



Korean Brand Origin under French-Inspired Positioning: A Qualitative Semi-Systematic Review of Paris Baguette's Market Entry Opportunity in Thailand

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Received 03 July 2026; Received in revised form 20 July 2026

Accepted 24 August 2026; Available online 1 September 2026

Abstract

This study examines Paris Baguette's market entry opportunity in Thailand as a case of Korean brand origin under French-inspired positioning. Using a qualitative semi-systematic literature review with thematic synthesis and conceptual framework development, the study integrates literature on country-of-origin, Korean branding and Hallyu, bakery café experience, and international localization with official business and institutional sources. The synthesis suggests that Paris Baguette's Korean origin can be a strategic but partly hidden asset because the brand name and bakery identity may activate French or European associations more strongly than Korean origin. French-inspired positioning may support premium quality perception, but country-of-origin ambiguity can create confusion unless Korean origin and French-inspired bakery cues are connected coherently. The synthesis identifies six literature-based themes: Korean brand origin as a hidden asset, French-inspired positioning as a quality cue, ambiguity as risk and opportunity, Thai K-lifestyle familiarity, bakery café as lifestyle experience, and balanced localization–Koreanization. The study proposes a conceptual framework and six literature-based propositions suggesting that Paris Baguette's opportunity may depend on combining Korean lifestyle appeal, French-inspired bakery quality, and Thai market adaptation. It offers an integrative conceptual contribution to country-of-origin and Korean branding literature and provides literature-informed recommendations for Korean food-service brands entering Southeast Asia.

Keywords

Korean brand origin, country-of-origin ambiguity, Paris Baguette, bakery café, market entry strategy

Introduction

Background of the Study

South Korean brands have become increasingly visible in international markets. In the past, the global image of South Korea was often linked to large industrial firms, electronic products, and automobiles. More recently, however, Korean brands and Korean-related products have become more visible across consumer-oriented sectors, including entertainment, beauty, food, fashion, lifestyle retail, dining, and service experiences (Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, 2025). This shift reflects the broader influence of Hallyu, or the Korean Wave, which has moved beyond cultural content and is increasingly associated with international demand for Korean consumer goods, particularly food, beverages, and other non-durable products (Jin et al., 2024).

Paris Baguette provides a relevant case for examining this issue. Although its name and symbolic cues suggest a French-inspired bakery image, Paris Baguette is rooted in South Korea and operates as a global bakery café brand within SPC Group's food-service portfolio (Malaysian Investment Development Authority, 2022; Paris Baguette, n.d.-a). Its business model combines bakery products, brewed beverages, café service, and everyday bakery café consumption (Paris Baguette, n.d.-b). The brand's planned expansion into Thailand through a master franchise arrangement with Berjaya Food indicates the growing regional ambition of Korean food-service brands in Southeast Asia (Berjaya Food Berhad, 2024).

Thailand is a meaningful market for this case. The U.S. Department of Agriculture reported that Thailand's foodservice market was projected to reach approximately USD 35.4 billion in 2025, supported by store expansion and tourism recovery (USDA Foreign Agricultural Service, 2025). Bangkok also has a visible urban café culture, where specialty coffee businesses are shaped by craft, creativity, lifestyle concepts, and visually attractive store presentation (Azavedo & Gogatz, 2021). At the same time, Thai consumers are familiar with Korean culture, with Korean food, music, beauty, and dramas being visible categories of Hallyu popularity (Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, 2025).

These conditions create an opportunity for Paris Baguette to position itself beyond a standard bakery. However, the brand also faces a strategic challenge. Its Korean corporate origin may be valuable in Thailand, but its French-inspired name and positioning may lead consumers to associate the brand with French, European, or broadly international meanings because foreign-language brand names can activate implicit country-of-origin perceptions (Charinsarn & Speece, 2025). This makes Paris Baguette an interesting case for analyzing Korean brand origin under French-inspired positioning in Thailand's bakery café market.

Research Problem and Research Gap

The main research problem of this study lies in the tension between Paris Baguette's Korean corporate origin and its French-inspired brand identity. In this study, such tension is understood as country-of-origin ambiguity, where consumers interpret a brand through multiple and sometimes competing cues, including brand origin, language, product style, ownership, and symbolic positioning (Chen et al., 2021; Charinsarn & Speece, 2025).

