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The impact of consumer behavior towards luxury products in online shopping.

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#### **ABSTRACT**

Nowadays, online shopping becomes fundamental in our life. The development online industry has a positive and negative impact on different industries. One of these industries is counterfeiting. The counterfeiting, which is making and selling fake products have the same name and shape of a famous brand with low quality and price. This phenomenon is not something new, but it is increased over the last decades. The online consumer behavior is affecting the intention of buying counterfeit luxury products. The topic of online consumer behavior has been studied by many researchers, but to date, there is no study about it towards counterfeit products. Consequently, this study investigated the impact of consumer behavior on counterfeit luxury products on online shopping.

**Keywords**: Online Shopping, Fake Products, Luxury Products and Investigation.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Over the last decade, the counterfeiting phenomenon has become a global issue that affects the world economy negatively (Haque, Khatibi, & Rahman, 2009). In 2016, the International Intellectual Property Institute reported that counterfeit activities have caused an estimated loss of \$200 billion dollars, worth for revenue, jobs, and taxes (Mushi, Noor, & Azila, 2016). However, this phenomenon has evolved further with the existence of online shopping as mentioned by several studies. The researchers studied consumer behavior and its impact on

purchasing products from online stores. To date, no research has been done on consumer behavior toward counterfeit products in online shopping. There is a lot of research done for the offline counterfeit luxury products here we can find many reference talking about it "The marketing literature shows that counterfeit and fake products are offered widely to the larger markets which jeopardize the exclusivity of original luxury brands" (Grossman & Shapiro, 1988; Lai & Zaichowsky, 1999; Gistri et. al., 2009; Sharma & Chan, 2011). There is an incentive to customer fake products such as the Price of fake products, the Symbolic status of the imitating and Distribution channel of retailers (Prendergast et al., 2002; Tang & Pam 2005)..

#### **Research objectives**

The following objective has been set to achieve the aim of this research:

- To investigate the current situation towards the counterfeit luxury products in online shopping
- To identify the risks regarding purchasing counterfeit luxury products in online shopping
- To determine the reasons and the motivations that encourage or discourage consumer to knowingly purchase the counterfeit luxury products in online shopping
- To assess the impact of consumer behavior toward counterfeit luxury products

# **Research Methodology**

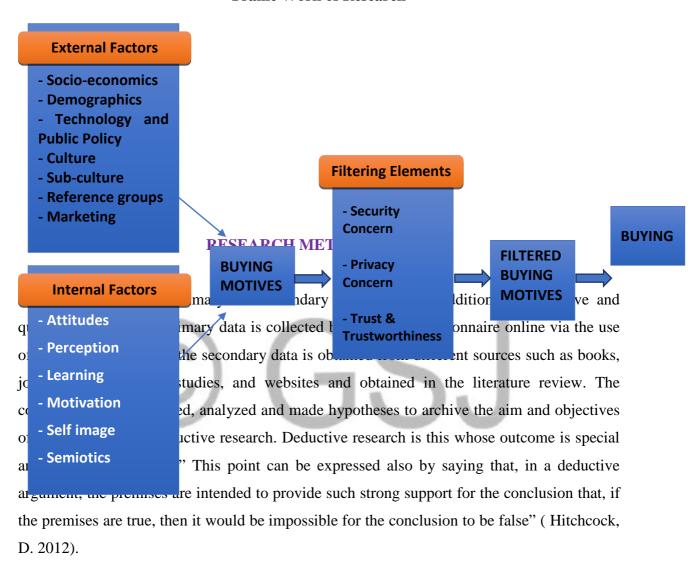
To achieve the aim of this research, qualitative and quantitative data will be applied. Primary data was collected using questionnaires that shared with the people how they are using online shopping and their opinion toward using online shopping to buy counterfeit luxury products. Secondary data about the background of the impact of consumer behavior in the business, consumer's risks, the moral and ethical considerations, positive and the negative impact and the impact of the search process to counterfeit luxury products in the online shopping, were collect form related literature from sources such as journals, newspaper, books, articles, online sources, reports and previous studies related to the topic

#### LITREATURE REVIEW

. Over the years, shopping methods have evolved from traditional shopping methods to online shopping. Online shopping is defined as "the activity or action of buying products or services over the Internet" (MBN, n.d.). Online shopping was invented by Michael Aldrich in 1979 to enable online transaction processing between consumers and businesses as noted by Norman (2004). Lee and Lin (2005) mentioned in their study that the process of online shopping is complex and can be divided as searching for information, navigation, online transactions, and customer interactions. Research previously undertaken by Cole et al. (2001), has indicated that online shopping is the third most popular online activity after e-mail messaging and web

browsing. Moreover, Khalifa & Liu (2007) highlighted that establishing an online store allows retailers to expand their market and reach out to customers who may not otherwise visit the physical store. However, even if the retail formats are changed, the fundamental consumer needs and psychic benefits remain the same (Michel, 2014).

