

## Has plastic surgery made these beauty queens all look the same? Koreans complain about pageant 'clones'

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South Korea's growing obsession with plastic surgery became apparent when pictures of a group of aspiring beauty queens posted online prompted claims that cosmetic procedures have left all the contestants looking the same.

Pictures of the 20 Miss Korea 2013 finalists were posted on Reddit fuelling speculation that many of them had undergone surgery and prompting users to criticise the Asian nation's growing trend to go under the knife.

South Koreans currently have more plastic surgery than in any other country according to recent figures, with the craze particularly popular among 19 to 49-year-olds.



**Beauty queen hopefuls: A picture of the Miss Korea 2013 hopefuls went viral after a Reddit user posted it online claiming that plastic surgery had left all the finalists with the same look**

All of the women vying for the crown of Miss Korea 2013 have dark, perfectly trussed hair, either tumbling over their shoulders or neatly tied up, pale skin, bright eyes and a perfect bright white smile.

The popularity of surgery, particularly among the young, has been blamed by some on a desire to look more 'western' fuelled by an obsession with celebrity culture.



And their apparent similarity prompted Reddit user ShenTheWise to post their pictures online, suggesting that many of those vying for the Miss Korea title this year have had similar surgery.

He captioned the image: 'Korea's plastic surgery mayhem is finally converging on the same face.'



The post saw more than 3,000 people comment in response, debating the merits of widespread plastic surgery.

Reddit user HotBrownie, who claims to hail from Seoul, said: : 'Those women in fact do look unnervingly similar and yes, Koreans think so too.'

'This is called the Korean plastic face look. In certain areas of Seoul, you would think all the women are sisters because they look so similar due to same surgeries.'

'Without the plastic surgery, Korean women are very diverse looking and easily can be told apart.'



**Debate:** Many questioned the wisdom of plastic surgery and blamed an obsession with celebrity culture for an upsurge in procedures in the country

'The surgery takes away their individuality and uniqueness and its sad. Most are beautiful without it but telling them that their Korean ethnic features are in fact lovely is as effective as screaming at a brick wall.



**Stunning:** Two of the Miss Korea 2013 hopefuls are pictured

'They wont believe you because they've been brainwashed to think westernization of their features is superior, I don't think they want to look white, but a mix of white and Asian and definitely less Korean.'

Another Reddit user, Forevertraveling, added: 'I live in Korea and older women complain how girls don't look Korean anymore because of all the plastic surgery.

'It's so common to the point if I meet a girl, I just assume she has had something done.



**Beautiful:** A montage of all of the contestants for Miss Korea 2013 was posted on Reddit

'Girls here consider eye surgery just like using make up. '

But others on the social networking site said that all the pictures served to prove was that there is a 'cultural divide' between the east and west in terms of plastic surgery.

HerpDerpDrone commented: 'Western women want to exaggerate their features with plastic surgeries (fuller lips, bigger boobs, bigger butts) while Asian women want to refine their features (smaller chins etc) so there is definitely a cultural divide when it comes to plastic surgery.'

The pageant sparked controversy last year when pictures emerged of winner Kim Yu-Mi before she had undergone plastic surgery, with many claiming that cosmetic procedures give contestants an unfair advantage.

The student revealed her plastic surgery secret after photos emerged of her looking very different at school, but she said she hadn't misled anyone.

But she defended her crown telling the Korean media: 'I never said I was born beautiful.'

South Koreans have more plastic surgery than any other nation according to figures released in January.

Those in the Asian country have more treatments per members of the population, with one in every 77 turning to the knife or needle.

The figures, from the International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons (ISAPS), show that in 2011, 15 million people across the globe turned to plastic surgery to enhance their looks.



**Miss South Korea Yu-Mi Kim admitted having cosmetic surgery saying: 'I never said I was born beautiful'**

While the popularity of cosmetic surgery in South Korea may come as a surprise to many, the industry there is in fact booming.

Last year, 20 per cent of women aged 19 to 49 in the capital city of Seoul admitted to going under the knife.

One of the most popular surgical procedures is double eyelid surgery - which reduces excess skin in the upper eyelid to make the eyes appear bigger and make them look more 'Western'.

It is believed that the rise of the country's music industry is behind the boom, and many patients visit clinics with photos of celebrities, asking surgeons to emulate American noses or eyes.

Singer PSY, whose song 'Gangnam Style' became a global hit, said his record label had urged him to get plastic surgery.



**Outspoken: South Korean rapper PSY said that his record label urged him to undergo cosmetic surgery**

Content Questions:

1. What does "HerpDerpDrone " say about the "cultural divide when it comes to plastic surgery"?
2. What percentage of 19 - 24 year old women in Seoul admitted to having plastic surgery?