Country-of-origin ambiguity is important because country-related cues can shape perceived quality, credibility, authenticity, and purchase relevance (Chen et al., 2021; Riefler, 2020). Existing country-of-origin studies often examine brands associated with clearer national images or product-country images, and may not fully explain cases where brand origin, brand name, and consumer interpretation are layered across different countries (Serrano-Arcos et al., 2021).

Korean branding and Hallyu studies have mainly discussed cultural content and its influence on consumer attitudes and Korean-related consumption (Chae et al., 2020; Jin et al., 2024). Less attention has been given to Korean-origin brands that do not directly present themselves through Korean names or obvious Korean cultural symbols. Paris Baguette therefore provides a useful case for examining how Korean brand origin can be strategically understood when presented through French-inspired positioning in a foreign market.

Although previous studies have provided important insights into country-of-origin and brand origin, Hallyu-related Korean branding, service experience, and localization strategy, these areas have often been discussed as separate streams of literature (Chae et al., 2020; Chen et al., 2021; Hong et al., 2023; Jin et al., 2024; Kandampully et al., 2023; Mandler et al., 2021; Serrano-Arcos et al., 2021). The theoretical gap addressed in this study is not the absence of country-of-origin research, but the limited integration of these perspectives in explaining a Korean-origin service brand that uses foreign-inspired positioning in a host market. Therefore, this study does not claim to develop a new country-of-origin theory. Its contribution is to integrate country-of-origin ambiguity, Korean branding and Hallyu, bakery café experience, and localization strategy into a case-based conceptual framework for understanding Paris Baguette's market entry opportunity in Thailand.

Research Objectives

1. To examine how Korean brand origin may influence Paris Baguette's market entry opportunity in Thailand.
2. To analyze how French-inspired positioning may create country-of-origin ambiguity for Paris Baguette.

3. To synthesize literature on country-of-origin, Korean branding, café lifestyle consumption, and market entry strategy through a qualitative semi-systematic literature review.
4. To propose literature-informed marketing recommendations for Paris Baguette in Thailand.

Research Questions

1. What role does Korean brand origin play in shaping Paris Baguette's market entry opportunity in Thailand?
2. What role does French-inspired positioning play in creating country-of-origin ambiguity for Paris Baguette?
3. What does the literature suggest about how Korean brand origin and French-inspired positioning shape Thai consumer perceptions?
4. What literature-informed marketing strategy can be recommended for Paris Baguette in Thailand?

Literature Review

Country-of-Origin Effect and Brand Origin

Country-of-origin effect refers to the way consumers use country-related information to evaluate products, brands, and services in international markets. Country image and product-country image remain important because consumers often connect products or services with the reputation, competence, culture, or perceived expertise of a particular country (Serrano-Arcos et al., 2021).

Brand origin is closely related to country-of-origin, but the two concepts are not always identical. In global markets, consumers may evaluate a brand through several country-related cues, including brand origin, country of manufacture, ownership, product category, and marketing communication (Chen et al., 2021).

Country-of-Origin Ambiguity

In this study, country-of-origin ambiguity refers to a situation in which consumers receive country-related cues that do not point to one clear national origin. A brand may be owned by a company from one country, use a name associated with another country, sell products inspired by a different cultural tradition, and operate in a foreign consumer market. In such situations, consumers may construct meaning from several cues at the same time, including brand origin, language, product style, ownership, and symbolic positioning (Chen et al., 2021; Charinsarn & Speece, 2025).

Recent international branding research also indicates that brand country-of-origin can work together with perceived brand globalness in hybrid positioning strategies, rather than functioning as a separate cue (Hong et al., 2023). Empirical evidence further suggests that brand origin misperception or non-identification can weaken brand equity compared with correct brand-origin identification (Tseng et al., 2022).

Paris Baguette reflects this type of ambiguity. Its corporate origin is South Korean, but its name and bakery symbolism suggest French or European associations. For this case, the issue is not simply whether the brand is Korean or French in consumers' minds. The more important question is how this layered origin cues can be organized into a coherent market position. This makes the case useful for examining how brand origin, symbolic naming, product style, and host-market interpretation interact in international food-service branding (Chae et al., 2020; Charinsarn & Speece, 2025).