#### Frame Work of Research



Structure of the research

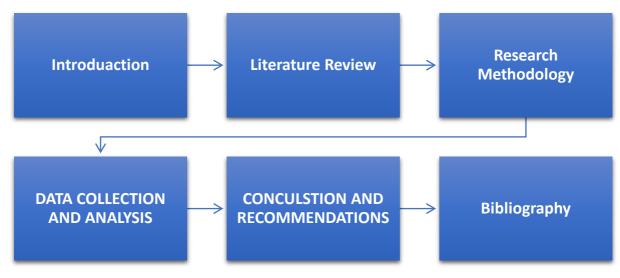


Figure 3.1 Research Design

# **Qualitative and Quantitative data**

Qualitative data is the data that is in a descriptive form, not numerical form. Holloway (1997) defined qualitative data as "a form of social inquiry such as interviews and questionnaires that concentrates on the way people interpret and make sense of their experiences and the world in which they live". This data may include observations, documents or transcripts of in-depth interviews (Patton, 1990). The benefit of using this approach is to obtain the chance to improve new ideas and the capability to have more detailed data. Qualitative research looks up to recognize the underlying concepts and relationships between them as mentioned by Seem and Nachmias (1988). In contrast, this method needs filtering of results and a lot of sorting which makes this method harder than the quantitative method (Fellows & Liu, 2003). The qualitative data used in this research will include a literature review and questionnaire.

Quantitative data is the data which can be recorded and measured in numerical form. Punch (2005) stated that the quantitative method is a combination method that covers different forms of surveys – mobile surveys, online surveys, paper surveys and longitudinal studies, website interceptors, telephone interviews, kiosk surveys, face-to-face interviews, systematic observation, and online polls. The advantage of using the quantitative method is that, batter to compare with other research using the same questions and best for personal and sensitive topics. On the other hand, as claimed by Denscombe (2007), this method is only good if the questions and approaches used to collect data are good.

#### DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

### **Questionnaire**

To achieve all objectives by collecting primary data, the questionnaire is used in this research. The questionnaire is classified into four sections: about you and online shopping,

the motivation that encourage consumer to purchase the counterfeit luxury products in the online shopping, the reasons that discourage consumers to purchase the counterfeit luxury products in the online shopping and the risk that face them and the impact of consumer behavior towards counterfeit luxury products.

The survey was emailed and shared via WhatsApp and email on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2020 to 100 people who are using online shopping. However, only 68 sets (68%) of participants answered the survey.

	Amount
Total no. of qquestionnairess	100
issued	
Total no. of response	69
Response rate	69 %

# **Questionnaire Section 1: About you and online shopping**

This section of the questionnaire aims to identify the characteristic of the participants. The section will include the age and gender of the participants, employment status and general questions about online shopping. This section consists of questions 1,2,3,4 and 5 and the results will be presented in the bar and pie charts.

**Question 1: Specify your age and gender?** 

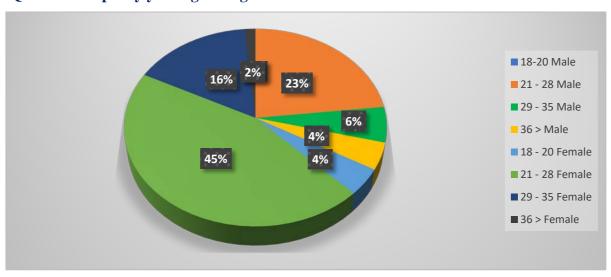


Figure 4.1 Question 1: age and gender of the participants

The different percentages of participants who are using online shopping are illustrated in Figure 4.1. A total of 69 responses were received for this online survey. The age and

gender of the participants are as follows: 18-20 Male (0%), 21-28 Male (23%), 29-35 Male (6%), 36 > Male (4%), 18-20 Female (4%), 21-28 Female (45%), 29-35 Female (16%) and 36 > Female (2%). The result of this question determines that most of the participants are Females from 21-28 years old, followed by Male ages more than 36.

