way to adjust the relationship methods and the attitudes towards the research participants who were introduced by the friend network. The researcher made an attempt to search for the means to create continual relationships by providing convenient channels which helped to improve the relationships and the attitudes using social media like Facebook. The researcher sent friend requests to the research participants via Facebook, which helped to create the feeling of power equality which did not overlap in the relationship between the researcher and the research participants. Instead, it was more like friendship which enabled two-way communication that reduced distance and unfamiliarity. The next step was the appointments to have phone conversations with the research participants which also allowed the researcher to get to know them. In this step, the researcher had to find appropriate periods of time for the communication which would not disturb the research participants' personal life; for example, to contact the participants during lunch break or after work.

As for the continual conversations regarding unclear topics, the researcher would organize formal and informal talks, and then came back to record the data later.

### **3.5. Data Validity**

The researcher has thoroughly considered the examination of data validity. In this study, the researcher conducts the study using many principles in the data access, the analysis and interpretation as well as the clear understanding of the phenomena that are being studied.

#### **3.5.1. Triangulation**

This study applies the triangulation technique which is a method to validate findings (Chai Pothisita, 2007).

There are several ways to conduct triangulation, including in the aspect of data collection using different methods and different sources. To illustrate, the researcher has conducted the study by herself in every step using various methods

including the participant and non-participant observation, the in-depth interview with key informants as well as the conversation and narration with the research participants. In the procedure to access these data, the researcher has acquired the data from both primary and secondary sources. Moreover, the researcher has verified the data by consulting with advisor who is highly-experienced and specialized in the interpretation of social phenomena as well as social methodology in order to comprehend the aged body experience and age resistance in the field of study.

### **3.5.2 Trust Rapport**

In the field of the public youth center, the researcher was involved as a new member of the yoga class. The researcher started to make friends with existing members who practiced yoga nearby. After entering the field for about 2 weeks and having enough chances to meet and talk to existing yoga members about general topics, the researcher became familiar with them and therefore revealed that, apart from being a person who was interested in yoga, the researcher was also a student who was conducting a research about female health care.

Approximately 5 months after the researcher joined the yoga class which was also during the New Year festival, after the class was finished, the members got together in groups to talk with their acquaintances about what they did during the New Year holidays. The researcher brought several jars of Thai herbal balm which were small and handy hand-made souvenirs to the class and gave them away to the class members as presents. The members who received the gifts began to talk about presents and health, which was a good opportunity for the researcher to create relationships with them on the basis of Thai social culture which offers presents during in the New Year Festival. By doing so, the researcher felt that she had more chances to talk to the class members and became more intimate with them.

As for the research participants from the snowball technique, most of them were introduced through the researcher's very trustable friend network before giving the researcher a permission to contact them, to introduce herself and to ask them to become the research participants who provided data for this study. Additionally, the researcher extended her relationship into the online area like Face

book, which was used as an informal contact channel that revealed the acceptance of relationship and acquaintance in the fast way of communication of people in modern times.

### **3.5.3 The Forming of Intersubjectivity**

In the field, the researcher has perceptions, thoughts, feelings from the self inside according to her various statuses in the research field, which include a member of the public youth center, a student, a customer who is interested in products and services, a healthcare worker and especially a middle-age woman. The researcher, therefore, has a variety of perspectives from different dimensions according to those roles. Also, the researcher has taken notes about perceptions, feelings and thoughts during visits to the main area and the related surrounding context areas where the researcher has been involved in the perception, the sharing of experience and thoughts as well as the co-learning with the participants. Such data will be used in the interpretation to reflect the understanding of anti-aging experiences.

### **3.5.4 Reflexivity**

The researcher used to reflect on the self before entering the field study and believed that own self never had strong feelings and real thoughts about using or searching for anti-aging methods. However, after entering the field, the researcher had a chance to share and exchange opinions on age resistance with the research participants. Such experiences made the researcher change self-reflection and realize that the researcher is actually one of those who gradually absorb anti-aging experiences in terms of way of thinking and operation as a consumer of anti-aging products and services in daily life just like the research participants, even though the experience of 9 research participants in this study consists of a variety of anti-aging operations under different underlying perspectives, visions and ways of thinking.

### **3.6 Research Equipments and Tools**

#### **1) Research equipments**

Research equipments consist of equipments and tools which are used for the data collection, analysis and record as follow:

The Researcher is considered an important equipment of the research procedure who accesses the nature of the problem, the information which is fluid and different under various contexts (Seibold, 2000, as cited in Aratha Rangphueng,2005) as well as the process to create meaning and culture in the topic area of anti-aging body experiences. In addition, this research comprises essential epistemological paradigm in accordance with feminism, which emphasizes the significance of the access of knowledge and truth from the subjectivity of narratives both from the women and the researcher as a woman and a part of the procedure to access knowledge and truth. Furthermore, the researcher has an experience in her own personal context as a middle-age woman. Therefore, the researcher uses intersubjectivity with women at similar ages in the sharing of experience regarding natural body changes by age.

**2) The Guideline of Questions for Conversations** is created for narrative interviews. It is a conversational guideline on the foundation of knowledge which is gained from the literary review concerning aged body.

Regarding the guideline of questions for the narration of anti-aging experiences, the researcher had the outline of conversational guidelines which allowed the researcher to link conversations together so that they covered all research questions. The researcher created the atmosphere for friendly and flexible interaction in natural circumstances, allowing the research participants to express themselves freely. In the conversational process between the researcher and the research participants, the researcher took into account the feelings and emotions, the perception between the interlocutors as deep, understanding listeners and the avoidance of communicational conflicts both in terms of body language and verbal language.

### **3) Equipments and Tools for the Data Collection, Analysis and Record**

The researcher provided equipments and tools for the research operations, including a sound recorder and a notebook to record conversations as well as the participant observation of activities and daily life in the field area.

### **3.7. Data Analysis and Data Presentation**

The researcher analyzes data before, during and after her entry into the field in order to comprehend women's anti aging experiences based on the data contexts from various sources, which are the narrative experiences, the conversations in daily life about group activities, the participant and non-participant observation as well as the interview with related key informants.

The researcher utilizes the conversations from a sound recorder and the self reflection from the field record in the narrative analysis. Besides, the researcher gathers information from documents, including magazines which distribute knowledge about aging and anti-aging biomedical technologies, anti-aging products and services as well as the record of data from the surrounding context areas in order to conduct documentary analysis. The overall presentation is based on the framework of social construction theory, Power and Knowledge concept of Foucault and Practice and Capital concept of Bourdieu.

As for the analysis of narratives, the main objective of this analysis is not the production of what the researcher has seen or known. Instead, it is the construction of dynamic framework that can weave the elements of data together in an interesting manner, which is reflected through the researcher as a person who shares experiences with the narrators. The researcher is able to illustrate the stories which are in connection with the contexts and various parts of the data to help the readers understand the things that the researcher wishes to present.

## **3.8. Ethical Considerations**

### **3.8.1 Inform consent**

The researcher has asked for inform consent from the research participants, key informants and related people. In this process, the researcher has to inform them about the main contents of the research, the objectives of the study, the reasons and the methods of selecting research participants, key informants, the confidential policies and the possible results that might happen to the research participants and the key informants due to their participation in the research. The researcher must start to inform them verbally using the language that is easy to understand to ask for cooperation and not to force them. The research participants must provide data willingly, and they must be allowed some time to make decisions. The researcher has to make sure that, if the research participants and the key informants decide not to cooperate, there will be no effect on them at all. The research participants and the key informants have the right not to answer particular questions or refuse to give information in the topics that they are not comfortable with. Also, they have the right to change their minds or leave the research. The researcher has to allow the informants to ask questions to clarify any doubt or concern until they are satisfied.

Also, the researcher will have to prepare a written document for inform consent in case that the research participants and the key informants request it in addition to verbal consent. The researcher will adapt to match the situations. For example, some people may be worried about having a written document, while others may concern about signing such document to give inform consent. In such case, the researcher will skip the signing process, but may give them the inform consent document and allow them to ask questions until the research participants and the key informants are satisfied.

During the data access by narrative conversation, the researcher will ask for permission verbally during the record of data in every session. In this case, the researcher will allow some time for the research participants and the key informants to decide whether they would like to participate in the study or not. The research participants and the key informants will be informed about their rights in the research procedure such as the termination of their participation in the study, etc.

### **3.8.2. Data Confidentiality**

The researcher pays attention to the data confidentiality by not revealing the names-surnames of related personnel in the field study. As for the key informants, the researcher follows the ethical process in conducting a research with human beings. Also, the data from the sound record will be deleted and destroyed after the research is finished. Moreover, the research participants and the key informants will be informed about their rights in the data from voice recording. If the providers of information would like to take back the data from voice recording, they have the right to do it at any time without having to specify their reason. As for the discussion or publication of the data from the research, it will be done in the overall picture for academic purposes to the extent that the research participants and the key informants allow only.

### **3.8.3. Consideration of Privacy**

The research methodology is to access data from the conversations between the researcher and the research participants as well as the key informants, which will be done generally and naturally in the field of study. However, in case that the data of the conversations lead to personal issues, the researcher will adapt with the situations to become flexible according to the times and circumstances in order to create the atmosphere which demonstrates respect in the privacy of the research participants and the key informants. Besides, during the conversations, the researcher will evaluate situations by considering both body language and verbal language that may imply the needs of the research participants and the key informants to communicate and show understanding or sympathy, or in case of force majeure such as very long silence or unstoppable cry, the researcher needs to terminate the conversations with the research participants and the key informants.

### **3.8.4 Benefit and Reciprocity**

The researcher has considered the benefit and the reciprocity to reduce negative feelings and attitudes towards the researcher who is the only one that gains benefit from the data that the research participants provide. Therefore, the researcher has formed relationships with them as a good friend in various situations, including the building of empathy as a woman, the sharing of experience and the exchange of

knowledge, etc. In some occasions, the researcher gave extra health information to the research participants and also shared feelings about daily life beyond the conversation in the research topics. Other actions include the visit to meet and talk with the research participants, the expression of gratitude to the participants during the bonding of relationships and the conversations such as the giving away of souvenirs as a friend in accordance with Thai culture, the offer to pay for a special meal during the meetings with the research participants , etc.

### **3.9 Period of Data Collection**

The researcher conducted the field study for approximately 10 months from August 2012 to May 2013.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **SENSES OF BODY-SELF AND PRACTICES OF ANTI-AGING BODY MANAGEMENT**

The researcher would like to present the results of the study in this chapter in two parts. Part 1 is a description on the contexts of Siripattana Youth Center and general information of women related to how to manage the body against aging in order to understand the background in a social life context which involves the experience of women's anti-aging body management in Thai society. Part 2, the senses of body-self and the practices of anti-aging body management, is an analysis of the diverse senses of body-self and practices of anti-aging body management of women in Thai society as an agency, particularly in the context of life and social status, who makes a decision on how to manage the body against aging. Those are in order to understand the experience of practices of selecting diverse methods in anti-aging body management of women in Thai society.

#### **Part 1: The context of area and general information of women**

##### **4.1 Context of area: Siripattana Youth Center**

Various new governmental youth centers with a new dimension and concept have been built in Bangkok since 2007 with principles of having modern structures and facilities including sport equipments to attract the attention as a place to promote the use of free time constructively by exercise, playing sports and enjoying recreational activities for the whole family. There are various promotions of organizing children and youth activities including sport, music, classical dance, arts and crafts as well as personality development courses and enhancing the experiences through contests, competitions and other special activities.

The new dimension Bangkok Youth Center has so far been opened in 37 various locations throughout Bangkok. They are the center for recreation and

enjoyment of all families. The areas are allocated into recreational activity building and indoor sports halls. The activity building consists of information room, arts and crafts room, International Music Chamber and Thai classical music chamber, multi-purpose room, weight training room, mini theater room, table tennis room, and dance room. In the indoor sports hall, there are 4 badminton courts and 12.50 x 25 meter swimming pool providing basic trainings, practicing areas, and fitness services.

Siripattana Youth Center is located in Bangkok, but also connected to the metropolitan area. This Youth Center was recently opened for about 3 years with members of all ages using the facilities from children to the elderly. Membership is required. Adult admission is 40 Baht per annum, whereas a child must pay 20 Baht per year for membership fee. The ground floor of this youth center consists of a mirror room for organizing the Taekwondo activity taking place every Thursday, dancing every Wednesday, and yoga every Saturday and Sunday. There is also art and painting rooms for small children and older children, and a library. On the second floor there are a fitness room and a classical music and dance room. The aerobic exercise activity is organized daily in front of the center's activity building.

#### **4.1.1 Siripattana Youth Center: a place where women strive to maintain the wellness body.**

##### **The atmosphere of yoga room**

During the weekend at Siripattana Youth Center, although the front door would not be opened by the normal opening time, it can be observed that some women have partially opened the gate of the youth center to enter the center's activity building, and wait at the front of the activity building. Those women waiting at yoga room often carry a yoga mat along with them indicating that this group of women is here to learn yoga. The atmosphere of having these women waiting in front of the building is very similar to small children concentrating on entering the play rooms. Those women waiting in front of the room are gathering among the familiar friends.

They greet and make conversations about general topics. The enthusiasm of some of these middle-aged women focusing their great attention to yoga exercise is a surprise to the researcher at the beginning upon entering the yoga room as a new

member of participants. These women, although they are an elderly people, assuming from their external expression, are eager to come to the youth center during weekends, although most people would rather stay at home with their family or doing their personal matters during the weekends than going outside.

Later on after having been into the youth center several times with opportunities to talk to some women, the researcher found that many of these women who regularly come here early are married and have a family. Although there are family obligations, but they have been trying to arrange the time to come early and do the yoga exercise during the weekends on a regular basis. The researcher observed that the women who come early and wait in front of the yoga room before the class starts are mostly middle- age women aged about 40-50 years old. While they are waiting to enter the yoga room, the staff will clear and prepare the room to get ready to be used. This yoga room on a regular weekday will also be used for other exercise activities such as dancing and Taekwondo. Immediately after the door of the yoga room was opened by the staff, these women would rush to take off their shoes and try to get inside the room quickly.

Each tried to occupy their preferred seats and choose a thick foam mat pad, which is used in practicing a yoga pose. Some of the women who came after the class started would try to squeeze into available space to insert a yoga mat. The rows are well arranged with enough reasonable gaps because yoga requires the space. In practicing Asana pose there must be estimate enough space to make sure that each would not end up with a collision by doing such position. From several conversations unofficially, many women admitted that to join the yoga class in a private fitness center they would lose a lot of money. But there is no tuition fee for the yoga class overhere. They only have to pay just 40 Baht annually for the membership fee which is considered very cheap. That is why they must try to keep the opportunity to do the yoga exercise at this youth center.

### **Teachers and yoga members**

There are 4 yoga trainers teaching yoga at the youth center, all in the adult age of about 35-50 years-old age range. This includes Master Nok (alias) at the age range 30 plus, whereas the other 3 trainers, Master Nam(alias), Master Ning (alias),

and Master Num (alias) are in the age range above 50. Kru Nok (Master Nok) is the main coach who regularly gives a yoga instruction here more frequently than others. The four trainers will rotate alternately at times. All yoga trainers normally wear sport outfits for yoga practice which fit into their good looking body shapes. Yoga trainers are often praised by the participating members. Some women have changed to wear such outfits following the coaches. Yoga outfits are specifically bought for this purpose and yoga trainers were discussed and consulted in particular to help them buy the proper yoga outfits.

Most participants were women totaling around 20-25 people. Once in a while there was a man joining, but not in a regular basis. Most participants were at the age of about thirty and above. There were very little participants under 30 years old, around 2-3 people, and they did not join the class regularly. Some members told the researcher that there were many women who joined yoga class but finally quitted as it was inconvenient for them to come early to occupy the space. Some of them said that the yoga class here is free of charge. So they did not have to spend so much money like in other places. Therefore, they did not want to lose the chance to play and must come earlier to occupy the space every Saturday and Sunday. Before 10 am there will be a number of women waiting in front of the activity building at the youth center, though the youth center is officially opened at 10 o'clock in the morning. There are members joining the yoga class who came to the class before it is opened and some who might come after the class has already started.

### **Internal condition of yoga room**

Inside the yoga room, there is a mirror in front of the room with plastic pads for yoga play. However, most woman participants preferred to bring their own yoga mats along whenever they join the class. Yoga trainers would sit and turn the back to the large mirror wall. While the trainer led the class in posing the yoga positions, the participants in the room could see themselves and others in the room through the mirror in front of the class.

When yoga trainers approached the room by the starting time of the practice of yoga, women inside the room would sit on their yoga mats orderly arranged in 3 rows. Everyone in the yoga class would wear the outfits as per their own

convenience, but shoes and socks must be removed. During the yoga class, the trainers often requested the participants inside the class to turn off their mobile phone in order not to distract others, right before the start.

### **Initial physical preparation: Practice of proper inhalation and exhalation**

To start yoga exercise, one must begin by sitting cross-legged on a seat mat. Stretch the body into a relieved position. Then begin the breathing in and out slowly. Make deep inhalations creating peaceful quiet atmosphere without any talk. All to listen to the yoga trainer start preparing. *"Inhale...exhale..."Keep the mind on the breath and the body. Concentrate on the breath"*. This voice is a typical starting voice of the trainer informing the participants to follow the instructions from the trainer alone. To practice yoga, a proper training of correct breathing is required at the start before entering the stage of acting yoga posture or Asana pose. There are inhalation and exhalation. Many woman participants told the researcher that they have never realized that in the past they did not breathe properly and learned how to breathe correctly here. A participant who practices yoga on a regular basis for almost 3 years told that she has practiced proper breathing until it becomes an automatic habit to inhale till a bloated belly and exhale till a collapse abdomen. *"Nowadays, I habitually inhales with a bloated belly and exhale with a collapse belly. Before going to bed, put your hand on the stomach and practice and get it familiarized in one week. Then you don't need any further practice as it becomes automatic"*. Women would feel like taking deep breath, inhaling fresh air into the body.

The training for proper breathing in the yoga class is an initial preparation for physical and mental readiness of a yoga practitioner. All participants followed the instructions from the leading yoga trainer in unison. The breath training exercises can help create a focused concentration of breath and relax the mind from the worries of everyday life prior to practicing yoga postures according to the rhythmic steps and methods of yoga trainer thereafter. Women practicing breathing in the yoga room recalled that yoga breathing exercises have helped inhaling fresh good air into the body enabling them to fully burn the energy. Besides, in-depth breathing also helps in terms of concentration. *"We relearned how to breathe and the benefits gained*

*unconsciously are burning calories, driving in the oxygen through a long deep breath, and forming concentration".*

### **Practicing yoga's Asana postures**

The yoga posture is called Asana posture. While practicing Asana, yoga trainer would instruct the setting of inhalation and exhalation and inform the benefits of practicing each Asana posture. Adjusting Asana positions often concerns the principle of twisting, stretching, bending, curving, and extending various parts of the body. It helps the body adjust the flexibility and create strength of organs and balance by practicing Asana postures on both the left and right side. During the training, yoga trainer would demonstrate various yoga or Asana postures for the participants to observe and follow. These Asana postures seemed very simple for the trainer to perform, but most of the new yoga members would not be able to set the yoga positions as the trainer. For some difficult yoga postures, after the demonstrations and informing the participants how to make the postures, the trainer would spend some times checking each row, review the participants' postures and help them adjust their postures to the correct position.

For yoga practice, this youth center regularly provides the training of Asana postures to the participants. These practiced Asana postures are often called by the trainers implying animals or various items found in nature. This is in order that the practitioners could imagine and try to imitate such postures easily. Such imitations include the posture of a butterfly, a dog looking down, a pigeon, a cat, a mermaid, a baby, a solar system, and etc. The starting posture for yoga practice would be the butterfly posture by leaning the body and rotating the leg outward and twisting by using the hip joints to stretch out the muscles of the groins. The solar system posture supports the balance of the body. It is actually a Sawasdee posture (Thai greeting) with both palms pressed together in a prayer-like fashion and standing on one leg like a tree. The pigeon posture supports in stretching the foldable joints and body. The dog looking down posture is a posture which the participants in the class often cite that this posture helps driving blood nourishing the face creating rosy complexion as it is in a somersault position with the toes raising up high and the face turning down below to the ground. The mermaid posture is almost the last posture before the end of the

training. In this posture, the participants had to lie down and twisted both legs together in a locked position with twisting of the body to the left and right against the body line, imitating a mermaid.

In practicing yoga and doing some Asana postures, there are various positions similar to gymnastic exercises. Doing Asana postures, therefore, requires a period of times for the body to fine-tune with flexibility. Some of the Asana postures could make most women feel that they could conveniently perform such postures when they were young, but the postures become harder when they grow older. Experienced members of the yoga class could adjust themselves to various postures better than the newcomers who did not have any experience in performing Asana postures. In the class, the new members who could not follow the instruction of the trainer properly were often assisted and advised by the more experienced ones in the class to set their postures correctly.

#### **Network of relationships within the yoga class**

Each yoga class lasted about one hour. After the class before returning home, sometimes it was often observed by the researcher that some women joining the class still gathered to discuss in several small groups of people who know each other. Topics of discussion usually concern simple self care practices such as eating foods that help health care before entering a golden age.

Some women practicing yoga like Khun Pom brought a Thai herbal drink “fingerroot juice” prepared for drinking during the yoga training break. The researcher asked her why she drank this juice and was responded that this herbal drink helps adjust the hormones in the pre-menopausal period. In addition, the researcher observed that she also flourished the qualities of this herbal drink to her familiar friends in the yoga class and advised them to try to prepare and drink this herbal drink to adjust the hormones by themselves.

Some women prepared other kinds of herbal drinks such as butterfly pea juice and gave to the yoga trainers to express their gratitudes and appreciation toward their trainers. The butterfly pea drink was claimed to help the flow of blood tubes and result positively for the body from preventing gray hair and anti-Alzheimer symptom. These are the qualifications of health protection, anti-aging, and reducing the risk of

future sickness. The other groups were seen talking about skin care and the use of the skin care cream product for good looking. Moreover, some women after the class would invite their acquainted friends in the yoga class to go shopping at a large weekend flea market selling various kinds of goods near the youth center.

After the yoga class, most women would return home quickly because during weekend everybody wants to return home for their personal matters. The researcher observed that some women who joined the yoga class would not return home immediately, but carried on with the fitness exercise at the youth center. Some women only practiced yoga, but some practiced multiple exercises. Some women, such as Khun Oh, would travel to other centers nearby to do other types of exercise such as dancing. This is sample of fixing an exercise schedule during the weekend in a day to the fullest.

Practicing yoga at the youth center, besides enjoying the yoga, women also had the opportunity to meet other women in the same age range, making it a place for women to get to know more friends and the opportunity to create intimacy and find new friends to meet, discuss personal matters and matters relating to the health of women approaching old age and self-care in the daily life. Some of them enhanced the intimacy and became friends who gather together for other activities at leisure.

## **4.2 Context of general information of research participants**

The researcher visited Siripattana Youth Center to join the yoga class and found 4 research participants together with pursuing of 5 research participants through Snowball technique from friend networks totaling 9 people.

### **4.2.1 Khun Pom: Striving and dedication for exercises**

Khun Pom, a Thai woman at the age of 40-year-old, married and staying with her family with 2 sons. The elder one is in a teen age studying at a senior high school level, whereas the younger one (approximately 9 years old) is studying at an elementary school. She graduated from high school. Although she had a chance to study at an open university, but did not finish the degree as she got married first. She

grew up in Bangkok living in a townhouse in a vicinity area. Currently she is a housewife. Her husband works as a mechanic and the only breadwinner of the family.

Prior to getting serious exercise, she recognized that her body has shown some signs of aging symptoms such as getting obesity and exhausted much easier than when she was younger. This also includes physical deterioration such as having wrinkles, and etc. She said while she got pregnant of her youngest child, she also had latent diabetes and anemia. The result from a blood donation allowed her to realize that her blood concentrations were less than a normal level. These symptoms occurred and forced her to seek regular medical assistance with doctor's recommendation to do more exercises. "Physically, first of all ... How to say ... something like the metabolism system or so. I feel that whatever I eat, I get obesity so easily. That's number one. Number two, I get exhausted easily unlike before. I've never done any exercise, never looked after myself, and get shabby...well...all kinds...wrinkles and so on...like both internal and external combined. I can feel it, especially from inside, in terms of health...well various diseases will be there".

She was trying to find a place to exercise and take care of herself body starting with aerobics at the public playgrounds in the neighborhood, but still not recovered. She still had various signs of aging and deterioration. Later when she found the exercise place here at Siripatana youth center (Alias) around 3 years back, she decided to fitness to strengthen her body, especially the heart and blood pressure. The doctor often explained to her the mechanism of blood circulation which would help alleviate the signs of aging and deterioration of her physical condition. When Siripatana youth center (Alias) opened the yoga class, she then had the interest in practicing yoga. To her, aerobics did not alleviate the occurring aging signs such as figure and shape. Therefore, she subsequently stopped doing aerobics. Finally She felt that doing fitness exercises and yoga are the effective approaches with obvious body improvement.

