

Effect of Local Cosmetic Brand's Global Images on Domestic Consumers' Purchasing Decision

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Abstract

This research was carried out by setting hypotheses on recognition of the global image of the research subject, a domestic cosmetic brand and consequent quality of the brand, reputation of the brand, purchasing decision, influence of images of expanded countries and their correlations to investigate what effect the global images of local brands practically have on domestic consumers' purchasing decision. The analysis results show that overseas expansion of the research subject brand has positive influence on the brand possessing global images. However, it can be seen that the quality of the brand has much larger influence on the reputation of the brand than the images of global brand. In addition, the images of the expanded countries have influence on purchasing decisions but the global images based on the expanded countries did not have much influence on purchasing decisions. Therefore, it can be seen that global images based on high levels of brand reputation and quality are requirements of a most competitive brand than images of the expanded countries in forecasting likelihood of purchase.

Key words : brand equity, brand quality, global image, purchasing decision.

I. Preface

Cosmetic products in modern life are a part of culture products to consistently maintain beauty and skin health and are closely related to the daily activities of modern people as their worth as tools of realizing the everlasting dream of beauty increased. Cosmetic products of which necessity is highlighted in lives of modern people are industry emphasizing personal taste unlike other consumer products and promising business that can create high added value by utilizing precision chemical industry and state-of-art science.

Domestic cosmetic market has been growing steadily for the last fifty years and various attempts

have been in progress to improve competitiveness of cosmetic brands since the market began to open in 1990's. Especially, interests in global brands are increasing as markets are globalized and global marketing strategies are actively introduced to companies in 2000's. As global consumer culture became the standard, competitions between local brands and well-known overseas brands intensified in markets of various countries and the importance of globalization of brands is underscored more in this process. In practice, many multinational corporations prioritize the brands with global potentials in their brand portfolios.

In addition, research results show that brand equity increases if a brand is recognized as a global brand as global consumer culture proliferates.

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Duncan & Moriarty (1997) stated that giving a global image to a brand was a very powerful means to increase sales and granted more value to the brand. In addition, Fredman (1999) stated that values of global brands come from consumers' ascent of class consciousness of perceiving themselves as a part of global consumer class by purchasing brands with global images and the global images of a brand perceived by consumers give the corresponding brand a superior image to consumers than other brands. Aaker(1995) and Kapferer (2004) proved the marketability of global brands by studying advantages and values of global brands.

In domestic studies, Na only compared imported brands with global images and domestic brands manufactured domestically with domestic distribution channels and Kwon (2000) researched the effects of global images of imported brands on consumers and derived the results showing that only the global images of imported brands had positive effects on consumers' purchasing decisions. Studies on global images and consumers' purchasing decisions following overseas expansions of domestic brands are lacking.

Therefore, this study attempts to investigate the effects of global images from the overseas expansions of domestic cosmetic brands accelerating full-scale on domestic consumers' purchasing decisions. Specific research goal is to first, analyze cosmetic purchasing behaviors of survey subjects, second, investigate whether consumers recognize global images of domestic brands and whether the perceived brand satisfy necessary conditions to be accepted as a global brand and third, enlighten whether the global images of the recognized domestic brands actually influence consumers' purchasing decisions.

II. Theoretical Background

1. Brand Image and Brand Equity

Brands have played an important role in markets for a long time but it is twentieth century when they are recognized as an important factor in market competition. Since then, brands escape

one dimensional realm of product distinction and expand into more specialized and specific realms. According to Aaker, brands are more than the products themselves and if products mention areas, characteristics, usages, qualities and functional benefits then brands must define in addition associations to organizations, uniqueness of brands, symbols, relationship with consumers, emotional/ self-expressional advantages, user images and place-of-origin effects.

Brand image is good or bad feelings towards a brand of a specific company or a belief in a brand and signifies consumers' psychological structure system created from combinations of good and bad feelings towards the products themselves and various information related to the products. Especially, consumers' images towards a brand have great effects on purchasing decisions and they are especially influenced by discriminatory images created by companies. When consumers have good images of particular brands, the consumers express their preferences by purchasing those products when the necessity arises, by recommending them to others or evaluating them positively.

