

CONSUMER ATTITUDE TOWARDS FASHION LUXURY COUNTERFEIT PRODUCT

by:

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ABSTRACT

Counterfeit are defined in various ways by some people. Generally it's described as an illegal activity of imitating a trademark. It also can be described as producing fake or imitation product that visually the same with the authentic. It can be the whole item that is fake, or only partially. The objective of this research is to examine the consumer attitude towards fashion luxury counterfeit products. Theories supporting research are counterfeit, attitude, and Fishbein theory of attitude. The population that is mainly observed in this research is the entire citizen of Manado, throughout the city. The subset of population, the sample, is 100 respondents that are randomly chosen. The conclusions gained are as follow: (1) consumer attitude towards fashion luxury counterfeit product in Manado are under the scale of favorable; (2) the attribute quality that gains the highest score of evaluation in shaping the evaluative aspect is the most important attribute while brand is the least important; and (3) the attribute price that gains the highest agreement score in shaping the strength of belief is the attribute which statement of affordable gets the highest agreement, while quality is the least.

Keywords: *consumer attitude, counterfeit product*

INTRODUCTION**Research Background**

Counterfeit are defined in various ways by some people. Generally it's described as an illegal activity of imitating a trademark. It also can be described as producing fake or imitation product that visually the same with the authentic. It can be the whole item that is fake, or only partially. Trademark Counterfeiting Act of 1984 (National Association of Wholesaler-Distributors [NAW], 2009) explains trafficking in counterfeit goods and services is prohibited, and it applies to any individual or company that knowingly sells a counterfeit product. The law conveys significant money as a penalty, and prison time for who violate the Act. That's why it's considered as illegal to any people who intentionally produce and sell, gaining money out of goods or services using counterfeit trademark.

Counterfeiting activity is also categorized into a form of consumer fraud, which is different from the crime of copy-right violation, where people sharing or transferring a licensed material such as music files. Product counterfeiting is generally an activity of a group of people with manufacturing process and a goal to gain profit (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC], 2010). If it is compared to the authentic manufacturing, counterfeit manufacturing have a lower cost of production with the same designs or the same look with the original product, because it only requires cheaper materials and even fewer labor. Counterfeiters basically don't need a deep concern about the control and have no interest in building brand reputation – though sometimes it does helps in brand awareness. They cut some processes that are usually follow through by the legal manufactures.

The first case of counterfeiting emerged about forty years ago, when only a few manufactures were affected. And now, it has developed to an economic problem, which harms the systems, though counterfeiting also has a positive impact for a brand of product (Eisend and Schuhert-Güler, 2006). Ritson (2007) stated on Branding Strategy Insider, a company could use counterfeit sales to forecast demand for its own brand and estimate its health. Counterfeits are also used to introduce or develop brand awareness for the genuine, which

could bring consumer to purchase the authentic. But, still it is an illegal activity, which leads to harmful effect to the economy to become unsustainable because of substantial losses of legitimate business around the world (International Anti Counterfeiting Coalition [IACC], 2009).

This world has a huge population of 7 billion. Counterfeit market is increasing day to day, grown over 10,000 percent in the past two decades, and reached a number of flow that exceed \$600 billion annually, that is approximately 5%-7% of world trade, excludes the online counterfeits (IACC, 2009). This is a big business, and those big amounts stated above is formed by an increasing in demand of counterfeit product that is hard to prevent. Thus, buying fake products has become a serious matter as it has grown in a significant way all over the world, and has become a global concern (Maldonado and Hume, 2005).

World Customs Organization noted, in 2008 counterfeit products are destined for 140 countries. The lack of regulatory extend makes the widespread counterfeit product possible and unbearable to numerous countries. Asian countries, with the biggest population in the world, have become a target in selling counterfeits, and also a source of counterfeits. Around two-thirds of counterfeits detected in 2008 were shipped from East Asia (UNODC, 2010). U.S. Customs stated China accounted for 87% of the value of the counterfeit goods (UNODC, 2013). While other significant East Asian exporters of counterfeit goods are include Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Japan, the Philippines, South Korea, Singapore and Vietnam, as stated on International Business Times (2013). Interestingly, from the data of the percentages stated above, counterfeit luxury or branded products has become one of significant source of intellectual property crime (Pollinger, 2008) with value of counterfeit going into billions (Phoyomrattanaphajit, 2009). The increasing popularity of luxury products triggers the counterfeiters to make benefits by imitating the trademarks.