In the past, before she started to exercise regularly, people normally greeted her as "PEE" or elder sister. This made her feel that her physical appearance, particularly the external facial image, looked older than her real age. Her closed friend was consoling her that she might look older than usual probably because of the glasses she was wearing giving her hesitation whether it was due to face or wearing

glasses that made her look old. She questioned herself whether all these various symptoms such as paleness, feeling numb at the fingertips, and hair falls were the cause of her old looking face.

"... I met someone who did not look familiar, they called me big sister making me feel...hey...I did not mean the one who just came...It's actually a long time ago...I felt like "Gosh,why is it so?"and looked at myself in a mirror and also when I looked at my photographs...well...is it because of this disease? It's possible though. Or may be because of this disease...So I asked the doctor, and he said yes, blood circulation is very important for women..."

"At that time, almost 40 years old, no, never had any problem with grey hairs before, never. But I got hesitated whether it was because of the face itself or the glasses I wore. Some friends tried to console me by saying it is actually because of the glasses..."why don't you try the contact lenses", they said. I was like...What, I am not that bad! "

After regular exercises, Pom by chance met an old friend, an old school friend, who drove by and could not recognize her."Can't remember you, what have you done?". A colleague and former boss also said that she looked much better than before and persuaded her to return to work together again. In addition, she said lately there were some men showing their interest in her when she wandered here and there.

She said that women need to pay attention on self-care. Through her negative experiences of the previous family, she recalled that her mother, as gardener, did not take care of herself well, "neglecting self care", leading to family break down. The decision to exercise regularly was a will to take good care of herself as she did not want her husband to cheat on her and did not want to be a burden to the member of the family when she grew old. She thought that she would rather waste time taking care of herself than having to rely on doctors, which is both time consuming and cost bearing. After 3 years of regular exercise, currently she doesn't have any symptom of disease that needs regular medical cures. However, she still goes through annual medical check up to realize that doing exercises results positively in the physical appearance and external image which have changed positively, much better than previously with no exercise at all. This improvement also made a positive impact to her family, creating charm and charisma to attract her husband as well as the opposite sex.

#### **4.2.2 Khun Oh: Exercises unleash to the world outside**

Khun Oh, A Thai woman at the age of 54, is working at a syndicate factory of her brother. She got married since she was 32 with two sons, the eldest one graduated, studying abroad, the younger one living with her . Her brother owned a syndicate business and silkscreen factory.

Khun Oh realized the signs of physical aberrant from a suggestion of a health care officer while she was donating blood. That was the beginning of her recognition to pay attention to the body and the risks of potential problems in the future. Therefore, she sought for a place to exercise and found an area for aerobics exercise close to her house. That was about 10 years ago. She did well in aerobics that the aerobics instructor sent her on behalf of her district as a representative in an aerobics presenter competition. She won the trophy for her district and was regularly invited as an aerobics instructor for various public sport playgrounds. Therefore, she then knew many public sport playgrounds and began to do sports at Saeng Arun Youth Center (Alias) located close to her house. Over there, a dance class was provided giving her the chance to play this sport. She also did well in dancing and finally became a representative of her district in a dance competition. Again, she won the title and the glory for her husband and herself.

Dancing sport gave her the chance to know more friends, both male and female, and get into the social events, meetings and parties. This has improved her social status with new friends from various professionals and helped her gain experiences to prepare herself prior to becoming an elderly. "Once I started doing exercises, things also got better. Dancing and hanging out. Gain experiences of social life and parties". A few years back, she saw a notice signboard at Siripattana Youth Center (Alias) about the yoga class. For that reason, she became a member of this youth center as well. She often spent her time on Saturday or Sunday doing various kinds of exercises. In the morning she played yoga at Siripattana Youth Center (Alias), and then proceeded to dancing at Saeng Arun Youth Center (Alias) closed by. She described that practicing yoga and dancing obviously affects her physical appearance. She was in even a better shape than when she was young. When she was a teenager, she had a straight figure, but at present she is in a much tangible good-looking figure which made her husband and herself so proud in this improved appearance.

Additionally, with her talents and being a representative as the presenter of both dancing and aerobics competitions, she had various opportunities to make new friends as in her daily life, besides exercising, she often spent most of her times for her family business at home which is a commercial factory home.

#### **4.2.3 Khun Maew: A leading pioneer of sport exercises**

Khun Maew, at the age of 58, single, graduated with a bachelor's degree, was born a rural person with her hometown outside Bangkok. She later moved to Bangkok to study at a school near her father's workplace since her secondary school till she graduated from a teacher institute. A year after graduation, she became a teacher of a governmental school teaching at an elementary school level from 1976 – 2012, then got retired early prior to actual retirement age. She lives alone in a townhouse closed to the school she has taught in the area where Siripattana Youth Center is located. On weekends, when she has free time, she would visit her mother in another vicinity province.

She had the opportunity to take care of herself by exercises since her young age. Right after graduation from the teacher institute, she was assigned by the school to teach physical education subject. Later, she was given the opportunity from the school to attend a training of sport leader teacher course. After training with a certificate, she persuaded her teacher friends and acquaintances in the neighborhood to start doing exercises in a small group of around 5-6 people at the school in the evening. She was an aerobics instructor, but after a while, the management of the school did not allow them to do the activity inside the school, so they had to find a new place nearby. The new venue was a secondary school closed by. So they did aerobics exercise everyday in the evening and paid for the space rental charge to the school. Those who joined the activity also paid the tutorial fee for her on a monthly basis amounting around 3,000 THB. Later, a subdistrict administrative organization requested her to be an aerobics instructor for the village on Saturday and Sunday. During the initial period, many people were interested in exercise, but there was no public playground. She received the monthly fee of 5,000 THB for giving instructions at both places.

Later on, due to time limitation unabling her to find a new aerobic music track, she quitted the aerobics instructor job. She said, at that time, there were more new instructors. Those new instructors focused on modern dance musics and did not enjoy her aerobics steps. As she did not have enough time to select the songs, and had to complete her academic papers, attend the school development meetings, and join various social duties, not allowing her to give regular aerobics instruction, she then decided to quit. But she has never stopped exercising. Currently, she is just an aerobics player at a sport playground of a small community located not so far from her townhouse. She practiced aerobics every evening and joined the yoga class on Saturday and Sunday at this youth center.

She was always concentrated in exercise from young age to the present. At present she does aerobics everyday and yoga on Saturday and Sunday. Before joining the yoga class at the youth center, she used to do yoga at local health center. She participated in a research project on yoga. The project announced on the search for yoga players who could practice yoga at no cost for 10 hours. Participants had to be weighed before and after doing yoga. At the first time when she joined this yoga research project, she felt that her flexibility was weak. However, by observing others, she found that she could still do better than others who could not follow the trainer properly. This was also because the trainer always asked the others to look at her postures as the example. After joining the research project, she felt that yoga practice has a good and positive impact to strengthen her muscles and help concentration. When she knew that Siripattana Youth Center (Alias) which is located closed to her house just opened a yoga class, she decided to join the class and practiced yoga here for almost 3 years. She described the feeling she has now when she practiced yoga that “they wanted me to practice yoga, in the past I’ve never liked it as I preferred aerobics. At least you could dance when doing aerobics.”

She described various methods she used to improve her appearances. She used to take food supplementary products, but just 1 set and quitted as she felt that they are not worth. “Food supplement is a waste of money. I know what to eat, except if I did not do it. I am not that valueless. My body is still not that deficient...Didn’t want to spend money on that.” She cited on cosmetic usage. She believed that cosmetics are essential. Brand is not the concern; she could just buy them from any

store. As for the use of cosmetics to reduce wrinkles, she just started using them regularly. She used a cosmetic from Japan, a form of collagen. She was suggested and bought it from her former student who is a beautician and a distribution agent. After using for 1 month a friend asked her the secret, so she began to sell it and get some commissions from this prepaid business. Besides, she also gained more knowledge of other treatment methods from her acquaintances at the aerobics ground such as using herbs like star apple juice and turmeric to tighten the skin pores. But she did not use them regularly, only once in a while.

She spent her daily life after early retirement without doing any job. The reason why she decided to retire early was because in the past she has worked very hard dedicated to teaching, accomplishing academic works to get promoted. She felt that is not right and not fair. Somebody who did not work so hard, but knew how to make good academic paper, got well paid for academic position stipends. So, she decided to quit before her actual retirement age and believed that it was worth to gain extra money fixing her house after the big flood and achieving extra time for leisure and religious purpose in India, spending a vacation abroad in Europe, and making many other groups of new friends.

#### **4.2.4 Khun Nong: Constructs life as a high- social class woman**

Khun Nong, A Thai woman at the age of 54, single, does not work. She spends from her financial interests and was taken care of by her brother. She graduated from high school. Her family is Chinese descent living in a townhouse with her brother who owned a factory business. She quitted her office job as construction equipment sales for 12 years. After quitting the job, she spent her free time doing handicrafts and taught crafts for woman groups in super markets.

After resignation, her life was not obligated, not having to take care of anyone in her family and no financial problem. Her life was not suffering from any monetary liability or personal family issues. She therefore had a great emotional state of mind. Her routine obligation was to create knitting work at home, go to the mall, and be a handicraft teacher once in a while. During her free time, she normally tended to find some books on health to read because her house is located near a public library. She could walk there back and forth. The knowledge gained from reading books and

magazines gave her a practical knowledge to live as in the magazines such as food selection and personal conducts that result positively for health and body.

Khun Nong recalled that two years ago she had a dental treatment and found that she had a slight irregularity of blood pressure. She then thought that the older you are, the more risks for having diseases. She began to pay more attention to self care and tried to find a place to exercise. She was advised by a retired teacher known within the woman group joining the handicraft class in the local department store to exercise at Siripattana Youth Center (Alias). She would then visit this youth center for her fitness every morning in the weekdays and attend the yoga class on Saturday and Sunday.

She practiced various types of exercise. After doing yoga and fitness, the obvious consequence was her young appearance even when she approached the age of 50s. Many people would greet her and admire her young appearance. She thought that if she had not exercise, she would look much older. "The result is obvious. Facial appearance...well...looks younger, not old at all. Supposed, at the age of almost 60, never attended any social event, no exercise...well I would be very old by now. Actually I am now a grandmother, but the people I met still say not at all". She believed that coming to exercise resulted in good shape and slim body. "Today, my figure is firmed. Exercise makes your body fit and not loose. If you don't exercise, even if you get thinner, it will not look pretty, it will rather be loose and baggy."

Khun Nong liked to spend her life without creating any stress to her own self and tried to find a way to live happily and avoid moody feeling. She often chose to spend her life joyfully resulting in good health. Having good mood filled with happiness would make the physical appearance looks young. She received some knowledge on personal health care from women magazines that she regularly read such as "Cheewajit" and Kwan Ruen" and practiced them in the real life.

Khun Nong had created a lifestyle starting from eating, living, taking a break and sleeping. In her leisure time, she would choose to eat nontoxic food and vegetable, find various other ways of exercise, and enjoy the hobby of handicrafts to relax and well concentrate, and etc.

In addition to fitness, exercise and yoga, Khun Nong informed the researcher that she was also interested in new kinds of exercise. She bought a CD

teaching Pilates which is an exercise that is becoming trendy and available in various fitness centers. There are some celebrities practicing this sport and set a sample for this exercise. However, she admitted that she did not have enough time to seriously practice this sport. From an unofficial discussion, Khun Nong told the researcher that she was lucky to know about this youth center from a retired teacher allowing her the opportunity to exercise and do yoga without having to pay expensive costs comparing to joining the private fitness center in big shopping malls. Besides allowing her to take good care of the body for good appearance having slender feminine shape, yoga also helped her become like people with a high social status.

#### **4.2.5 Khun Jin: Eat Food supplement for wellness**

Khun Jin, A Thai woman at the age 52, single, not married, is working for a family syndicate business and also managing a direct-sales team selling cosmetics and popular dietary supplement brands in Thailand. She is a single daughter of a family of Chinese descent. She lives with her mother in a large extended family. All her older and younger brothers are married having many kids. Khun Jin has many nephews at various ages from teenage studying at the university level and small children.

The deterioration symptom of her body requires treatments and rehab in a hospital. She had bone adjustment and while taking a rehab she had a chance to read some books given by her goodwill visitors. She got impressed by those books about the body care and therefore started to take food supplement against deterioration and live properly as per the degenerative conditions suffering by her body.

She took the food supplement of a direct sales company in Thailand and recalled the choice of food supplement from this direct sales company she used to earn as a professional before making serious income. She is currently a part of the management team of this business providing her the opportunity to learn and take some training courses on the products including cosmetics and Vitamins. Sometimes she also acted as a speaker and lecturer. She ate two doubly supplements than others taking 12 kinds of food supplement daily, which specially support bone maintenance particularly the cartilage associated with the deterioration. This was for the purpose of maintaining the symptoms of degenerative bone she had so bad that she couldn't even walk.

As for her family life, daily routines, and leisure activities, she did not bear the home burden and kitchen works as there are employees from Northeastern province working with her family for more than 17 years. Khun Jin loved her nephews and children. At her free time she often liked to hang out with her family and the nephews and habitually posted group pictures of aunty and nephews on Facebook. Khun Jin said we should act like a friend to our nephews, not a fussy mother, and get along with them at any age. In her free time, Khun Jin would join the direct-sales team to travel and do some volunteer activities such as taking care of the youth religious camps and hosting lunch for the elderly in hospitals. When she joined the volunteer activity as a mentor in the youth religious camp, the children would love her like their own parents. She also mentioned that she used 3 principles for her way of life, that is, food , fresh air and emotion. To make yourself healthier, we should control our emotion not to lose temper for too long and try to join volunteer activities particularly in a Buddhist camp where you would have more chances to be with children. You should also avoid eating wasteful food such as deep fried items and try to escape for a trip to enjoy fresh air like at Wang Nam Kaew resorts.

Food supplement resulted in both her external appearance and her lifestyle on the direct sales business and social life. Eating food supplement made her look young without any wrinkle. She requested the researcher to stare at her face and asked, “Can you see? There is no wrinkle at all”. At an alumni social party, she did not look older than those in the same age. In some situations, she was recognized by strangers whom she just met with trust and confidence through her good and trustworthy appearance.

#### **4.2.6 Khun Nadia: Image is the window to success**

Khun Nadia , A Thai woman at the age of 38, married, living with 3 teenage sons, Khun Nadia used to live abroad since the age of 15. Her mother ran a Thai restaurant overseas so she had to travel back and forth. After getting married and having a family in Thailand, she owned an upscale restaurant as equivalent to 5-star level.

Khun Nadia recalled her childhood life with great influence from the family and school persuading her to take care of her body constantly since the teenager stage till date at the older age. At the young age, she used to join a beauty contest and

therefore believed that being a woman one should pay attention to self care since the young age. If you wait until you get old, then it would be difficult to gain back the good looking appearance even with a beauty surgical solution which would not be so effective. "Just let it loose for a short while...It's so quick. When you get old, you are definitely old. It's so difficult to return to the young stage. By the time you realized that you have never taken care of yourself, you would already be old."

As a daily routine, she often went to hair salon almost every day for a haircare before going to look after her 5-star restaurant which opens in the evening. At the one-stop beauty salon, she would often be prettified to create good image before going to run the restaurant business.

At present, she also choose to purchase almost all kinds of products that support skin care and health care to prevent aging such as cosmetics, dietary supplements, healthy drinks, facial self massage equipment from the direct sales company in a full set of anti-aging products in particular. Some of the products were not used till completely emptied, but still she kept purchasing new ones regularly. " first priority is this crème, obvious results. The Stem Cell Whitening of Na Skin brand. (alias) Also the Age Lock program, which takes only 10-15 minutes to complete...still no time to use it though. Already bought it anyway, but only do it once every 1-2 months. I mean, instead of using the purchased product till the end, but once there is a new promotion, I would buy it and keep them in stock. Anyway, now I feel that I need to do something with my face. I must see the doctor. That's the quickest way and most convenient."

She has reviewed various self-care methods ranging from simple walking up the stairs both at home and the restaurant which is a 7 storey building. Anyway, she could not do it on a regular basis. This also included the use of skin care cosmetic products, consuming vitamin supplements, buying skin care, anti-wrinkle and aging sign equipments from an international direct-sales company known when she was in America. Besides, it also involved using medical technology for skin care and facial appearance constantly. In this regard, the doctor would personally call to make appointments regularly. At the clinic, the doctor advised her to do Botox injections but she still refused to do so due to her fears of side-effects. Khun Nadia would prefer to choose a less dangerous method such as using other skin and facial care technologies of which she

has already searched for the detailed information to make sure that there is harmless. This included collagen injections, injections of natural extract substances, and etc. She believed the best method is to use the services at a medical clinic, but in some cases she also did not do as per the doctor's recommendation such as the Botox injection.

#### **4.2.7 Khun Luk: Beauty and image of an idol, looking younger than actual age**

Khun Luk, A Thai woman at the age of 42, originally from a rural province, former family doing commercial business with good financial status, never worked in an office. She graduated with a Bachelor's degree and is married. Her husband worked as a police officer holding a high ranked position. She has 2 teenage sons. She established a security business with her husband after getting married and did not have to be in her office all the time.

When the researcher met Khun Luk for the first time, it was a first impression. The external appearance of Khun Luk, both facial and figure, seemed like a working woman at the age between 20-30 years old. She had her facial make-up beautifully like a star or a model in a fashion magazine. She dressed up well with modern style fashion in black color and wore a lagging showing her slim figure with a hair style like a top celebrity. The researcher admired her and started our conversation about Khun Luk's self care. She began the story that she normally pays attention to herself and daily living such as food and sufficient rest. "Actually I am a fastidious person. My friends always say that I basically take care of myself a lot".

She described that she used some cosmetics for the make up to match with her outfits. This is the basic of how to look younger. As per the medical treatment technologies, she only used them in some occasions, but was not addicted to it. She did not want to be old, so she has the passion of serious self care and chose the safest ways using modern medical treatment technology. But she did not want to use surgical medical technology. "I don't want to be old and try to take care of myself as much as possible. But things could happen any time, so I also tried to study the information for the safest ways. Some medical evolutions may be required sometimes, but no surgery or sewing please..." She used the facial and body make ups with cosmetics and fashion, and occasionally used medical technology. "Make up only. Today I want to

have this style of face, this kind of eye-brows, eyes like that. I feel that everyone could build their self-confidence through their faces and shapes. Therefore, the face is very important comparing when you have make up and do not have. Make up could build the self-confidence for me.”

Make-up and dressing up with cosmetics and fashion made her overall appearances look like celebrities. She was always attractive whenever she joined a social event. People always stared at her seriously that she sometimes had to ask those people for the reasons. There were both answers and questions from other people, making her sense that everyone feels good about her. "Everyone feels good to me...are you a star? Which channel do I play for? That's about how they asked me..."

"I am glad to feel very strongly confident with myself. So, every day we should not indulge ourselves. Every day we have to take care of ourselves at best. It doesn't matter what the day is. Some days I got home very late...like can I go straight to bed? 1 am, 2 am, went to an event with my husband. But your heart says no. If you want to look good, you really must seriously be in order.”

Khun Luk looked at herself that her beauty image could be an idol. She looks younger than her actual age attracting people surrounding her. Various friends came for advices. She shared the ideas without covering anything. That even made the friends love her more. “I take good care of myself and share this experience with people around me. So, they all love me... Yes, I told them all, even about the fashion.”

#### **4.2.8 Khun Nuan: Medical technology is the final answer**

Khun Nuan, a Thai woman at the age of 52, single, lives in a hospital dormitory. She came from another province outside Bangkok but has been living in Bangkok for about 32 years. She graduated with a Master's degree. During the weekend she would visit her parents who resided in a vicinity area. She works as a nurse holding a supervisor position. She is a bit portly, has a fair skin, and a working woman personality.

Khun Nuan recalled her childhood and teenage, being often praised as a good-looking person. She, however, did not take care of her skin and body. Entering the working age, she was often worn by her sister to pay more attention to skin care. But she did not care, as her career that did not require facial make up. But at the age

above fifty, she had seen some signs of aging which became her weak point. She had to see a surgery doctor in a hospital. That was the beginning of her involvement in anti-aging care and treatment regularly with medical technology. The aging sign which created her weak point was to have bags under the eyes which could not be cured by a surgery. Therefore, she turned to laser technique at a one-stop beauty salon using the laser to repair the bags under the eyes and erase the sagging wrinkles. Somehow, it lasted temporarily only around 2 weeks to 1 month. At this international branded beauty institute, it was not the doctor who provides the treatment, but the trained nurses using the equipments. At this institute, a machine was used to examine Khun Nuan's skins which indicated that she had a "dry skin" problem which needs a skin care. Khun Nuan therefore invested in the purchase of a treatment course worth over a hundred thousand Baht comprising of skin nourishing, facial lifting, and reducing wrinkles from bags under the eyes. She bought each course periodically with a sales person from the institute offering the courses with regular calls to check if she has any other concern of the body, persuading and presenting the products and available treatment courses.

Later, Khun Nuan bought another course for skin and facial nourishment in a medical clinic with doctors to provide the treatment. Overhere, she met a doctor who worked at a popular governmental hospital in Thailand. She felt much more confident in skin and facial nourishment here than at the international beauty institute. At the clinic, the doctor persuaded her to do a Botox injection. She was shown some photographs of the doctor, relatives and people in his family who have gone through the Botox injections giving her the confidence in the safety and efficiency after use. So, she decided to repeat the injection. Even though she has learnt that Botox injection is dangerous, but the doctor at this clinic had assured her about the safety and quality of the injected Botox substance. The doctor claimed that the danger of the product could be assumed from its cheap cost and where it was made. If it was made in Asia, it would be cheap, but more risky in safety concern. "The danger ones are quite cheap, the expensive ones are not dangerous," the doctor who persuaded her to do the Botox injection cited.

After the Botox injection she often asked about the result from her closed acquaintances such as younger colleagues to assess the effects of Botox injection, "at

the first place I feel pity for the money for only one injection, both Botox and filler, for over a hundred thousand Baht, with no obvious result at all. But this time, just a few months back...the sales in charge of our case has already called me. I asked my colleague sitting next to me, and was responded that there is no obvious result. What a pity, not worth spending. No change. Till after 2 weeks from the injection date, I felt much relieved. At the beginning, I felt so pity for the money. It was really hurt during the injection, but I could stand it. Never knew that it was going to be so much painful.”

Subsequent to Botox injection, Khun Nuan often asked people around like her underlings at the workplace. From the conversation, she said she never obscured when she did the Botox injection. She would ask about the result from the nurses at the workplace. She thought that skin and facial care have positive impacts for her career. Her job as health care provider has to do with meeting lots of people and communities. She said fellows in the communities liked her. She said questioningly that she might have a character of a high social status madam, good looking and friendly. The people there therefore liked her."It's difficult to explain..well...I understand that it could be because I am a friendly person. Visiting a community, my good personality would make everyone knows me. I may be outstanding, I think. Or may be it is because I am impressive. You may be doubtful how everyone in the community would like me. But I think and believe that, yes, because of my friendliness...as I am a nurse..."

Khun Nuan still used the method of anti-aging regularly through technologies with regular appointments and treatment using new technologies from medical clinic such as the non-surgery facial lift, so called Ulthera which is the use of high frequency sound-wave combining with a Thermage technique. She explained the feeling during the treatment that was so painful like being cut by a knife repeatedly. She therefore decided not to use this method again. This method has a parallel technology. Though not so painful, but you would feel the heat throughout the face like your face is being burnt. You must keep telling the doctor and the doctor would stop once in a while and just said, it's alright.

Khun Nuan recalled various methods from her own experiences that she never thought that she would need to use the medical technology body treatment method that is so painful. But when she got older with facial wrinkles like this, she

thought it is necessary to use this painful technology. If not, she would look even older with more wrinkles. Additionally, she also told about the influential person who supported her decision against aging which was her younger boyfriend. But she would not reveal what kind of anti-aging technology she used with her boyfriend. She said, in the past she felt that the medical technology like Botox and filler injection was a satisfactory method for her. She admitted that even though she used various methods of buying self care products and services, but she gave the importance to the constant skin and facial nourishing medical technologies conducted by a doctor and anti-aging treatments.

#### **4.2.9 Khun Fern: Never ever stop using anti-aging medical technology**

Khun Fern, A Thai woman at the age of 40, originally from other province, is working as a secretary for a foreign company. Her extra job is an English tutor. She graduated abroad with a master's degree. She is married with 1 son living in a townhouse.

Khun Fern recalled her youth and working age with various skin problems. Therefore, she had to go to a medical clinic. Overthere there were some sales staff selling skin care courses making her come and use the services of this medical clinic constantly. She paid high attention to skin care and her external appearance in the past many years. At the medical clinic, there will be a staff persuading and selling skin care courses using anti-aging medical technologies such as laser treatment, Botox and filler injection. Besides, she is always a pioneer in using latest version of medical technologies not broadly introduced in facial youthful treatments such as stem cell injection.

She recalled her demands for medical technology use. Sometimes, even when she has a duty to go up-country, she could visit an unknown medical clinic. If she sees that the clinic provides anti-aging medical technology and wants to use the service, she unquestionably will. She has used various types of medical technologies constantly and continuously. She has a thought that even though using medical technology would be painful, but it is necessary in the same way as other health care matters like dentistry.