# Question 2: Are you currently...

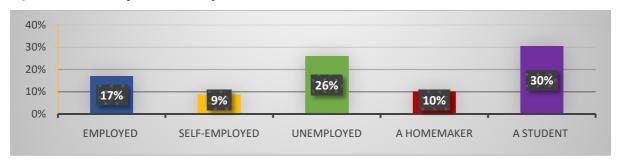


Figure 4.2 Question 2: The employment status

In this question, the participants were asked to specify their current status if they are employed, unemployed or others, as shown in Figure 4.2. The most frequently chosen status was A student and unemployed with 21 (30%) and 18 (26%) responses respectively, followed by (17%) for employed. The figure also indicated a close-ratio for A self-employed and A homemaker with (9%) and (10%) respectively

Question 3: Do privacy concerns stop you from online shopping?

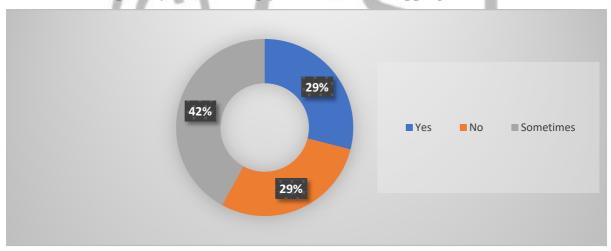


Figure 4.3 Question 3: Privacy concerns stop respondents from online shopping

Question 3 indicates how many participants may stop online shopping due to privacy concerns as illustrated in Figure 4.3. According to the results, (42%) of the participants are sometimes stop online shopping due to privacy concerns. An equal percentage of (29%) of the participants are agreed and disagreed that privacy concerns stop them from online shopping. This data supports what has been shown before in Figure 2.3 the literature review by Grabowski (2017). Thus, the privacy concern is one of the factors that affect the behavior of the consumers in online shopping, which may stop them or not from completing the shopping.

Question 4: Are you confident that your payment information is kept secure?

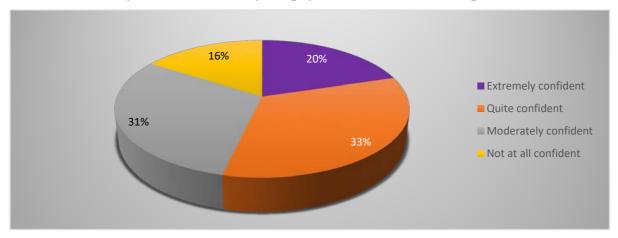


Figure 4.4 Question 4: Confidence rate of the respondents toward the secure of payment information

The participants were asked in question 4 about how much they are confident about payment information in online shopping. Based on collected data, as shown in Figure 4.4, most of the participants are quite confident about their payment information with a percentage of (33%), while (31%) of the participant are moderately confident about that. Only (20%) of the participants are extremely confident about payment information in online shopping. However, (16%) of the participants are not confident at all about their payment information.

This result does not match what was mentioned previously in the literature review. As stated before, Singh and Sailo (2013) agreed that consumers using online shopping because it is easy in payment. By contrast, Hieke (2010) determined the payments as one of the consumer's risks in online shopping. However, both data, primary and secondary, show that some people are confident about payment information in online shopping, others are not.

Question 5: Have you ever use online shopping to purchase counterfeit luxury products?

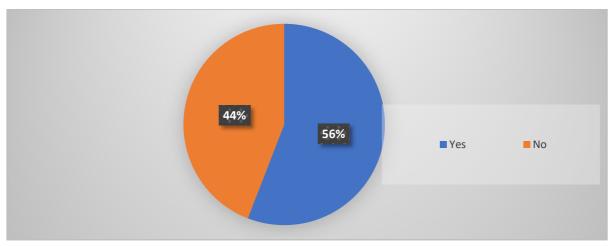


Figure 4.5 Question 5: Percentage of respondent's use online shopping to purchase counterfeit luxury product

The main purpose of question 5, is to divide the participants into two groups; one is using online shopping to purchase counterfeit luxury products, other is not. The participants who answered 'Yes' were moved to section 2, where the participants who answered 'No' were moved to section 3. Although, both groups were moved to section 5 at the end. Based on Figure 4.5, It is clear that the results are rather close. The collected data shows that (56%) of participants are using online shopping to purchase counterfeit luxury products, while (44%) are not.

# Question 6: On a scale of 1-5 how likely you are buying counterfeit products?

\* 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest

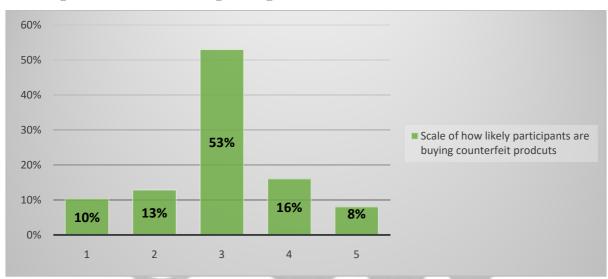


Figure 4.6 Question 6: Percentage of scale of how likely participants are buying counterfeit products

The first question of section 2 were asked to the participants who are buying counterfeit products to determine how likely they are buying it on scale of 1-5. Based on the responses as represented in Figure 4.6, (53%) of the participants chose scale 3, followed by (16%) of them had chosen scale 4. Besides, Scale 2 was chosen by (13%) of the participants followed by scale 1 and scale 5 with (10%) and (8%) respectively.