In addition, many scholars agree to place-of-origin effect, that is, that the image of the place-of-origin country can be a part of the image of the product as a whole. Heslop and Papadopoulos discovered that country's image and nationals' image had very significant effects on variables other than prices and values of the products and summarized that such influence acted advantageously or disadvantageously in evaluations and purchasing of the products. Lee (2003) states that country images are a kind of prejudice having consistent influence on consumers and it is because consumers use country images as a surrogate indicator for all images of the product in purchasing a product. Therefore, it can be seen that brand images related to the place-of-origin play a significant role in dominating a market especially in competition with other brands.

J. P. Jones defined brand equity as "products providing added values as well as functional values and evaluated by consumers to be worth pur-

chasing." Aaker (1995) defined it as "the total value of assets and liabilities connected to a brand and its name and symbol" and Keller (2001) defined it as a preferable marketing effect developed due to a product or a service having a brand; high logo preference, market share or profit. Factors that compose brand equity can be classified into five; brand loyalty, brand name recognition, quality of products perceived by consumers, images associated with brand and other monopolized brand equity (Aaker, 1995). In addition, recognition and association are affected when perceived quality improves, symbol marks increase recognition and recognition, familiarity and perceived quality affect brand loyalty.

2. Global Brand

Global brand refers to a brand which has existed in a region or a country spreading to and being used in other regions or countries (Choi, 2004). They have characteristics of strengths in home country market, regional balance in sales and mainly satisfying demands of similar consumers. Most global brands focus on particular product categories and standardize demands of similar consumers. Especially, well-known global brands provide advantages of realization of economy of scale, low marketing cost, increased buying power, maintenance of consistent brand image and unified marketing activities in production and distribution for consumers and companies (Hwang, 2003).

Moon (2003) stated that emergence of global brands are perceived as intangible assets which greatly influence sales and survival of companies as power brands and global brands bring absolute trust in product quality to consumers and realize premium share prices for investors when companies need to increase revenues by selling in markets far away from their own major product sale markets due to unified globalization of the world and regional economy.

From the reasons stated above, global brands can produce superior results than other brands. That is, global brands have larger brand equities and larger values are created by applying global brands than the other case. Therefore, global brands

with positive images and high recognition from numerous consumers all over the world need to be nurtured to increase value of a company.

3. Current Status of Domestic Cosmetic Market

The scale of the domestic cosmetic market has shown a quantum increase rate during the last decade and is forecasted to grow further. Such dramatic market growth is due to growing out of female consumers in 20's and 30's that have been absolute part of cosmetic consumption and recently increasing consumption by teenagers. Especially, growth of markets for male cosmetic is playing a large role in the growth of the domestic cosmetics market.

According to the research by Jang (2003), the domestic cosmetic market is world top ten in scale at 5.6 billion including imported cosmetics. However, domestic cosmetics yet rely more on importing than exporting and the export markets are limited to United States, France, China and a few Asian countries. Domestic cosmetic companies started to intensify expansions to overseas markets in order to escape increasingly difficult business environment of the domestic market. Due to these efforts, cosmetic exports of domestic cosmetic companies have shown increasing trend for several years and the number of exporting countries is also increasing. Such overseas sales increase of domestic cosmetic companies is analyzed to be due to improvements in brand images from Korean fever in Asian markets and prompt analysis of overseas market trends and reaction to them by localization strategies of the companies.

However, it is urgent to seek new breakthroughs as trade deficits of cosmetic products deepens and the domestic cosmetic market has reached the saturation point. Therefore, efforts to explore overseas markets and diversify export markets to various countries are necessary as a direction for improvements.

III. Research Methods and Procedures

1. Sample Selection and Data Collection

Subject products for this research were limited

to cosmetic brands manufactured by domestic manufacturers, sold domestically and in two or more foreign countries, with three or more years of experience in overseas markets and securing recognition domestically and individually in each country. Among the subjects, Laneige by Amore Pacific which was determined to be the brand most suitable for corroborative research was selected as the subject product. Ages and genders of survey subject consumers were focused on females in their 20's to investigate purchasing decisions and their factors of the consumers active in cosmetic consumption. 250 questionnaires were distributed and collected and 227 questionnaires showing good-faith answers were used. Reliabilities of evaluation categories were verified with SPSS 12.0 and correlation analyses and multiple regression analyses were performed for the data analyses.