She recently underwent the latest advanced medical technology lifting up the sagging face without surgery. She suffered a side effect from the treatment, even

though the doctor has persuaded her to be confident and guaranteed for no side effects from this operation. However, this latest treatment with the new technology resulted in less than 50% from her prior expectation. She also suffered side-effects of traumatic wounds and facial cyanosis from the operation. She insisted that she will never use this kind of technology again, but she will still undergo other medical technologies such as Botox and filler injections. She thought that she would carry on using the medical technologies non-stop. "Never enough, I want to get more and better. I am not satisfied at this point, but also realize that I should do a bit less". Medical technology is a method with a more obvious result than other kinds of body management.

## **Part 2 Senses of body- self and practices of anti-aging body management**

### **4.3 Women's Senses of Body-Self**

The research participants shared various experiences about their senses of body-self in different contexts of life. These women, whose were in their middle age, had their bodies changed according to their age from the natural organic biological aging process causing both external and internal aging signs. External aging signs included skin, faces, shapes, which were different from those of young people. Internal aging signs included functions of internal organs and physiological mechanisms of the body. Some of the women perceived and admitted their aging of the body, while the others refused to do so.

From the conversation with the 9 research participants who shared experiences about their senses of body- self occurring during the transition stage, resulting in a wide variety of aspects as follows:

#### **4.3.1 Subjective experiences : Negative to aging**

##### **4.3.1.1 Senses of Body- Self as Reckless-No Body Control or Self Care**

Women tend to value themselves from external image and are more interested in taking care of the image than men from social expectation. Aging is the opposite of rejuvenation of young people. Women not only look at their own body

image, but they also stare those of other women. Aging signs indicate lack of self-care of both health and beauty.

Women told about their feelings. Khun Nuan (alias), a 52 years old woman, told the researcher that she had never thought to clearly have such wrinkles of aging in her age of five, especially the sagging ones like bags under the eyes. In her youth, people often appreciated her skin and appearance of good looking. Although her family members like her elder sister tried to suggest her to take care of herself by using cosmetics in maintaining in advance, she did not follow the suggestion to use cosmetics in taking care of her body skin and let it be naturally. When wrinkles occurred, she felt that she was careless. In the care of Khun Nadia (alias), she told that women need to take care of themselves. If any women did not take care of themselves, they would never be able to restore their original conditions.

*"Wrinkles are caused by negligence. Now I have understood why children at present take care of themselves from their young age. In the past, I did not care. Perhaps it was because I had good skin. Most people thought I looked good, but I did not care about that. I remember when my elder sister always warned me."* (Khun Nuan, 52 years old, a research participant)

*"If a woman does not take care of herself, she will become old very fast. If we become old, it will be very difficult to get back. Some women hardly notice, without taking care of themselves, that they have already become old. "* (Khun Nadia, 38 years old, a research participant)

#### **4.3.1.2 Senses of Body -Self as Interiority Complexes and worries**

Most women often have a feeling inside against aging signs which happen to the body. Some aging signs on the body can be covered with no difficulty. But some cannot easily be repaired, covered or removed. The aging signs women perceive occurring to their body cause some mental feelings which are an inferiority Complexes and worries.

Khun Nuan(alias) told that she felt she had an inferiority complex with the aging signs occurring to the body, especially the bags (sagging) under the eyes. She did not want anybody to see them. Bags under the eyes were her

inferiority complex and anxiety which were often brought to consult and find a way to cure. Khun Luk told about her feeling worried and unconfident. Aging signs were wrinkles that began to happen from the habit of frowning. In addition, she was also concerned she had excessive fat around the upper arms making her unable to dress with some fashionable clothes, such as sleeveless clothes. That was because the defects, which were excessive fat, would be seen when participating to social events. Some women like Khun Jin had abdominal excessive fat to be a protruding belly. She said that was like wearing a donut belly ring, and wanted to remove it from her body.

*"The reason I need to see a doctor ... I would say that what I don't like most on my face is that I have so many bags under my eyes, which is truly my inferiority complex." (Khun Nuan, 52 years old, a research participant )*

*"What I am worried about is that when taking a photo, my arms are the first things to be seen. I can't completely hide them. Moreover, I like wearing short sleeves, sleeveless, vests or something like that. Sometimes, I like wearing a T-shirt. I don't want my arms to look big." (Khun Lak, 42 years old, a research participant )*

*"What I worry about are my belly and weight, because my metabolism is not like that of young people. I eat a little, but am easy to get fat. In the past, I ate very much--food, sweets, everything, etc.--, but I didn't feel I was fat. I really indulged my mouth. I worry only about "the rubber ring". I want to get rid of my rubber ring. I have a lot of belly." (Khun Jin, 50 years old, a research participant)*

#### **4.3.1.3 Senses of Body - Self as Changes the Blood and Circulation System**

When women get older and there are some internal and external aging signs, they will feel themselves that it is related to the blood system. The blood system changing can affect aging signs. Women have an understanding in the blood system about residue of waste and the conditions of the blood circulation. The residue in the blood causes the aging signs. The skin with waste residue is often dull and not luminous. For the blood circulation, if it does not work properly, it won't bring blood to different parts of the body efficiently. The internal system will then be

unhealthy. For example, the skin becomes pale and lacks of shine. Therefore, changes in the blood system affect the occurrence of aging signs.

Khun Nong (alias) told that when she was menopausal, the body could not excrete blood out as usually. She must find ways to drive waste out of the blood, such as through sweat or by donating blood. That makes blood circulation adjusted, causing a healthy and glowing skin like a teenager, not looking old.

Khun Pom (alias) told that her external body looks more deteriorated, caused by poor blood circulation, which made blood unable to nourish the face thoroughly, causing the face look older than the actual age. And she believed that donating blood allowed the blood system to be changed and there would be new blood creation, making the skin look better, not old. In case of Khun Oh (alias), she told that when women were menopausal, the internal blood system would changed, causing them in bad mood and frustration, which could negatively affected people nearby like husbands.

*"Donating blood allows blood to be transfused and new blood creation, making the skin healthy and glowing."* (Khun Nong, 54 years old, a research participant)

*"The circulatory system is poor causing the face to look older than the actual age, right? The whole body is then degenerated."* (Khun Pom, 40 years old, a research participant)

*"I am also afraid that in menopause, women are easily frustrated, causing the husband bored. I don't want my husband to get bored with me. I then try everything such as doing exercise by going dancing."* (Khun Oh, 54 years old, a research participant )

The stories about senses of body-self of women about blood circulation are similar to the set of knowledge on anti-aging of biomedicine. For example, medicine on beauty, skin care and face has a series of knowledge about anti-aging, in which hormones are associated with the aging process. Therefore hormones are provided to maintain the body, such as growth hormone. In geriatrics, there is a hormone replacement for women with estrogen deficiency in menopause. So is in applied Thai traditional medicine which has a series of knowledge explaining about the aging process that when the blood system is driven slowly, it is necessary to

stimulate the blood circulation, drive the waste out and purify the blood, causing no waste left to affect the external skin which is glowing and looks not old.

*"When the age is entering the 45-50, some people still feel that they are normal and active. Therefore, they are not willing to enter into such an age. They then use supplement hormones by eating, injecting, etc. according to the formula. Now there are many formulas to make them stay young."* (A male doctor of clinical medicine on beauty, skin care and faces and anti-aging medicine, a key informant)

*"Actually, if we were born in the past, our parents' age, when entering menopause, they would just let it pass, just hot and cold. But if that hormone reduced, some problems would occur, such as aging, wrinkles, skin, emotion and ambition."* (A male doctor of clinical medicine on beauty, skin care and faces and anti-aging medicine, a key informant)

*"There is no mention in the Bible about the age of degeneration. Some books say 32, while some say 30. But I think the average is 30 or above. However, in the textbooks of the Ministry of Public Health state that 32 is the beginning of the old age, from the cellular level, focusing on the wind element. People who have problems with the wind element are those in the old age, for example, frequently faint, dizzy, or something like that. The air element is related to every driving, anything that moves, etc. Nerve impulses are also related to the wind element. It is noticed that when we get older, we will be slower down. Nerve impulses are less. Movement begins to be inconvenient. The flow of blood is driven by the wind element. At the age of 30 or above, into the old age, these systems begin to have problems."* (A female manufacturer of cosmetics products and the owner of an institute of applied Thai traditional medical cosmetics, a key informant)

*"In Thai medicine science, theories about women and women's blood system which causes a radiant always mention about blood purification or something like that. In blood purification, herbs of the sour group and which stimulate blood circulation and drive waste out. So I understand that--my own understand by linking things together--vegetables and fruits with vitamin C have effect on blood purification which then affects the skin."* (A female manufacturer of cosmetics products and the owner of an institute of applied Thai traditional medical cosmetics, a key informant)

#### **4.3.1.4 Senses of Body-Self as Unwanted/Undesired Appearances**

Aging body signs from degeneration by biological processes of women who get older until entering their middle age make the image of this group of women noticeably different from young people, including images, faces, skin and body shapes.

Faces are the organs of the body people usually use to assess the age in social interaction. Faces can indicate ages, such as the faces of children, teenagers, adults, middle-aged and old people. When people get older, aging signs will usually appear naturally and even more obvious when entering the old age. In Thai society, people call wrinkles in different areas with different words making different negative feelings. Wrinkles at the corner of the eyes are call "crow's feet". Wrinkles around the cheeks are call "deep grooves". A sagging chin or neck is called "sagging wattle", that includes the changed shape of the face. In current trends, people value the image of young people who have a firm face, not sagging. New symbols of young faces are created by using the image of the shape of young people as a standard. For example, the face of young people looks like the letter V, while of old people like the letter U. With modern and advanced medical technology, aging women then desire to repair wrinkles, grooves, sagging, shapes and the image of the face.

Skin is an organ that covers the body with most area. Skin can indicate degeneration clearly. There are various conditions of skin with aging signs, such as dull, dry, rough, not moist, far distance of pores, not tightened. Most products, services, culture, populism and services from clinics have created desire for ideal youthful skin, which includes radiant, sparkling with aura, firm, healthy, etc.

Women who get older have the proportion of fat in different parts of the body, such as the torsos, belly, thighs, hips in a large quantity, making the image of the shape of women who get older look different from that of young people. Usually, the shapes of young people found are slim with no fat. The ideal shape of young people most people desire and often mention is tightened, fit and firm.

Many of the research participants told about their feelings. Khun Nadia told that the time after the baby delivering was the beginning she has felt her broken body changed from her youth. When she got older, her external appearance looked sagging according to the gravity, such as the buttocks, belly and breasts. The

important organs became broken and damaged. Her shape was not in the same anymore as in her youth. Khun Luk told that there are wrinkles on her face, especially the forehead, because she often made her face to express suspicion.

"The buttocks are sagging. The face is not tightened. The body has changed. I feel that they follow the gravity. I myself call this "awkward". When I was a girl, I had a long torso, arms and legs. Since I got the first child, my body has gone. I was originally good at eating. When I was pregnant, it increased throughout my body. After my first child had been delivered, it broke. I used much money to cure." (Khun Nadia, 38 years old, a research participant)

*"Despite having 3 children, I have kept doing it. I have never given up. If I had given up, I would have been sodden at first. However, although I have done many things and taken many courses, I still don't look like that when I was young. Look at my buttocks, belly and breasts. My breasts have become sagging. My face ... Around my eyes ... I work until late at night. I can see I wilt. I don't sleep enough."* (Khun Nadia, 38 years old, a research participant )

*"I don't want to have wrinkles. I know I like to raise my eyebrows and make my face to express my suspicion. I notice that there are wrinkles on my forehead."* (Khun Lak, 42 years old, a research participant)

#### **4.3.1.5 Senses of Body- Self as reduction in passion and sexual attractiveness**

Some women told that when they got older, their image and body changed, making them not interesting for their lover or husband anymore. Some middle-aged women told that when entering the age of 40, they were not attractive to the opposite sex anymore. Moreover, some of them told that when they were in menopause, they got frustrated easily, making their husbands bored.

"My husband has made me feel that I am not very good, although I have a lot of self-confidence. (Khun Nadia, 38 years old, a participant)

*"I once said to my friends that in our 40 it would not be so bad to have someone to tease us. Not even dogs did not glance at us like this."* (Khun Pom, 40 years old, a research participant)

*"I am also afraid that in menopause, women are easily frustrated, causing the husband bored. I don't want my husband to get bored with me. I then try everything such as doing exercise by going dancing."* (Khun Oh, 54 years old, a research participant)

### **4.3.2 Subjective experiences: Positive to aging**

#### **4.3.2.1 Senses of Body -Self as the medium of happiness and good -spirit**

Some women like Khun Meow told that she did not feel the aging both internally and externally. Her body was not older or changed much more than that in her young age. People around her like friend teachers often said that her external appearance did not change. Even her outer clothes did not change according to her age. She thought she was usually in good mood, fun and cheerful. That was from her using to be a teacher who liked doing recreation activities, entertaining and being fun with her students. Some women like Khun Nong told that she did not feel anything to change. Her early retirement made her relaxed, happy, not stressed. She made crafts for her favorite hobby. She felt to herself that the body did not change, that she was happy, not stressed with good mood from inside, causing her to look not old.

"I am satisfied with myself that I look good and not very old. I have played sports until now when I am 57-58. Changes called "gold age" did not happen at all. I am myself, cheerful and fresh." (Khun Meow, 58 years old, a participant of case study)

"Others say that I look healthy, not old, happy. I do things with no shyness. I was a teacher doing activities. I was not shy to act out with smiles and active when going for a camp. I lived as ever. I led my students. They liked it." (Khun Meow, 58 years old, a research participant)

Women's body senses are in accordance with those in the series of knowledge on treatment, anti-aging, etc. according to the concepts of anti-aging medicine which view the body and mind more holistic. Doctors give importance to both external and internal anti-aging treatment called "look younger, feel younger". However doctors think that "feel younger" is more sustainable.

"We treat from inside resulting to the outside which becomes more sustainable and stays longer. Skin being good is caused from inside. It stays longer. For example, some people have laser, but got disappointing results. That is because their free radicals or anti-oxidants are not in good conditions. We must adjust from inside, too. That will make the treatment result better. Mostly we use combine treatment." (a male clinical doctor taking care of medicine on beauty and skin, and anti-aging, a key informant )

#### **4.4. Practice of anti-aging body management: various practices of women**

Many women have methods of anti-aging body management with a wide range of practices starting from various simple cares in everyday life such as eating, sleeping, resting, living, and etc. up to the complex ways which create invasive pains from medical technologies in order to become youthfulness

Youthfulness represents a notable feature of body beauty qualification. Women in many societies around the world pay attention to their own body with a link of body beauty to the feminine value. Body beauty of women brings opportunities and recognition from society especially for women who occupy youthfulness. It is once said that youthfulness is the power of women (Calasanti T.M. & Sleevin K.F., 2002, as cited in Karuna Jaisai, 2010). Youthfulness or adolescent is therefore the crown desire of all women who want to maintain their body not to change over time. However, when women get older, the body alters naturally. The youthfulness or adolescent therefore starts to decay. The signs of aging deterioration will replace and apparently appear from the external personal appearances which are different to those in the young age. The youthfulness and adolescent qualifications perceived and assessed from external appearances include the skin, facial and physical appearances. The present society, in particular, emphasizes the values of young people which are the major productive resource of the society. The values of youthfulness and adolescent are therefore encouraged.

The strategy in the field of marketing and advertising of popular culture products often uses the image of a female representative who is successful in life

which is a good-looking young woman who appears in the media especially the women's magazines as they are famous among the women. Women are often interested in reading and getting information from Women's magazines and use the information for their personal imitation and improvement of their physical appearances (Kanchana Kaewthep and Somsuk Hinvimarn, 2008). Women have perceived the perspective images of their ideal representatives who have been accepted by society into the inner sense of body. So there is a sense of being depressed and impaired with their aging bodies and a feeling of being other and non-existence in the society.

Biomedical science has played an important role in the life of the people who believe in medical science as a path of faith and overwhelming to all areas of health care. Medical science becomes influential in the practices of power generating to the body of women constructing a wide range of issues to the women's physical appearances through evolutions of the existence of medical technologies to help resolve dysfunction of the internal organs within the body, the congenital disabilities appearance, and the medical technologies focusing on maintaining and modifying the beauty of the female body as desired. Through the development of knowledge-based expertise in various specific fields such as hormone replacement therapy, skin and facial massage laser treatment, injectable fillers and Botox, cosmetic surgery for face lift, and etc. The definition of youthfulness and adolescent is therefore tied to health as well as the manufacturing of popular culture products in response to the needs of women's desire for beauty creation.

Various anti-aging solutions for a youthful appearance have become the methods for body managements both in terms of health and beauty combined in to a single action against the aging of women. Some women choose the anti-aging methods that focus on external beauty to look youthful. Some focus on anti-aging rejuvenation from within as a matter of internal feeling, mind and emotions. Women have various different options in a wide range of anti-aging body management.

In today's society, the body management methods against aging that make women more youthful include prevention, restrain, treatment and maintaining as well as rehabilitation of aging damage that has already occurred. This includes the methods that women can with their own body such as exercise, yoga, shopping and consuming

food supplement or cosmetic products, as well as the body managements through different fields of expertise and specialist personnel such as beauty salons, massage services, lifting spas, one-stop beauty services, and treatments by medical experts using medical technologies under the direct supervision of a doctor in medical clinic.

According to the conversation with a total of 9 research participants, the experiences, practices, and details of various body management methods have been narratively shared. The researcher divided the practices of body treatment against aging of women into 4 groups including a group of women with a body management method of self practices such as exercise and yoga, a group of women with a body management method of consuming food supplements, a group with combination treatments including selective consumptions of popular culture products and services together with the use of medical technology, and a group that focuses on using medical technology under the supervision of a medical specialist, as follows:

#### **4.4.1. Practice of anti-aging body management by exercise**

Most women who use the anti-aging body management methods of exercise and yoga at the public youth center revealed that they were advised by health care personnel on basic health cares, and some who had the opportunity to donate blood were informed about the health conditions of their body which may slightly deviate from normal such as blood pressure ratio or anemia condition. After being advised, these women therefore got interested in finding a venue for their self care and health precautions typically starting from a public sport playground closed to their houses. This usually involved a late after non aerobic exercise being held at various shopping centers spreading around the communities. Coming to exercise at the public playground also allow them to gain information about various exercise venues in the closed areas. They finally ended up using the services at the public youth center. Some of them were introduced directly by their friend network. The public youth center offers numerous types of exercise such as aerobics, fitness, dancing and yoga. Using the services here allow the women to resolve the signs of aging body occurring to each of them in various different ways. Women at the youth center realized that some signs of aging occurring to each of them when they get older are both external and internal. They got the health information on the risk or an association with various diseases.

Without exercise and health care, one could be affected by sickness in the future. Exercise and yoga are good methods to prevent aging and protect you from illness or simply getting sick. They can also give an impact to your future health, making you healthy and live long.

After body improvement through exercises and yoga, these women often received some compliments for the transformation in their external appearances, the recognition of their external appearances and the changing of their personalities after the exercise and yoga. For example, these women feel agile and energetic. Their external motion and body movement are filled with a sense of inner strength. Also, they can choose and buy new outfits with clothes that are proportional and slimming with their body shapes, and adjust their internal emotions well recognized by the family members like their husband and children. Some have seen a result in affection and passion with sex appeals attracting both their husbands and the people in the opposite sex as well as the ability in building many more relationships with external social networks.

The group of women who focused on body management method by a practice of self care both through exercises and yoga includes the researcher participants consisting of Khun Pom (alias), Khun Oh (alias), and Khun Maew (alias) with the following practices:

**Finding a venue to exercise near home for creating discipline and self-control.**

Khun Pom described that when the body degenerated according to different stages of age, various signs of aging would occur. Therefore, she tried to maintain a stable body and follow the advice from doctors who look after her health treatments by trying to start finding an available venue for exercise that does not charge money. This includes the public sport playgrounds at a shopping center and a community closed to her house which organized an aerobic activity for the public to do in the evening. *“Physical degeneration, nobody likes it for sure. All parts would decay at once as per your ages. But I also try to hold it and maintain as much as my available funds could do.”* From an informal discussion with her, Khun Pom likes to survey and find a venue and change the place to exercise at various public aerobic

sport playgrounds closed to her house. So, she knows many public aerobic playgrounds in her neighborhood.

Doing aerobic exercise at a public sport playground would not possibly change or improve the body conditions. Decay symptoms would still be there and the body would not be slim, still. Finally, she found the youth center around 3-4 years back. At this center, there are numerous kinds of sports available such as aerobics and fitness center. Overhere, she decided to do fitness. And when the youth center offered yoga class, she therefore joined the yoga class and realized that it improved her physical health conditions in a better way than playing aerobics. Finally, she exercised by doing both the fitness in the youth center and constantly practiced yoga as well for nearly 3 years.

From a participatory observation as a member of the yoga class, Khun Pom is a member who practice yoga regularly both on Saturday and Sunday. On the weekdays, she also comes to the youth center and exercises at the fitness center from 10 am to 2 pm on a daily basis, and then picks up her kid from school. Her youngest child is studying at a primary school level.

The youth center is a place where Khun Pom visits as a daily routine of life. She is intimately familiar with the staff within the center and many other people who come and exercise here. Even during the school break, her children are at home so she does not need to leave the house. To come to the youth center, she needs to leave the house for the youth center by a public bus with some difficulties walking in the sun. This caused an internal dispute between the laziness and the thought of diligently coming to the youth center. But the idea of coming to the youth center actively finally overcomes the laziness. So, she is still encouraged to come and exercise at the youth center.

*"I was also encouraged to continue and walk into the sun. I used to ask myself why I need to walk to here. Lying at home is much better. The arguments between the two sides are happening internally. The going one won. Sometimes I went to bed late and the sun is so hot making me want to stay back. But it was not clear. I know that the other side of my mind would say, let's go...just only for 2 hours. The fight gets fiercer during the school holidays when the kids are home. I don't need to leave home. But again the lazy one never wins."*

Khun Oh started to search for a venue for exercise and go for aerobics near her house. When she performed aerobics, she did so well and won the aerobic player presenter contest. Later, she shifted her status from an aerobic player to an instructor allowing her to know many aerobic venues. Each place has different categorization of sports, so she searched for a venue with different types of exercise at various youth centers closed to her house. She then realized that a woman who is approaching menopause age must do various types of sport to get healthy and fine-tune the emotion inside.

**Choose multiple exercises that fit to body conditions and promote both internal and external health.**

Khun Pom told that she started to do aerobic workout at various venues until she found the youth center. Overthere, there are numerous sport activities available such as aerobics, fitness, swimming. As she started to do aerobic workout, her body was not apparently changed, so she tried other fitness equipments at the fitness room, particularly the one that could evaluate the heartbeat function which you need to reach a certain target in order to affect the blood pump to support each part of the body well and make them strong. Later, when Siripattana youth center (alias) opened the yoga class, she also joined the class to enhance the concentration. Working out on various sports allows her to choose the exercises that suit her body conditions and improve the body health both internally and externally with results as expected of heart rate to the target player has to pump blood to different parts of the body.

*"There are many types of exercise. Relaxing exercise, not so hard, like those who are already healthy and do not need hard practice and be so serious like us. Those who do not need to have the heartbeat ratio of 130 times per minute like us. I used to do aerobic workout for 4 years, but this disease is not completely cured. A doctor once explained to me that once the heart fully function pumping the blood to support various parts of the body, everything will be fine."*

Khun Oh explained that to do various kinds of exercise make women become healthier than doing just one kind. She started to do aerobic workout for almost 10 years, but as she got older it doesn't suit with her changing body conditions anymore. So, she shifted to yoga in the morning every Saturday and Sunday at Siripattana Youth Center, followed by dancing at another youth center.

*"From aerobics to dancing, because I read that more exercise can help women approaching menopause reduce the symptoms, may be none or very little. It does help...Yoga on Saturday and Sunday, I have plenty of times. After yoga, I will go straight for dancing at Ruangarun (other youth center) all within the same day, in the same rhythm. Finish yoga at 2 pm, 3 to 4 continued with dancing. Just like this. "*

Khun Nong cited that as she came to exercise at the youth center, she first played the fitness equipment for her heart to be active, pumping blood to the body's metabolism, causing weight loss, but the overall shape did not look better. So she decided to continue with yoga which she felt make her look slimmer.

*"I exercise there to make my heart active, right, bicycling and fitness exercise make your heart function well, lose weight, but you won't get a good looking figure, unlike yoga, much better. They say, the size, good looking shape. "* In addition, Khun Nong also felt that yoga makes her skin healthier, *"glowing skins, looks good. Many people would recognize and say what an aura, clear face, face so bright at this age. It's probably because I have a proper breathing. In the past I didn't breathe like this. I inhaled more carbon dioxide, but now more oxygen."*

She said that yoga makes her shape a woman-like, *"playing other sports, it is a pretty lumpy shape you will get. Being a woman, you got to have the waist and curves. This is why yoga is excellent. You won't get lumpy muscles, like weight training. All you gain is the lumpy muscles."*

Khun Maew told that she has exercised since she was young till date. After her early retirement, she would go bicycling around the neighborhood in the morning allowing her heart to blood pumping. In the evening, she would do aerobics at the aerobic playground near her house everyday. And on Weekends, she would do yoga.

