Awareness level of Consumer for Counterfeit Products

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ABSTRACT

This research paper aims to know consumer awareness towards counterfeit products and how demographic profile of consumers such as their age, gender, education qualification, social status, marital status, income level and residential area effect their awareness towards counterfeit goods. For research purpose convenience sampling method was used. Total 130 questionnaire distributed in Rohtak district out of which 100 are used for analysis. Data analyses with the help of SPSS. Mean, frequency, t-test, Anova were used as analysis tools. Result indicated that there is significant difference between educational qualification, income level, Residential area and consumer awareness towards counterfeit goods, where there is no significant difference between age, gender, marital status, social status and consumer awareness towards counterfeit goods.

Keywords: Consumer behavior, consumer awareness, counterfeit products, global market

INTRODUCTION

In today's globalized marketplace, the proliferation of counterfeit goods presents a significant challenge to consumers, businesses, and governments alike. Counterfeit products, ranging from luxury items and electronics to everyday consumer goods, not only undermine the integrity of legitimate brands but also pose potential health and safety risks to consumers. As the digital age progresses, the ease of accessing and distributing counterfeit products has increased, exacerbating the issue. Generation Z, the cohort born roughly between 1997 and 2012, represents a unique segment of the consumer market. This generation has grown up in an era of rapid technological advancement and extensive internet use, influencing their shopping behaviors and attitudes towardss products and brands. Understanding Generation Z's awareness towards counterfeit goods is crucial for developing effective strategies to combat the proliferation of these products. This research paper aims to explore the level of consumer awareness towards counterfeit goods among Generation Z. It examines how demographic profile affect consumer awareness towards counterfeit goods. By analyzing these aspects, the study seeks to provide insights into how this generation perceives and interacts with counterfeit goods and to offer recommendations for raising awareness and promoting the purchase of genuine products. Through a combination of literature review, surveys, and data analysis, the research sheds light on the nuances of Generation Z's consumer awareness and offers strategies to enhance their discernment and safeguard their interests in the marketplace.

Review of literature

Rafi et al. (2024) explored the impact of factors like brand image, social influence, status consumption,

and price-quality perception on Gen Z's attitudes toward counterfeit electronic products. The study also looked at how these attitudes influence purchase intentions, using the Theory of Planned Behavior. Data from 178 respondents in Semarang City were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The findings revealed that brand image, social influence, and status consumption positively and significantly affect attitudes towards counterfeit electronics, while price-quality perception had a positive but not statistically significant effect. Additionally, attitudes towards counterfeit products significantly influenced purchase intentions, with all hypotheses supported except one. The study suggested marketing strategies to differentiate genuine products from counterfeits and recommended introducing cheaper genuine alternatives to reduce the appeal of counterfeits related to status consumption, thus encouraging the preference for genuine products among consumers.

Shrivastava (2023) investigated the impact of demographic characteristics on the use of luxury counterfeit products among young Indians. The study also aimed to understand customer attitudes and intentions regarding the purchase of counterfeit goods. This qualitative research employed convenience sampling to gather data from 460 respondents, mainly young adults from various Indian institutions and professions in regions where luxury counterfeits are common. The research was conducted in cities such as Indore, Mumbai, Pune, Delhi, Hyderabad, Bangalore, and Chennai. Responses were recorded using a self-designed questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale. The results indicated that value consciousness, brand consciousness, perceived risk, and materialism significantly influenced attitudes toward fake luxury goods, while social influence did not affect consumer perceptions of counterfeit premium products. Despite the unethical nature of purchasing counterfeit items, the study found that consumers are highly involved in this practice and frequently recommend these products to friends and family.

Manimannan G (2019) The study aimed to understand the role of awareness about counterfeit goods among men and women. Various statistical techniques were employed to determine the importance of this awareness. The research focused on identifying differences in consumer awareness about counterfeit products across different age groups. A convenience sampling method was used, gathering primary data from 160 respondents through questionnaires. The sample included working men and women, retired individuals, businesspeople, and homemakers. Analysis tools such as Chi-Square, ANOVA, and Correlation were utilized. The results indicated that 91.2% of respondents believe that initiatives against counterfeit goods would discourage purchases of these products. No significant relationship was found between education and the ability to distinguish counterfeit cosmetics from genuine ones. Similarly, no significant relationship was identified between income and the preference for replica goods due to lower prices. However, a significant relationship was found between occupation and the purchase of counterfeit goods with quality similar to original brands. No significant relationship was found between the age group of respondents and health issues related to using counterfeit cosmetic brands. Additionally, a positive correlation was observed between the age of respondents and their awareness of fake goods.

Bhatia (2017) The study examined the factors that influence consumers' attitudes and intentions to purchase counterfeit fashion goods. A survey involving 382 participants was conducted in Mumbai. A structural equation modeling approach was utilized to explore the causal relationships between various components. The findings revealed that consumers' attitudes towards counterfeit fashion goods were positively associated with value consciousness, materialism, and social influence, which ultimately led to purchase intentions. Another investigator supported his study on counterfeit items with a conceptual model proposal. According to this research, brand awareness and perceived risk had minimal impact on customer attitudes towards counterfeit fashion items. For lower-income consumers, their attitudes towards

counterfeit fashion items were shaped by their brand and value concerns, as well as their perception that there was little risk involved in purchasing counterfeits.