2. Hypothesis Formation

1. Brands sold in foreign countries that are not manufacturing country (Korea) will have positive (+) effect in the global images.

2. Recognized global images of domestic brands will have positive (+) effect in the brand qualities perceived by consumers.

3. Recognized global images of domestic brands will have positive (+) effect in the brand reputations perceived by consumers.

4. Perceived images of the expanded countries by domestic brands will have positive (+) effect in the consumers' purchasing decisions of the brand.

5. Recognized global images of domestic brands will have positive (+) effect in the consumers' purchasing decisions of the brand.

IV. Research Results and Analyses

1. Reliability Analyses by Factors and Correlation Analyses among Variables

Analyses of important major variables in this research which are global images, brand qualities, brand reputations, purchasing decisions and reliabilities of expanded country images showed Cronbach's α coefficient of global images to be 0.864, Cronbach's α coefficient of brand qualities to be 0.825, Cronbach's α coefficient of brand reputations to be 0.828, Cronbach's α coefficient of purchasing decision to be 0.849 and Cronbach's α coefficient of expanded country images to be 0.695. Therefore, variables to be evaluated showed very high reliability of over 0.80 except for expanded country images. In correlation analyses among variables performed to test hypotheses, most variables had statistical significance in 0.01 significance level.

2. Cosmetic Purchasing Behaviors of Survey Subjects

The results of study of survey subjects' cosmetic purchasing behavior before testing each hypothesis are shown in the following tables. Averages and standard deviations of the question number 1 regarding cosmetic purchasing behaviors are shown in the <Table 1>. Averages and standard deviations regarding purchasing tendencies show even averages between 2.26 and 2.68 and standard deviations from 0.979 to 1.215, showing high reliability in each question.

In the next <Table 2>, 16% of the survey subjects responded that they prefer global brands very much and 40% responded that they prefer

<Table 1> Averages and Standard Deviations of Each Questions Regarding Basic Purchasing Tendencies

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1-1	227	1	5	2.53	1.075
1-2	227	1	5	2.51	1.094
1-3	227	1	5	2.26	0.786
1-4	227	1	5	2.67	0.979
1-5	227	1	5	2.68	1.215

〈Table 2〉 Preferences for Global Brands in Purchasing Cosmetic Products

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	37	16.0	16.0	16.0
	2	87	40.0	40.0	56.0
	3	53	24.0	24.0	80.0
	4	36	15.5	15.5	95.5
	5	14	4.5	4.5	100.0
	Total	227	100.0	100.0	

〈Table 3〉 Current Purchase of Global Brands

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	40	17.5	17.5	17.5
	2	83	38.0	38.0	55.5
	3	55	25.0	25.0	80.5
	4	34	14.5	14.5	95.0
	5	15	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	227	100.0	100.0	

global brands above average when purchasing cosmetic products. That is, it can be seen that 56% of the total survey subjects prefer global brands.

In the 〈Table 3〉, 17.5% of the total respondents were shown to purchase only global brands and 38% to prefer global brands very much in the question regarding current purchases of global brands.

Therefore, 55.5% of the total survey subjects were shown to use mainly global brand cosmetic products currently. In addition, 12.5% were very satisfied with the currently using products and 55.5% were mostly satisfied in questions regarding the satisfactory level of the currently using

brand products as seen in 〈Table 4〉. Therefore, 68% of the total survey subjects were seen to show positive responses to the products they are currently using.

In response to questions regarding continuous use of currently using brands, 9.5% showed very strong repurchase decision and 39.5% showed positive repurchase decision. Therefore, total 49% of the respondents will use currently using products again as seen in 〈Table 5〉.