### **Practice of physical training in yoga postures following the trainers' instructions to modify the external appearances and internal sensation.**

Khun Pom explained that yoga is a practice of meditation to create a concentration on the body by following the instructions of the yoga trainer. A new player can not practice yoga alone, but must be advised and follows by listening to the trainer's commands. Khun Pom felt that listening to the trainer made her feel the silence, listen to other people, and set her breathings in and out systematically. She

was trained to inhale deeper than usual, which is also a practice of creating concentration for her. Training of each bending posture should rotate switching from left to right to create a balance. Each changing posture should interconnect with breathing in and out. The trainer will share the benefits of doing each posture for the blood circulation to nourish each parts of the body. Each different posture of yoga will help enhance the strength of each different organ. She has observed that yoga also help improve the body movement leading to good-looking outside personality automatically.

*"What do we learn from practicing yoga? I have learnt for almost two – three years, I noted that yoga is meditation. It made me calm down a lot. I am more with myself, learn how to be still, listen to others like the way my trainer instructed. Breathe in, nothing much, we just need to breathe deeply and be with ourselves a little longer. Practice breathing. Yoga can help a lot. Even my sons had said that I am a lot calmer than before. I have never been like this before. When you do yoga and learn meditation, we must always be with a teacher. If we really concentrate on it, we will gain a lot of benefits in return. I am serious...got the physical strength on wrists, shoulders, and body as a whole. I noticed that previously when I walk or stand. It improves personality, straights up and broadens your shoulder automatically "*

Moreover, she also said that yoga classes made her stay focused on her own body and her breathing in and out properly which affect the delivery of oxygen throughout the body. The body then will have its metabolism function well. Her concentration has also improved resulting in better mind-set and good mood. Even her son admitted that she is much composed, not so frustrated and moody like before.

*"Practicing yoga, we have to be with our inner self. Our Trainer Khru Nok (alias) told me to observe myself if I have breathed correctly for the last 30 years. As observed, I did not breathe properly, so I practiced how to breathe correctly. The benefits obtained include burning calories unconsciously, chasing oxygen flow, deeper and longer breathing resulting in better concentration."* Khun Nong also mentioned that yoga posture training made better body shapes with visible waist and feminine curves than other exercises.

**Searching, exchanging, and sharing health care information for preparation prior to approaching hormone altering age.**

Khun Pom mentioned that although she comes at youth center and joins the yoga class regularly; her key approach for health care and anti-aging is to exercise. But she also searches information on preparedness for the changes when entering a golden age. She said she gathered the information from reading books and knew that health in the elderly is related to hormonal changes. She has chosen to drink herbal drinks to nourish and adjust the balance of the hormones. She therefore makes and drinks fingerroot juice as the body hormone balancer and shares the drink with her friends in the yoga class at the youth center.

*"I find the information by myself. I can say that women approaching menopause must be ready and exposed to it. It affects our entire body. The menopause is really frightening. How do we face it without having to take medicine? Nowadays there is a solution. This fingerroot herbal drink contains high testosterone. I drink it during a menstrual period when one of the hormones is reduced. The drink will help balance it. I read this from the book."*

Also, to make friends in the youth center also gave her the opportunities to exchange the knowledge. There is a friend who is a role model in having a cheerful mood all the time making her look young. In the last couple of months, an acquaintance who came for fitness advised her to drink fermented liquor and take herbal bolus, which help with health concerns. That person has consumed both for the last 2-3 years. Khun Pom tried them but she was allergic to alcohol resulting in turning red with rash. Someone in the youth center who was also suggested sent the pills to the lab for examination and found that they contain steroids. So she stopped.

Khun Maew revealed that she also does aerobics. At the aerobic workout yard, she had a chance to share the methods of self care through eating and using anti-aging herbs, facial nourishment such as using star apple juice to tighten facial pores and turmeric soap. Thai herbs can be prepared by herself and some are bought from herbal shops, as she did not use them on a regular basis, but only when she feels like using them.

*"Do you know, star apple juice with turmeric only at 200 THB per set. Thai herbs, they said. This lotion is to be used after soap for intensification. I switched*

*brands all the time. Perhaps, if I have face wrinkles, I will use fingerroot, but not regularly. Some things are not supposed to be used too often. Sometimes when it is over, I won't use it then. Or sometimes we feel like using it, sometimes not."*

Khun Oh told that she did many kinds of exercise, dancing and yoga. For dancing, she always found older people on the dance floor, so she gained experiences of preparedness for menopause period.

*"The experiences of elderly, we have to be prepared. When we grow older, we have to socialize with this aged group, so we can prepare before reaching there."*

#### **4.4.2 Practices of anti-aging body management: Eating food supplement direct sales business product.**

Having the opportunity to read the books on alternative medicine during the crisis of life when the body was weakening that she could not get up and walk for almost a year made this woman attune the system of her life by choosing to consume food supplements instead of drug twice as much as the normal people. Using the food supplement products, she was given a slogan from the food supplement direct sales business product advertising campaign as "Like it, use it, and share it". This woman has shared her experience of using the products, appreciating the quality, and sharing it to others to also use and buy the products. The woman who consumes supplements has the perception that the quality of these supplements is equivalent to food, not medicine. She also has confidence in the supplement products from a business own by a doctor which also have medical researches to support and approve the qualifications creating trust in buying and consuming such products. She said taking food supplements is similar to consuming good food that will help maintain and restore the occurring signs of aging and nourish the health thus keeping your body healthy. Being healthy from inside results in having young and pleasant external appearance. Choosing to eat food supplements, besides helping you fight against aging and create good looking appearance from inside out, also helps you change the way of life to earn extra incomes from being both consumer and direct sales business vender with opened opportunities to meet people, be in a good society, and accepted by outside communities.

The woman who has chosen to arrange the body against aging by consuming food supplement products is one of the research participants , Khun Jin (alias) who practiced the followings:

**Reorganizing new life system after life crisis choosing the path of consuming anti-aging food supplements to maintain and restore aging body.**

Khun Jin recalled when she could not walk due to the symptom of degenerative disc to be admitted to the hospital for a physical therapy. Unable to walk by herself, but still she ran a direct sales business as a sideline career with a closed colleague helping her manage the works. She spent most of her life resting in bed till there were people who thought that she was expecting a baby.

*"Lying until the person on the bed next to me asked what was wrong with me since I did not have any saline solution line on my arm, my face even looked so normal, and I could pick up any phone calls and talked and talked. When I talked I normally forgot my pains, but when they all on the beds next to me slept, I then would feel the pains. So I kept staring like this and said it's painful but I must be tolerant, I kept telling myself. The one next to me would ask what my illness was since I did not have any saline line on me, no wound, and am I here expecting a baby...Yes I was fat. So, I said, no, I have a bone disease. I used the walker walking brokenly to the restroom. I lied there for physical therapy."*

Later, a young colleague visited her and brought her some books to read at leisure. She had a chance to read books about using food supplements as an alternative healing treatment of illness without using drugs. After reading, she was so impressed and turned to reorganize her life and take care of her health by eating food supplements, double the amount.

*"My beloved colleague gave me this book as a visiting gift. It is called 'When a doctor doesn't know the food supplements, death is overwhelming you.' I have from then on reorganized my life by consuming the food supplement twice the amount together with taking the Chiropractics therapy costing 1,000 Baht per time."*

*"... This was a translated book. I do not remember the name of the translator but remember the book title. I have talked about it over a hundred times wanting everyone to benefit from this good book. This doctor, his wife almost died*

*several times because of allergy. Until one day, the doctor went to study alternative medicine. In consequence, the doctor from then on healed his patients using only dietary supplements without using any more drugs. And now that I got the book, I have rearranged my food supplement eating habit reading only about the diseases I carried."*

In addition to food supplement, she also has to be careful in her movement patterns and bodily gestures in the daily life. She has to practice them correctly.

*"At the time of sleeping, walking, sitting, running, and all other physical movements, I have to do them right. Normally if we dropped something, we would stand straight and bend ourselves down to pick it up, right? That 's actually wrong. In fact we should kneel down and reach the dropped staff. So, no matter it was sleeping, walking, or sitting, we did them wrongly all the time. Nowadays, we are addicted to Facebook, sitting in front of the computer, or so called office syndrome, and suffered with webbed shoulder because of using mouse all the time. When you stretch your shoulder, it's so painfully tense and stiff, right?"*

She thought that exercise is good for the body. However, since she doesn't have a discipline to exercise, she believed in the method of eating food supplements which gives good results for her, but they must be the products from the reliable company. *"Is workout good? Absolutely one million per cent I confirm that it is good. But how many people actually have discipline to exercise? So I use the method of consuming food supplements, which I believe is effective, but we must only choose from the reliable company."*

### **Selecting the qualifications of food supplements that suit for their aging body and doubling the consumption amount.**

After going through a critical point in life since the age of 45 years, she consumes doubly a food supplement than others on a daily basis to maintain and rehabilitate aging. Nowadays, she takes 12 kinds of the supplements. As people get older, the body changes according to the age range. So, she is concerned about the changes of her external appearance such as the belly and weight. She therefore chooses to consume food supplements that support metabolism. She told us that the metabolism energy burning ability of the people with age is different from that of the

younger people. The elderly may consume the same amount of food, but become overweight easily. Appearance also changes unlike the young people.

*"... What concerns is the abdomen and weight because my metabolism is not the same as the youngsters, even eating less, but get fat more easily. In the past when we ate a lot, but we did not feel the obesity. Foods, sweets, whatever I liked...So I consume supplements that support metabolism of old people. I drink tea that helps burn calories...sometimes fat burning supplements. There is a green tea call CLA which helps in burning. When we get older, metabolism system also alters from when you were young, right?"*

Khun Jin takes almost 12 kinds of food supplements and has explained about the qualifications of some of the supplements she takes for health and anti-aging. She is exclusively concerned about bone nourishment, cartilage in particular, as it is associated with deterioration she had been through earlier.

*"Because I select only what I need. Some of them are duplicated. The new one that has been developed, I will eat it. Earlier there was a collagen pellet which was not so delicious, tasting like a medicine. But as of today, it has been developed as collagen in pomegranate juice ... And this one is an Abalone Collagen drink, fresh collagen from live abalone blended in pomegranate juice, so delicious when drink it chilled."*

She had suffered with deterioration's disease within the body, particularly the Degenerative disc. So, she chose to take food supplements that help nourish the bone. Many people notice about bone nourishment with the calcium supplements which is the process to make the bone hard. But she told the researcher that the cartilage should be nourished with collagen. Khun Jin noted the information of the products which say the body of the people at the age of 25 is set to decline. Every part is counting down.

*"Bones of all of us include intervertebral disk and joints ... just like when we eat chicken legs or heel, there you can see the gristles. Calcium will take care of the hard bones ... but for the cartilage parts at the bone joints attaching a bone to another bone, collagen is needed. Once you are 25 years old, everything would be on a countdown. So, most people do not know about this, they only know calcium. Collagen just came to be known only over the last 2-3 years".*

**Receiving, learning and sharing qualifications of anti-aging food supplementary products.**

After recovered from not being able to walk, Khun Jin turned to direct sales business more seriously, not only personal consumption and just making extra incomes. This made her a part of the management team of a direct sales business. So, there is time and opportunity to learn and go through trainings on the new supplementary products, cosmetics, and vitamins. There are academic researches endorsing these new products making confidence using them and following the campaigned slogan created by the direct sales company, that is, "Like it, use it, and share". This can be defined as giving a trial of the products till you see the results, like them and share with others and persuade them to also use the products.

*"When a new product is released there will be training courses to provide the correct and genuine information. The products should have academic researches to support their qualifications. If there are less than 5 research papers to support, the product will not be manufactured and released for sales. There will also not be any hiring of somebody talking nice about the products. I am a real member who really uses the products. So, the principle concept of our company is, use it till you like it and share. So, we must use them first, and if you like them, you can invite your friends to also use them like you."*

Additionally, Khun Jin sometimes acts as an MC and speaker in the product trainings. So she also gets to know the information and qualifications of the supplementary products continuously.

*"I got this one from the training at Nasai by Doctor Pan (alias) is a doctor at the Blue hospital (alias). I told you that there will be a meeting every Tuesday. So the members or the business person at the company (food supplements) will not boast. We only tell the truth because the doctor has come and share the knowledge by himself combining with the knowledge I gained from reading books. I like reading".*

From the constant discussion, she told that she has received the information from listening to the trainings. The company will offer training to both members and the direct sales business venders without any charge because this is a communication from the company. And from reading the journals of direct sales

company, being distributed for free, with columns providing product information with anti-aging qualifications, she summed up that throughout the past, the information on the qualifications of the products, various anti-aging body care products using Thai herbs extracted into food supplements, as well as other information were provided.

*"The company will provide training to its members whether you are a consumer or a business vender. The trainings are without cost, except for the products. Also, I got information among friends, from the doctor or acquaintances, those whom I always visit. Some are from magazines. I normally read general magazine at beauty salons. I never subscribe any of them. I read journal of the company which tells about self care, business expansion when I go to collect my dividends. The company provides the information about self cares, information about business expansion, special column featuring Dharma and Buddhist stories composed by the Doctor Pan (alias of Co-owner of domestic direct sale brand). That is the journal I read regularly. I also read other magazines at beauty salons".*

**Lifestyle modifications with the 3 principles- food, fresh air and emotion from the belief that youthful good-looking external appearances is a result of internal young emotion.**

Khun Jin talked about her family life, daily life and leisure activities not having to bear the burden of the housework and kitchen works as she has an employee from Isan (North Eastern) who works with the family for almost 17 years. Khun Jin loves her nephews and children. At her leisure time, she likes to hang out with the family and her nephews and often post pictures of the couple –aunty and nephew – on Facebook. Khun Jin said she normally be friends her nephews, not acting like a fussy mother and is able to get along well with her nephews at any age.

*"We should not behave like a fussy aunt or a mother getting angry all the time checking if they have done the homework or how was the school today...When I talk to the children, I use cartoon-like kids' language. May be it's because I love kids. When I visited the Young Buddhists Association, I found 4 children crying...they are all a single child missing their parents at the night time".*

At her free time, Khun Jin will be joining the direct sales business team to do some volunteer activities, voluntary care of the youths joining a religious camp and

provide foods to the elderly in hospitals as well. When she joins the volunteer activity as mentor in the religious youth camp, the children will love her like their parents. She also mentioned about her way of life following the 3 basic principles of food, fresh air and emotion to become healthier. In terms of emotion, she tries not to be angry for too long and participate volunteer activities in Buddhist camp allowing her to be closer to the children.

*"I think if we keep our mood up, our beauty will glow from inside out itself. In the past, I had been suffering ... Strung, petulant, resentful, but the only thing I was not was stingy. Otherwise, all the other negative ones, I was. But then I have learnt from the Young Buddhists Association. For the past 4-5 years, I started to get sick. In 2006 I started to visit the Young Buddhist Association. In 2007 and 2008, I have exposed by the noble truth of Buddhism that the supreme excellence of all alms is forgiveness. So, if someone makes me angry, will I be angry? Yes, but I could calm it down much quicker. I can easily forgive faster than ever. I normally look at it in a positive and funny way. I have one nephew who is 27 years old and the other nephew, the youngest one, who is 6. I can get along with both of them. The elder one went to Big Mountain Concert at Khao Yai. I went there with her as her parents were not free to go. I can also play with the youngest one, anything she likes to play".*

Besides, in terms of food and eating, she tries to avoid eating useless junk food as told such as oily fried food. And in terms of good air, she often go out to the place with fresh clean air in her free time.

#### **4.4.3 Practice of anti-aging body management using combination methods of consuming popular culture products and services and using medical technology.**

Women in this group normally practiced against aging body with combination methods by choosing to consume popular culture products and use medical technologies. Some of them, Khun Luk, for instance, use cosmetic products primarily in making themselves look young. Khun Luk often gets some greetings that she looks much younger than her actual age and there are so many people paying attentions to her appearance. In addition, she also uses medical technologies in anti-aging as well, but only occasionally, as she knows that she has got a good appearance

basically from her heredity. Using medical technology is in some occasions a good way to supplement the appearance. In this regard, she needs to find the most secure information about it from trusted acquaintances and relatives to make a co-decision, as well as from consultation in the care of a doctor. Another woman, Khun Nadia, chooses to consume all kinds of popular culture products and services. Some products were not even finish or unused, but she will keep buying the new ones non-stop. She buys the products generally from local markets as well as ordering them from international direct sales brands. She is also confident in anti-aging methods under the supervision of a doctor, but she tries to avoid the persuasion from a doctor for using some risky technologies.

The group of women who decided to use the body treatment methods in combination of consuming popular culture products and services and using medical innovations and technologies to personally manage the body or by the advice of medical experts includes the researcher participants- Khun Nadia and Khun Luk who performed the following practices:

**Maintaining and the nourishing feminine body from the young age through the family and school polishing and edification.**

Khun Nadia recalled her childhood that she started to take care of her body since she was young because she saw her mother use the makeup. She also studied in classical dancing art making her pay more attention to the body care since she was young and at a much earlier age than others. She dispraised those women who did not take care of themselves since their youth and started to pay attention when their faces are already spoiled and damaged as it would be so difficult to recover even through a surgery as it will not be the same as those who took care of this matter since their youth.

*"My mother used, I have a mother, I was the only daughter of the family. Whatever she used, I also used as her. And when I studied dancing arts, the girls there needed to wear makeups for the stage the performances. Checking on cosmetics, the mascara, it made me learn because I was right there since I was a young girl. I had learnt how to take care of myself which affects my appearance now. Those who just take care of the face when they are already damaged, it would be so difficult to*

*recover, even though they will undergo a surgery, it would not be the same as if they have taken care of themselves in the beginning”.*

When she was a child, Khun Nadia would prepare herself by eating food supplements. She knew how to find Vitamins for her skin care and drank feminine nourishing drinks that are typical Thai medicine. This preparation must be done since childhood. Anti-aging is a non-stop process if you are serious about it.

*"I was not concerned only externally, I also consumed Vitamins and food supplements such as fish oil since the age of 15-16. When I was 20-21, I started to eat Vitamin C, a food supplement for skin. Then I took some supplements of Mor Seng brand (Thai herb medicine), and many others”.*

Khun Luk said that she looks after herself since she was a teenager through the edification of family and schools. Because in her childhood, she was a twin, her parents often paid attention to dress her up to look cute and attractive. She has done a lot of community activities since she was around 3 years old. When she grew up to a teenage, she was selected as a representative of the school and the community as a traditional dancer performing at various festive events in the district. She also used to participate in a beauty contest and won the title as well.

*"I was a twin kid and when I was very young, my hair was a bit reddish like a Western kid. I have a fair skin, so everyone at home would dress us both up in cute dresses. So I was involved in various social activities since I was only 3 including the school activities and the district activities. I was a dancer, a school representative. I also performed when there was a festive event at the district level, or a Chinese opera show. I was the girl who held a lantern, and danced a demonstrating car, performed at some factories and participated in various beauty contests like Miss Teen which I won the title of the first runner up. So, it was engraved in my blood vein since I was a kid”.*

**Daily lifestyle looking after the body and shape like a young age: eating, resting, sleeping and exercise.**

Khun Luk began her story that she was seriously looking after herself in fixing good external appearance by using cosmetics. She doesn't do any exercise, but is very concerned about eating and taking enough rests and sleeps. She doesn't eat too much, not too sweet and fatty and tries to eat all kinds of food before 6 pm. In the past

she has to wait for her husband to have dinner together before going to bed causing some bloating, so she changed her dining time to finish all by 6 pm. Eating before 6 o'clock would make your body looks good, never get old, and having external appearance like a teenagers.

*"Actually I am an irritating person. My friends always say that I took care of myself a lot, basically in terms of food. Do I exercise? I would say not at all. But my physical characteristic, body shape, and eating habit, I don't eat too sweet or oily. I always leave the oily parts out. I am a serious person in terms of resting. At this age of mine, my dinner schedule must be earlier than 6 pm or sometimes 5 pm or 4 pm I stop eating already."*

Khun Luk said in her daily life, everything must be in order, food, sleeping, and resting, except for one thing, exercise. Otherwise, she does everything. But she doesn't take food supplements because after her baby deliverance, she weight dropped to 37 Kgs. After blood tests for all diseases, everybody assumed that she must have Thyroid, but still could not find. The doctor assumed that she was allergic to birth control pills. Therefore, she could not take any supplements. When she ate them, she would feel dizzy with nausea. Moreover, she also treats her body in a very simple way, particularly for stomach and breasts. So, she takes care of her chest not to be saggy, and does some belly contraction, and uses treatment creams on the cellulite parts.

*"When I put on the brassiere, I will scoop up the side meat to push up the breasts into shape. This will block and hold the chest up all the time. But if we wear the brassiere without the frame, it would look floppy. I feel like...don't forget that we have to wear it all day, like holding them up and do other things. So, they can lose the shape. No exercise, but I do my belly contraction all the time. A lot. Like when I sit, I never sit with humpback. It's like getting indulged as if I am a first-class lordly person, but serious in my personality. Straight back, belly contraction, all that make me look elegant. I think about this quite a lot. All friends said that."*

Practicing all the above on a daily basis results positively as she could gain self-confidence whenever she joins the social events. Sometimes, when she feel like stop doing them, she will tell herself that a woman who wants to look good must have disciplines and not letting herself go.

*"I am glad and feel very strongly confident in myself that every day I will not release myself. Every day I have to take care of myself at the best, no matter which day it is. Some days when I returned home so late and like to go straight to bed, like 1 or 2 am after attending an event with my husband but no, I say any woman who wants to look good, must really have some disciplines".*

**Wearing makeup with absolute cosmetics to create youthful appearance as a acknowledged and honorable idol.**

Khun Luk dressed up so well to make her appearance look young and graceful. She stresses primarily on using cosmetics in an absolute way. Wearing makeup allows her appearance become much different from not putting on makeup. Cosmetics also make her appearance look youthful and give her full confidence in the social events she attends.

*"I feel that everyone can have their self confidence through their good looking image and appearance. So, my important task is to wear makeup to be confident". This also make her gain attentions like being a celebrity when she goes to a shopping mall, people will look at her like seeing an alien. So she asked, "Hey, why are you staring at me like that? I am so curious and didn't know what to do...the answer was you are so beautiful. It makes me feel special and perceivable from the surrounding how their attitudes about me were".*

In addition, peers recognized her as their exemplary idol and asked for guidance in the use of cosmetic for skin and facial care, decorative cosmetics and inspiring costume fashions. She said that she would not conceal the information on her experiences in enhancing her image making her feel accepted by others and be loved by her friends.

*"With each of my friends, it depends on me. If I only keep the good things for myself, not sharing with them, then they would probably be just friends, but not real friends by heart. So the practice that I take care of myself and share what is good with people around me, it really makes them love me...yes, I told them everything even costume fashions. My friends in the other provinces will call me and ask me what to wear for an event. I will then ask what kind of event and tell them the trendy fashions.*

*They see that I live in the city...: Like a celebrity or an idol for them. They rely on me as I always help them with all ideas."*

*"I think everyone is a friend. I never refuse being a friend with anyone but I will tell them the status of the friendship. It's like I love making friends, creating a new community, knowing more people, and letting them feel good about me. I care for everybody, whomever. But they also must dare being in, talking to me, but not so much these days. It's like no one dare to approach me as I will go out with family and friends. So, they are all chilled. But before getting married, there were quite a lot. When I went to a shopping mall, it's obvious. They would look at me differently as if I am a strange folk"*

**Dress up well in variously styles for personality enhancements and youthful image for sex appeals according to situations.**

Khun Nadia plays an important role of a mother of 3 teenage sons. She used to live abroad with the taste of stylish dress up. Sometimes, she dressed up in a teenage style wearing complete outfits - dress, hat, and shoes making her appearance totally different from the image of a mother according to social expectation who must behave with full respectability. Khun Nadia shared her experience that her sons would admire her but also feel a bit shy with her appearance like a young teenage girl, rather than an image of a mother. She explained to her sons to understand and be proud of her reality. Her dressing style is just supporting her good personality.

*"Admire but shy, Wow...full dress up...hat, all the props...I would say in such a mood that here it is your mother, be proud. I explained to my sons that it is not a wrong thing to dress up beautifully and attract other people. It is enhancing your personality and supports who you really are. People are looking and admire with the look, beautiful face or shape, right? But those living in the same house are feeling shy and think that's too much". (Khun Nadia, 38 years old, a research participant).*

Khun Nadia owns a business and has to take care of her restaurant by herself. She is proud of her business establishment and pays attention in managing her restaurant business resulting in big crowd of customers. While talking about the restaurant business, the researcher observed that her face was so refreshing. She said her 5-star equivalent restaurant is using only quality goods and products carefully

selected by herself. She continued that in managing her business, she has to dress up well as the owner of a boutique restaurant. Sometimes, she even has to sing. That's why she normally goes to a beauty salon to make up her hair prior to going to the restaurant every day. She has managed her external appearance well, using the beauty and youthfulness to impress the customers. She said when she dresses up to the restaurant, she would look so beautiful. Some customers even thought she is young and entice her. Khun Nadia has to use her good personality and charm as well as the sex appeals to make an impression to the clients for the success of the business and career.

