

# A Study on the Characteristics of Skin Beauty Franchise System -Focusing on the comparison of cases between Korea and the United States-

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## 피부미용 프랜차이즈 시스템의 특성 분석 연구 -한국과 미국의 사례 비교를 중심으로-

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**Abstract** This study compared the current status, opening costs, and service of skin beauty franchises in Korea and the U.S. with the aim of providing data for skin beauty franchises. The main items in both countries include facial and body care, with 54 mean value in Korea, which is smaller than 361 mean value in the U.S. The U.S. franchise fee is about 1.5 times higher than that in Korea, and franchisees pay royalties of 20-60(ten thousand KRW) per month in Korea and 5-6 percent of annual sales in the U.S., as well as submit a net worth requirement and cash requirement. There are many spa services in the U.S. which creates differences in cost from Korea. and for the education, the cost was set in Korea while the time in the U.S. Every franchise offered facial and body care services. In addition, most Korean franchises run bridal care services, while in the U.S., waxing, men's treatment, hot stone, and spa services are offered. These differences are the result of differences in climate and race between the two countries, as well as differences in perception regarding the socio-cultural atmosphere, skin beauty, and openness.

**요 약** 본 연구는 피부미용 프랜차이즈 시스템의 개발을 위한 기초자료를 제공할 목적으로 한국과 미국의 피부미용 프랜차이즈 현황, 개설비용 및 서비스 내용을 조사하고 비교 분석하였다. 피부미용 프랜차이즈 현황 비교 분석 결과 한국과 미국 모두 주력 아이템은 페이스 케어와 바디 케어이며 가맹점 수는 한국이 평균 54개로 미국의 평균 361개보다 적으나 이것은 프랜차이즈 시장 규모, 국토의 면적과 인구 등의 영향이 크다고 판단되었다. 개설 비용 비교 분석 결과 미국의 가맹비는 한국의 최대 가맹비보다 약 1.5배 높으며 로열티는 한국이 20-60만원(월), 미국은 연간 매출액의 5-6%를 지급하며 Net Worth Requirement, Cash Requirement 등 개인 자산 확인을 필요로 하였다. 미국은 스파를 운영하는 업체가 많아 비용적인 부분에서 한국과 차이가 있었고, 교육 시스템에 대해 한국은 비용, 미국은 시간으로 정해져 있었다. 프랜차이즈에서 제공하는 서비스 내용 비교 결과 양국 모든 업체에서 페이스 케어와 바디 케어를 중심으로 하고 있으며 한국은 대부분 브라이달 케어, 연구소를 운영하며 미국은 왁싱과 남성 관리, 핫 스톤, 스파 서비스를 추가로 운영하고 있었다. 양국 간의 기후나 인종 등의 차이와 함께 사회문화적인 분위기와 피부미용을 대하는 양국 간의 인식의 차이, 특히 개방도의 차이가 반영된 결과라고 판단된다. 향후 본 연구의 결과를 바탕으로 국내 피부미용 프랜차이즈 시스템을 발전적으로 보완한다면 해외 미용산업 프랜차이즈 시장에서 성장 가능할 것으로 전망된다.

**Keywords** : Franchise, Skin Beauty, Opening Cost, Facial Care, Service

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background of the study

The domestic skin care market is in the process of developing variously to enhance customer service satisfaction. First of all, according to a study based on the National Statistical Office report on the size of the domestic skin care industry, sales in 2017 grew 99.2% to 880.689 billion Korean won and the number of businesses increased 139.5% to 20,150 companies[1].

In addition, according to the National Statistical Office's "Service Industry Survey", the number of domestic skin care businesses was 21,964 in 2018, the number of workers was 31,917 and sales were 928.745 billion won, which is still on the rise compared to the previous year[2]. It is reported that the skin care sector is gradually expanding compared to the past, and there are many companies that provide unified and systematic services such as obesity management, body shape management, whole body manual techniques, foot manual techniques by introducing new types of franchise systems by introducing new types of Franchise systems[3].

The term "franchise" means the establishment of a contract to allow the sale or operation of the same brand, service, or product through a franchise agreement in selling or distributing the product or service. Such a system is a form of distribution in which know-how and service methods are supported so that the same contents can be operated through education within the area designated by the contract[4].