In response to questions asking whether they mainly use department stores when purchasing cosmetic products, 48% of the respondents answered agree (27%) and strongly agree (21%) but

〈Table 4〉 Satisfaction with Currently Using Products

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	30	12.5	12.5	12.5
	2	118	55.5	55.5	68.0
	3	58	26.5	26.5	94.5
	4	13	4.0	4.0	98.5
	5	8	1.5	1.5	100.0
	Total	227	100.0	100.0	

〈Table 5〉 Continuous Use of Currently Using Brands

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	24	9.5	9.5	9.5
	2	86	39.5	39.5	49.0
	3	61	28.0	28.0	77.0
	4	47	21.0	21.0	98.0
	5	9	2.0	2.0	100.0
	Total	227	100.0	100.0	

〈Table 6〉 Preferences for Department Stores in Purchasing Cosmetic Products

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	47	21.0	21.0	21.0
	2	61	27.0	27.0	48.0
	3	46	20.5	20.5	68.5
	4	58	26.5	26.5	95.0
	5	15	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	227	100.0	100.0	

somewhat (20.5%) and disagree (26.5%) were also very high as shown in 〈Table 6〉. It can be seen here that purchase of cosmetic products is being made in various locations.

For a reference, top five brands from questions regarding what cosmetic products are mainly used currently were Clinique (12.5%), Lancome (10%), Hera (10%), Estee Lauder (6.5%) and The Face Shop (5.5%) out of 41 brands and the research subject, Laneige showed 4.5% usage rate.

Summarizing the above, it can be seen from the survey subjects' cosmetic purchasing behaviors that global brands are preferred when purchasing cosmetic products and global brands are actually being purchased in significant amount. In addition, it also can be seen that they are satisfied

with currently using brands, plan to continue purchasing the brands, prefer department stores for purchasing global brands but purchase cosmetic products in various locations in practice.

3. Hypotheses Testing

1) Recognition of Global Images of Domestic Brand

In order to test the first hypothesis, the correlation between question number 4-4 asking if consumer recognized overseas expansion of the brand improved the reputation of the global image of the research brand and the global images was tested with correlation analysis.

The results of the correlation analyses show

〈Table 7〉 Correlation between Images of Brands Sold Overseas and Global Images

		Global Image	Question Number 4-4
Global Image	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2 tailed)	.	
Question Number 4-4	Pearson Correlation	0.484(**)	1
	Sig. (2 tailed)	0.000	.

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed).

global images of brands sold overseas at 0.484 of positive correlation which is statistically significant at 0.01 significance level. Especially, *P*-value is found to be 0.000 in <Table 7> which also shows statistically significant correlation. Therefore, hypothesis 1 which states that brands sold in foreign countries that are not manufacturing country (Korea) will have positive (+) effect in the global images can be considered accepted.

Following <Table 8> is the results of the correlation analyses between global images and brand qualities, brand reputations, likelihood of purchase and expanded country images.

2) Relation between Recognized Global Image and Perceived Brand Quality

Correlation analyses were performed to test the second hypothesis which stated that recognized global images of domestic brands would have positive (+) effect in the brand qualities perceived by consumers. The results in <Table 8> show recognized global images of brands at positive correlation of 0.429 with brand qualities. This is statistically significant at 0.01 significance level and especially, *P*-value is found to be 0.000 which also shows statistically significant correlation. There-

fore, hypothesis 2 assuming positive (+) effects of recognized global images on perceived qualities is also accepted. This is shown to be the identical result as the research by Aaker (1995) and Keller (2001) on brand equities. It can be seen in the researches by Bae (1997) and Lee (1998) that foreign products are evaluated high in their qualities especially in the domestic market. Brands with global images are evaluated positively in the research by Na and it has been identified in prior researches. Therefore, it can be also seen in the results of this research that if global images are created on certain brands, those products are determined by consumers to have good qualities.

3) Relation between Recognized Global Image and Brand Reputation

Correlation analyses were performed also to test the third hypothesis which stated that global images of recognized domestic brands would have positive (+) effect in the brand reputations perceived by consumers. The results in <Table 8> show recognized global images at positive correlation of 0.390 with brand reputations. This is statistically significant at 0.01 significance level and

<Table 8> Result of Correlation Analyses between Abstract Conceptual Variables

		Global Image	Brand Quality	Brand Reputation	Likelihood of Purchase	Expanded Country Image
Global Image	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2 tailed)	.				
Brand Quality	Pearson Correlation	0.429(**)	1			
	Sig. (2 tailed)	0.000	.			
Brand Reputation	Pearson Correlation	0.390(**)	0.696(**)	1		
	Sig. (2 tailed)	0.000	0.000	.		
Likelihood of Purchase	Pearson Correlation	0.187(**)	0.671(**)	0.667(**)	1	
	Sig. (2 tailed)	0.008	0.000	0.000	.	
Expanded Country Image	Pearson Correlation	0.304(**)	0.500(**)	0.552(**)	0.453(**)	1
	Sig. (2 tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	.