*"Actually, it's not a good thing having so many people flirting at you (laughing). But the good thing is more customers will come to the restaurant. A bad thing is that I might have a problem with my husband".*

Khun Nadia feels good when there are men showing interest and flirting at her. It's like checking her sex appeal rating. Although she is already 40 years old, but she still looks good attracting the opposite sex. And so she has to take good care of her facial appearance to be youthful.

*"I feel good. In my perspective, it's like checking about your sex appeal. Today I am almost 40, and this is how I look. Makeup, dress up and hair dressing, I will be 40 in the next 2 years. So, I am okay with today's life and realize that I must carry on taking good care of this face".*

Khun Luk was always prepared to make up herself before going to any social event. She liked to dress in a matching style. As she did not have a daughter, she therefore liked to dress up herself.

"I am a very scrupulous person. I even need to know where I will be going tomorrow, what I will be doing. My husband always asked me what I will do tomorrow, how I will be making up the face and dressing up, and what kind of shoes I will be wearing, the bag I will be carrying. I must memorize all this and set everything in my head. Because I don't have a daughter, I like to think of myself as a doll and dress up myself."

**Finding information from various sources before making decision.**

Khun Nadia searches information from talking to friends on the Internet and reading magazines making her increase information and knowledge of the use of certain medical technologies that are dangerous, such as Botox injections causing a monotonous face.

**Occasionally co-decision making with doctor in using medical technology for treatment.**

Khun Luk primarily uses makeup to enhance her image and occasionally uses medical technology as a supporting method to cover and eliminate the aging signs of external appearance in order to look youthful.

*"I admit that I sometimes used needles. I did Botox injections, after I studied and found that it is not dangerous. And I only chose to make the injections only on the safe areas...Once every six months or sometimes 8 months specifically on just 1 area, the forehead, not any other place. I didn't want to have wrinkles, particularly because I like to raise my brows, making a curious face. So, I looked at myself and saw wrinkles on the forehead. I can also find them on my eyes, but I am not so worried. I just don't want it on my forehead as I have a broad forehead, just a few small marks. I didn't want to put too much because I am afraid it may look delusive."*

She needed to eliminate the wrinkles in the forehead. She searched for the information of the use of Botox injection technology before seeing the doctor recommended by her closed and trustworthy relative who used to do the Botox injections before.

*"I learned from my sister-in-law, from a person older than me before seeing the doctor seeking for his advice. But I told the doctor not to put too much. It did not have to be so tight. I didn't need a big change or to be so strange from before "*

When she saw the doctor, she asked for more information and suggestions and consulted with the doctor to make a co-decision prior to using the medical technology. She informed that she only required using a small volume at only a certain area to make it as close to natural as possible and only occasionally.

*"I asked for the doctor's opinion and he said 'fine', so I said 'I want to try but only a little, not too much, not too tight, let it be movable', because I did some pre-studies".*

Khun Luk continued that using medical technology can fix the imperfect areas and make her look younger. This would make her feel more confident. She has searched for information to make sure that it is safe, but will not go for a surgery medical technology.

*"There were some wrinkles before doing it, but after a few weeks, all the marks were gone. The face looked tighter. More confident, as we tried to look for our personal deficiencies and fixed them. I didn't want to be old and try to look after myself the most. But if required, I will study and look for information to make sure that it is going to be safest. Little medical evolutions must be required, but definitely not surgery."*

**Choosing to use numerous medical technologies, but rejecting some medical technologies with dangerous risks.**

Khun Nadia has used medical technologies consistently with an option to buy the consumer goods and popular culture products and services available in the market as well as the international branded anti-aging products. However, she accepted using only some medical technologies that she recognized for no danger consistently such as fillers, collagen substance injections, and Mesotherapy. She has earlier searched the information for these techniques making sure that there will be no danger. But she refuses using a certain medical technologies such as Botox injections.

*"Botox was offered, but I 'rejected. I do just what we wanted to do and be very straight forward to the doctor. I know the qualifications of each product, unlike those who never had such a service before. They wouldn't be able to distinguish".*

She said although she uses various products and services, but she still trusts in using medical technology together and uses such medical technology constantly and continuously.

#### **4.4.4. Practice of anti-aging body management using non-surgical medical technology treatments.**

Women who use medical technology treatments will bear the feeling of anxiety about their outside appearance affecting their emotional sensation. Some of them are worried with their and inferiority complex. Some are afraid of elderliness. They choose to use medical technologies consistently to cure, restore and eliminate the aging signs stressing on external appearances. Using medical technologies is a primary method which can be used repeatedly more frequently than other methods they used to try earlier. Using medical technology can result in improvements of external appearance more obvious and direct to the need than other techniques. Upon choosing to use the medical technologies, they will be persuaded by the doctor to gain the trust in the quality and safety, as well as the efficiency and effectiveness. Some were promised by the doctor that the technologies used will not give any side effect, but once they decided to undergo the process, they in turn unfortunately faced the unexpected side effects. Some of these women could not make any complaint to the doctor and had to accept the consequences of their own faults of natural body that partially caused the side effects from using the painful and invasive medical technology on the body.

The group of women who decided to use the non-surgery medical treatment technology under the supervision of an expert doctor for their body treatment includes the research participants – Khun Nuan (alias) and Khun Fern (alias) who performed the following practices:

##### **Various experimental methods, but non-practicable methods .**

Khun Nuan told that when she approached the age of 50, the body has changed from the young age. She found that various aging signs started to appear, many of them she did not like and wanted to eliminate them. This includes having gray hair and having body pains and aches while moving. To fix the grizzled hairs, she goes to beauty salon and has a hair dye. And for the body aches, she goes for a body massage to relieve the pain. So, it's easy to fix these problems and not a real concern. But there are some external image aging signs that could not easily be handled causing anxiety and inferiority points affecting the internal emotion such as more facial

sagging wrinkles. She tried to cover the wrinkles by using makeup and eye nourishing serums, but they are still not completely cured. Moreover, she also tried to find other ways such as practicing yoga and fitness exercise. But the results from trying various methods to fix the worried appearance problems were still unclear, even though exercise is a good solution, she could not do it on a regular basis.

*"Things get improved when I exercise like the pains and aches on the body or whatsoever. Yoga is the first class method. All pains just disappear. I also go for a massage. Good solution, but sometimes I was too lazy to go. So, the irregularity and lack of time, as we always quote, the best way for the body and saving the money is to exercise. I conclude this from all experiences I have learnt by myself plus the knowledge from the text books. Exercise is the best, only if we do it regularly. We will be young, healthy, and active. But that's what we didn't do".*

Khun Nuan told that she did not like the aging body signs from wrinkles and sagging bags under the eyes causing anxieties and becoming her weakest point. She had to consult a well-known cosmetic surgery doctor in a hospital and was advised not to go through a surgery. The reason given was that the tearing eyes will not be stitched. The doctor advised her to do a laser treatment to remove wrinkles around the eyes and bags under the eyes. She agreed and followed the doctor's advice to fix the aging problems at an international branded one-stop beauty institution which belongs to the doctor's wife. Khun Nuan underwent the laser treatment to fix the wrinkles and bags under the eyes at Star Doctor Institute (alias) located in a business area closed to the hospital.

*"I met a cosmetic surgery doctor to tell him that the most unpleasant thing on my face is the sagging bags under the eyes which is like the weakest point of me. After consultation with the doctor to fix the bags under the eyes, he said that my muscles at that area could not spring back so well. So, after sewing, it could make my eyes like tearing in pieces".*

### **Detecting abnormalities skins that need to be fixed through medical technology equipments.**

Khun Nuan told that she underwent the aging signs treatment at Star Doctor Beauty Institute (alias) which is an international brand name from Australia.

There is no treatment doctor at this institution. To use the equipment and medical technologies, the service provider was just a trained nurse who can use the equipment and medical technologies. At this institute, she has to take care of the occurring numerous problems of external aging body signs through the skin mal-function examination equipment.

She said she has gone through skin test equipment indicating that she has a dry skin which is a problem and showing the abnormalities and signs of aging like wrinkles and sagging skin visibly several times clearer than with normal vision. It made her feel that it is necessary to restore the skin. Khun Nuan therefore invested in purchasing a skin treatment course worth over a hundred thousand baht for treatment of the skin, face lift, reducing wrinkles and bags under the eyes. The course was bought periodically with a specific sales person to call her up and check about her worries on body as well as introducing other courses and methods to fix the anxiety of aging body signs which is happening all the time. The treatments for aging body signs are sold in courses, which she has to purchase each course to fix the aging sign and receive services as scheduled by appointment. They cost will also be paid continuously.

*"Sold as courses from facelift course, removing bags under the eyes course, skin nourishing course, because they told me I have a dry skin problem ... They asked me to go through the skin test and see the results of how bad my wrinkles were, how many per cent of my face were sagging...which will be wider as I grow older".*

**Searching for deficiency of undesirable external aging signs according to expert officers prior to seeing doctor.**

Khun Fern told that previously when she went for aging skin treatment in a medical clinic, a doctor would be the person advising her how to use medical technologies and new products starting from laser treatment, supplementary substances like Botox and fillers. But nowadays, the direct sales person selling treatment courses in the clinic will initially come and introduce each product and service course with pre and post treatment picture samples. The queries can be further asked and explained later when you meet the doctor prior to medical technology treatments.

*"The first time when you were there, the reception staff would ask what kind of problem we had. They would then introduce some products. But everyone would certainly see the doctor afterward. It's just that the staff would initially advise which product to be used for such problem, but to be certain, one should consult with the doctor".*

Khun Fern began the treatment with facial skin nourishment from pimples and allergies to fixing the unwanted defective points which are the problem of various aging signs.

*"I would initially asked the salesperson and they would let me wait to see the doctor to ask for all my queries. There were numerous files introducing the products with pictures folders. If it was a machine, then we could see from the machine how it goes...before and after...this person, that person. If we have more queries like can I do it at this age? Then the doctor would be the one who explain further".*

At the skin and facial care clinic, there will be staff to provide the services and observe the irregularities of the skin and face. They will point out various points of aging signs on the body and the abnormalities that need fixing. This includes wrinkles in the forehead or the eyes and deep marks on the cheeks. While using the service, some areas of the face were not her priority concern and she did not even see the irregularity. But when these irregularities on her face were raised up, she would concur and be convinced to fix such irregularity as per the staff's suggestion and recommendations. Thus, Khun Fern must use the services for the treatments of various aging signs of irregularities using medical technologies to fix the physical problems on almost every part of her face consistently such as Botox injections on the forehead and wrinkles at the eyes' tips. On her cheeks, even though the cheek marks were not so deep, she had them tighten up with Botox. Typically the deep cheek treatment by a doctor would use fillers injection, but she requested for Botox injection to make them even tighter. This made Khun Fern feel better after using medical care technologies.

*"I had my forehead injected but never get worried. They pointed out that injection was required there, so be it. They said I had a lot there, so sure, inject. But the first thing I fixed was the wrinkles at the eyes' tips. After that, again and again, here and there! It's here, it's there, well, do it! The latest one was the deep cheeks,*

*started to get deeper. So, I asked the doctor, can I do Botox injection there? Well, the doctor said, we could try, but it might not be as effective as fillers. But it was really better". Khun Fern has used medical technologies against aging continuously. "Not really all the time, approximately once a year. They will say, normally this should be done once every 6 or 8 months. But if I don't have money or am moody, I won't go anyway. So, continuously? Yes, but not too frequently".*

**Fixing aging skin, facial wrinkles, and deep cheek with popular painful and dangerous medical technologies as per doctor's recommendation "Botox and fillers injections".**

Khun Nuan told that she began fixing her aging signs by eliminating wrinkles and bags under the eyes at a beauty institute where she learned to fix her aging sign, starting from her first skin care with laser treatment to eliminate wrinkles and sagging and fixing the wrinkles around the eyes which lasted temporarily around 2 weeks to 1 month only. Khun Nuan followed the treatment course constantly and used invasive non-surgical medical technology, that is, Botox injection, which was the popular trend at that time within that beauty institute. The first Botox injection was so painful but she had to be patient. She never knew that the pain would be so much and felt pity for the money spent because she did not see any sign of improvement immediately after the injection. She did not cover up the people at her workplace and asked about the outcome of the treatment from one of her younger nurse colleague working in the same unit. In the beginning, the immediate change was not visible making her regret for the money spent. But after the injection, there was a sales staff at the beauty institute calling her for her satisfaction view and informing her that the result would be visible after around 2 weeks. Finally, she was more relaxed to see that the Botox treatment really works.

*"The first one I had I felt so pity for my money. Just one injection, both fillers and Botox cost me around a hundred thousand Baht without any obvious result. I just had it several months back...The sales in charge of my case has called me so I told her that when I asked my colleague sitting at the same workplace, she said she could not see any change. So the staff told me that the result will be noticeable around 2 weeks after the injection. So, I felt much better. In the beginning, I very much*

*regretted for the money I've spent. It was also very painful, but I had to bear it. Never knew that it would hurt so much."*

She recalled that she had her skin and facial treatment at Skin Doctor for around five to six months and still did not complete the treatment course that she has bought. But then there was another skin and facial care medical clinic Dr. Line promoting their services while she was on my way to the fitness center and doing some shopping at a shopping mall. The staff at the skin and facial care medical clinic distributed the brochures and advised her to buy a skin and facial treatment course at Dr. Line Clinic (alias). Khun Nuan said this clinic was different from the first one having doctors to conduct the treatment, so she finally moved to this clinic.

*"At the first place, I was with them for about 5-6 months. They sold me the course at very expensive price and I did not even finish the course. Then there was this Dr. Line Clinic doing propaganda again".*

At this clinic, she underwent a treatment by a doctor. The doctor in charge of her case was a full time doctor at a popular governmental hospital. This gave her greater confidence as compared to the other clinic. She was persuaded by the doctor for her facial skin care to go for another round of Botox injection which is the use of painful and invasive medical technology to cure the aging sign of facial wrinkles. The doctor has shown her pictures along with the pictures of her relatives and family members who did the Botox injections making Khun Nuan feel so confident in safety and efficiency of Botox injection at this clinic, because the doctor has shown pictures of people in her family who had Botox injections and all looked better.

*"She demonstrated that even she herself also had done it. She showed me her picture before and after she had the injection that her face got tightens up so well. Then she showed me her aunt's pictures, she actually did it for all her family members. Her aunt also had bags under the eyes like me and again the doctor injected. So, the doctor has pictures for comparison and told me that she has done a lot of studied and researches about Botox injection. As a doctor, she showed me her picture comparison. She was still young. So, when I was there, I realized that for those who want to take good care of themselves, they don't have to wait until they are 30 or 40. They had the injection already. I was a little scared at that time, because there was some news about the dangers of this treatment".*

Even though Khun Nuan has learnt from the media about the dangers of Botox, but she decided to do it at the medical clinic as this clinic has guaranteed the quality of the genuine Botox substance produced overseas that it is safe and not dangerous. The unsafe ones usually are the cheap ones produced in Asia. It would be cheaper but comes with higher risks. *“The dangerous one is the cheap one, expensive one, normally not dangerous”*.

As for Khun Fern, she continuously had treatments against aging skin, eliminating wrinkles, and fixing deep marks on her face. Although she heard bad news and about side effects from Botox use and fillers, she told the researcher that she bought an expensive Botox substance, so there would be no harm or side effects, but it took around 2 weeks to see the results. The use of Botox and fillers is obviously effective even though creating a lot of pains as well.

### **Eliminating defects and undesirable aging all over the external face particles using a wide variety of medical technologies.**

Eliminating unwanted deficiencies with medical technologies from ultrasonic massage equipment, and pushing anti-aging extracts to the painful and invasive body injections

Khun Fern explained that she often went to medical clinic for aging sign treatments. She recalled that as she got older during the last 10 years, she has gone to clinics for skin care as she has a lot of pimples on her face like having allergy. So she returned to the skin and facial clinic again and has to use the services of the medical clinic consistently to restore the external aging appearance by skin and facial treatments using various medical technologies to fix skin problems stressing on the face to make the face look beautiful and youthful. And she also tried everything available in the clinic.

*“They asked me to start using IPL (intense pulsed light) and IPL laser to lighten up the facial color pigments, and IONTO which is a vitamin pushing machine. It actually depends on us to choose which vitamin we want. They have various vitamins to choose, like Vitamin C for face glowing or Collagen for facial tightening. I tried them all, whatever they tried to sell to me. I took all. Just couldn’t remember which one first”*.

The suggestions of the salespersons in the clinic come with commitments for the immediate expected results. But Khun Fern confirmed that the results will not be visible immediately as advertised and exaggerated by the salespersons. But after around 2 months, all results would appear as expected. All unwanted deficiencies on facial skin were gone.

*"For all of these, you won't feel anything for just once. They will usually make a big promise like only try once and you will see the result in one month. But in reality, no, it takes around 2 months. I did not feel anything after it was done. By looking at the mirror, I felt like has it been done already? But soon after 2 months, I can feel that it is better. People will start asking you. So, when they say result in a month, that's not true. But I am not so serious about that. It's just their habits to say like that".*

**Experimenting new innovative techniques that are not formal approved by doctors who persuaded and confirmed the earlier trial results.**

Khun Fern told that the skin and facial treatment clinic will bring in newly discovered scientific technologies for skin and facial treatment against aging. At that time, stem cell injection was still a newly invented and unknown technology for skin and facial treatment to make the face youthful. The doctor in the clinic would convince Khun Fern to try this new technology. Being persuaded, but she did not accept the invitation. Still the doctor would keep giving the information with examples of well known celebrities and superstars who have used this new technology. Also, the doctor insisted that she has studied the details and information of this technology so much and even used this technology for curing his personal blood disease as well. Since she also had a problem of the blood system disease just like the doctor, she decided to try this new technology consistently since it was still unknown. Khun Fern added that the doctor has examined her blood after using and found that her overall blood test result has improved with not harm.

*"At the beginning I did not buy it. It was scary. So, I kept saying no for a year. She would give examples of many famous people who had this injected. Even the doctor herself also has it injected. The reason why I did it was because the doctor also did it. She said she has studied a lot about it before she had it done on herself. I said I*

*was afraid because at that time Thai people have never heard of it, not even a single person. But now people talk about this technology a lot. So, she gave examples of celebrities, some of them had the injections done by the same doctor as well. Later, when I talked to the doctor and realized that the doctor had the injection because she has a blood disease, the same like myself. And the doctor reconfirmed that after the injection, she had a blood test and it was better".*

At present she still uses stem cell injections, but not so often as she gets exhausted for the pains around the injected areas again. She also went to another medical clinic to recheck for blood irregularity, but did not find any abnormality.

*"Yes, doctor, I am pale. I monitored myself closely and thought that it worth a trial. So, I still have the injection these days, but not so often. I am getting tired of sore ass".*

**“Lift-up sagging facial deformation” using advanced medical technology, more painful and invasive.**

In addition to using Botox injections or fillers to correct wrinkles and deep furrow, facial lift-up technology is a method to fix sagging face to be toned up. This technology has evolved continuously. In the past women often adjusted to tighten sagging facial skin to look youthful by using a so-called cosmetic facelift surgery. But with the invention of modern medical technology, non-surgical method with less complexity as in the past has existed.

Currently, facelift to fix sagging is not only involving skin tightening up, but also slender face reform that represents the youthful face. Evolutionary development of medical technology in face lift which is like doing a surgery, using medical technology, is now available with a variety of techniques, such as Ulthera, Thermage and V-shape facial lifting, and etc.

Some women have chosen to tighten up their faces to look more youthful using V-shape facial reform and facelift. They have told the researcher that this method is only effective at less than 50% of their expectation with side effects of swelling and bruised face. Some have chosen a facelift using the Ulthera technique which uses sound waves to break down the fat creating slimmer face told the researcher that they had to suffer so much pains and will never use the same technique ever again, like a Botox injection.

Khun Fern told that she has used the medical technology on facial skin care constantly whenever there is a latest modern medical technology used to maintain aging with introductory advertisements at the medical clinic. The latest anti-aging technology that Khun Fern underwent was the V-shape facial reform and facelift which is effective on restoring the face of the elderly who facial sagging problem. The U-shape face form will be lifted and reformed in a beautifully slender V-shape, which is a unique image representing the teenage people, and also a current trend. The doctor has explained this technology that when people get older, their muscles on the face would alter according to the age range and usually get sagging leading to a U-shape facial form. Khun Fern decided to fix this problem by using V-shape facelift, which is a non-surgery technique. But she also knew that it would be a very painful procedure having been injected with anesthetic prior to the operation and then being sewed with silks into the layer beneath the facial skin for a numerous times like sewing.

*"Lately I underwent the V-shape facelift , a little while after a Botox injection. But this time, about a month or 2 back, was a bit painful, but not so much. What was really painful was the anesthetic injection. It was not 100% effective as it was only on the skin layer. If it went underneath the skin, it was still painful. During the sewing, it did not hurt so much, but right after the anesthetic effect was gone, then it was so painful...bruised so black and blue, I took some pictures, if you want to see when it became black and blue you can see it".*

The researcher asked Khun Fern if using the medical technologies that she underwent gets hurt every time and the latest one that she took with needles sticking on her face so many times, why would she carry on doing them. She said it did not hurt so much during the operation, but afterward as the anesthetic was no longer effective, and then the pain would increase with bruises and marks. Khun Fern perceived that the skin cure methods that she used, even though they are painful from several Botox injections on the face continuously, but they are inevitable like dentistry. *"Asked if this is painful, it is not that painful, just like a dental care, after finished, the pain will go".*

Using the latest medical technology of V-shape facial reform and facelift the doctor has reassured that the face will be reformed into a V-shape and there was no one who had this done with side-effects post operation. But when Khun Fern

underwent the treatment and got side effects with various signs of bruised wounds on her face, she took some photographs and informed the doctor in charge. The doctor told her that in the past no one has got such bruises before, but the side effects on her might be due to her lymphatic system malfunction.

*"I never complained. the doctor said ,no wound, but I got wounded and showed the pictures to him. He said he was sorry; he never has any case with wounds like her. So, I said it should be because my lymphatic system is not well. And her reconfirmed it so assertively...never wound".*

This method is in effective less than 50% from her first expectation and she thinks that she would not use this technique again just like the Botox injection that she did many times. She did not blame this to the doctor, but thinks that she might put the expectation for too high and looks at it as a learning curve and will not make any complaint like the others.

*"I won't do it again in the future. They said my face would look so slender and narrow (speaking in a high tone). But the actual result was very little after I did it. I mean, I am willing to pay if it is as expected. But the truth, it was not even 50% of my expectation. So, it's a learning curve, right and wrong. I did not want to blame the doctor. I may have set my expectation too high. But the advertisement, when I saw it before I did, I would have expected that the result would be the same. But when it was not, I was the one who lose, the story ends. Learning curve in deed, but may be not for the others. They will make big complaint in front of the clinic. I don't know how to do that".*

Khun Nuan underwent a non-surgery facelift medical technology call Ulthera which is a technique of double operations. For the first time, she said it was painful like someone is lancing the same wound repeatedly. In this method, there will be a second operational technique to be accompanied that is Thermage. She said, the sales person who sold this course and the doctor insisted that this method would help support the Uthera non-surgical facelift technique to stably last long. Although the second technique would not hurt like the first one, but she felt very hot like the face is being scalded. She had to tell the doctor repeatedly and the doctor would stop intermittently and kept telling her that it was alright. She insisted to the researcher that she will not undergo this facelift medical technology again and reconsidered the Botox

injection which also makes the face look younger would be an acceptable technique. Although it is somewhat painful, but less than facelift, besides it can be done on a constant basis.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **LIFE EXPERIENCES OF WOMEN WITH DIVERSE LIFE CONTEXT**

The researcher has presented the life experiences of women with diverse life context through the story telling of four women including Khun Oh, Khun Jin, Khun Nadia, and Khun Maew.

The stories of the life experiences of four women were narrated in various scenarios from the configuration data depicting the links of diverse events happening to each individual woman in a background telling the event presented in stories. The stories are the results of associated information and information organization which the researcher has participated in the story telling to observe and see the stories which bond the context and details of the experiences of the research participants.(Napaporn Havanon,2012)

#### **5.1 Life experiences reflecting practices of anti-aging body management as passing status by transformed self to higher social status**

Khun Oh, a woman with life experience, began to get to know the state of her body with deviations from normal from the advice of a Health officer during her blood donation. She tried to fix the symptoms of the possible future risks when she gets older. She found an exercise venue near her home and exercises continuously for over 10 years, creating a new external appearance into a new identity from an ordinary to a capable woman winning a district representative aerobic leader contest, becoming an aerobics leader at a public sport playground and aerobic and dance presenter. Currently, she is socially acceptable with ability to socialize with better social status. The body management against aging has changed her risky body of potential problems in the future to become a new body identity, "I'm not Chinese aunty".