The International Franchise Association (IFA) defines that franchise is a type of business that includes products, services, trademarks, marketing and operating manuals, and franchise headquarters and franchisees are entitled through legal agreements[5]. One of the most representative global franchise associations is the World Franchise Council, a non-profit,

non-political national franchise association established on 26 April 2005 under British law, and through associations from more than 40 countries around the world, including Korea, to develop and protect franchises[6].

However, recently the Ministry of SMEs and Startups is providing policy support for self-employed people due to various management difficulties in skin beauty-related fields, which have continued to develop in terms of size and content. More specifically, according to the small business support booklet released in 2020, it reported that it supports cooperation between franchise headquarters and franchisees for win-win cooperation and supports costs such as brand development and promotion of franchise headquarters. It was also found that it emphasized the need for a new system such as franchises for the development of the skin beauty industry by evaluating the capabilities of the franchise headquarters and providing some level-based support[7].

### 1.2 Purpose of the study

This study aims to provide basic data for the development of franchises in the skin beauty sector by investigating and analyzing the status, opening cost and service details of skin beauty related franchises in the U.S. and Korea.

### 1.3 Scope and method of study

To set the scope of this study, five franchise companies representing the two countries were first selected. As to Korea, a total of five franchises which have 'beauty treatment' business category were selected based on data from the Fair Trade Commission's merchant transaction information disclosure report, in the order of the largest number of franchisees and the most suitable for the purpose of the study from among franchises based on sales area across the country. As to U.S., five franchises

based on sales area across the country which have ‘massage and skin care services’ business category were selected in the order of high ranking based on the data of size, number of stores, cost, financial soundness and brand value by statistics specialist company.

As a research method, we compared and analyzed the overview of franchises selected for the two countries, the cost of opening franchises for each franchise, and the contents of services provided for each franchise. To this end, the analysis was based on various data provided by the National Statistical Office, the Fair Trade Commission, franchise statistics specialist company, and the website of each selected franchise.

## 2. Point

### 2.1 Status of Skin Beauty franchises

#### 2.1.1 Status of Skin Beauty franchises in Korea

According to Table 1, which summarizes the Fair Trade Commission's information disclosure report, all of the Korean skin beauty franchise industries are already registered as ‘beauty treatment’, and all service items are centered on facial and body care. The number of franchisees

Table 1. Beauty Treatment Franchises’ Outline of Korea[8]

Country	Korea				
Sort	A	B	C	D	E
Category of biz.	beauty treatment	beauty treatment	beauty treatment	beauty treatment	beauty treatment
Item	·Facial ·Body ·Golgi-Therapy	·Facial ·Body ·Home-Care	·Skin ·Body	·Facial ·Skin	·Facial ·Skin ·Body ·Wedding
No. of affiliate	98	86	29	29	29
H.P.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Start biz.	2017	2005	2004	2006	2016
No. of employee	17	7	10	5	10

stood at 29-98 and all franchises were providing information on the website. Company C out of 5 franchises was the first to start the franchise in 2004, and Company A started the latest in 2017, but its registration status in 2020 was 98 with the largest number among the 5 franchises.

#### 2.1.2 Status of Skin Beauty franchises in U.S.

The U.S. skin care franchises’ business category was registered as ‘massage and skin care services’, as shown in Table 2, and service items include facial, body massage, waxing, and spa. The number of franchises is 48-1,152, showing a big and spread deviation, with all companies providing homepage information, and the start date of the franchise was 2001-2008.

Table 2. Beauty Treatment Franchises’ Outline of U.S.A.[9]

Country	U.S.A.				
Sort	A	B	C	D	E
Category of biz.	Massage and Skin Care Service	Massage and Skin Care Service	Massage and Skin Care Service	Massage and Skin Care Service	Massage and Skin Care Service
Item	·Facial Massage ·Skin Care	·Facial Massage ·Skin Care ·Spa	·Facial Massage ·Skin Care ·Waxing	·Facial Massage ·Skin Care ·Spa	·Facial Massage ·Skin Care ·Spa
No. of affiliate	1,152	473	68	64	48
H.P.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Start biz.	2002	2004	2008	2001	2007
No. of employee	179	67	26	25	10

### 2.2 Cost of opening a beauty franchisee

#### 2.2.1 Cost of opening a beauty franchisee in Korea

The specific cost of opening a skincare franchisee in Korea was summarized in Table 3. First of all, the difference between the minimum and maximum costs of initial franchise fee was found to be between 330-2,750(Ten Thousand KRW), which is 8.5 times greater. In particular, B company, unlike other companies, was

registering road shop franchise fees(16.5 million KRW) separately from mart shop franchise fees(27.5 million KRW), and the Fair Trade Commission registered mart shop franchise fees, which required higher franchise fees than other companies.