The collected data from this question support what has been reported by the International Chamber of Commerce (2019), as stated in the literature review. The organization reported that 80% of customers around the world regularly purchase counterfeit products. This huge percentage shows that this phenomenon has become a real issue around the world which needs to be considered, as claimed by many authors previously.

#### Question 7: When it comes to buying a counterfeit item, where do you buy it?

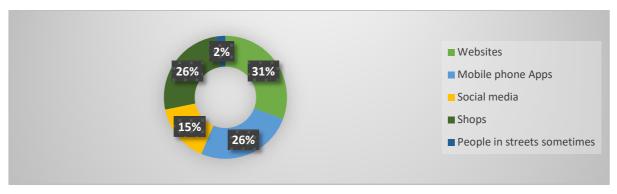


Figure 4.7 Question 7: The proportion of the sources that participants buying the counterfeit product from

The result of question 7 indicated that the major source that the participants are buying the counterfeit products from it is the websites with a percentage of (31%). Besides, (26%) of the participants are buying the counterfeit products by using mobile phone apps, followed by shops with (26%). In addition, (15%) of the participants indicated that they are buying these products from social media, while only (2%) said that they are buying it from people in the streets sometimes.

The data is correlates with evidences found previously within the literature review. As found by Bian and Forsythe (2012) and supported by Wang and Song (2013), one-third of counterfeit products' sales are made by using online shopping. Similarly, Jain (2015) also indicated in his study that 87% of counterfeits products are purchased online. From the result, most of the people using online shopping to buy the counterfeit products, including websites, mobile phone apps, and social media. One of the reasons that make customers purchase counterfeit products by using online shopping as stated previously in the literature review by Brandao and Gadekar (2019), that online shopping roles and processes allow buying these products easier rather than buy it from the markets.



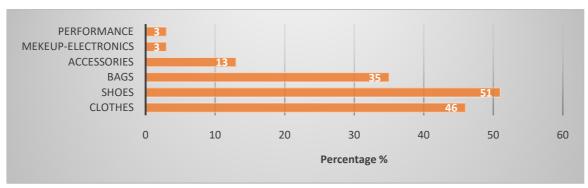


Figure 4.8 Question 8: The major kind of counterfeit products that participants usually buy

In this question, the participants were able to select more than one option. Figure 4.8 shows that half of the responses (51%) reported that the participants are usually buying counterfeit shoes, followed by clothes (46%). The bags were chosen by (35%) of the

participants, while (13%) have selected accessories. Also, an equal percentage of (3%) for both makeup-electronic and performance.

The result found by Richter (2019) and reported in the literature review are quite similar to this result. The author found that in 2016, the most affected businesses by counterfeit products are footwear with (22%), which is similar to what found by the participants. Likewise, the author indicated the second kind of counterfeit product is purchased by the customers is clothes (16%), which is also correlates with the collected data of this question, as the clothes are the second option. Both results approve that footwear and clothes are the most kinds of counterfeit products that people are buying frequently.

### Question 9: What are the reasons that make you buy counterfeit luxury products?

\*Please rank the following in order of importance

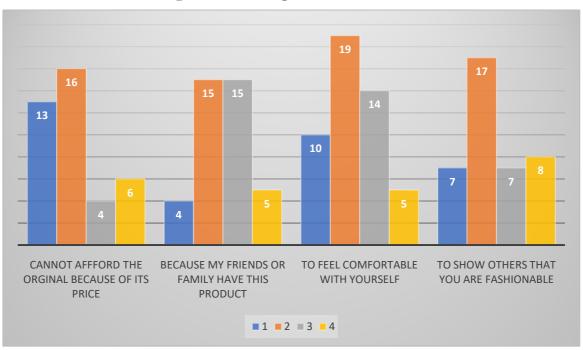


Figure 4.9 Question 9: The reasons that make the participants buying counterfeit luxury products

In this question, the participants put in order of importance the reasons that make them buying counterfeit products. Based on the result as shown in Figure 4.9, the most important reason that makes the participants buying these products is 'to feel comfortable with yourself' with (19%) of agree. The second choice which selected by (17%) of participants is 'to show others that you are fashionable', followed by (16%) for 'cannot afford the original because of its price' and (15%) for 'because my friends or family have this product'.