### **Living in focused area of family**

On her childhood Khun Oh was born and raised in a family of Chinese descent. She never got a chance to mix with other societies except her family. She did not live with her parents but was taken care of by her Chinese grandma. When she became a teenager, she was cultivated and has learnt to take care of her body in a simple way at home which still abides by traditional cultures of Chinese families that is to do the “Man Ming” (refined hair coat on the face).

*"In my childhood, I was just like a kid who just came down from the back of the mountain, so naive, never go outside. Only staying at home.... "*

*"...Grandma raised me up. I was not with my parents until I got married. I have 4 brothers and sisters, an eldest brother, an elder sister, myself, and my younger sister and the other 2 kids of my uncle. Grandma took care of all the 6 of us, so all girls as well. When we approached teenage, after about a month she did it for me the last as I was a bit hairy and sticky. She called me a stubborn girl, so called a ‘Geng Yung’ so kept me for the last one as it’s a bit painful for her fingers. So she would coat for all other sisters first. Coat the hair from the face. All of us".*

During that time, her family was not rich. Her family also did not encourage women to have a chance of higher education. So at her teenage after completing compulsory education, she was trained to sewing as a career. Later, she began looking for work and did a sewing job at a swim wear factory. So she was just a girl with a profession of a seamstress. During the sewing career, she often had chances to try out the swimming suits that she made. Many people said she had a fair skin. So, during her teenage before getting married she noticed that she had a fine skin but did not find any mean to nourish the skin like the teenagers today.

*"...As a child, my skin was so beautiful. I did not know to dress. In the old days, it’s not like today. Teenagers, they know how to improve their looks. They know what to put on their bodies. Unlike the old days, it’s only by the nature of its own. My skin was really beautiful".*

She is married. Her husband also works as a seamer like her. After marriage they lived in a factory tenement with her brother’s family. The factory was a many storey tenement. Her family lived upstairs. She stopped working as she had her babies. At the time when she had to take care of the children, she spent most of her times with the

children and her family leaving no time for her to take care of herself. She realized that in the past, before starting to exercise, she was like a mad person, getting angry easily, often is irritable mood.

*"Raising the second child till she was three years old and attended the kindergarten, I then went back to work, but still never exercise, no aerobics. I was like a mad lady and liked to shout yelling and scolding all the time even when I babysitting the children. My brother said this mad lady did not have a period, crazy woman".*

### **Out of the house into aerobics ground**

After raising her children till their kindergarten age, she then had the chance to come down from upstairs and helped with the factory business of her brother. That was around 10 years back when she was around 45 years old. She had the opportunity to donate blood and while donating the health officer measured her blood pressure and told her that her blood pressure was lower than normal, like a fainting person. Therefore, she wanted to improve her health and since there is an aerobic ground closer to her house, she then started to work out playing aerobics. As for her external skin care in general, she does not use expensive cosmetics.

*"I had my blood pressure measured before donating blood. The doctor examined and asked me I have done, just like going to faint. Normally the body was fine, no stress. But the doctor insisted that I should exercise, so fortunately there was an aerobic workout near my house".*

*"Live a simple life, never care to use expensive stuff, because I could not effort them anyway".*

She told that the aerobic trainer in the past would not only teach the basic step of aerobic dance to make your body gets fit, but also advise you even about a proper outfit suitable for aerobic sport. The aerobic costume will help keep your body in shape. Practicing aerobic also makes your body strong and healthy. And when I changed the outfit, my shape also looks firm and well-fitting.

**Step into the outside world: from an ordinary woman to aerobics instructor and presenter**

The aerobics made Khun Oh switch from an ordinary woman to become the aerobic leader and presenter. Khun Oh told that she did well in aerobics training, the trainer therefore sent to represent the district in an aerobics presenter contest. Later on she had an opportunity to take the stage as an aerobics instructor showing her strength at various aerobic courts

*"I did aerobics till I became a leading coach. Then around 45to46, I was the instructor seriously but not frequently. I love to be healthy; being an instructor is much harder than just doing it down the stage. I was a leader on the stage, I must present the strength, must make it fun, right? I can't do it softly as those below the stage. Down below you can dance the way you want, but up the stage you have to look strong".*

Being an aerobics instructor allowed her to know many other exercise venues and realized that there is also a dance class at Rung Arun Youth Center (alias). Later on Khun Oh has joined as a member and attended the dance class at this public youth center. Khun Oh, again, did well, so the teacher sent her as a district representative to a dance contest and again she won the prize. After that the teacher asked her to become the presenter and also teach in the dance class as well.

*"I thought there for a while with Khru Jaeng (alias), being the presenter like I was a co-teacher, but I did not earn anything, just teaching the students and showing them. They all called me a Guru, not Ajarn, but Khru".*

### **Being accepted into the group: Posing with the opposite sex and different social status**

Prior to practicing yoga at Siripattana youth center (alias), she went to a dance class at Rungarun youth center (alias). During her first stage at the dancing class, she did not dare telling her husband. But later, she could not conceal as she has to wear skirt to the dance class, so she confessed to her husband who understood her well.

*"I told my husband frankly. At the beginning when I joined the dance class, I did not dare to let him know. But after a while, I could not keep the secret any longer. At the beginning I was wearing aerobics outfits to the dance class. But how could I keep on like this when others were wearing skirts to dance. Actually they did not forbid that, but since they also allowed me to join the class, and I knew how much I could go for, so let's not lie to my husband. So I told him straight".*

At the dancing class in the beginning she felt it was harder than aerobics. In dancing she had to remember various rhythmic gestures according to different types of stroke. But she tried to stand it as she knew that such class would otherwise be very expensive in other places.

*"... At the beginning I felt discourage and thought why dancing was so difficult. Aerobics was much easier. But after trying for a while, I figured out dancing is not easy and needs seriousness. Actually it is very expensive elsewhere, but available here so closed to my house, why wouldn't I? So, I tried to bear it and kept learning. Still I felt that dancing is so difficult (laughs). Then when I think that each class like this would cost almost a hundred thousand baht, but here it was just 40 baht, I have to be more resistant to learn".*

*"We must remember the figures because there are so many of them. Cha Cha Cha is just one of them. Another rhythm, another set of figures. We had to use the brain to think, something like that".*

Dancing is most often a kind of recreation found in academic and state official social groups having social events. This activity involves both male and female. Mostly the men who joined the dancing class at this public youth center were military retirees. She was able to make more friends both male and female. Dancing requires postures and dress outfits for entering the dancing floor. She had to prepare some decent dresses for the dance floor. Her husband understood her well and usually took care of the dresses and gave some advices when she joined dancing events or social gatherings. She could dance so well that many men would like to match with her for practicing. However, she realized that finding a dance maid, you must behave properly not to ruin the image of women. Having a new set of friends joining the same dance class, there are more parties and hanging out with these new friends.

*"Discotheque dancing style is annoying for the neighboring folks. But typical dance like this looks classier, suitable for senior people, the navy, better social classes. Those are for drinking and shouting styles, but for this classic dance, the men are not supposed to smoke or drink. Anyway, there are some bad persons also, we have to look carefully. Some of them joined the class just to take advantages over the ladies and the bodies are attached. So, we should not set an example. Being a woman*

*in dancing, you are already disadvantaged. How do we make others to look at us differently that we are not a bad person? It also depends on our demeanour as well".*

*"... Since the class started, there are various social events to attend. We had to dine out and hang out with this group of friends, some with admission costs. So, I would tell my husband that I am going for a dance, just once a month would be enough. No fixed date, but with dining appointments".*

**Transitional body-self : from a risky body in future to a new identity, "I'm not a Chinese aunty"**

The reason why she decided to do multi-sports from aerobics, dance and yoga for over 10 years because she concerned to her body with the risks of potential problems in the future. When she gets older her body alters. So, she later stopped her aerobics exercise and at present she only does yoga and dancing at both youth centers. The result from doing multiple sports not only make her shape gets better, her external appearance also looks younger than her actual age. Her figure which used to be in a cylindrical shape when she was a teenager, now becomes a body with chest and waist even when she gets older. Her body shape is socially accepted from both her husband and the outside society. And with the well outfits, when she goes to a social event, she can make new friends from the social network also at the exercise venues both for yoga and dancing class apart from her usual society only at the family.

*"I started to change physically better. So I even wanted to make it better and better, so I kept doing it. Even my husband gave me compliments. I am proud of myself to get in better shape than when I was young. I had no waist before, just straight down".*

Currently, her appearance has changed. At her age, a woman from a Chinese family is usually seen and called as "A-Sim" or a Chinese aunty. She has transformed from an ordinary woman staying at home working for the family syndicate business into an aerobics instructor, attended and won both aerobic leader and dancing contests. Her transition into a woman with good appearance with modern dressing style making her look younger allows her to enter into other social groups and the group of well educated people and senior retired government officials naturally.

She was well accepted by these new social groups and able to create better social networks of her own.

*"Dress up well but not too striking. Just a little bit of here and there. A little shorter when I attend a social event. Fortunately I basically have a fair skin, so looking much better when I dress up. You can't tell that I am an "A-SimBoh" (Old Chinese lady). I might be a small person, but my shape is not like an "A-SIM". They all believe that as a sister of my big brother aged at 50, I must look like "A-SIM". But when they see my actual body, they wouldn't believe that this is her. A lot of my workers, thinking that I am 50 already and should look like a big aunty, but when they saw me looking so active, then it's not A-SIM at all. I also try not to dress up like A-SIM".*

## **5.2 Life experiences reflecting practices of anti-aging body management as accumulated capital**

Khun Jin, a woman with an experience of a premature aging of the body, has turned to adjust her decaying body by consuming food supplements doubling the amount to fix and improve such pre-aging deteriorations and developing her body from inside out. Besides, she also adjusted her emotional and mental habits by joining volunteer activities such as Youth Buddhist Camp. She believed that internal good health would reflect to outside. Her methods of body management against aging allowed her to develop her life in various ways such as knowledge and information accumulation on the products' quality, becoming an MC and speaker, becoming a volunteer in youth Buddhist camp, having network of friends and society, creating reliability enabling her to extend her network of friends, society and business giving her extra incomes and high profit accumulating position in the direct sales business. Her body management against aging has transformed her aging body into a better body with social and emotional excellences.

### **Critical point of life: the unavoidable start of body care**

At Khun Jin's critical point of life, she could not get up and walk for almost a year leading to her reversed intention to body care on a serious basis. She chose to consume food supplements. Prior to that, she realized herself as a person who

love beauties, dressing up well and put on makeup, but never really paid serious attention to body care.

*"I have a habit of loving all beauties. I love dressing up, but only used the skin care cream for the body".*

### **Development from additional revenue incomes to the lined management of direct sales business**

Khun Jin resigned from being an employee of a department store about 11 years ago. She was looking for a new professional in addition to joining the family business. Her family has a tenement for rent but when people stopped the rents and moved out, she decided to open a beauty salon and barber shop at the tenement. Therefore, she applied for a hairstylist class and was introduced to the course instructor at the admissions desk. While they were talking, Khun Jin was coughing a lot, so the instructor gave her an herbal pastille. From there she had a chance to discuss with the instructor about food supplementary brand as well as the Thai-branded cosmetics which the instructor herself was selling those products. Khun Jin decided to apply for this direct sales business immediately. But on the other hand, she did not complete the hairstylist course because she had to stand all the time for hair dying, so she had to abandon the intention to be a hairdresser.

Before the crisis of her life, the direct sales business was just a sideline business for some extra incomes. But when Khun Jin was suffering from the degenerative disc symptom, she prayed to the spirit of her respectful person who also symbolized the quality of the direct sales brand and made a vow that if she was recovered from this sickness she would seriously work for this direct sales business. Choosing to consume healthy food supplements seriously, it is necessary to eat many kinds of supplements which are costly. So, she has to put serious dedication to make the business become her major source of income enabling her profit sharing and returned incentive from the company. She has increased her accumulative profits to reach the management level in the direct sales business. Therefore, her degenerative body care does not only help her prevent her body from deterioration, but also maintain her healthy body when she gets older. Besides, she also pointed that the incomes returned from eating food supplements has also become her major source of

income enabling her to accumulate the target profits and reach the management level of her line to become both a buyer and a seller. This position in the direct sales business has indicated the high profit margin of the accumulated incentives which can also be transferred this business inheritance to her successors. She said she wanted to pass on this business inheritance to her nieces.

### **Accumulated knowledges and experiences in individual self care, family and business**

The direct sales business activity made Khun Jin want to accumulate knowledge related to health and beauty from the opportunities to be the MC and speaker, the buyer and seller, as well as the management in the direct sales business line leading to all the continued gathering information about health and beauty for 11 years gaining both academic knowledge and self experience from using the products having a slogan of “ Like it, use it, and share it”. This allows her to take care of herself and everyone in the family. As a single unmarried daughter of the family taking care of her 76 year-old mother, she thinks that to take care of the body under the correct academic knowledge and choosing to use the products recognized through various researches would be most effective and efficient. She said that she is so confident in the results from consuming the food supplements which makes her external appearance look good, younger than her actual age as compared to the others in the same age. This happens to both herself and her mother who also eats the supplementary products. “Take care of mom and myself with effective results. When we have 70 year old women standing in a line, my mom would look best”.

*"Mom, at the age of 76, could still walk straight, no sign of humpback. Just when my mom walked up the stairs, she would have some knee pain at the age of 76. In the meantime, my mother's sister who never had the food supplement now becomes humpback with reduced height of 5 cm. So I believe that my 11 years at Nasai (alias of direct sale brand) I can look after myself and my mom satisfactorily".* Going out to a social event, particularly in an alumni reunion party, she would look younger than her friends. Her mother, when compared to her sister, did not look old or have a humpback with less aging symptoms

*"Every time we go to a party, alumni reunion parties, or other events, everyone because of their anxiety, I usually look best among the 8 of us in the group. Six out of eight have babies. Married or unmarried, still don't know how to put makeup, and look old like coming from different generations".*

*"I posted some pictures before I join Nasai (alias) on Facebook. I look much younger now. I am sure it is because of the supplements I ate."*

### **Adjusting healthy body, mind, and emotion leads to extension of broader social network**

After her recovery from degenerative disc, Khun Jin can live a normal life like before. Her mother persuaded her to go for a religious youth Buddhist training camp allowing her a chance of using the principles in the religion in the treatment of various bad habits and tempered mood. After the training she made friends and became a part of the voluntary network of this youth Buddhist training camp. She has turned to working as a volunteer doing volunteering activities such as organizing new years' party for the seniors at hospitals, mentoring at youth Buddhist camp, and tree planting inside the temple.

At the volunteer activities, she would persuade her business team and acquaintances to do good things together which affect their good image among the society establishing trust and expanding networks and circle of friends and acquaintances in a broad way which in a way supports the direct sales business.

Accumulation of physical capital: from pre-aging deterioration to development of physical, mental, and social emotional integrity

Khun Jin perceived that during the last 11 years of food supplementary consumption, her aging body which got decay until a disability stage has transformed and developed continuously accumulated in to a new good physical, mental, social emotional identity. She looked at her good looking and youthful external appearance as a reflection of her internal healthy body with the mental and emotional modification. "I think if we keep our emotions cool, our beauty will glow out from the inside". Food supplements have resulted in the change of her life having modified the whole impair body to a career, incomes and extensive social network growth followed

by a perception of a valuable life as contributor to the society with the career success and being surrounded by better society.

Eating food supplements is the method used by Khun Jin on a regular basis without doing any exercise or using medical technologies against aging. She is highly confident with supplementary consumption from the seeing of effective results from her mother who also takes the products. "My mother at the age 76 is a good example. Wherever I go I feel so proud of her beauty. She is always in the Facebook".

In the past 11 years, the path of choosing the food supplements to her direct sales business career has given her the social opportunities in knowing many people and being accepted by the society more.

*"My house is a factory. If I did not do Nasai (alias) , I would not have a chance to know the self-care techniques to look good like this. A factory girl at a life today...I am about to say, without Nasai (alias) at the age of 52 I must have not been so old at home, no dressing up, no makeup or anything. It is considered fortunate for me to be in another society. Luckily I met the society with a great story to convey to the people you know and love".*

### **5.3 Life experiences reflecting the practices of anti-aging body management as exchanged capital**

Khun Nadia has the life experience focusing on managing physical body since her youth. She could see and emulate the body care from the practice of her mother and the Dancing Arts Institution. To be raised up in the middle of the business, she has learnt how to make an impression and take care of the clients in an image of the owner of the restaurant and the quality of the products and services in her restaurant. When she got married she opened a 5-stars restaurant as a major part of her family income. She has given the importance to the external body appearance using the charming body, the beauty and personality to create attraction and impression to the clients. Youthfulness is the key to success. Body management against aging intentionally from childhood to teenage consistently, as she got older she also felt some unwanted appearance on her body with sagging parts through the gravity. So,

she had to modify the body to regain the youthfulness as the key to her career and family success.

### **Growing through businesses**

In her childhood and teenage life, she grew up with her family restaurant business giving her the experience since she was young. She said when she was 3 years old, she was already in the restaurant collecting tips. When she was 15 she went to America staying and working in her mother's restaurant and had a chance to meet many kinds of people. Her child experience showed her family business giving good things and quality to the clients and even the owner of the restaurant must pay great attentions to service the clients as well as creating happiness to the clients.

*"In America, since 15, I got experiences from seeing many kinds of people working in a restaurant since a young age, our own restaurant in Thailand which belonged to my mother. Since I was 3, I collected tips in the restaurant. Then I went to America before returning to Thailand and opened this restaurant".*

### **Seriousness and intension on taking care of body**

Khun Nadia said the body should be taken care of since childhood and must be done consistently and seriously. This cannot be done at the old age even with a plastic surgery. Khun Nadia takes care of her body from repairing, maintaining, and nourishing the whole body. She compares the body as a house, to be gradually taken care of part by part. So, she uses various types of treatments both the popular culture products and services and using medical technologies on a consistent basis. She thinks that taking care of aging bodies is just like home maintenance. Besides, Khun Nadia also said that some skin treatment technologies such as pushing vitamins and skin nourishment must be done constantly. Once you stop, it would be even worse than before.

*"It's like we have to leave some spaces, not only done once and it's gone. Even when it's done, it doesn't mean it would work a 100% as it needs consistency to polish and scrub. It's just like home".*

*"If you do not think about beauty management, don't start. Because once you start, you can't stop. If you think it's just for fun, but once your skin is treated it*

*would get worse if you don't take care of it. It's like you have opened the door to the skin nourishing, putting the food into the skin. Once the food is finished the skin will wait for more. If you don't want to feed it, don't start unless you really think you can take it seriously".*

### **Using body to attract and impress customers**

Apart from taking care of her restaurant business in finding quality resources for food and appliances, and cleanliness of the restaurant before opening in the evening, Khun Nadia also has to look after her body appearance on a regular basis as the owner of the restaurant. She has to prepare and dress up nicely both hair and outfits. She has to go to a beauty salon for hairdressing and making her appearance to look good and young before managing her restaurant business. Sometimes, she has to sing to entertain the guests and impress them in both her appearance and through songs.

*"I normally arrive my at restaurant around 3 pm for mosquito spraying before opening the shop, not wearing any makeup, checking if everything is well in order, cleanliness, and then go for a hairdo at 5-6 pm".*

### **Charming beauty, personality in exchange to success of family and business**

Khun Nadia with her 5-star restaurant must meet her customers and always prepare for other business expansion. She thinks creating a distinctive personality would lead to business success and profitability as well as to her love and family.

*"Fortunately my secretary used to work as a tour agency. I personally love to travel. So, I plan for this business. It's so challenging and so I even have to improve our personality. So, for this issue I am facing today, all I have to do is to put some beauties into it".*

Khun Nadia recognized the changes in her young body after giving birth as she gets older. She has some undesirable parts of the body with sagging by gravity such as breasts, buttocks and face. She used a wide range of products and services for maintenance and repairs and also uses various medical technologies under a supervision of a clinic physician on a regular ongoing basis to manage her body

against aging and unwanted parts that is sagging by gravity and adjust the body to be youthful as a window of success.

*"Youthfulness is a window to success, that's what I think. You would already win half of it if you smile and have a bright face. Good personality would always support in terms of career, love and family".*

#### **5.4 Life experiences reflecting practices of anti-aging body management as negotiation with anti-aging medical technology treatments**

Khun Maew has a life experience of practicing exercises continuously. She works as an elementary teacher in a governmental school. When she was a new teacher, she was teaching physical education and had a chance to join PE development courses in the period where the trend of aerobics exercise and public sport playgrounds are all over Bangkok was not yet existed. After the trainings she tried to encourage her teacher friends and known people to set up a small group for exercising. Although she faced some obstacles, but she always find a solution to the problem externally and internally and has a discipline in exercising for almost 20 years. Personally she has a good personality and mood in concerning with her career with the creation of recreational activities for the students. She is therefore in good mood and happy in life. When she gets older, she has perceived that she has a body of a happy medium, doesn't look old without any much change. So she doesn't required medical technologies against aging.

##### **Pioneering in exercises**

Khun Maew is interested in exercise since she was a young girl. When she was a new teacher, she had a chance to attend a PE development training course and was given a certificate. Khun Maew therefore has knowledge and skills thus trying to encourage people to join an aerobics exercise group in a public ground. She said at that time there aerobic exercise was not a trendy sport and there was no public sport ground like today, so she has encouraged her friends at school and acquaintances to do aerobics exercise in a group of around 5-6 people at the school in the evening. However, her teacher friends were not interested as they have much works to do.

*"Later, I was able to gather some friends. That's about 20 years back. There was no public sport ground. No one knew how to dance, not so popular. I trained my friends step by step starting from 5-6 people. Later, they started to give me some money for that so, I made around 3,000 Baht a month. Whoever came I would teach. Who wanted to know how to dance has to come. There was no Bangkok sport playground like today. Most of my teacher friends were busy and did not see the importance of this, so initially it was the people in the neighborhoods, then the news spread out".*

### **Finding solutions to barriers to exercise**

Khun Maew found some obstacles in practicing exercises both in the past and at present, internally and externally. In the past where public exercise was not popular and there was no policy for public sport ground it was even harder for her to find a venue for exercise and she even got hinder the use of the facility for group exercise. At present she faces a problem from inside of her body. At a middle age, some postures are not easy to do and could cause injury. But Khun Maew could find the solutions for the problems by herself. She said in the past she used the school where she worked as a place for aerobic exercise in the evening. Later, the management did not allow her to use the place anymore as there was no policy for a public sport ground at that time unlike today where schools are the center of the community like the Bangkok municipality schools at present. "There was no policy of public sport playground allowing school to be the center of the sports for the community". She tried to find a new place and got the venue at a high school nearby by sending an official letter requesting to use the space for exercise with monthly fees signed by all members in the group. "I paid them 200 Baht per month with the letter signed by the member of the aerobic group. Later I also come and dance here. There was no aerobic trainer before. To be a trainer, you must be a qualified teacher".

Khun Maew got some income for being an aerobics instructor every month. After many years she decided to stop as she had regular job and private duties. But she never quits exercise. She has an interest in various kinds of sport. Some of them she did not practice so often and stopped such as swimming. At present she continued doing aerobics for many years, but as she gets older some of the postures

like jumping are not suitable to her body conditions. But she always tries to modify the posture, both in Aerobics and yoga to suit herself and never gives up exercising.

*"For me I know the rhythm, and do not jump. We have to know our capability and should not jump when others are jumping. I would just kick. Yoga is good, strong, but I know that we should know how to do it. At the beginning I did not know and failed, got injured with tendon inflammation. First, I forced too much so there was a lot of tension, but now I just go to a massage."*

### **Discipline, fitness and humorous personality as a routine**

At present, although retired prematurely Khun Maew continues to exercise on a daily basis starting with cycling in the morning in front of her town house. After doing the daily routing functions, she would leave home for aerobics at the public sport ground near her house every evening for the last 20 years. She does yoga every Saturday and Sunday consistently. All these together with her lifestyle working as an elementary teacher with children creating recreational activities and self exposure to the children without being shy, and having fun at the boy scout camping, she therefore has a pleasant personality from her long career of over 30 years.

### **Having medium of a pleasant mood – medical technology treatment not required**

When she got older she perceived herself that she is a medium of pleasant mood, does not look old with unchanged body shape or dressing style. As she is always in a good mood making her look younger than her actual age compared with those at the same age as her. Khun Maew thinks that using medical technology would change the formation of external face shape to look rather funny than beautiful. So, she thinks that she does not require using the medical technology treatment against her aging like Botox injection or plastic surgery. Medical technology treatment should be conducted for important health purposes only.

*"I will not go through any operation if not necessarily required like facial surgery because when you meet someone you know, they would notice the change and it looks funny rather than beautiful. So, I don't want to go through that. People should be as they age, not resisting it. But I also have the feeling that if I have so much money*

*and if the eyes are so sagging, I might have a try (laughing). But I have to make sure that it is safe. I think I have sagging eyes. But I won't try the dangerous one like the mad nose, I won't try. It's not required. We rather do it if it is health concerned."*

The narratives of the four women, each life experience, reflect various practices on anti-aging body management as follows: Khun Oh's life experience reflects the practice of anti-aging body management as passing status to a new higher status having the body transform from future risking body into a new body. "I am not an A-SIM" (old Chinese aunty). Khun Jin's life experience reflects the practice of anti-aging body management as accumulated capital. With her body accumulating capitals from a premature deteriorated body being developed to have a socially pleasant body, minds, and emotions. Khun Nadia's life experience reflects the practice of anti-aging body management as exchanged capital using her body in exchange with the undesirable body having the body modified for youthfulness as the key to her business success. Khun Maew's life experience reflects the practice of anti-aging body management as negotiation with the use of anti-aging medical technology treatment by having self discipline to exercise and have a pleasant personality on a routine basis making her body "a medium of pleasant mood" without requiring any medical technology treatment.