Korean Branding, Hallyu, and Lifestyle Consumption

Korean branding has increasingly been shaped by the global visibility of Hallyu, or the Korean Wave. Hallyu originally gained attention through Korean dramas, music, films, and entertainment, but recent evidence suggests that its influence has expanded into Korean consumer goods, including non-durable goods, processed household food, and beverages (Jin et al., 2024). In many markets, Korean culture does not only create entertainment value. It can also shape how consumers perceive Korean-related products, services, and brand experiences through the broader formation of K-brand image (Chen et al., 2025).

Hallyu connects products with cultural meanings. Korean cultural content can shape consumer attitudes, national image, acceptance intention, and social connectedness among Hallyu-related audiences (Chae et al., 2020; Laffan, 2021). Korean branding may therefore operate through direct cues, such as Korean food or K-pop, and indirect cues, such as store atmosphere, product design, service style, packaging, digital communication, and lifestyle experience (Kandampully et al., 2023).

Thailand is a relevant context because Thai consumers have shown strong familiarity with Korean culture. Korean food, music, beauty, and dramas are visible categories of Hallyu popularity in Thailand (Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, 2025). For Paris Baguette, Korean origin may work as a second layer of meaning that supports lifestyle positioning, rather than as an obvious surface identity.

Bakery Café Experience and Thai Urban Café Culture

Bakery cafés should be understood as part of a wider experience-based foodservice market. Rather than being evaluated only through bakery products, a bakery café can be examined as a service setting that combines products, beverages, store atmosphere, service interaction, seating space, and visual presentation (Mora & Ueasangkomsate, 2023). This format is relevant to contemporary consumer behavior because consumers often evaluate food-service brands through both perceived product quality and the broader experience created by atmosphere, service, and brand interaction (Kandampully et al., 2023).

Thailand provides a meaningful context for this type of consumption. In Bangkok, café culture has developed through specialty coffee businesses, lifestyle-oriented store design, craft-based product presentation, and visually attractive spaces (Azavedo & Gogatz, 2021). Café-hopping intentions among

Gen Y and Gen Z consumers are also influenced by lifestyle patterns and marketing factors such as product, physical characteristics, location, and service process (Amornsittinon et al., 2025).

International Market Entry and Localization Strategy

International market entry is a key issue for food-service brands because the expansion of a restaurant or bakery café concept involves both operational control and local market adaptation. Franchising is often used in food-service internationalization because it allows a brand owner to expand through a contractual business format while relying on local partners to support market knowledge, regulatory understanding, location development, and business networks in the host market (Bretas & Alon, 2021). Recent research on restaurant franchises also suggests that market selection is shaped by market attractiveness, geographic expansion logic, and the early-stage internationalization process of franchise firms (González-Márquez et al., 2023).

International food-service brands also need to balance standardization and localization. Standardization helps maintain brand consistency and global recognition, while localization becomes necessary when consumer taste, dining behavior, cultural meanings, and competitive conditions differ across markets (Liu et al., 2022; Mandler et al., 2021). International marketing strategy therefore requires fit between the firm's global brand system and the local market environment (Poulis, 2024).

Conceptual Framework

Based on the literature review, this study proposes a conceptual framework for understanding Paris Baguette's market entry opportunity in Thailand. The framework begins with two main brand cues: Korean brand origin and French-inspired positioning. Korean brand origin may provide cultural familiarity and lifestyle relevance because Thai consumers are already exposed to Hallyu and Korean-related consumption (Chae et al., 2020; Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, 2025). In contrast, French-inspired positioning may operate as a premium quality cue through the brand name, bakery style, and visual identity.

When these two cues appear together, they may create country-of-origin ambiguity because consumers may interpret the brand through Korean, French, European, or broadly international meanings (Charinsarn & Speece, 2025; Chen et al., 2021). In this framework, country-of-origin ambiguity influences Thai consumer interpretation, including perceived authenticity, quality, lifestyle relevance, trust, and market fit. The outcome is Paris Baguette's market entry opportunity in Thailand.