Based on the literature review, some authors such as Phau & Teah (2009), Bian and Veloutsou, (2007), and Ang, Cheng, Lim, and Tambyah (2001), agreed with the most selected option of the result of this question, as the authors indicated that motivations and

personality traits affect the purchase behavior of customers towards counterfeits products. The second choice also supports what previously found by Zheng, Shen, Chow, and Chiu (2013), as the researcher stated that the prestige of holding a luxury product is one of the main reasons that make customers want to buy these kinds of products. Moreover, the third choice which is the price also correlates with what highlighted in Xia, Monroe, and Cox's (2004) study about the price of the products as one of the main reasons. Finally, the last choice is also supporting the previous view indicated by Godey and Lai (2011). Consequently, these four reasons can be the main reasons that make customers around the world tend to buy counterfeit products.

Question 10: When you choose a counterfeit garment/accessory, do you care that the counterfeit is fearful to the original one?

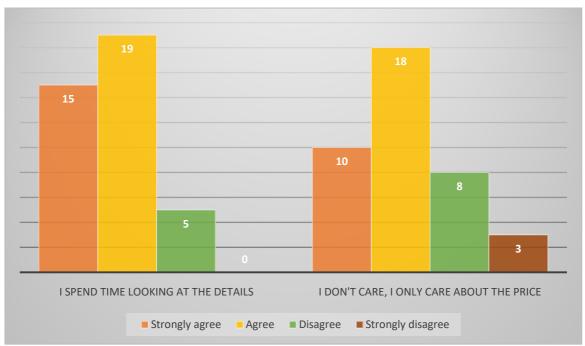


Figure 4.10 Question 10: The importance of quality and price for the participants

From the result shown in figure 4.10, (19%) of participants are agreed to look into the details, while (18%) are agreed that they only care about the price. In addition, (15%) of participants are strongly agreed about the details with (10%) were strongly agreed about the price. Moreover, (5%) has disagreed about the details, while (8%) were disagreed about the price. The figure also indicated that (0%) were strongly disagreed about the details, while (3%) were strongly disagreed about the price.

The information found in the literature review support what found in question 10. As stated previously by Tom et al. (1998), the customers found the price sometimes is unfair which makes them buy these kinds of products. The view is also supported by Wee, Ta, and Cheok (1995), who indicated that the price is the main reason that makes coatomers tend to buy these products. Furthermore, as mentioned by Penz and Stottinger (2005), customers can

accept the low quality if they get a lower price. The result shows that half of the participants care about the details, others are not.

# Question 11: I would buy a counterfeit product if?

#### \* Choose one or more

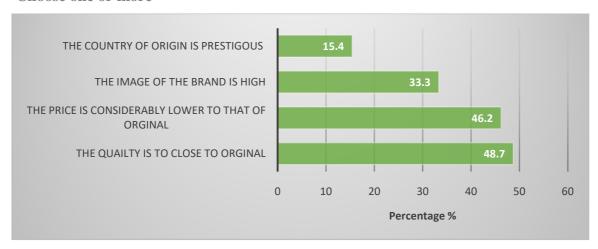


Figure 4.11 Question 11: The motivations that make customers tend to buy a counterfeit product

This question aims to identify the motivations and reasons that make customers tend to buy a counterfeit product. According to the result, most of the participants (48.7%) will buy these products if the quality is too close to the original. Further, (46.2%) of participants believe that they will buy these products if the price is lower than that of the original. The percentage of the customers were agreed that they will buy these products if the image of the brand is high is (33.3%), while (15.4%) of the participants will tend to buy these products if the country of origin is prestigious.

Based on the literature review, Gentry, Putrevu, and Shultz (2006) support the result found that customers may tend to buy counterfeit products if they with achieving an image with owning such a brand product. Besides, the price as stated by many authors is plays a significant role to purchase counterfeit products (Gentry et al., 2006; Gupta et al., 2004; Katawetawaraks & Wang, 2011). Moreover, as a study conducted by Hussain, Kofinas, and Win (2017), customers may tend to buy counterfeit products if the quality is too close to the original product. The result found to show that price, image and an acceptable quality are motivations to purchase these products.

Question 12: What are the reasons that avoiding you from buying counterfeit luxury products by using online shopping?