Items on franchise education were set as initial training fee, with 220-1,034(Ten Thousand KRW), showing a five-fold difference between the minimum and maximum costs. Initial commodity costs were 2,615-10,505(Ten Thousand KRW), deposit was 200-1,000(Ten Thousand KRW) and royalty was mostly 20-60(Ten Thousand KRW) per month, but unusually, Company D had a royalty deposit of 600(Ten Thousand KRW) that could be returned upon termination of the contract.

The standard area of franchisee stores was 8 to 40 pyeong(3.3m<sup>2</sup>/pyeong), with a deviation of 176-220(Ten Thousand KRW) per pyeong(3.3m<sup>2</sup>/pyeong), and the total cost of interior was 1,540-8,800(Ten Thousand KRW). In the end, the total cost of opening a franchise store considering all the expenses listed above was 4,925-22,339(Ten Thousand KRW), and the initial contract period was found to require a 1 to 6 year contract depending on the company.

Table 3. Beauty Treatment Affiliates' Opening Cost of Korea

(Unit: Ten Thousand Korean Won. \*every month)[10]

Country	Korea				
	A	B	C	D	E
Sort					
Initial Franchise Fee	1,000	2,750	1,100	2,200	330
Initial Training Fee	1,034	495	440	330	220
Initial commodity cost	10,505	8,195	8,470	7,170	2,615
Deposit	1,000	800	500	600	200
Royalty*	-	60	30	-	20
Special equipment cost	-	-	2,480	-	-
promotional expenses	-	-	100	200	-
Contract Period	6years	2years	1year	2years	4years
Store Base Area(3.3m <sup>2</sup> )	40	25	30	25	8
Interior Cost(3.3m <sup>2</sup> )	220	220	176	198	192.5
Sum of Interior Cost	8,800	5,500	5,280	4,950	1,540
Total Initial Cost	22,339	17,800	18,400	15,450	4,925

## 2.2.2 Cost of opening a beauty franchisee in U.S.

The specific costs of opening a U.S. skin care franchisee were summarized in Table 4. In the case of initial franchise fees, \$42,500-\$49,500 does not show much difference between franchises. In the United States, the minimum time required for initial training is specified for each franchise, with the difference of 36 hours of E franchise(Classroom: 20 hours, On-The-Job: 16) and 185 hours of D franchise(Hours-Classroom: 72 hours, On-The-Job: 113 hours) being nearly five times larger. And the royalty of each 5 franchises in the U.S. was mostly similar, with 5 to 6 percent of annual sales. Initial Investment, which is equivalent to initial commodity and equipment costs in Korea, was \$353,251-\$985,000, showing some significant deviation depending on the characteristics of the franchise. In addition, it was also found that there are several conditions unique in the U.S. for verifying the financial soundness of franchisees, including \$400,000-\$1,000,000 for Net Worth Requirement and \$120,000-\$250,000 for Cash Requirement. The total cost of opening a franchisee considering all expenses was \$1,069,700-\$2,194,625 in the United States.

Table 4. Beauty Treatment Affiliates' Opening Cost of U.S.A.