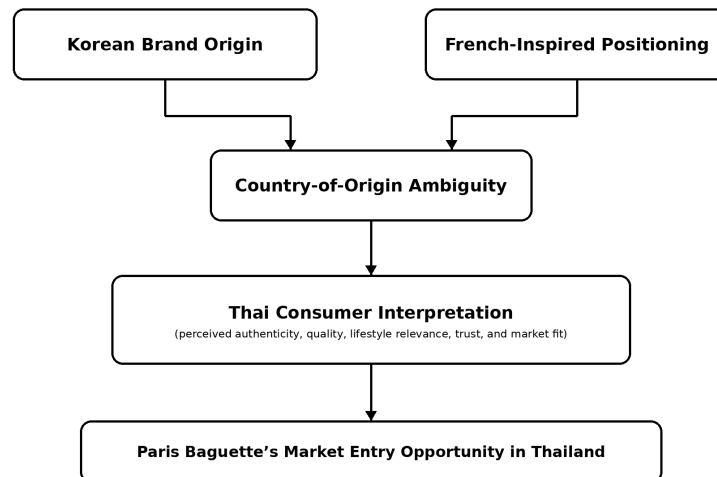


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework¹

Research Propositions

Based on the literature review and the proposed conceptual framework, this study develops six literature-based research propositions. Since this study uses a qualitative semi-systematic literature review, these propositions are not presented as statistical hypotheses or direct empirical findings about Thai consumers. Rather, they serve as theory-informed statements that guide future investigation into how Korean brand origin, French-inspired positioning, country-of-origin ambiguity, Thai consumer interpretation, and localization strategy may shape Paris Baguette's market entry opportunity in Thailand.

P1: Korean brand origin may strengthen consumer interest when it is communicated as a source of lifestyle meaning and cultural familiarity rather than as a purely factual corporate origin.

P2: French-inspired positioning may enhance consumers' perception of Paris Baguette as a premium bakery café brand when it is supported by consistent product quality, store experience, and visual communication.

P3: Country-of-origin ambiguity may create consumer confusion when Korean origin and French-inspired positioning are not clearly connected within the brand's communication and experience.

P4: Country-of-origin ambiguity may become a strategic advantage when Paris Baguette is interpreted as a Korean-global bakery café that combines French-inspired bakery quality with Korean lifestyle appeal.

¹Contextual factors, including Thai K-lifestyle familiarity, urban bakery café culture, and balanced localization–Koreanization strategy, are treated as market-context conditions that may shape Thai consumer interpretation and Paris Baguette's market entry opportunity in Thailand.

P5: Thai consumers with higher familiarity with Korean culture may respond more positively to Korean-origin communication, especially when such communication is connected with café lifestyle, visual experience, and social media-friendly consumption.

P6: A balanced strategy that combines Korean lifestyle appeal, French-inspired bakery quality, and Thai market adaptation may strengthen Paris Baguette's market entry opportunity in Thailand.

Research Methodology

Research Design

This study employs a qualitative semi-systematic literature review with thematic synthesis and conceptual framework development. This design is appropriate because the research question draws on several related but distinct streams, including country-of-origin, Korean branding and Hallyu, bakery café experience, franchising, and localization strategy. Rather than attempting an exhaustive review of one narrowly defined field, the study integrates evidence across these areas to examine Paris Baguette's market entry opportunity in Thailand. The review nevertheless applies explicit search, selection, and synthesis procedures to maintain transparency and coherence (Simsek et al., 2023).

Data Sources and Search Strategy

Academic literature was identified through Scopus and publisher databases, including ScienceDirect, Emerald Insight, Taylor & Francis Online, SAGE Journals, and ThaiJO. Searches focused on combinations of terms related to "country-of-origin effect," "brand origin," "country-of-origin ambiguity," "Korean Wave," "Hallyu marketing," "Korean branding," "bakery café," "café experience," "restaurant franchising," "market entry," "standardization," and "localization." The search concentrated on publications from 2020 onward, while earlier works were retained only when they provided necessary conceptual foundations. Candidate studies were checked through publisher pages, DOI records, and available academic metadata.

Official company, government, and institutional sources were used separately to establish case facts, including Paris Baguette's corporate background and menu, Berjaya Food's Thailand expansion announcement, Hallyu-related public information, and Thailand's foodservice market context. These sources supported factual context but were not treated as peer-reviewed academic evidence.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Academic sources were included when they were relevant to at least one central concept of the study and were published in credible peer-reviewed outlets, with priority given to Scopus Q1–Q2 journals and TCI Tier 1 journals. Sources also needed to provide sufficient conceptual or empirical information for

interpretation. Studies were excluded when they were duplicates, outside the research scope, focused only on technical or operational issues without consumer or market relevance, or lacked verifiable publication details. Blogs, Wikipedia, informal webpages, and promotional materials without official or academic support were excluded. Official business and institutional documents were included only when their authorship and organizational source could be verified. The selection process followed a purposive but explicit sampling logic suitable for management review research (Hiebl, 2023).

