BRAND IMAGE BETWEEN ASIA AND EUROPEAN COSMETICS: VIEWS OF CONSUMERS IN UBON RATCHATHANI PROVINCE, THAILAND

[1]A-NUSARA KAEWSENA, [2]NARA HUTTASIN, [3]TAWAMIN KRUASOM

[1,2,3]Faculty of Management Science, Ubon Ratchathani University, Thailand
E-mail: a-nusara.ka.60@ubu.ac.th

Abstract - Cosmetic products play important role in consumers 'daily life. The objective of this study was to investigate the attitudes of brand image between Asia and European cosmetics**.** The qualitative approach was employed for this study**.** The ten key informants living in Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand were purposive selection on the criteria of having and not having experience in both Asia and European cosmetics at least three months**.** An in**-**depth interview by 1 to 1.5 hours with tape recording was hold**.** Content analysis was used to analyze and interpret data from interview**.** In findings, Asia cosmetic brands seem influential to previous users' review, price, packaging and skin appropriateness. However, the users in European cosmetic brands concern with skin color and quality. Brand image such as functional benefit, emotional benefit and self-expression benefit plays important role towards using Asia or European cosmetic brands.

Keywords - Brand Image, Cosmetic, Asia, European, Consumer

I. INTRODUCTION

Cosmetics have been finding since the ancient time till the present. They have found in ancient Egypt, China and India. Greek is the first pioneer who separate cosmetics and medicine together. Normally, cosmetics are daily used and categorized into three types such as skin care, perfume and facial make-up.
For many women, cosmetics are used daily. Cosmetics promote their better personality, images and personal concerns. They involves in human lives hugely. The variety of price and quality is found in cosmetic market. The target market is traced even the economy plays down. The customers still concern their personal, health and image in a society.

Euromonitor (2017) found that there was not market death in Thailand following higher growth by 6.5 percent or 154,000 million baht in 2016. Thailand market seems to be the biggest market in Asian country. In fact, in 2016, the make-up cosmetics are expanded at 7 percent or market value is by 21,000 million baht. The proportion of cosmetic products can classify in face, lip gross, eyes, and nail at 56, 26, 17 and 1 percent respectively.

In the present, Thailand cosmetic market has been influenced by Asia brand as Korea and Japanese, and European brand as French, Denmark, and German. Not only cosmetic that play important role to consumers, music and fashion are also driven. It is therefore a high competitive in cosmetic market between Asia and European brand are occurrence to reach higher market share. With the lack of study in this circumstance, this study aims to investigate the attitudes of brand image between Asia and European cosmetics.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Brand Images

It is inside figure occurring by the consumers to a product as in brand, trade mark, or even a logo. Jaijoon (2014, cited in Kotler, 2003) summarized that brand image is the overview of a product or service created positively by marketers. It links to positive impression and memory of consumers. Brand image can establish in several ways such as experience creation, memory, or preferable impression into a firm, product or service. Brand image is referenced from name and/or logo. Images are identified through manufacturer, origins, personnel, or even a dealer firm. The consumers select a cosmetic product from positive brand images.
According to Thanakhulchai (2001, cited in Kotler, 2000), brand image is derived by the inside impression into a brand, or trademark. It creates through advertisement, or sale promotion to distribute brand characteristics. There is no need to have same image for a product came from the same company. It depends on identification a positioning and differentiation strategy.
In the conclusion, images are the over view of beliefs, thoughts, and impression onto a thing. Attitudes towards action for a thing related with brand image (Kotler, 2000). Direct and indirect experiences are preferable to narrow attitudes towards subjective knowledge to interpret a meaning of a thing or even an image (Boulding, 1975). Similarity of Robinson and Barlow (1959), inside pictures of a person onto a firm came from both direct and indirect experience or even story telling by someone are indicated as brand image.

2. Brand Identity

Tunshevavong (2011, cited in Aaker, 1996) states that brand identity is the relationship among brand

association. Brand identity indicates to what may come and derive to consumers. It helps to promote brand image. The value proposition is employed from brand image such as functional benefit, emotional benefit and self-expression benefit.

Brand identity is classified into tangible and intangible component. The four categories are formed as;

1. Brand-as-Product: it defines into product scope, product class, product attributes, quality and price, use occasion, users, and country of origin.
2. Brand-as-Organization: it indicates into organization attributes that concerns with customer focus, environmental concerns, technological commitment, innovation, and corporate governance (Saritvanich, 2001).
3. Brand-as-Person: it refers to a lively person who drives to brand personality, and brand customer relationship.
4. Brand-as-Symbol: a symbol affects to memories of consumers as recognition and recall. It causes by visual imagery, metaphor and brand heritage.

3. Value Proposition

Netinan (2011, cited in Aaker, 1991) argues that brand image can drive functional benefit, emotional benefit and self-expression benefit. The value is proposed through brand-customer relationship. A brand could identify into brand personality, life style, product attribute and product features.

III. METHODOLOGY

The qualitative approach was employed for this study. The ten key informants living in Ubon Ratchathani province, Thailand were purposive selection on the criteria of having and not having experience in both Asia and European cosmetics at least three months. An in-depth interview by 1 to 1.5 hours with tape recording was implemented. Content analysis was used to analyze and interpret data from interview. Tape transcript interpretation with professionals, advisors, and data feeding back to key informants to verify their opinion were employed following triangulation method.

IV. RESULTS

By an in-depth interview, the results show different attitudes to the consumers between Asia and European cosmetic brand.

1) The attitudes of only using Asia cosmetic brand: The reviews, price, packaging and skin appropriateness play more influential to the consumers.

" I bought Korean products from many reliable reviews on the internet. Later then, more impression occurred after using."

"[…] With the cheaper price of Asia cosmetic product makes up happy to buy it more than the expensive brand from Europe."

"I do love Asia packaging. It's so cute and seen high class for me."

"[…] for my easy allergenic skin, I think that Asia product make me more comfortable to use."

2) The attitudes of only using European cosmetic brand: The skin color and quality play more influential to the consumers.

"[…] my skin color is matched to European cosmetic more than Asia."

"European brand provides more skin colors that I can select suited to my skin type and color."

"I have a problem with some component in cosmetic. European cosmetic indicates clearly all ingredients, so it makes me confident in the quality of it."

"Even the price is high; the long day applied makes me confident to continue use with the perfect quality."

In brief, Asia cosmetic brands seem influential to previous users' review, price, packaging and skin appropriateness. However, the users in European cosmetic brands concern with skin color and quality. These attitudes indicate to brand image such as functional benefit, emotional benefit and self-expression benefit.

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

Brand image such as functional benefit, emotional benefit and self-expression benefit plays important role towards using Asia or European cosmetic brands. In detail oriented, Asia cosmetic brands seem influential to previous users' review, price, packaging and skin appropriateness. However, the users in European cosmetic brands concern with skin color and quality. The figure 1 shows the conceptual framework summarized from the present study.

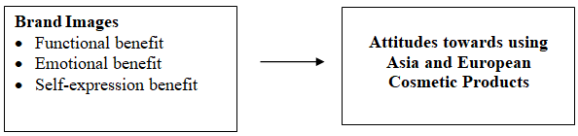


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework (Authors)

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