(Unit: U.S. Dollar, \*Percentages per annual sales)[11]

Country	U.S.A				
	A	B	C	D	E
Initial Franchise Fee	45,000	42,500	42,500	48,000	49,500
Initial Training	Classroom Training				
	33 hrs	57 hrs	-	72 hrs	20 hrs
	On-The-Job Training				
	30 hrs	85 hrs	-	113 hrs	16 hours
Royalty*	6%	5-6%	6%	6%	6%
Initial Investment	567,850-840,000	567,626-674,476	449,900-564,500	808,250-985,000	353,251-700,820
Net Worth Requirement	500,000	750,000	400,000	1,000,000	500,000
Cash Requirement	150,000	150,000	120,000	250,000	200,000
promotional expenses*	2%	5%	3.5%	0.25%	1%
Contract Period	10years	10years	10years	10years	10years
Total Initial Cost (Mean Value)	1,398,925	1,563,551	1,069,700	2,194,625	1,276,536

### 2.3 Services offered by the franchises

#### 2.3.1 Services offered by the franchises in Korea

Details of the service provided by Korean skin beauty franchises were summarized in Table 5, and all of five companies were adopting facial and body manual techniques as main service menus. The Bridal course and pre and postpartum care were being conducted by all franchises except D, while only A and B franchises were conducting youth and kids care. In the case of men's care, there were a total of two men's care menus from franchise C and the groom's care course from franchise E. Slim & Diet was run by franchise C and Aroma Course was run by franchise B. All of the franchises were conducting initial and periodic additional training for franchisees, and in the case of D, they were unusually engaged in activities such as product development and sales through the operation of the research institute.

Table 5. Beauty Treatment Affiliates' Services and Business Item of Korea [12-16]

Country	Korea				
	A	B	C	D	E
Sort					
Facial Care	○	○	○	○	○
Body Care	○	○	○	○	○
Slim & Diet	-	-	○	-	-
Tanning	-	-	-	-	-
Waxing	-	-	-	-	-
Men's Treatment	-	-	○	-	○
Bridal & Wedding	○	○	○	-	○
Pre and Postpartum care	○	○	○	-	-
Teenager and Kids Care	○	○	-	-	-
Aroma Care	-	○	-	-	-
Hot Stone	-	-	-	-	-
Spa	-	-	-	-	-
Education	○	○	○	○	○
Research	○	-	-	○	-
Product development and sales	-	-	-	○	-

#### 2.3.2 Services offered by the franchises in U.S.

Details of the service provided by U.S. skin beauty franchises were summarized in Table 6. In the case of U.S. skin-beauty franchises, all of franchises were found to be conducting facial,

body massage, waxing, and education in common. The Teenager and Kids Care course was exclusively for Company B, while the Men's treatment course was for all companies other than Company D. Pre and postpartum care is operated by B, C, and E, while Hot Stone courses are operated by A, B, and C, and Spa by B, D, and E franchises.

Table 6. Beauty Treatment Affiliates' Services and Business Item of U.S.A.[17-21]

Country	U.S.A.				
	A	B	C	D	E
Sort					
Facial Care	○	○	○	○	○
Body Care	○	○	○	○	○
Slim & Diet	-	-	-	○	-
Tanning	-	-	-	-	○
Waxing	○	○	○	○	○
Men's Treatment	○	○	○	-	○
Bridal & Wedding	-	-	-	-	-
Pre and Postpartum care	-	○	○	-	○
Teenager and Kids Care	-	○	-	-	-
Aroma Care	-	-	-	-	-
Hot Stone	○	○	○	-	-
Spa	-	○	-	○	○
Education	○	○	○	○	○
Research	○	-	-	-	-
Product development and sales	○	-	-	-	-

## 3. Results and Review

### 3.1 Comparison of status of skin beauty franchises in Korea and U.S.

The results of comparing the current status of franchises related to skin beauty in Korea and the U.S. are as follows.

First, all of the Korean skin beauty franchises are registered as 'beauty treatment' and the U.S. skin care franchises' business category is registered as 'massage and skin care services'. In Korea, national certificates related to skin care are unified across the country as esthetician, but the U.S. has different licenses depending on each state. As shown in the prior study on the scope of work [22], the U.S. has different licenses, such

as cosmetologists, esthetics(skin care), and massage therapists, and there are some differences in the scope of work according to each licenses, which actually affects the work.

Second, in the case of the main items being serviced, both Korea and the U.S. are centered on facial care and body care, with wedding in Korea and spa and waxing in the U.S. being selected as additional items. The difference shown in these main items is seen as a natural result from the differences of history and culture of the two countries' attitudes toward skin beauty, and differences in climate and race, and is considered to be a consideration for future international franchise brands.