Products that labeled as luxury products that bring prestigious feeling are commonly targeted at affluent consumers who are willing to pay at high price to reflect the user's personality (Thomas, 2007). Counterfeiters see this as an opportunity to gain profit. People who doesn't have ability to purchase the branded or luxurious fashion products may have to choose to purchase the counterfeit, knowingly or unknowingly, to become fashionable or accepted by society. Essentially, consumers play an important role in counterfeit business. The information that consumer carries also becoming a determining point whether they will purchase or not. The information here means the knowledge about counterfeit products such as a different in appearance, or in any other attributes, and how they consider the risk of using the fakes. Although, there are many factors that involve in consumer decision in buying counterfeit products, which arrive from their attitudes towards it. Of course, lower price is not the only attribute consumer seek in counterfeit goods. There are various non-price causal factors that have significant impact in consumers' purchase intention (Wee at al., 1995).

This research takes place in Manado, because considering that it has a significant economic growth in all sectors and the growth of welfare, which means the buying ability is increasing. Fashion luxury counterfeit products that usually counterfeited such as bag, sunglasses, cloths, shoes, scarf, watch, and other goods that people wear for style, are now become something common in this city. Something that are known as exclusive product and usually wore by high end consumers now spread out in every level of citizen in Manado. Counterfeited fashion luxury product becoming more and more familiar to the consumer and already formed as a lifestyle. Consumer who buys this product, which is cheaper and more consumer oriented, might be classified as smart buyer because of buying with lower price but get higher satisfaction, means economically consumer is saving their money. Though it's considered as illegal in trafficking counterfeit products, but this research can be used to explain how consumers evaluate the fake products and act towards it.

Research Objectives

The objective of this research is to examine the consumer attitude towards fashion luxury counterfeit products.

THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

Theories

Counterfeit

Grossman and Shapiro (1988) explain the consumer who unwittingly purchased a product that carries a brand name or logo without permission to the brand owner is called deceptive counterfeit transaction. In contrary, non-deceptive counterfeiting occurs when consumers knowingly purchase the products. In accordance,

the consumer can be categorized in a role of victim, where he/she believes that he/she purchased an original or authentic product, or willing collaborator when he/she purchase a product known, or surmised as counterfeit. Consumer often capable to differentiate counterfeited product because of the dissimilarity of counterfeited and original product's price and other attributes.

Attitude

Attitude is someone's enduring favorable or unfavorable evaluations, emotional feelings, and action trends in relation to some object or idea (Kotler, 2002:96). Attitude towards a brand is defined by consumer's beliefs and preferences after perceive and process information. There are three components of attitudes: cognitive, affective, and conative or behavioral (Maio & Haddock, 2010:25). Firstly, cognitive involves a person's belief or knowledge about an attitude object experienced from various sources. Second, affective involves a person's feeling or emotions about the attitude object. Lastly, behavioral or conative which means the way the attitude consumers have influences how they act or behave.

Fishbein Theory of attitude

Fishbein states that people form attitude to objects on the basis convictions, related with the object. Convictions, in turn, are determined by personal experience of using the object or by information, acquired from another sources (Banyte al., 2007). In another text, Fishbein and Ajzen found two problems with the traditional views of attitude, first the term has been defined too generally, and second the traditional view is that the previous researchers appeared to ignore the receiver, which they see as a "passive recipient of information" and therefore gave the credit of attitude (Bright et al., 1993, cited by Johnson, 2002).

Previous Research

Phoyomrattanaphajit (2009) provided the empirically preliminary information for understanding of consumer attitudes and the explicit reasons why they use or use not counterfeit luxury products help brand owners to develop the appropriate countermeasures. Bhardwaj (2010) studied other aspects to understand the consumers' buying behavior of counterfeit products and found that fashion consciousness and price-quality schema have no influence on the attitude toward the counterfeit brands purchase, favorable attitudes toward the purchase of counterfeit brand have a negative act upon the intentions to buy the original, and price sensitivity does not act as moderating factor in the relationship amongst attitudes and intention to buy counterfeit brands. Budiman (2012) studied the effect of extrinsic and intrinsic cues, attitude towards counterfeits, religiosity, lawfulness attitudes, and status of consumption on purchase intentions; the result exhibited that the more positive the consumer's lawfulness attitude; the more negative the influence towards the intention to purchase counterfeit bag products. Ramdhani et al. (2012) showed the model that indicates the most influencing attribute towards consumer attitude where the result of consumer attitude towards one brand can be use as comparison to another brand, answering which brand has the most positive or negative attitude. Jiang and Cova (2012) studied counterfeit luxury product in China and found that the meaning of luxury brand is made by the same product design of the counterfeit, if the counterfeit was made as real as possible to the originals and the needs to be similar to consumers' social group and the wants of status force consumers to purchase fake products. Sun et al. (2013) studied the attitude toward counterfeit of luxury brands and found that positive effect of relationship of social influence and attitude; however personal gratification has a negative effect on attitude toward counterfeit luxury brands.