\*Please rank the following in order of importance

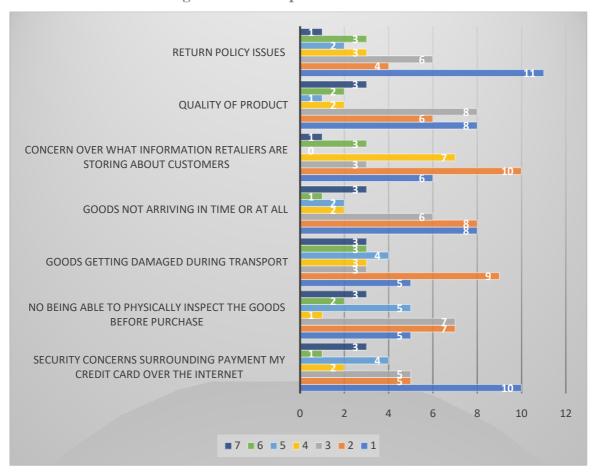


Figure 4.12 Question 12: The risks that make customers not tend to buy a counterfeit product by using online shopping

Based on Figure 4.12, the major reasons that make the participants avoiding buying counterfeit products by using online shopping are the return policy issues as agreed to be the main reason by (11%). Ranked as the most second option is the concern over what data retailers are storing about customers with (10%), followed by the third option which is quality of product with (8%) of responses. The most option has chosen to be the fourth option is the goods not arriving on time or at all (5%), followed by the fifth option which is afraid of the goods which may get damaged during transport (4%). Moreover, (2%) of the participants believe that one of the main reasons that discourage them from buying these products is that they are not able to physically inspect the goods before purchase, followed by (1%) for securing concerns surrounding payment.

However, most of these reasons were indicated by many researchers as previously reviewed in the literature review. For example, as mentioned by Adebiaye and Owusu (2017), the uncertainty about the quality of the product that customers ordered is one of the issues that discourage people from buying counterfeit products. This view also supported by Baeva (2011) as previously reported. Moreover, Benbunan-Fich (2010) in his study discussed the information provided by online stores and how this can make some customers avoid using online stores to buy counterfeit products. Other risks also mentioned previously in the literature which supports what found in this question.

# Question 13: When you are buying something from online shopping, how can you determine if the products are original or not?

\* Select one or more

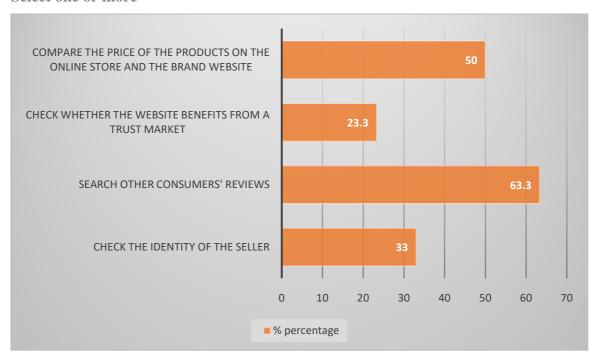


Figure 4.13 Question 13: The process that the participants who are not want to purchase a counterfeit product are following

The participants on this question were asked to determine their behavior when they want to avoid purchasing a counterfeit product by using online shopping. As illustrated in Figure 4.13, (63%) of the participants are searching about other consumers' reviews before purchasing any product from online stores, while (50%) of the participants are comparing the price of the product on the online store or the brand website before the purchasing process. Furthermore, (33%) of the participants prefer to check the identity of the seller first, while (23.3%) of the participants tend to check whether the website benefits from a trusted market or not. However, as mentioned before in the literature review, to date, there is no study about how the online consumer avoids purchasing counterfeit products from online stores.

Consequently, our study has determined from this question some of the main processes that consumers tend to do when they deciding to purchase a product from online stores.

# Question 14: In your opinion, what are the reasons that make some people buy counterfeit luxury products?

\*Please rank the following in order of importance

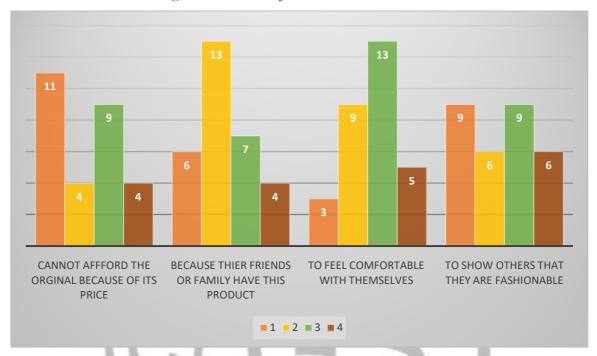


Figure 4.14 Question 14: The reasons that make the participants buying counterfeit luxury products from a view of the participants who are not buying these products

This question is similar to question 9 from the previous section, but in this case, the question was asked to the participants who avoid buying a counterfeit product from online stores, to see their views about the people who are buying these products. According to the result presented in Figure 4.14, the most important reasons that make the customers buying these products are 'to feel comfortable with themselves' and 'because their friends or family have this product', with an equal percentage of (13%). The second choice selected by (11%) of participants is 'cannot afford the original because of its price', followed by (9%) for 'to show others that they are fashionable'.