Third, in terms of the number of franchises, 29-98 in Korea and 48-1,152 in the United States, shows a significant difference in the comparison of simple figures(Fig. 1). Although the size of the franchise market in the U.S. is quite larger than other countries, it is believed that the impact of the unique characteristics of the country itself is significant as it differs greatly from Korea in terms of land area and population.

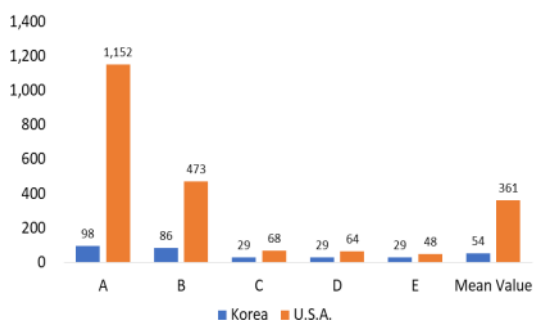


Fig. 1. Number of Affiliate by Franchises

### 3.2 Comparison of Cost of opening a beauty franchisee in Korea and U.S.

The results of comparing the cost of opening a franchisee related to skin care in Korea and the U.S. are as follows.

First, the initial franchise fee in Korea is 330-2,750 (Ten Thousand KRW) and the

franchise fee in the United States is \$42,500-\$49,500. All of five companies in the U.S. had similar franchise fees, about 1.5 times higher than Korea's largest.

Second, when it comes to initial and additional education for franchisees, it was difficult to compare accurately because Korea was defined as an expense and the U.S. was defined as a time. This different trend is also seen in the national skin beauty qualification system, where Korea is judged to pass the exam by the score of writing and performance, while the U.S. is required to complete a certain curriculum as a requirement to take the license test. A prior study on the U.S. esthetician license system shows that people who complete a certain fixed time or two-year curriculum are eligible to take the license test in the U.S.[23]. In particular, in the United States, theoretical and practical education were provided in various types to suit the characteristics and needs of franchises, and these costs were included in the initial investment cost. In the end, both countries have different systems, but they are well equipped with a high-quality education system for franchisees to maintain the same brand identities.

Third, in the case of franchise royalty items, Korea's franchisees pay a certain amount of money to the headquarters every month, but the U.S. pays 5-6% of its annual sales. The reason for this difference is that in the United States, they are familiar with incentive systems based on capabilities and performance, so the culture of reasonably judging these types of contracts is considered to be the reason of this result. These differences in loyalty systems between the two countries have advantages and disadvantages, and prior research suggests that more research should be continued as the form of royalties proportional to sales may be reasonable, but there may be conflicts of interest between franchise headquarters and franchisees[24].

Fourth, in Korea, the cost of interior is

specifically suggested as area, cost per floor space, and total cost, but in the United States, the items related to interior are not specifically presented and are included in the Initial Investment cost. In Fig. 2 below, the total cost of establishing franchisees in Korea and the United States was compared in dollars. The total cost of opening a franchisee considering all expenses was 4,925-22,339 (Ten Thousand KRW) in Korea and \$1,069,700-\$2,194,625 in the United States. According to the Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency, the United States is the world's largest consumer market, but the laws on franchises vary in establishment, investment and regulation depending on the federal government[25] and each state and it was expected that there could be a cost difference in the U.S.. In the United States, it also appears that it requires verification of personal assets such as Networth Requirement and Cash Requirement, which can be understood as a unique U.S. verification system to verify the financial health of franchisees in the United States, where creditworthiness is very important.

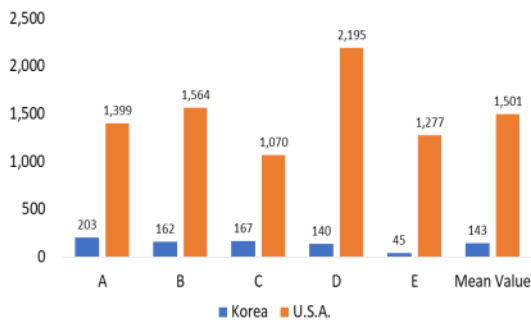


Fig. 2. Total Initial Cost by Franchises (Unit: Thousand Dollars)

### 3.3 Comparison of services offered by the franchises in Korea and U.S.

The results of comparing the contents of franchise services related to skin care in Korea and the U.S. are shown in Fig. 3.