Screening Process

Records were screened in stages. Titles and abstracts were first reviewed for relevance to the research questions. Potentially relevant studies were then assessed through available full texts, publisher abstracts, DOI records, and verified publication metadata. Duplicate, weakly related, and unverifiable records were removed. Because this study uses a qualitative semi-systematic review rather than a PRISMA-style exhaustive systematic review, the screening process does not claim full coverage of all publications in each database. Instead, it reports a transparent source selection record and final source pool used for thematic synthesis and case analysis. The final manuscript retained 20 academic sources that directly informed the thematic synthesis and conceptual framework. Three methodological sources were used to support the review design, thematic synthesis, and literature review sampling logic. Six official company, government, and institutional sources were used to establish case-specific facts. These official sources were not treated as peer-reviewed academic evidence but were included to support the business case.

Screening / source category	Number	Role in the study
Academic sources retained for thematic synthesis and conceptual framework	20	Used to develop themes, propositions, and conceptual interpretation
Methodological sources retained	3	Used to support semi-systematic review design, thematic synthesis, and sample selection logic
Official company, government, and institutional sources retained	6	Used to establish case facts and market context
Total references retained in the manuscript	29	Final source pool used in the revised manuscript

Table 1. Summary of Literature Screening and Source Pool²

² The review is semi-systematic and case-based. Therefore, the table reports the final source pool used for thematic synthesis and case analysis rather than a PRISMA-style exhaustive database retrieval count.

Data Extraction and Thematic Synthesis

Information extracted from the selected sources included publication details, research context, main concepts, principal findings, and relevance to the proposed framework. Academic studies provided the main evidence for conceptual relationships and theme development, while official sources supplied case-specific facts. The evidence was coded around Korean brand origin, French-inspired positioning, country-of-origin ambiguity, Hallyu-related lifestyle consumption, bakery café experience, and localization strategy.

Thematic synthesis followed an iterative process. Initial codes were developed from recurring concepts and findings, related codes were grouped into broader categories, and the categories were refined into six themes. These themes were then connected to the conceptual framework and research propositions. This approach enabled evidence from different research streams to be interpreted within one coherent case analysis (McMahon et al., 2022).

Synthesis Validation

A study-to-theme check was used to confirm that each theme could be traced to relevant academic or official sources. The conceptual relationships and propositions were also checked against the extracted evidence, followed by a reverse review to ensure that the principal sources were represented consistently in the literature review, results, discussion, and recommendations. Table 2 summarizes the principal studies and official sources supporting each theme. This process was used to reduce unsupported interpretation and maintain alignment across the article.

Theme	Principal academic / official sources	Contribution to theme
Theme 1: Korean brand origin as a strategic but hidden asset	Chae et al. (2020); Jin et al. (2024); Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (2025); Paris Baguette (n.d.-a)	Supports the argument that Korean origin and Hallyu-related familiarity can create lifestyle value, while Paris Baguette's surface identity does not directly signal Korean origin.
Theme 2: French-inspired positioning as a premium quality cue	Azavedo and Gogatz (2021); Kandampully et al. (2023); Paris Baguette (n.d.-b)	Supports the role of bakery café atmosphere, service experience, and visual presentation in shaping premium quality interpretation.

Theme 3: Country-of-origin ambiguity as both risk and opportunity	Charinsarn and Speece (2025); Chen et al. (2021); Hong et al. (2023); Serrano-Arcos et al. (2021); Tseng et al. (2022)	Explains how consumers interpret brand origin through multiple country-related cues and how ambiguity or misperception may affect perceived quality, credibility, and brand equity.
Theme 4: Thai consumers and K-lifestyle familiarity	Chae et al. (2020); Jin et al. (2024); Laffan (2021); Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism (2025); Sansomedang et al. (2021)	Supports the link between Hallyu exposure, Korean lifestyle meanings, social identity, and Thai consumer familiarity with Korean-related consumption.
Theme 5: Bakery café as lifestyle experience	Azavedo and Gogatz (2021); Kandampully et al. (2023); Mimoun and Gruen (2021); Mora and Ueasangkomsate (2023); Oldenburg (1989)	Supports the interpretation of bakery cafés as service and lifestyle spaces involving atmosphere, seating, interaction, visual presentation, and third-place functions.
Theme 6: Balanced localization and Koreanization	Berjaya Food Berhad (2024); Bretas and Alon (2021); González-Márquez et al. (2023); Liu et al. (2022); Mandler et al. (2021); Poulis (2024)	Supports the need to balance global brand consistency, franchising logic, local consumer expectations, and selective adaptation in international food-service expansion.