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed).

P-value is found to be 0.000 which also shows statistically significant correlation. Therefore, it can be seen that the hypothesis 3 is also accepted and recognized global images of domestic brands would have positive (+) effect in the brand reputations perceived by consumers. This is shown to be the identical result as the prior research by Heslop and Papadopoulos (1993) stating that the images of the place-of-origin countries can represent the images of the whole products.

However in <Table 8>, brand qualities show 0.696 value for brand reputations at 0.01 significance level and have stronger correlations. Therefore, it can be seen that the most important part of the product image is actually the brand qualities even though place-of-origin and various other associated images apply to the product images.

4) Relation between Expanded Country Image and Purchasing Decision

Correlation analyses were performed between the expanded country images category and likelihood of purchase category to test the fourth hypothesis which stated that perceived images of the expanded countries by domestic brands would have positive (+) effect in the consumers' purchasing decisions of the brand.

The results show recognized positive correlation value of 0.453 between the two variables which is statistically significant at 0.01 significance level. *P*-value is found to be 0.000 which also shows statistically significant correlation. Therefore, it can be seen from <Table 8> that the hypothesis 4 which states that perceived images of the expanded countries by domestic brands will have positive (+) effect in the consumers' purchasing decisions of the brand is accepted. This supports the theory of Schiffm & Leslie (1992) stating that many consumers reach certain conclusions before searching other information about products when there is little experience or information about the products with the country images being appearing as halo effect. However, the correlation between the two variables is thought to have resulted somewhat low as Laneige already has solid images as a domestic brand and as the

expanded country images are not considered to be included in developed countries.

5) Relation between Recognized Global Image and Purchasing Decision

Correlation analyses were performed between the global images and likelihood of purchase variables to test the fifth hypothesis which stated that recognized global images of domestic brands would have positive (+) effect in the consumers' purchasing decisions of the brand. The results in <Table 8> show positive correlation value of 0.187 which is weak but statistically significant at 0.01 significance level. However, *P*-value was shown to be 0.008 and it is seen that high correlation does not exist. However, it is seen that reputation and quality of the brand have greater effect on likelihood of purchase than global images with 0.667 and 0.671 shown for likelihood of purchase and brand reputation and brand quality, respectively, at 0.01 significance level. However, analyses for the hypothesis testing show that recognized global images of domestic brands have weak but positive (+) effect on likelihood of purchase and the hypothesis 5 can be seen to be accepted.

It can be verified from the results of the correlation analyses between the conceptual variables in <Table 8> that global images have positive (+) effect on brand qualities and brand reputations. It can be verified that global images have strong positive (+) effect on likelihood of purchase indirectly by affecting brand qualities and reputations even though the degree of direct effect on the likelihood of purchase is small. This can be verified again in <Table 9>. The last eigenvalue explains 13% of constant deviations, 4% of expanded country image deviations, 49% of brand quality deviations and 94% of brand reputation deviations. This suggests that somewhat close dependencies exist between brand qualities and brand reputations.

4. Effect Analyses of Likelihood of Purchase by Expanded Country Images of Domestic Brands

As stated previously in the hypotheses testing

<Table 9> Result of Collinearity Diagnostics through Multiple Regression Analyses

Dimension	Condition Index	Eigenvalue	Variance Proportions				
			(Constant)	Expanded Country Image	Global Image	Brand Quality	Brand Reputation
1	4.909	1.000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2	0.039	11.248	0.02	0.06	0.96	0.02	0.02
3	0.025	13.927	0.35	0.07	0.00	0.46	0.02
4	0.016	17.472	0.51	0.83	0.03	0.04	0.02
5	0.010	21.647	0.13	0.04	0.00	0.49	0.94

$p < 0.05$

a. Dependent Variable : Likelihood of purchase

section, recognized global images of domestic brands have direct or indirect positive (+) effects. Effects of levels of expanded country images on each conceptual variable and final effects on likelihood of purchase were investigated by controlling the levels of expanded country images in order to investigate the moderation effects of expanded country images of domestic brands on likelihood of purchase.