Dessalew (2017) The research explored various elements that influence consumers' intentions to purchase culturally inspired clothing in Addis Ababa. The study considered factors such as value consciousness, previous experience, fashion awareness, social status, and customer attitude. Convenience sampling was employed to gather responses from a sample size of 305 participants through questionnaires. The analysis utilized multiple statistical methods, including multiple regression, ANOVA, correlation, and independent t-tests. The findings indicated that all the examined factors significantly influenced consumers' intentions to purchase fashionable clothing. There was a notable variation in purchasing intentions based on age, social status, and attitude. Significant disparities were also found across different income brackets. Furthermore, the study revealed that fashion consciousness and past experiences had distinct influences on purchasing intentions among different education levels, while past experiences had less impact on purchasing decisions overall. Additionally, employment status significantly affected purchase intentions for fashion apparel across various factors, except for value consciousness. The study suggests that managers should consider these variables when developing marketing strategies to boost profits and market share.

Chellasamy et al. (2020) The study aimed to assess consumers' knowledge and satisfaction levels regarding counterfeit goods, as well as to understand their behavior when purchasing these items and the impact of counterfeit goods on the brand image of original products. The research was conducted in Bengaluru and employed a quantitative approach with statistical analysis. The study was classified as conclusive based on its design, but descriptive in nature. A convenience random sampling method was used to select a sample of 101 respondents aged 18-21. Data were collected via questionnaires. The analysis was performed using regression, correlation, and ANOVA, with IBM SPSS Statistics 20 and Excel as the analytical tools. The findings concluded that consumers were well-informed when purchasing goods from the market and had a good understanding of different types of products. Consequently, there was no significant impact on consumer buying behavior or their perception of the brand image of original products.

Research Methodology

Research design is descriptive in nature. Purposive sampling technique is used. Data collection is done with the help of questionnaire. Total 130 questionnaire are distributed in Rohtak city. Out of total 100 find valid for analysis. Responses are measured on 5-point Likert scale (Fully aware, Aware, Neutral, Not Aware, Not Fully Aware). Demographic profile includes age (1520, 20-25), gender (male, female), marital status (married, unmarried), Education (10th, 12th, graduation, post-graduation, other), social status (student, employed, unemployed, other), Monthly income (less than 20000, 20000-40000, 40000-60000, 60000-80000), Residential area (rural, urban, semi-urban). Consumer awareness include six variables availability of counterfeit goods, Risk associated with the use of counterfeit goods, Legal safeguard and constitutional for counterfeit goods, consumer protection act, consumer court, Process of filing complaints in consumer court for counterfeit goods, Legal punishment for selling of counterfeit goods.

Table 1.1

Demographic Variables	Frequency
Age	

15-20 20-25	31 69
Gender	
Male Female	31 69
Marital Status	
Married Unmarried	37 63
Educational Qualification	
10th 12th Graduation Post Graduation Other	3 16 39 18 24
Social Status745	
Student Employed Unemployed Other	39 47 11 3
Monthly Income	
Less than 20000 20000-40000 40000-60000 60000-80000	33 47 15 5
Residential Area	
Rural Urban Semi-urban	69 22 9

Table 1.1 shows demographic profile of respondents 31 respondents belongs to age group of 15-20 and 69 belongs to age group of 20-26. Male are 31 and female are 69. In table it is seen that 37 respondents are married and 63 are unmarried. In educational qualification 3 respondents are 10th pass, 16 respondents are 12th pass, 39 respondents are graduated and 18 respondents are post graduated. In social status 39 category are students, 47 respondents are employed, 11 respondents are unemployed and 3 respondents belongs to other. In income level 33 respondents falls under income less than 20000, 47 respondents fall under 20000-40000, 15 respondents fall under 40000-60000 and 5respondents falls under 60000-80000 income group. In residential area 69 belong to rural, 22 belongs to urban and 9 respondents belongs to semiurban area. Table 1.2

Consumer Awareness	Fully Aware	Aware	Neutral	Not Aware	Not Fully Aware

Availability of counterfeit goods	71	19	6	2	2
Risk associated with the use of counterfeit goods	57	28	8	4	3
Legal safeguard and constitutional for counterfeit goods	44	34	11	9	2
Consumer Protection Act	43	41	8	7	1
Consumer court	36	48	6	5	5
Process of filing complaints in consumer court for counterfeit goods	36	35	10	11	8
Legal punishment for selling of counterfeit goods	38	38	7	10	5

Table 1.2 describe the awareness of respondents towards various variables. 71 respondents are fully aware about availability of counterfeit goods in market. 57 respondents are fully aware about risk associated with the use of counterfeit goods. 11 respondents are neutral about legal safeguard and constitutional for counterfeit goods whereas 2 respondents are not fully aware about it. 36 respondents aware about consumer court and 5 respondents not fully aware about consumer court. 36 respondents are fully aware about process of filing complaints in consumer court whereas 8 respondents are neutral about it. 38 respondents are fully aware about legal punishment for buying and selling of counterfeit goods whereas 5 respondents are not fully aware about legal punishment selling of counterfeit goods.