By comparing the result found in this question and question 9, the main reason that makes customers tend to buy these kinds of products is the same, which is 'to feel comfortable with themselves'. The views founded in this question are supported in the literature the same as what is analyzed previously in question 9.

Question 15: When you are buying original product, how important is the brand image?

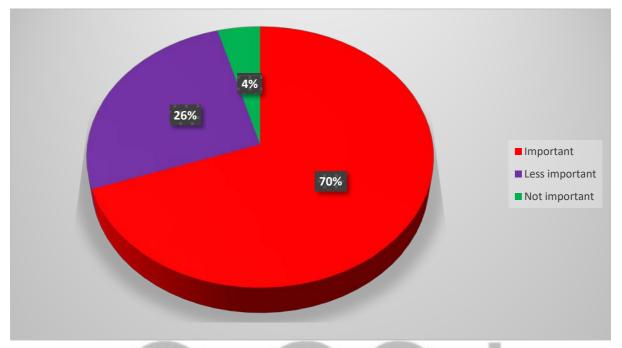
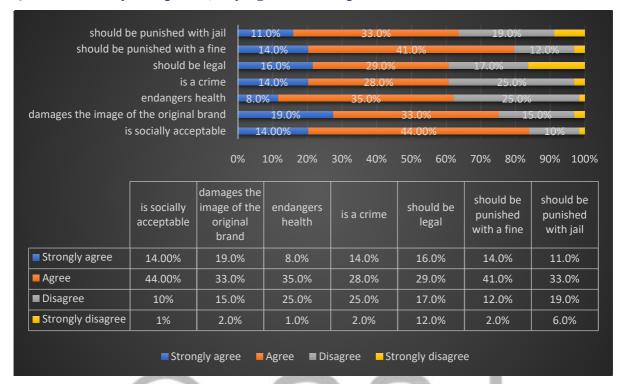


Figure 4.15 Question 15: The importance of the brand image for the participants

The importance of the brand image for the participants was determined from question 15. As shown in Figure 4.15, approximately (70%) of the participants believe that the brand image is important. In addition, (26%) of the participants think that the brand image is less important for them, while only (4%) of the participants are not care at all about the brand image.

Based on the literature review, although the brand of the product is important for many people when purchasing their products, these brands are facing counterfeiting threats as claimed by Wilke & Zaichkowsky (1999). Likewise, Brandao and Gadekar (2019), mentioned that counterfeit products decrease brands' revenues. However, many researchers as stated previously in the literature review found that most of the people prefer buying less and getting the same name as the brand even if it is fake or has an acceptable quality.



Question 16: In your opinion, buying counterfeit products

Figure 4.16 Question 16: The impact of counterfeit products

Question 16 of the questionnaire aims to identify the impact of counterfeit products from the view of the participants. According to Figure 4.16, (19%) of the participants are strongly agree that counterfeit products can damage the image of the original brand, while (44%) were agreed that it is socially acceptable. An equal percentage of (25%) of the participants disagreed that buying counterfeit products may endanger the health or it is a crime. Moreover, (12%) of the participants believe that counterfeiting should be legal.

However, most of these impacts were determined by many authors as conducted previously in the literature review. For instance, the International Chamber of Commerce (2019), in their annual report, stated that counterfeit product may potential health and safety risks to the customers. Also, as discussed in section 2.3.6, there are some negative impacts of counterfeit to the business which may damage the image of the original brand as described by Nia & Zaichkowsky (2000). However, as previously mentioned by Godey and Lai (2011) and agreed by Zheng, Shen, Chow, and Chiu (2013), there are some customers support the idea of that the counterfeit products may give them social benefits.

Question 17: In your opinion, which factors would stop consumers from buying counterfeit products?