The results show that the expanded country images offer little help in forecasting the likelihood of purchase at 0.05 significance level. Expanded country images have positive (+) effect on purchasing decision as tested in the hypothesis 4 but it can be seen that expanded country images of domestic brands do not have much effects on likelihood of purchase when other conceptual variables are controlled and compared. That is, it is verified that the factors affecting purchasing decisions of consumers are brand qualities or brand reputations regardless of expanded country images being high or low. It is verified again that global images have positive (+) effects of brand qualities or brand reputations indirectly. Therefore, it is seen that expanded country images of domestic brands are not significantly important factor in the effects of recognized global images on purchasing decisions.

Examination of the study with above hypotheses testing shows that first, overseas expansion of the research subject, Laneige and acquisition of global images by the brand. It is seen that due

to this, domestic consumers also have the idea that global brands have qualities and reputations above a certain level. However, the research results also show that brand qualities have greater effects on brand reputations than the images as global brands. Finally, it is seen that expanded country images affect purchasing decisions but the results of multiple regression analyses show global images based on expanded country images does not have much effect on purchasing decisions. Therefore, it is seen that global images based on high levels of brand reputation and quality is a factor of most competitive brand when forecasting likelihood of purchase.

V. Conclusion and Suggestion

This research was to study conditions for domestic brands to acquire brand power everywhere domestically and in overseas based on consumers' approval in domestic market in order to succeed as global brands. Therefore, Laneige by Amore Pacific with the most successful overseas expansion was studied to reveal whether the brand conveys global images and satisfies conditions to be approved as a global brand. Research hypotheses were tested to see whether the recognized global images have effects on consumers' purchasing decisions.

The results of the study revealed that global images can be a very important source of competitive advantage and purchasing decision can

be increased by recognized quality and reputation improvement through recognized global images of a brand. However, the study result revealed that the global images through the expanded overseas country images could not influence consumers' purchasing decisions of domestic consumers. It is thought that only qualities and reputations tested and approved solidly will have greater effects on consumers' purchasing decisions and grant the brand with strong competitiveness. Especially, recognized qualities and reputations are thought to be the best advantage with strong defensive power against other competitor brands as they cannot be easily mimicked or created in a short time.

However, existing brand images were found not to be ignored as the images as global brands had positive effect on reputations and qualities of products and positive (+) effects on practical purchasing decision but in a small degree as the images prior to the overseas expansion of the brand influenced the brand images in reality. In addition, good quality and reputation as global brands should be focused on more than expanded overseas country images in terms of global images that affect practical purchases as expanded country images had positive effects on consumers' purchasing decisions but only in a small degree.

Recognition of global images is the focus of qualities and reputations as seen by the fact that major multinational companies are top companies in global market share of cosmetic industry. Especially, quality and reputation have greater effects on purchasing decisions in cosmetics than other industries as cosmetics have direct effects on human skin and it is also high value added industry. Therefore, the importance of active advertisements of images and reputations suitable for the quality and the brand towards consumers domestically and internationally, through which the efforts to strengthen the global image itself should be emphasized in order to succeed in overseas expansion and have greater effects also on domestic consumers instead of focusing merely on releasing high price and high function products.

However, the study was done on relatively limited class of consumers. Therefore, future re-

searches should increase possibilities of generalizing hypotheses by extracting various samples in various regions and age groups. In addition, it can be pointed out that not all brands with established global images through overseas expansions are studied in selecting the brands to be researched. Therefore, the future research direction is more detailed effects of global images and investigations on their relevance through studies on relevant target age groups for global image marketing proceeding to overseas expansions to various countries. It is suggested that studies are necessary on conditions of a competitive power brand by comparing global images of overseas brands present domestically and global images of domestic brands expanded overseas.

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