HYPOTHESIS
H0- There is no significance difference between age and consumer awareness towards counterfeit goods.
H0- There is no significance difference between gender and consumer awareness towards counterfeit goods.
H0- There is no significance difference between marital status and consumer awareness towards 3counterfeit goods.
H0- There is no significance difference between educational qualification and consumer awareness towards counterfeit goods.
H0-There is no significance difference between income level and consumer awareness towards counterfeit goods.
H0 There is no significance difference between residential area and consumer awareness towards counterfeit goods.
H0- There is no significance difference between social status and consume awareness towards counterfeit goods.

Data Analysis

Table 2.1

Age	N	Mean	F value	Significance value	Null Hypothesis
15-20	31	4.1014	0.57	0.667	Accepted

20-26	69	4.1739			

Table 2.2

Gender	N	Mean	F value	Significance value	Null Hypothesis
Male	31	4.0138	3.396	0.235	Accepted
Female	69	4.2133			

Table 2.3

Marital Status	N	Mean	F value	Significance value	Null Hypothesis
Married	37	4.0309	1.243	0.234	Accepted
Unmarried	63	4.2222			

Table 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 indicates varying mean awareness scores among respondents across different demographic factors. A t-test was employed to assess the statistical significance of these differences. Significant results ($p < .05$) were reported in the 'Equal variances assumed' row, detailing the t-value and its significance. In cases where the results were not significant ($p > .05$), findings were presented in the 'Equal variances not assumed' row, including the t-value and its significance.

In table 2.1 p value is 0.235 which is greater than 0.05 which means null hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant difference between age and consumer awareness towards counterfeit goods.

In table 2.2 p value is 3.396 which is greater than 0.05 which means null hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant difference between gender and consumer awareness towards counterfeit goods.

In table 2.3 p value is 1.243 which is greater than 0.05 which means null hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant difference between marital status and consumer awareness towards counterfeit goods.

Table 3.1

Educational Qualification	N	Mean	F value	Significance value	Null Hypothesis
10TH	3	3.6667			
12TH	16	3.7321			
Graduation	39	4.3993	2.770	0.032	Rejected
Post graduation	18	4.0317			
Other	24	4.1786			

Table 3.2

Social Status	N	Mean	F value	Significance value	Null Hypothesis
Student	39	4.1648			

Employed	47	4.2553	1.806	0.151	Accepted
Unemployed	11	3.8701			
Other	3	3.3810			

Table 3.3

Income	N	Mean	F value	Significance value	Null Hypothesis
Less than 20000	33	3.8615			
20000-40000	47	4.2310	3.268	0.025	Rejected
40000-60000	15	4.3333			
60000-80000	5	4.7714			

Table 3.4

Residential Status	N	Mean	F value	Significance value	Null Hypothesis
Urban	69	4.2091			
Rural	22	3.8247	3.251	0.043	Rejected
Semi-urban	9	4.5079			

One of the assumptions of a one-way ANOVA is that the variances across the groups being compared are similar. The test for homogeneity of variances assesses whether the variances are equal among the groups. This is determined by checking the significance value in Levene's test. If the p-value is greater than 0.05, it indicates that the variances are equal (homogeneity of variances is present). If the p-value is less than 0.05, it indicates that the variances are not equal (homogeneity of variances is absent). When homogeneity of variances exists, the significance value from the ANOVA table is used. When it does not exist, the Welch test is applied, and the significance value from the Robust Tests of Equality of Means table is considered. If the significance value (p) is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. If the p-value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted.

In Table 3.1 value of p is 0.032 which is less than 0.05. It means null hypothesis get rejected and there is significance difference between educational qualification and consumer awareness towards counterfeit goods.

In table 3.2 value of p is 0.151 which is greater than 0.05 It means null hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant difference between social status and consumer awareness towards counterfeit goods.

In table 3.3 value of p is 0.025 which is less than 0.05. It means null hypothesis is rejected and there is significance difference between income level and consumer awareness towards counterfeit goods.

In table 3.4 value of p is 0.043 which is less that 0.05. It means null hypothesis is rejected and there is significant difference between residential area and consumer awareness towards counterfeit goods.

Conclusion

After carefully analysis of data, it concludes that there is significance difference between educational

qualification and consumer awareness towards counterfeit goods. It means that person who are educated have higher awareness towards counterfeit goods. There is no significant difference between age and consumer awareness towards counterfeit goods. There is no significant difference between gender and consumer awareness towards counterfeit goods. Male and female are equally aware towards counterfeit goods. Further marital status does not affect consumer awareness towards counterfeit goods. There is no significant difference between social status and consumer awareness towards counterfeit goods. Students, employed, unemployed equally aware about counterfeit goods. Income level of consumer have significant difference with consumer awareness towards counterfeit goods. Residential status also has significant difference with consumer awareness towards counterfeit goods. Consumers belongs to urban area are more aware in comparison to rural or semi-urban area.

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