Table 2. Principal Studies and Theme Contribution

Research Results

Following the coding and thematic synthesis process, six literature-based themes were identified. These themes should be interpreted as conceptual patterns derived from the reviewed academic literature and selected official business and institutional sources. They do not represent direct empirical evidence from Thai consumers. Rather, they indicate how existing literature and case evidence can be used to interpret how Korean brand origin, French-inspired positioning, country-of-origin ambiguity, Thai K-lifestyle familiarity, bakery café experience, and localization strategy may shape Paris Baguette's market entry opportunity in Thailand.

Theme 1: Korean Brand Origin as a Strategic but Hidden Asset

The first theme suggests that Paris Baguette's Korean brand origin can be viewed as a strategic but partly hidden asset. Hallyu may give Korean origin positive lifestyle meaning in Thailand (Chae et al., 2020; Jin et al., 2024; Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, 2025). However, because the brand name

and bakery identity are more likely to activate French, European, or international associations, Korean origin should be treated as a supporting positioning layer rather than the brand's only identity.

Theme 2: French-Inspired Positioning as a Premium Quality Cue

The second theme indicates that Paris Baguette's French-inspired cues may work as a premium quality signal in Thailand's bakery café market. Its name, bakery style, and visual identity can support perceptions of refinement and international appeal, especially where consumers value atmosphere, design, and visual presentation (Azavedo & Gogatz, 2021; Kandampully et al., 2023). This premium image, however, depends on consistent product quality, store experience, and communication.

Theme 3: Country-of-Origin Ambiguity as Both Risk and Opportunity

The third theme may suggest that country-of-origin ambiguity creates both risk and opportunity. The risk is that prospective Thai consumers may not clearly interpret Paris Baguette as Korean, French, European, or international, which could limit its ability to benefit from Korean cultural familiarity. The literature indicates that consumers form brand-origin perceptions from language, ownership, product style, and symbolic communication (Charinsarn & Speece, 2025; Chen et al., 2021), and that origin misperception or non-identification may weaken brand equity (Tseng et al., 2022). This ambiguity may become an opportunity only when Korean origin and French-inspired cues are connected coherently.

Theme 4: Thai Consumers and K-Lifestyle Familiarity

The fourth theme can be interpreted as indicating that Thai K-lifestyle familiarity may support market entry when it is translated into a relevant café experience. Thailand has strong exposure to Hallyu, especially Korean food, music, beauty, and dramas (Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, 2025). Therefore, Korean cues may be more effective when linked with store atmosphere, menu storytelling, visual presentation, and social media-friendly experiences that fit Thai urban café culture (Amornsittinon et al., 2025; Sansomedang et al., 2021).

Theme 5: Bakery Café as Lifestyle Experience

The fifth theme indicates that Paris Baguette's opportunity depends not only on bakery products but also on the lifestyle experience surrounding the café format. In Bangkok's café culture, consumers value atmosphere, presentation, service interaction, seating, and visually attractive design (Azavedo & Gogatz, 2021; Mora & Ueasangkomsate, 2023). Since cafés can also operate as third-place settings for work, socializing, and leisure, the bakery café format may become more meaningful when bakery quality, café comfort, and visual experience are combined (Mimoun & Gruen, 2021; Oldenburg, 1989).

Theme 6: Balanced Localization and Koreanization

The sixth theme suggests that Paris Baguette's market entry opportunity depends on a balanced strategy between localization and Koreanization. Localization is necessary because consumer taste, café behavior, pricing expectations, locations, and competition differ across markets (Liu et al., 2022; Mandler et al., 2021). At the same time, selected Korean lifestyle cues, menu storytelling, seasonal products, or cultural communication may help maintain distinctiveness when integrated carefully with the French-inspired bakery image.