First, all of franchises in Korea and the U.S.

were providing services centered on facial care and body care, while three of franchises in the U.S. and none of that in Korea included spa programs. In Korea, the fact that the sauna-related system is very well equipped in terms of social and cultural aspects, and that most franchisees entering the skin beauty industry do not have much room for initial investment, is considered to be the reason for the difference between the two countries.

Second, while Korea does not have any tanning and waxing programs, the U.S. runs waxing service in all franchises and one tanning service, indicating that waxing courses are popular in the U.S. This difference is also seen as a natural result of differences in variety of climates and races.

Third, men's treatment is two in Korea and four in the United States, with more men's treatment menus in the United States. As for the Bridal menu, Korea had four specific Bridal menus, but the U.S. did not reflect them on the menu as a separate item. This difference is seen as a result of the difference in perception between the two countries about skin care, especially the difference in openness, and as the data shows, men's access to skin care has been increasing in Korea recently.

Fourth, Pre and Postpartum care was conducted by three franchises in both countries, while the U.S. had three franchises and Korea had no one providing hot stone and spa services. It was also found that both countries actively operate education systems for franchisees, and that two Korean and one U.S. franchises run research institutes and develop products. Research and development of related products by franchises and even selling them shows the possibility that franchisees can function as agents that create added value and develop linked industries, not just providing fixed services. And this also shows the direction the franchise has to move.

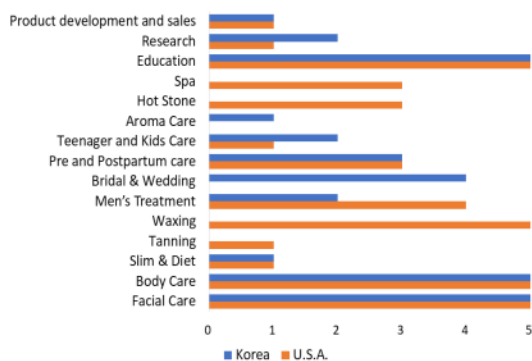


Fig. 3. Services Offered by Franchises

#### 4. Conclusion

This study investigated, compared, and analyzed the status, opening costs, and service of franchises related to skin care in Korea and the U.S. in order to provide basic data for the development of a franchise system and the results are as follows.

First, according to a comparative analysis of the status of skin beauty franchises, both Korea and the U.S. focused on facial care and body care, while Korea was additionally running a Bridal course and the U.S. was spa and waxing course. In terms of the number of franchisees, Korea has 54 mean value, which is very less than 361 mean value of the U.S., but this is largely due to the unique characteristics of the country itself, such as the size of the franchise market and the area and population of the country.

Second, a comparative analysis of the cost of opening a beauty franchisee shows that the U.S. franchise fee is about 1.5 times higher than Korea's largest one. And the royalty is 20-60(Ten Thousand KRW) per month in Korea, while pays 5-6% of its annual sales in the U.S.. In addition, it appears that franchises requires verification of personal assets such as Net Worth Requirement and Cash Requirement in the United States. As a result, the total cost required to open the franchisees averaged \$143,000 in Korea and

\$1,501,000 in the United States. In particular, as there were many companies operating spa programs in the U.S., it was analyzed that the difference in initial cost was somewhat greater compared to Korea. When it comes to initial and additional education for franchisees, it was difficult to compare accurately because Korea was defined as an expense and the U.S. was defined as a time. Both countries have different systems, but they are well equipped with a high-quality education system for franchisees to maintain the same brand identities.

Third, comparing the contents of the service provided by franchise, all companies in Korea and the U.S. were operating facial care and body care as the main. In addition, most of Korean franchises have bridal care program and run research institutes focusing on product development, while the U.S. franchises operate waxing, men's treatment, hot stones, and spa services. This difference is seen as a result of the difference in perception between the two countries about skin care, especially the difference in openness.

In this study, we compared and analyzed the overall status, opening costs, and service contents of Korean and U.S. skin care franchises at a time when domestic beauty franchises are entering overseas markets. If the domestic skin beauty franchise system is supplemented through the results of this study, it is expected that Korean franchises will be able to take the lead in the global beauty industry franchise market.

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<Research Interests>

Skin Beauty, Esthetic Theory, Aroma Therapy