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The research on "Anti-aging body experiences of women in Thai society" was a qualitative research conducted by accessing the data through Ethnographic Approach and the Narrative Approach Methodology with Epistemology according to the basic philosophy of Feminism in accessing the knowledge and reality through the life experiences of women. The knowledgeable people in the viewpoint of feminism are those who are not secluded from the subject of the study as well as those who are being studied. During the narrative process, there were some reflections disclosing the experiences among the researcher as a woman and research participants in an "intersubjectivity" with the objectives to study the experience of senses of body-self and practices of anti-aging body management of women and life experiences of anti-aging in a diverse context of women's life in the Thai society. Those are in order to understand the feelings, thoughts, and subjective perceptions in the act as an agency deciding to choose various practices of anti-aging occurring in the Thai society.

The sample consisted of women with the following characteristics: 1.) a woman in the age range between 35-59 years old 2.) Social status of all the middle class as lower, moderate and upper levels 3.) Active self-care person, exercises, using anti-aging products and services or/and medical technologies. In this study, the researcher selected the research participants on a purposive sampling basis from the selected specific study venues and utilizing the Snowball technique of the researchers' personal social networks such as friends, relatives, and acquaintances on the venues such as medical clinics, one-stop beauty salons, and etc., which already recognized individuals having integrated qualifications according to set-up criteria. Research ethic to protect the right of the research participants were considered throughout the study.

## **6.1 Conclusions**

### **6.1.1 Experience of women's senses of body-self**

Experience of women's senses of body-self occurs when women get older with biological aging process causing natural changes on their body. The findings of this research indicate that women's senses of body-self vary in form of subjective experiences both negatively and positively as follows: 1.Senses of body-self as reckless; 2 Senses of body-self as inferiority complexes and worries.; 3. Senses of body-self as changes of the blood and circulatory system;4. Senses of body-self as unwanted/ undesired appearances.; 5. Senses of body-self as reduction in passion and sexual attractiveness; and 6. Senses of body-self as the medium of happiness and good-spirit.

### **6.1.2 Practices of women's anti-aging body management**

6.1.2.1 The findings to the study specify that the styles and patterns of women stressing on consistent anti-aging body management methods can be divided into 4 groups: 1. Women who stress on self-practice by exercise such as Khun Pom, Khun Oh, Khun Nong, Khun Maew; 2. Women who choose to consume popular culture products rather than self-practice such as Khun Jin consuming anti-aging food supplements from direct sales products; 3. Women who focus on using multiple methods such as Khun Nadia and Khun Luk using a combination of non-surgery medical technology and consuming popular culture products and services, and 4. Women who stress on using non-plastic surgery medical technologies such as Khun Nuan and Khun Fern.

1) The practices of women who stress on self-practice by exercise with the practice of finding a venue to exercise near home for creating discipline and self-control., choose multiple exercises that fit to body conditions and promote both internal and external health., practice of physical training in yoga postures following the trainers' instructions to modify the external appearances and internal sensation., searching, exchanging and sharing health care information for preparation prior to approaching hormone altering age.

2) The practices of women who choose to consume popular culture products rather than self-practice are those consuming anti-aging food supplements from the direct sales products with the practice of reorganizing new life system after life crisis choosing the path of consuming anti-aging food supplements to maintain and restore aging body., selecting the qualifications of food supplements that suit for their aging body and doubling the consumption amount., receiving ,learning and sharing qualifications of anti-aging food supplementary products., lifestyle modifications with the 3 principles- food, fresh air and emotion from the belief that youthful good-looking external appearance is a result of internal young emotion.

3) The practices of women who focus on using multiple methods effectively use a combination of non-surgery medical technology and consuming popular culture products and services. This includes the practices of maintaining and the nourishing feminine body from the young age through the family and school polishing and edification., daily lifestyle looking after the body and shape like a young age: eating, resting, sleeping and exercise., wearing makeup with absolute cosmetics to create youthful appearance as a acknowledged and honorable idol., dress up well in variously styles for personality enhancements and youthful image for sex appeals according to situations., finding information from various sources before making decision., occasionally co-decision making with doctor in using medical technology for treatment., choosing to use numerous medical technologies, but rejecting some medical technologies with dangerous risks.

4) The practices of women who stress on using the treatments of non-plastic surgery medical technologies include Various experimental methods, but non-practicable methods., detecting abnormalities skins that need to be fixed through medical technology equipment., consult with a medical expert known, believe and follow the instructions to solve aging anxiety., searching for deficiency of undesirable external aging signs according to expert officers prior to seeing doctor .,fixing aging skin, facial wrinkles, and deep cheek with popular painful and dangerous medical technologies as per doctor's recommendation“ Botox and fillers injections”., eliminating defects and undesirable aging all over the external face particles using a wide variety of medical technologies., experimenting new innovative techniques that

are not formally approved by doctors who persuaded and confirmed the earlier trial results., “Lift-up sagging facial deformation” using advanced medical technology, more painful and invasive.

6.1.2.2 From the context of the life of women practicing various methods of body management in this study, there are diversities of life contexts and the context of space and determination against aging in various patterns. With the perspective in the dimension of social status and class, the findings imply that the trend of class differences have an impact on the decisions to approach against aging differently. Although class differences in the Thai society are not outstandingly as notable as in the Western society (Amara Prasitrattasin,2007).

In this study, various perspectives have been used in combination of educational levels, professionals, and economical status. The class differences have been categorized into three groups, i.e.,1. ) Lower Middle Class with educational background lower than higher education up to bachelor’s degree level, and professions of semi-professional labor women with a moderate economic status such as maid, former factory employees, employees in a syndicated factory family business, and an early retired teacher who taught elementary school, and etc. 2.) Middle Class with a stable professional and college education and higher than Bachelor's Degree level education such as women working a unit chief of governmental offices, women working in a private sector in a foreign company. 3) A class of women who are not so highly educated both within the vocational degree to bachelor’s degree, but have great financial status as being a private business owner (New Upper Middle class).

Women in the lower middle class group often use self-care methods such as exercise at a public youth center or consuming food supplementary products which can be simply bought in a popular culture products and services such as eating food supplements from a direct sales business. The women in this group tend to focus on physical and emotional health care having the health and temperament as a set of knowledge, i.e., the internal health discourse would consequently affect the appearance of the external body and deciding how to organize the body in a way that is easily accessible and in consideration of their financial status such as exercise at the public youth center. These women often start by seeking the exercise venue from an aerobic court in a public area closed to their houses which can be found in various

districts of Bangkok. Some of the women in this exclusive group choose to consume the food supplements as a method to manage the body against aging that can also generate revenue from the use of such supplementary product as a career. These women become buyers and sellers of the direct sales products allowing them to access to domestic branded food supplements at affordable prices. This is a kind of creating a financial flow and extended network of friends and societies. The women in this group usually do not practice the self-care using anti-aging technology medical treatment for their external image which is costly and more preferred by the middle class women having stable professional careers who often use the anti-aging medical technologies consistently at medical clinics. The women in the new upper middle class on the other hand often use to various methods in combination as they have high purchasing power and claim to have no time to practice the body care which is a routine daily exercise. Therefore, they usually opt for the medical technology along with an option to buy the popular culture goods and services against aging such as cosmetics, food supplements and anti-aging massage device products under a famous international brand. The women in the new upper middle class often focus on the body management to modify the shape and restore the appearance with medical technologies that results in an exclusively detectable external appearance.

### **6.1.3 Women's life experiences with diverse contexts of life**

The findings in this study point out that women's life experience consists of diverse contexts of life through the narratives of 4 women including Khun Oh, Khun Jin, Khun Nadia, and Khun Maew. For Khun Oh's life experience reflects the practice of anti-aging body management as passing status to a new identity with higher status having a transformed body from future risky body to a new physical personality. "I am not an old Chinese aunty", Khun Jin revealed the practice of anti-aging body management through the basic of having physical accumulated capital: from a body with premature deterioration, going through the development and enhancement of virtuous body, mind, emotion and social life. Khun Nadia's life experience reflects the practice of anti-aging body management on the basis of exchanged capital using her body in exchange: from the unwanted/undesired body turning into a youthful body as a window to a business success. Khun Maew's life

experience discloses the practice of anti-aging body management on the basis of negotiation with using anti-aging medical technology treatment with disciplinary body workout and a good personality as a routine making the body a "medium of pleasant mood" which finally not requires using medical technology treatment.

## **6.2 Discussion**

### **6.2.1 Senses of body- self in social and cultural context**

The women's aging senses of body-self are not just a matter of being determined by natural processes but also by the social and cultural determinations governing thoughts, feelings and emotions of women to vary according to the social and cultural individuality. This finally has created a social construction of a set of diverse knowledge on feminine body and elderliness which keeps on changing over time and space.

#### **6.2.1.1 Gender and women's aging senses of body-self**

Womanhood is constructed from social relations and symbolic meaning (Mc Dowell,1999:7,as cited in Siraya Sammawart,2007).Gender of femininity is defined by society as proclaimed by Simone de Beauvoir (1949), " One is not born, but rather becomes a woman." Feminine is a social construction (Siriporn Phakdeephassook,2009).Thai society in the past, the body of a woman was given the significance and values which was often tied to the beauty. The determination of significances of women's features of the body's beauty is different according to the era. In ancient times, it was believed that qualified natures of "Benjakalyani", or the 5 beauties of Thai women, include hair, flesh, bone, skin, and age (Siriporn Phatdeephassook, 2009).Beautiful hair typically refers to shiny black hair like a peacock's fine-looking feather. Beautiful flesh refers to aesthetic texture of lips like a ripe gourd. Beautiful bone means white teeth like a polished conch shell. Beautiful skin refers to a delicate fine skin, no matter what color the skin is. Even dark skin can be considered beautiful if it is neat and clean with rosy healthy complexion. Beautiful age means the firm body and skin from youth till aged (Siriluck Kochanil,2007).

These five features comprise of the information about youthful skin characteristics as well as the shape which is a feature of a body that has long been a key focus of all women. Women's shape should be delicate with waist and curves just like the portrayal of the slim body of the girls in literature from each generation outstandingly indicating the ideal body of a woman. In the research of Somruk (2001) it was indicated that in the past the Thai society valued the perspective of having a slim and slender body, white spotless and radiant skin which had been categorized as standard aspects of beauty and that beauty perception is also associated with the social classes (Somruk Chaisingkananont,2001, as cited in Siriporn Phakdeephassook,2009).

Skin, facial and body shape features therefore are the elements of womanhood which was constructed in the Thai society and culture. Thai women were cultivated and thought from children to take care their individual skin, shape and face. In the society, the women are therefore enthusiastic about beauty. The social activities of women are concerned with beauty and body care (Chulanee Thianthai,2007).The research of Kojchakorn Sareechantalerk (2008) on "Beauty discourse of women in Thai society: Perspectives on multilateral consensus" claimed that the aesthetic elements consist of inner and outer beauty. The first one, outer beauty, consists of body beauties including shape, face, and skin, and decorative beauties (clothing, valuable ornaments, and hairstyles, which in some broad sense, include cosmetics, makeup, and fragrances).The second one, inner beauty, are the mental beauties in the sense of manners, behavior, personality and beauties in skills including the knowledge and educational level, housewife abilities, and etc.(Kojchakorn Sareechantalerk, 2008).But it is also notable that the beauties in different societies are also different. There may be some resemblance, but often different in details. There is no aspect of the internationalization, and it cannot be defined the exclusive nature of absolute beauty. So when it comes to beauty, it is difficult to provide a clearly defined synonymous as stated in a famous phrase of Plato that "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder."

Feminine values usually tend to link with the body beauty. In the Thai society, the values are given to the body beauty with youthful features. When women get older, signs of natural aging unveil the aging body as evident from the external looks that can be clearly recognized. Physical features that indicate the

youthfulness begin to decline and make significant decrease in the woman values due to the physical change according to the age, whereas the values of manhood are linked to the ability, independence and self-control (Siraya Summawart, 2007). The body of a man when he gets older, although there are signs of aging, but the virtues of masculinity does not decrease with age as the body of a woman. In contrary, it indicates that he has more experiences and maturity (Kamjorn Luooyapong, 2005). Men therefore can better accept the natural changes of the physical condition, while women being pressured by the society and culture are trying to maintain the identity of the youthfulness than men (Pinquart and Sorensen, 2001, as cited in Barrett, Anne E., 2004).

#### **6.2.1.2 Social inequality on gender and women's aging senses of body-self**

In most societies, the concept of patriarchy system having the perceptions and practices that prioritize and privilege the male over the female would cause inequality between the individual and in most case men usually take advantages of women. This idea permeates everyday systems and comprehensive way of thinking of the role of behavior in society, both women and men. In the perception of double standard complexity, the society normally discriminates and determines the manhood and womanhood differently. In most societies, men are superior to women leading to an inequality relationship between a man and a woman. Women are inferior to men under the cultural and social structure. So the issue of double standard which is associated with feelings and relations between the genders subsists.

##### **1) Double standard in gender and sexuality**

The body of a woman is linked to gender or sexuality as well. Beauty body represents features that indicate skin, facial, and body youthfulness making women believe that the youthful body beauty creates sex appeals and attentions from the opposite sex. From the cultural cultivation, the relationship of lovers in most societies where men are superior to women, men often want their couples or brides to be younger than them. Besides, the society also grants opportunities for men to have more than a couple or get married multiple times. The love affairs between an aged man and a younger girl tend to be socially acceptable and

are more common than a couple of older woman married with a younger man. (Siraya Summawart,2007).The difference in relationships of a lover couples between a man and a woman has created a feeling of the women to sense that the affection with the opposite sex of their own declines with age. Women have their senses of body-self that their charm to attract the opposite sex reduced. Aging body is therefore the body that is not sexual attractiveness. The charm of a woman body normally leads to opportunities to build relationships. Sex appeals have given some women the opportunities to make a couple and upgraded the social status by getting married to men with high and stable economic status. Some women have the opportunities to create satisfying sex life with a couple and the husband as mentioned by Sontas that the power of women was penetrated from the value of beauty and sex appeal, while the power of men was infiltrated through the values of social status and stability (Wiersma,E.C.,2007).Besides ,Sontas (1978) explained that in a culture that often glorifies youthfulness, women would gain perceptions of being old earlier in the initial period than men. And in the work of McConatha et al.(2003) a survey on American and German women found that women are more concerned about changes of appearances related to age than men. Secombe and Masako Isshi-Kuntz explained finding by the argument that women primarily valued for physical attractiveness and sexuality. However, the interesting study of Conell (1995) and Hearn (1995) provided a different view from other studies which often describe the power of the male gaze superior to women The results showed that the image of masculinity stressed on the importance of physical strength and toughness which become increasingly difficult to maintain and aspire to as a man ages. Such findings could be argued that the much discussed male gaze are becoming empowered by the female gaze. In addition, both male and female are the subject to the youth gaze as well.(Twigg,2004, as cited in Nolan, J. and Scott, J.,2009:148)

Age is the major factor in determining the self perception as well as the interaction with others (Settersten,1999, as cited in Nolan,J.& Scott, J., 2009:134). In psychology age is the subject of development according to the life course and organized the categories of people from childhood, adulthood and elderhood respectively. The life course is defined in general as a pattern and behavior by social expectations of age range.

The contemporary society has valued the importance of the youthful body which is the age range of adulthood that can be productive to society and the power to drive the economy. People in society, thus give the value to people in this age group. Youth is therefore the age group which the society values for both production and consumption. Aging is therefore not desirable to people in society. The aging appearance is accordingly not desirable. In a social interaction in many areas such as the workplace, the women in the workplace must have a good personality with active and lively appearance which is an expression which indicates the ability to make an impression to attract customers and the ability to create products that generate incomes for the organization (Jutamanee Somboonsut,2004, Siraya Summawart, 2007).The middle-aged women approaching the elder age in the workplace are generally devalued in their ability and potential in the role of working women as a stereotype.

An overseas research of Marilyn Pearsal (1997) which studied the status of the elderly women in the foreign countries indicates that the elderly women are more disadvantage compared to men at the workplace, and have the anxiety of being fired or job stolen from the younger people(Jutamanee Somboonsut,2004). As a consequence from the perception that the ages of women is in coordination with gender and sexuality, when women get older the society would expect the role of female gender as a wife, mother, and grandmother. The gender role of some women therefore may fall into to the role of a mother or grandmother posed to obtain respectability than having the passion of attracting the opposite sex.In contrary, the older age of men means gaining more experiences and capabilities. Aging marks on their bodies represents long experience making them more prominent; whereas older women with wrinkles on the face would look obviously older.The maturity would therefore compliment the male for being sexually attractive, whereas women are to be grandmothers (Suporn Kumthongka et. al., 2001).

In addition, in the area of the family, women still need to be fixed with the gender role as lovers or wives in the family who need to create sexual attraction for their couple and husbands as well. A woman might be expected from a variety of gender role expectations including the wife and mother or grandma. The

women's senses of body-self are therefore concerned with the body as personality and elegance according the age range and gender roles in each area.

As mentioned above, women are feeling and have the perception regarding their physical changes in various coordinated dimensions including age, gender, and sexuality. Most societies and cultures have constructed the women's bodies to distinguish whether a person's body is normal, different or unusual.

Women in each period were set to face with diverse social and cultural ideologies of a body standard. This leads to women's absorption of this idealistic perception and feeling toward their own body. In consequence, women have more negative senses of body-self against natural aging which changes according to their own ages.

### **6.2.2 Power, knowledge, and truth: the set of knowledge and practice of surveillance and gaze of dominant social institutions**

According to Foucault, power in the modern era is called the Bio-power controlling the thoughts and actions of people in the society. Although not visible as hierarchical power relations, but seen in form of diffusing not necessarily coming from the top down or from the bottom up. Foucault described such power through the Panopticon approach, "A tower in the prison's centre", a metaphor depicting that the bio-power is like a tower in the middle of a prison with guards watching us, but the detainee could not see if the guards are staring at them or not. Such power is associated with us as we would be forcing ourselves called "Body under the dictation". The bio-power will be related to the regime of truth, that is, we dictate our own self without seeing that power because we recognize that perception which is under one truth.

The regime of truth is like a power mechanism forcing ourselves without seeing the dictator. As explained by Nopporn Prachakul (2004), all powers started with a source. But when the process reaches a certain point, such power becomes anonymous. There is no real owner. After flowing down the large flows in one direction, it circulates in every direction as pervasive in all societies at all levels without a head or a tail. Power becomes a "structural" one that opened the door for many people to play as an actor and the victim frequented alternately. (Nopporn, 2004:23, as cited in Anan Kanchanapan, 2009:73-74).

Woman's body is a field of major power network operation and important space to create meanings (Pimpawun Boonmongkon and Saharaj Kittimahacharoen, 2011) as well as the center of defining discourse (Davis,1995).

Social institutions have constructed a set of knowledge on the female aging body which determines the thoughts, feelings, and emotions of women. This includes the Medical Institutes and the Institutes for marketing and advertising. The products and services under the aforesaid institutions have created the knowledge and the truths with social acceptance without doubt or question. According to Foucault idea(1982), he presented that latent knowledge in form of power is related to the discourse. The given polished-white power has been refined into a form of knowledge on each various topic and it's not a common knowledge, but specific expertise knowledge (Chairut Charoensin O-larn,1999: 26-27).

Medical institutions have a view on aging as an emanation of body disease (Featherstone, M., &Hepworth, M., 1993:311-312, as cited in Kamjorn Louiyapong, 2007).The body of a woman was made to enter into biomedicalization process in all ages of life, including fertility, motherhood, menopause, and etc.(Berger,Gabriella& Wenzel, Eberhard. , 2000). There are numerous new definitions and terms of new diseases from biomedicine as woman's body approaching the menopausal period. The menopause, which used to be just natural matter, has become a disease called Estrogen-deficiency disorder. The clinics for elderly people have been exclusively opened for hormone replacement therapy to replace the defective hormone. Medically menopause is produced mainly as the sign of changing of women in lives. It is a transition from a young to mid-life which is the first stage of aging

There are various advancements of science and medical technology from the development of specialized fields such as the pathology for the elderly, obstetrics – gynaecology, and anti-aging medical pathology in particular. Although there is a more holistic management approach to this, they have to create a series of knowledge of aging body of women in correlation with the disease causes and risk through biomedicalization.

The institutes of marketing and advertising for products and services have been institutionalized with social influences and built a series of knowledge on female physically acceptable values using the standard of youthfulness as an ideal perfect

body. The body in marketing and advertising is a body that does not grow old. Anti-aging has been defined diversely which determine the types of strategy and the differences between anti aging efforts. This includes: 1. Slow down aging 2. Stop aging, 3. Reverse and maintain youthfulness process. For other definitions, it stresses on having longer life as an example of anti-aging in the movement of the society (Binstock, 2004:292). These anti-aging practices can be seen in the popular culture anti-aging products and services. The body of aging women is believed to be declined, deficiency, and deviant from the body of the ideal woman, both in internal and external dimensional image, inconsistent to the standard features on the body of a young girl. Aging body therefore was made to represent the “other” in the society.

Many women whose bodies have changed according to age range under the natural aging process often have the signs of aging occurred in both external physical appearance and internal signs as a matter of the functions of internal organs and feelings. The aging signs from external appearances can cause more anxieties than internally such as dark unhealthy skin without healthy complexion as young people, facial wrinkles and overweight shape with obesity indicating the body of aging person as in a different stage of a youth age. The bodies with identity of aging signs are grouped as the elderly being devalued in the society. At present, aging women would have more negative senses of body-self and try to manipulate their body appearance in different ways to be socially acceptable.

The medical institutions and the Institutes of marketing and advertising of products and services created a set of knowledge and practices of the aging body to be a body tied in both health and beauty. Body or the human body is the perimeter where we can discover not only the traces of past events, but the space where we can see the movement of various forces that act upon the body which is not able to expose itself straight out (Nuttida Maitang, 2012), which was melt and absorbed into the experience of women’s senses of body-self and dominated the thought of people in the society.

### **6.2.3 Practices of women’s body management against aging: the practical networks of power.**

According to Foucault, the power has a characteristic of scattering hidden in all aspects of relationship in the form of "Network of power" and expands covering

throughout the areas of social life. Even the human body that appears to have privacy and be a smallest particle of the society cannot escape from being empowered in any way. The act of "small power" in the practice of everyday life by each individual exists and operates under the cover of the network of power as a local relation of power or the so-called "micro physic of power". The end destination of such power usually acts upon the human body (bio-power) (Foucault,1990:139 – 140, as cited in Chak Phachuphet,2003:145).

Medical institutions conduct the act of surveillance and control from an unequal structural power relationship. Foucault has said in his book "Discipline and Punish" that power in the modern era is not acting upon subject only, but there is another type of power, that is, the "Regulate Power" that make the subject under the regulations forcing individual compliance. According to the governmentality approach (Shikanaru, Tanabe, 2008), medical science is a part of totalizing of regime that has managed and constructed the body to follow the norm or normalization. In contrary, biomedical model is an initial messenger to govern mentality or physical mechanisms that determine and control in Western societies (Faircloth A. Christopher, 2003).

Biomedicine is a medical mainstream in the Thai society providing knowledge through health care and education in the system such as schools, hospitals, mass communication, and etc. to create social discipline and responsibility for self care. Obligations and enforcements in modern society stress on the discipline in the way of a silent mastering by taking control of the human body to dictate human thought and action as needed. This enforcement will be unleashed in form of a force making people think of what the appropriate body shape and behavior should be as opposed to the use of force with a knowledge base of legitimacy (Napaporn Havanon, 2002:5). In the Thai society today, there have been some adjustments of biomedical paradigm of the health system. Health care is focused in a more holistic pattern with an encouragement for the people in Thailand to preserve and promote health through the practices under the policy of Active Aging approach. Aged women are therefore the target group being monitored by the power of biomedicine to be aware of responsibility of self care, preparing prior to approaching old age for the goal that these people are healthier and live longer, reducing cost of health of aging society in the future.

The popular culture products and services define the values of body beauty of women today with the beauty of youthful appearance from skin, face and body. Also, in terms of marketing there is a promotion of "being healthy elderly people" that encourages individuals to rejuvenate their identity according to the concept of living through the increasing ages of life (Bayer, Jeanne Kathy, 2004). Such operation resulted in the formation of popular culture anti-aging across the country penetrating into the daily life (Siraya Summawart, 2007), especially for the products and services through advertising media using indirect power in dictating women to look after their body (Kanchana Kaewthep and Somsuk Hinvimarn, 2008), without aging on almost all parts of the body unconsciously as dictated by the powers through their body.