Discussions and Conclusions

Discussion

This study contributes to country-of-origin and international branding literature by showing how a service brand may be interpreted through layered country cues rather than one clear national association. In the case of Paris Baguette, Korean corporate origin, a French-inspired brand name, European bakery symbolism, and Thai market context may interact in shaping brand interpretation (Charinsarn & Speece, 2025; Chen et al., 2021; Hong et al., 2023; Serrano-Arcos et al., 2021). This should be understood as an integrative conceptual contribution, not the development of a fundamentally new theory. Managerially, the study connects this interpretation with Korean branding, bakery café experience, and localization strategy to provide a literature-informed framework for Korean food-service brands entering Southeast Asian markets (Chae et al., 2020; Jin et al., 2024; Mandler et al., 2021; Poulis, 2024).

Taken together, the literature-based themes suggest that Korean origin, French-inspired symbolism, and Thai café culture do not operate separately. Their strategic value depends on whether they can be combined into a clear and credible consumer-facing position. For Paris Baguette, this means Korean origin should support, rather than replace, its French-inspired bakery positioning.

The synthesis also suggests that localization should be selective rather than excessive. Korean food-service brands may need to adapt to local taste, location expectations, pricing conditions, and social media-oriented café culture while maintaining a clear global identity. The key managerial challenge is how to connect brand origin, foreign-inspired positioning, and local consumer experience into a coherent market entry strategy (Mandler et al., 2021; Poulis, 2024).

Conclusion

This study concludes that Paris Baguette's market entry opportunity in Thailand depends on how the brand manages the relationship between its Korean corporate origin and French-inspired positioning. Korean origin can provide cultural familiarity and lifestyle relevance, while the brand's French-inspired name, bakery style, and visual identity can support a premium bakery café image. The main strategic issue

is not whether Paris Baguette should be positioned as Korean or French, but how these two meanings can be connected in a clear, credible, and locally relevant way.

The synthesis suggests that country-of-origin ambiguity can become both a challenge and an opportunity. If Korean origin and French-inspired positioning are not connected carefully, consumers may interpret the brand only as a French, European, or broadly international bakery café. However, if the brand communicates itself as a Korean-global bakery café inspired by French bakery culture, this ambiguity may become a distinctive positioning advantage. For the Thai market, Paris Baguette may benefit from a balanced strategy that maintains its premium bakery café identity, uses Korean lifestyle appeal as a supporting layer, and adapts selected elements to Thai consumer expectations.

Suggestions

Recommended Marketing Plan

Based on the literature-informed synthesis, Paris Baguette could consider positioning itself in Thailand as a Korean-global bakery café inspired by French bakery culture. This recommendation should be treated as a strategic implication from the review rather than confirmed evidence of Thai consumer preference. The potential target segment may include urban Gen Z consumers, young millennials, café hoppers, K-culture followers, students, first-jobbers, and young professionals who value café atmosphere, visual presentation, social media sharing, and Korean-related lifestyle consumption (Amornsittinon et al., 2025; Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, 2025; Sansomedang et al., 2021).

For product strategy, Paris Baguette could maintain its signature bakery items and beverages while selectively introducing Korean-inspired and Thailand-exclusive items. For price strategy, affordable premium pricing could be supported by bundle sets, seasonal promotions, and student- or office-friendly meal combinations.

For place strategy, Paris Baguette could prioritize Bangkok lifestyle malls, office districts, university areas, and transport-connected locations, where the bakery café format may support convenience and everyday lifestyle use (Azavedo & Gogatz, 2021; Mora & Ueasangkomsate, 2023). Promotion could emphasize Korean lifestyle storytelling, café experience, social media content, influencers, and selected Korean cultural collaborations. Physical evidence could balance French bakery elegance with Korean café modernity through store design, product display, packaging, lighting, seating, and photo-friendly spaces.

Limitations and Future Research

This study has some limitations. First, it is based on a qualitative semi-systematic literature review and uses secondary data from academic articles, official company sources, government sources, and credible institutional reports. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted as conceptual and literature-



informed suggestions rather than direct evidence of Thai consumer behavior. Second, the study focuses on Paris Baguette as a single business case. Although this case is useful for understanding Korean brand origin under French-inspired positioning, the findings may not fully represent all Korean food-service brands or all bakery café consumers in Thailand.

Future research should collect primary data from Thai consumers to test and refine the propositions proposed in this study. Interviews or focus groups could explore how consumers interpret Paris Baguette's Korean origin, French-inspired positioning, and bakery café experience. Surveys and experiments could examine relationships among country-of-origin perception, perceived authenticity, lifestyle relevance, trust, purchase intention, and alternative positioning messages.

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