<sup>\*</sup> Select one or more

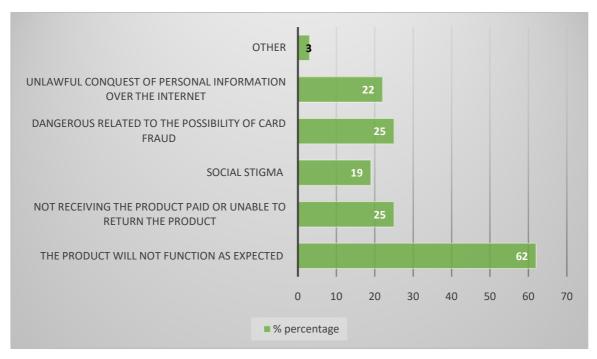


Figure 4.17 Question 17: The factors that may stop consumers from buying counterfeit products

Figure 4.17 illustrated the factors that mays stop consumers from buying counterfeit products from the point of view of the participants. Based on the result, (62%) of the participants agreed that the product may not function as expected. In addition, an equal percentage of (25%) of the participants are consider about the two options related to the payments 'Dangerous related to the possibility of card fraud' and 'Not receiving the product paid or unbale to return the product'. Moreover, (22%) think that one of the factors that may stop consumers from buying counterfeit products is 'Unlawful conquest of personal information over the internet', while (19%) is believe that buying these products may cause 'Social stigma' for the customers. However, (3%) of the participants were provided some other factors such as "affecting health" and "some product are totally different from the original one".

# Question 18: In your opinion, what is the impact of consumer behavior towards counterfeit luxury products?

Table 4.2 Question 18: Participants' opinions regarding the impact of consumer behavior towards counterfeit luxury products

Participants' opinions regarding the impact of consumer behavior towards		
counterfeit luxury products		
Category 1: Social impact	> " A lot of them like those products to increase the self-	

(18%)	esteem I think people become a little bit more confident
	and thinking others like them"
	> "buying what you want and like and don't buying what
	people say about your style"
	> "The person who used counterfeit luxury product he
	/she will feel that they are same stage as billionaires and
	rich people."
	➤ "The represented social status"
Category 2: Price impact	> "I don't know but most of the times they opt to buy fake
(18%)	products because they are cheaper"
	> "They like because of the price and it's close to the
	original"
	> "Directly impact the sales and preferences"
	> "It is so cheap and not waste our money"
Category 3: Purchasing	> "Nowadays lots of people cannot makes difference
with knowing if its	between original brands and counterfeit luxury products"
counterfeit or not (4.5%)	
Category 3: Security of	>"security and payments"
payments (4.5%)	
Category 4: Quality impact	> "The product not like the product quality as the photo
(4.5%)	and stoical media"
Category 5: Economic	> "Purchasing counterfeit luxury products raise its
impact (13.6%)	market"
	> "No more impact of consumers but the real impact will
	happen to companies and factories."
	> "It affect the economy especially Tax, value can not be
	placed on such products"
Category 6: Other (36%)	≽ "Mood"
	➤ "Online shopping"
	> "It impact for the product, price, quality, and
	confident"
	> "We can't judge the consumer behaviour due to my
	opinion because the buying abilities differ from customer

to another depending on his economic status."

- > "Consumer Behaviours are sometimes controlled by online product availability"
- ➤ "The consumer may not be affected by the presence of counterfeit products and similar to the original products, the companies producing the original products may be affected, which may affect some of the stagnation of some products then"
- > "consumers were less satisfied with online shopping"

The responses of this question were categorized into six categories as illustrated in Table 4.2. An equal percentage of (18%) of the participants are given their opinion for both social and price impact. Moreover, a percentage of (4.5%) of the participants gave their opinion in 'Purchasing with knowing if its counterfeit or not', 'Security of payments', and 'Quality impact'. Also, (36%) of the participants provided other impacts of consumer behavior towards counterfeit luxury products'. However, most of the results from this question are correlates with the data previously reported in the literature review.

#### **CONCULSTION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The aim of this research was 'to investigate the impact of consumer behavior toward counterfeit luxury products on online shopping. The research established online shopping and consumer behaviour including the impact of consumer behavior in online shopping. The research reported studies about counterfeit luxury products in online shopping including its reasons and motivations, the positive and the negative impact, consumer's risks, the moral and ethical considerations, the impact of consumer behavior and its effect on the business. These also were supported by the methodology. Consequently, the aim of this research has been accomplished by completing all related objectives as detailed below.

#### **Recommendation for future research**

There are several recommendations to further research related to the same area of this research. First, a study about the legal aspects regarding online stores who purchasing counterfeit products. Second, the researcher may look further into moral and ethical considerations regarding selling this kind of product, as most studied only focusing on the customer side, not the seller side. Third, a study can be conducted about how the customers who are avoiding purchasing the counterfeit product can affect the customer who is purchasing this kind of product, as most of the studies conducted on only the customers who

are purchasing these products. Finally, this study is only about consumer behavior towards these kinds of products, so the further study may look into different aspects.

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