From the study, it was found that in addition to the surveillance powers gazing at medical science through a series of biomedical knowledge, the biomedical operation also creates power through dictating tools on various spaces especially in the area of medical clinics. In the group of women who choose to manage their body against aging using medical technologies, the women accept to become the followers of the biomedical power operations through discipline power of biomedicine such as normalization technique and classification technique.

1) Technology of Normalization is a practice of the discipline power of biomedicine acting on the female body. The women will be examined for the aging body abnormality including skin, face and body through various devices and technologies. Women's bodies will be checked through medical devices and technologies making them believe that their body has an abnormality and needs fixing, improving or maintaining such as the skin testing and analysis device which classify women's skin to help create skin problems for women. Various skin problems lead to various skin features indicating the range of aging. These medical instruments have conducted surveillance operations using a gaze technique to find a subject invisible to the naked eye which are highly reliable.

Physical aging is measureable, manageable and definable in accordance with the knowledge set of medical science (Wichit Wongwareethip, 2009:165). According to Cartwright It is a technique proposing realistic representation in a form of documentary which presents an image of human representatives in terms of professions in various fields merged into a single piece with the culture created by the

society to describe the aging body and skin as unwanted or undesirable things for women( Cartwright,1995 ,as cited in Wichit Wongwareethip,2009:166). This includes dull and unhealthy skin, wrinkles and deep areas on various parts of the face, and etc. The use of instruments to survey, monitor, analyze and define the meaning to the body is not only through medical science techniques but also cultural practices that permeate everyday life to create conventional standard or classification of the body through the outward aging appearances such as skin, face, and shape, as an opposition to youthfulness. Aging body is therefore abnormal from the standard normality of the youth body. Aging body is therefore considered the “other” in the society.

It should be noted that apart from skin surveillance equipment, there are other modern medical science observing against aging classified into three levels. The first level includes the body examination and measurement of blood pressure, etc. The second level involves examining biochemical level which begins as a special checking in anti-aging science by testing 2 elements: 1. nutrient and vitamins and 2. Level of declining hormones, in order to replace or increase them. The third level is an examination in the genetic level deep down into the Genes level to analyse aging and the risks for diseases at the Genes level (Anongnuch Chavalittamrong ,2008:64-65, as cited in Kamjohn Louiyapong, 2010:278).

In addition to the body of a woman being operated through the investigation by medical science devices or tools, the body of a woman has also been gazed by medical personnel or experts in medical science leading to the process of medicalization by the practices of giving advices and consulting from a set of knowledge of medical treatment technology against aging treatments, both surgical and non-surgical, the operations in a medical clinic or complete beauty treatment institutions, persuasion for the use of medical technology directly by medical staff or the doctor for the detection of unwanted defective appearance, persuasion to use risky, painful, and invasive medical technologies such as Botox or fillers injections.

Doctors and specialists in the area often cited as the first ever trial, citing the results of researches on mechanical operation of the anti-aging technology, and as an expert that was socially acceptable to have sufficient knowledge ensuring quality and safety in using such medical technologies of anti-aging. Medical professionals or experts in the area are parts of establishing the truth and connect the knowledge into

action in (Turner,1996:131) consistence with locality. It is therefore a merging of commentary, author and discipline created (Siraya Summawart, 2007:19).

## **2) Classification**

In the operation of power in the set of knowledge on anti-aging discourse of biomedicine acting on the women's body, the women's bodies will be the target of the set of knowledge of anti-aging through the information from experts in the areas such as medical clinics or beauty institutions. This also includes the information of the products and services through marketing and advertising targeting on a woman's body as well. There is also a classification of youthful and aging body such as the young face is defined from the use of medical technology to lift-up and tighten up the face shape. Apart from facial reformation fixing the sagging parts, the face shape is to be reformed into a V-shaped instead of the U-shaped which is a shape symbolizing the sagging shape of aging. The medical technology, fillers and Botox injections, using laser therapy, radio wave and ultra sound therapy have set a body definition body of the use of medical technologies to help prevent and nourish the skin from aging, including glowing skin with aura, clear and shine, and firm skin. In contrary, aging skin features blotchy aging spots, loosing pores, the wrinkles and various sagging on certain spots.

The information of popular culture products and services against aging and facial, skin and body care through marketing and advertising channels such as food supplementary products and cosmetics also classifies aging body features from youthful body. Undesired aging body includes aging face with wrinkles, sagging bags under the eyes, eyes' marks, deep marks on the cheeks, and sagging chin and neck. In terms of body shape, it covers a body with excess fat on the body parts such as the arms, thighs, calves, chest, abdomen, hips, buttocks, and etc. It also includes belly ring, loosing arms and legs, and sagging thighs, tight, breasts, and buttocks under the earth gravity. The desired body of youthfulness is classified into the body without the above characteristics, but should be fit, firm, and tighten in all parts.

In addition, the operating power also occurs in various areas, including the exercise venue, food supplements, applying cosmetics or using medical technology. There are also direct practices from the women themselves by publishing and

broadcasting including introduction and persuasion of products, sharing information and knowledge of health care, informing the benefits of food supplements, being exemplary idol and counsel to friends which is operating under a format of non-official institution as well. This is a reproduction of power, knowledge, and truth against aging for the existence by the practices of women themselves (Siraya Summawart, 2007).

Foucault has divided the institutions with a power to create knowledge and truth discourse against aging into two groups, namely an official institution or public institution such as the medical institute and academic institution, and an informal or private institution such as family and friends. The difference between the two types of institutions is the result of a reality creation where the public institutions are more reliable and have the control power over human in a broader society as well as more justified power of truth and righteousness in the real practices. The informal institutions often have more flexibility in acceptance limited on only a certain group (Siraya Sammawart, 2007). Women are targeted by the power networks of knowledge and truth under various sets of knowledge / discourse, and practice against aging of medical institutions and popular culture products and services in the society leading to women practicing anti-aging body care by such diverse set of knowledge.

The findings in this study showed that women have a wide variety of body management including simple self-care to treatment by specialists in different areas, that is, women have 4 ways to handle their bodies including women who choose a self-care practice by exercise, women who consume popular culture products rather than self-practice, women using multiple method, and women using a non-plastic surgery medical technology. These diverse sets of knowledge discourse against aging are overlapping among one another, some against each other, some supporting. Women therefore choose to focus on each set of knowledge or discourse of any series differently as well as giving the values and diverse definitions according to the life context of each individual woman. Each woman therefore makes different decision. However, although the set of medical knowledge with the power covering almost every area in the society (Lupton, 1996) and enforcing the power everywhere. as perceived by Foucault indicated that the medical surveillance is an important tool in controlling the human body resulting in becoming a docile body. He also has a view

that a human or an individual has a freedom of choice and self-determination as the actor as well, as the citation that "where there is a power, there is resistance" (Foucault, 1978).

From the findings of this study, life experience of Khun Maew reflects her identity as an agency doing a negotiation to the use of medical treatments technology against aging. She selected the method of body care by practicing self-discipline exercise consistently for many years. Although she found some barriers in exercising both outside and inside the body, she continues to seek various solutions to get to exercise continually. Moreover, the context of her life allows her to have high self-discipline by doing exercise for many years including in his career as she works as recreational teacher conducting activities with students leading to her mental and emotional welfare. She recognized the subjective senses of body -self in a form of "blissful medium" that does not look old, not so much changes. This is an awareness of her individual body aging positively. The blissful medium therefore does not need to rely on the use of medical technology. The use of medical technology has risks and hazards. Besides, she finds that the use of treatment technology for external appearance would look rather funny than elegant. She resisted relying on the end result from the use of medical technology against aging for the external beauty appearance, but saw that there may be treated using medical technology to solve health problems in the future.

#### **6.2.4 Practices of anti-aging body management of women: Social classes and body investment**

According to the concept of Bourdieu, the body in the contemporary society is a body containing the symbolic values which the people in the society use to illustrate the power and reproduce the inequality in the society (Bourdieu, 1980, as cited in Shilling, 1993:127-128). People from each class tend to develop the method of body care differently (Jariya Subchartanun, 2005). From the findings of this study, the moderate to new upper middle-class women focus on the outer beauty or charm having good personality symbolizing of the social class as elite women such as actresses, models or famous people. The moderate to new upper middle class people with high purchasing power tend to focus on external appearances in interacting with

others with body management using medical technology to see the image of youthfulness clearer. The lower class women often focus on the healthy body and internal emotions that result in external appearance. This is the group of women who exercise and do yoga at the youth center and those who eat food supplements from the direct sales business. The middle class women, both moderate and high levels, have the interest in external physical appearance over the lower middle classes.

However, "wherever there is a different in class, there would be an imitation concurrently" (Kanchana Kaewthep and Somsuk Hinvimarn, 2008). The lower middle class women often choose exercises or eating food supplements imitating the anti-aging body rejuvenating like the women in the new upper classes having spending power. But the lower middle class women are concerned about cost reduction on body investment like Khun Pom who does the workout at a public youth center not having to pay like going to a private fitness center. Khun Jin, as another example, eats food supplements and acts as both buyer and seller of a direct sales business under a domestic local brand, which is cheaper than the international brand, making her some return incomes. In the case of Khun Nong, she manages her body by practicing yoga at a public youth center at no cost. Besides, using proper sport outfits with her own personal sport tools exclusively for yoga gives her the feeling of a lady in a high society playing yoga in an expensive private fitness center or yoga institutes. She also has a lifestyle imitating the life of a celebrity according to her knowledge through reading female magazines, such as buying CDs teaching Pilates sport, which is similar to yoga exercises with a principle of yoga and gymnastics in combined. Moreover, in the future, she also wants to try dancing as having a good image and giving better social opportunities too. The body investment of the lower middle class women therefore is both a body investment to maintain the class as well as stepping up to the higher class.

The power of knowledge and truth on the practices of anti-aging which took control of a woman's body has created a body that is a symbolic value which differentiates the class, too. The moderate to new upper middle class women tend to stress on external features of body, skin, and face, which is an external appearance indicating youthful body symbolizing the beauty of a woman that that society values. Besides, the Thai society also sees the beauty of women's skin and shape which

indicate high social status as well (Somruk Chaisingkananont,1995, Kojchakorn Sareechantalerk , 2008).The skin of the upper class people in Thailand must be the skin that is not of the people working outdoor like that of the labor class people. The feature of glowing clear skin indicates the workplace condition of the social elite women in Thailand which often work in the shade, unlike the working class women working in the sunlight (Nattida Maitang, 2012).In addition to the natural aging process, exposure to sunlight is also a risk factor for skin changes resulting in skin aging such as dull skin, groping, dry, blotchy spots or freckles. The women in the labor field have more chance to face the external appearance of unwanted aging skin than the skin that is not exposed in the sunlight.

The skin without aging sings is the feature of beauty of the elite women accepted by the society. Women as an agency are still practicing the search for body management. Under the current consumer capitalist society, the researcher found that the upper middle class women with purchasing power often invest in the body through purchasing rather than an investment to practice with body self. Seeking investment for purchasing against aging can be done in various ways. Some women still chose to use medical treatment technology which is painful and physically invasive. The use of this painful and invasive technology against aging reflects various perspectives to the questions raised by the social thinkers whether this is a freedom of choice or they are being pressed by the gaze of the power of the structure of the thinking system of male domination according to feminist view. From this study, the researcher found that some women such as Khun Luk who chooses to manage her body against aging with the use of painful and invasive medical technologies occasionally represents the identity as the agency of women trying to make the choice of freedom for herself reflecting her individual identity for the body care with the use of medical technology under the set knowledge of "safe medical evolution" trying to find the safest way by searching information from close relatives or reading a magazine.

It can be said that Khun Luk uses a multiple methods against aging with a combination of the use of medical technologies occasionally and finding information from closed reliable relatives as well as making co-decision with the doctor on the use of medical technologies. This also reflects the identity of her hedonism as she is seeking happiness to the expression of self-identity through the use of cosmetics to

decorate her external appearance to look younger than her actual age and look like a celebrity or a model. Her idol image has set samples accepted by the society and friends in becoming a consultant. She has shared all information from her accumulated experiences through various sources from close relatives and magazines to her direct experiences of her body management through the expression of her good looking and youthful external appearances which give her self-confidence and happiness for the transition. In addition, the body investment by expressing women's identity has also altered flowing inconstantly according to the space and times as well.

The study also found that the middle-class women with high socioeconomic status like Khun Nadia have the perception of subjectivity that resists following the traditions or norms in accordance to the social expectations which vary according to the space. It means the women who get older must adjust their body according to their body ages with the image of respectability rather than creating sexual affection. But the women in this group try to negotiate with their outfit to look younger than their actual ages by decorating the body with cosmetics or wearing stylish fashion outfits with various ornaments. These women also define the meaning of their identity expression resisting following norms and gender role expected in the family. This includes dressing up not conforming to role expectation as mother in the area of family, but creating a good personality of youthful teenage in a role model of working women working in the public area of professional that creates success and profitability to the business.

In conclusion it can be said that the power from the set of knowledge and practices of the mainstream medical institutions have cultivated the perception of women in their body management in collaboration with medical technology products and services which create the diverse need and endless desire for women. However, the women still have their identity as an agency to select the practices of the set of knowledge from a particular set of discourses in anti-aging according to the social location and taste under the structure of the inclination of the context of women's habitus itself.

### **6.2.5 Practices of body investment of women: transformation of physical capital**

According to the theory of practices under the concept of Bourdieu, the body is comparable to a kind of capital called "body as a form of physical capital". Physical capital can be converted into another capital.

From the findings of this study, life experience of women reflects various practices of the body management against aging. These women focus on the care of their body using the allocation of money and time to organize their own bodies. Khun Oh practices body management against aging as the transition of passing status to a new identity with higher social status. This is a conversion of physical capital into a cultural capital, social capital and symbolic capital with higher social status. Cultural capital, for example, can be found in the dance class, which is a recreational activity with a higher social status.

Doing aerobic exercise and dance generates social capitals with extensive network of friends and social networks as well as the symbolic capitals of having the honor and reputation from winning the award from a presenter contest or being an aerobic trainer raising up the social identity to a higher level. Khun Jin practices the anti aging body management by accumulating various kinds of capitals and converts the physical capital, both cultural capital and social capital, into economical capitals. Her cultural capitals were accumulated from the knowledge and experience of the products and from being the MC and speaker of the food supplements, as well as the mental and emotional adjustment through the participation of Buddhist youth camp and working with a volunteer group. Social capital is accumulated from extending network of friends and societies as a result of direct sales business and the volunteer group which is accepted in terms of the image of social and cultural capitals accumulation. Khun Nadia practices the anti aging body management in form of exchange capital converting her physical capital into economic capital.

Pay the cost and time for the women's body management is an investment, which led to the physical capital conversion. The conversion of physical capital transforms the capital resulted when the body takes part in work creation or participation of social activities into other forms of capital such as the economic capital including money, goods and services, the cultural capital such as education and

social capital from social network connections that can be traded with products and services of members in that particular network of relation (Shilling 1993: 127 - 128).

It can be summed up that body investment is another way to establish the identity of the owners of that body making them feel good about themselves and recognize the ability to control the body because even if they feel that they lack the ability to control the society which is becoming increasingly complex, but at least they can deal with a certain size, shape and appearance of their body "(Shiling,1993: 7).Someone who refused to invest on the body and let the body decay without any attention to the fix or control it will be seen as a slackening of consciousness of that person. It may also mean the loss of self-esteem and social status (Featherstone.,& Hepworth,M.,1991)However, it is noteworthy that the maintenance of various physical capital formats including the transition, accumulation, and conversion of the physical capital to other types of capitals is full of problems and limitations. The physical capital may have the following limitations: Accumulation and development of physical capital is a complex long-running process taking many years with no shortcuts. Physical capital may have gone along with the owner as human cannot avoid the basic cycle of life that involves birth, getting old, sickness, and death. The perception of the value of physical capital can be modified on its symbolic meaning (Kanchana Kaewthep and Somsuk Hinvimarn, 2008). But even if physical capital is at risk, but the middle and upper class people will still maintain their class interests through the physical capital all the time such as getting dressed, exercise and so on.

### **6.3 Researcher' personal reflexivity**

As the researcher was the person who set the involvement procedures in the research process, the feelings that arise while conducting the research since the researcher was also involved in sharing the conversation in a role of a woman with the age dimensions of being in a middle age, once while having the conversation with the research participants, the researcher was also asked back by some of the research participants such as the image and the age of the researcher. The researcher therefore has shared some experiences in the personal context to let the participants know about the personal perceptions.

The researcher reflexivity during the conversation with the participants has broadened the view of self experience of women who get older occurring in the process of discussions. The additional issues derived from the broadened viewpoints apart from the fixed perceptions include the style of dressing fashion, and personality expression that makes women look old. These were the issues of discussion that allowed the researcher to further discuss about expression of female identity and led to the presentation of data.

#### **6.4 Limitations of the research**

This research has some limitations in the study of women that use the methods to manage the body against aging which does not cover some spaces and methods of anti-aging of women in the Thai society such as women who choose to use biomedicine of plastic surgery, alternative medicine, and natural therapies, and etc. In addition, there are also sub-cultural groups in the practices against aging such as women using Guasa Massage, facial slapping massage, eating secret eccentric recipe, practicing other Buddhist sects or cults as the way of life which are subgroups of marginalized cultural models against aging occurred amid a wave of various anti-aging ranges.

Additionally, the researcher could not access the anti-aging practices of women in all the places and times with participatory observation in everyday life. However, the researcher has accessed through dialogues, narrative and observation in specific spaces, particularly in the context of women is the yoga class and in some circumstances only.

#### **6.5 Recommendations from the study**

6.5.1 There should be social communication channels providing awareness and knowledge of health management against aging body for women in making a decision to choose how to practice their health care in order to healthy. This is in order that women will have opportunities to study the information and understand in all

aspects and see the pros and cons of each method for deciding how to handle the body critically. This is also in order for them to be ready to approach the elder age range with natural changes including using their personal right to bargain with the unequal relationships in the process of health care as well.

6.5.2 More social networking space to women should be opened. In the area of personal capacity promotion women can gain positive life experiences promoting social and cultural capitals to be ready to step into old age with good health. From the results of the study, women have negative feelings about their bodies, and have no social space with clear overview of adapting the change through their body. Therefore, there should be a space to build their creative identity and create cultural capital that encourages women to have more channels to create their valuable meaning in another dimension to be recognized. This is also to create significantly positive social and cultural definition in addition to the pitfall trap of illusions that define only external physical aging changes according to the ideological values of the women featuring youthful values in relation to social inequality. This also includes gathering for creative activities of social movements for women to be more active and leads to deconstruction and redefine a new diverse identity that can modify the severity level of reproductive culture of negative physical aging stereotypes.

6.5.3 Develop and build awareness of business processes for the owners of business, service, marketing and advertising of popular culture and medical science with business and medical ethics as women are always persuaded and encouraged to buy consumer goods and services from the trend of creating non-stop desires through marketing and advertising. So, women are made to be amenable to the consumption of goods and services than they actually need and may fall as a victim of the power through complexity to create a false reality.

6.5.4 Establish women's health care policy with the understanding of femininity. The state is to be responsible for the health on participatory mechanisms such as knowledge management, communication, building partnership networks for investment in health, and more, as the state welfare without letting the public seek health care through marketing and advertising mechanism unnecessarily from the business sector to achieve the goal of good health in the Aging society in the future.

## **6.6 Recommendation for further studies.**

6.6.1. There should have a complete knowledge and interdisciplinary scholars using academic perspective in cognitive science disciplines such as psychology, linguistics, history, economics and communications in conducting the research on the topic of "aging body " related to health with the realization that there are very little researches on this topic in the field of social sciences which tend to have more social theoretical concepts than the practice in terms of research and so on.

6.6.2 There should a study on the experience of aging bodies and how to manage the body against aging from a variety of variables including the variables of age, gender, ethnic, classes, status, and occupation.

Age variables should be studied in the elderly group in each age range to compare the transition of experience. Gender variables can be studied in the topic of masculinity studying the experience of aging body and how to handle the body of the men, whether it is the same or different from women, however, in the context of space and time.

The ethnic variables can look at the exile people group to find a difference or a combination of cultural clash between traditional and new areas of cultures. The diverse social variables in the Thai society can be investigated particularly on social class with poor financial status with limitations in numerous dimensions in accessing to health and health management against their aging bodies. Professional variables can be investigated on career expectations and expression of the body in a cultural context. What is a significant effect on the aging body?

6.6.3 There should be a study on anti- aging body experience and how to manage the body against aging in various social spaces, not only the regional physical areas in the spaces or community in each region only, but also includes other social space that joins the reproduction of the current popular culture in anti-aging including the powerful media space (Intranet, movies, television, radio) such as the group using anti-aging drinks from listening to the community radio, or other social space such as Buddhist community group or religious sects or cult with their practice to maintain their lives against aging. Do these social spaces have a series of knowledge or the culture of producing meanings about anti-aging?

6.6.4 There should be a study of the experience of life and how to manage the body against aging in sub-cultural groups such as women who manage the body against aging using natural therapy, alternative medicine and anti-aging medicine, and etc.

6.6.5 There should be expansion of research issues on anti-aging. Currently, anti-aging has extended to wider circle which is not only to act against aging of the external appearance nearly in every part of the body, but also to be extended to the function and capacity of various important internal systems in the body in a more specific aspect such as maintaining youth in sexual function with choices of methods to handle such as using drugs and hormones, or maintaining the youth in brain ability, and etc.

6.6.6 There should be a study on the experience of an individual that reflects social determinants that create social inequality, such as the state policy to have a prejudice against the elderly and etc.

6.6.7 There should be a study on defining the set of knowledge / aging discourses and anti aging for both the individual level and the macro level from other institutions such as the important state policy disclosing the use of power, the creation of discipline in the body management against aging of the public, the media institution presenting pictures of representation and reflection on the meaning of women's body aging and anti-aging.

6.6.8 There should be a study on the adaptation of usage in health preparation of women, how should the management guidelines and state service, state mechanism in participatory responsibility be in the context of the Thai society because in modern society under the consumer culture, a culture of young people pressing on aging body naturally into the alienation, creating “otherness”, especially for women. Women therefore fall under various set of knowledge / discourse which cultivate a series of ideas that involve in creating problems for the women who must have an individual responsibility to care for their own health and were overcharged by the business sector lacking good participatory social structures to support and promote from the state mechanism, plus a gender sensitive of womanhood in access to health care, protection and maintaining the rights of women.

To study the administrative guidelines of state services and the mechanism of the Government is a study of guidelines that allow public sector to access equally such as having a development area to promote capacity or activities that create cultural capital such as an interactive activities to share health problems, having an information and communication resource in aging health care, having the channel for solving public safety concerns in terms of morality and ethics from entrepreneurial businesses, products and services, the state mechanism coverage of health services budget for the health promotion. The administrative guidelines of the state services and state mechanisms as mentioned above must find the proper answers that fit the context of the Thai society.

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## **APPENDICES**

**APPENDIX A**  
**ISSUED FOR CONVERSATION TO WOMEN**  
**AS THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS**

1. General Informations of research participants
2. How do you feel about your bodies which naturally body change according to increasing age ?
3. How methods of body management which you do for taking care your bodies.?
4. How do you learning in taking care your body from?  
(your friends,doctors,mazgazines,advertisements of products and services)
5. Which is the methods of body management do you concern that its suitable and continuous to make you look good and younger.
6. Could you tell about your event or experiences (such as felling ,thought and perception) about previous and post using active methods of body management for good looking and younger
  - 6.1 body management by using medical technologies  
(for medicine doctor)
  - 6.2 body management by exercises (For Yoga instructor)
  - 6.3 body management by consuming and using Popular culture products and services (owner full beauty salon, owner Thai cosmetic product? Medical Clinic)How are?
7. Could you tell about your event or experiences about your daily life ,works or businesses, hobbies and review your past, present lifestyle and planed future.
8. Could you tell the other your experiences related to anti-aging body management which you would like to sharing to the researcher ?

**APPENDIX B**  
**QUESTIONS ISSUES FOR INDEPTH-INTERVIEW**  
**OF KEY INFORMANTS**

1. General information's Key informants
2. Could you tell your experiences in finding to women who use the methods of body management to her aging bodies?
3. Could you tell the complaints of women who come to meet you to consult her aging bodies, to modify her aging bodies?
  - 3.1 the medical technologies (For Doctor)
  - 3.2 the exercises (For Yoga Instructor )
  - 3.3 the consuming and using popular culture products and services (For owner Full beauty salon, For owner Thai medicine cosmetic products)
4. What are the methods which you provide , suggest to women in body management to modify her aging bodies?
5. How are the methods of body managements which your treatment, suggestion, solving to women for against- aging
  - 5.1 body management by using medical technologies (for medicine doctor)
  - 5.2 body management by exercises (for Yoga instructor)
  - 5.3 body management by consuming and using Popular culture products and services ( for owner full beauty salon, owner Thai cosmetic product? Medical Clinic)
6. Could you tell the other your experiences treatment related to anti-aging body management which you would like to sharing to the researcher ?

## **BIOGRAPHY**

<b>NAME</b>	Miss Patcharee Niamsri
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<b>PLACE OF BIRTH</b>	Bangkok, Thailand
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