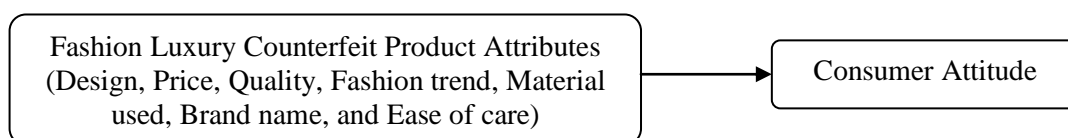


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

RESEARCH METHOD

Type of Research

The research is quantitative research which can be handled numerically. This research uses relational type of research that investigates the relation between variables, in this case, attributes of counterfeit luxury products and consumer attitude.

Time and Place of Research

This research takes place in Manado and conducted in August - September 2013.

Population and Sample

The population that is mainly observed in this research is the entire citizen of Manado, throughout the city. The subset of population, the sample, is 100 respondents that are randomly chosen.

Data Collection Model

Data collection follows two model methods of data type; primary data and secondary data from various sources. The survey is held in a local area, so the primary data will be collected through survey by using designed questionnaire that are distributed to respondents set up by researcher. Secondary data are obtained from existing journals, books, internet, news, government publication, work papers, and others offered by media.

Operational Definition and Measurement of Research Variables

This research identified the consumer attitude as the dependent variable, and the attribute of product as its independent variable. Below is the research variable and operational definition.

1. Counterfeit products: unauthorized copies of a product presented for sale as if they were the legitimate manufacturer's product (Olsen and Granzin, 1993, cited by Cheng, 2005). Counterfeit products are made to imitate a popular product in all details of construction and appearance (Kenawy, 2013).
2. Luxury products: products that have more than necessary and ordinary characteristics compared to other products of their category, which include their relatively high level of price, quality, aesthetics, rarity, extraordinariness, and symbolic meaning (Heine, 2012:53).
3. Product attributes: characteristics of a raw material or finished goods which make it distinct from other products. Attributes include size, color, functionality, components and features that affect the product's appeal or acceptance in the market. Design: the art of the application to clothing and accessories that influenced by cultural and social latitudes and has varied over time and place.
4. Price: the brand offers products which belong to the most expensive products of their category.
5. Quality: the contribution of a product to its ability to meet given requirements.
6. Fashion trend: the direction in which fashions are moving (Jarnow and Dickerson, 1997, cited by Cheng, 2005)
7. Material: the tangible substance of the object in this case fashion luxury counterfeit products.
8. Brand name: a trade name or symbol that differentiate a product as that of particular manufacturer or distributor (Jarnow and Dickerson, 1997, cited by Cheng, 2005).
9. Ease of care: hardwearing, practical, and requiring no special treatment.

The research variables above will be measured by using interval scale mechanism of Likert scale that requires respondents to indicate degree of agreement or disagreement for measuring belief, and important or not important for measuring evaluation. Belief measurement using 1 to 5 scales from strongly disagrees to strongly agree to indicate the statement of belief towards the attributes given contained in counterfeit fashion luxury product. Evaluation measurement using 1 to 5 scales from very unimportant to very important to indicate the value of the seven attributes in counterfeit fashion luxury products.

Data Analysis Method

Validity and Reliability Test

Validity testing will determine whether or not the test measures what it claims to be measure. On a test with high validity the items will be closely linked to the test's intended focus. To analyze the validity of the questionnaire, and to calculate the percent of exact agreement, Person's product moment will be used. Reliability is the consistency of a set of measurements or measuring instrument. Alpha Cronbach is reliable coefficients that can indicate whether the two independent assessors give similar scores. Reliability is inversely related to random error.

Fishbein's Multi Attribute Attitude Model

Attitude theories illustrate that consumer behavior or action against products is affected by consumer attitudes. Fishbein's multi attributes attitude model is a model that can only be used to measure consumer's attitude towards an object and is the most relevant and was studied by some researchers. Attitude toward an object in this model, is a function of belief that the object is associated with certain attributes and evaluative responses that connected to that belief. To predict their behavior you need to multiply the person's evaluation of each behavior's consequences by the strength of one's belief that the behavior will lead to those consequences and then adding of the products of each. These variables then put into equation:

$$A_o = \sum_{i=1}^n b_i e_i$$

A_o is equal to the attitude toward object o , b_i is equal to the strength of belief i about o , e_i is the evaluative aspect of b , and n is the number of beliefs. An attitude toward and object equals the sum of each belief about that object times its evaluation. People usually believe that their behavior will lead to both positive and negative and their attitude is based on how favorable the total set is (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1980, cited by Johnson, 2002). Fishbein's model used also to indentify the evaluation of every attribute that are already determined as variable, and which attribute is the most important to the consumers.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Validity and Reliability Test

Validity is measured from critical values for Pearson's r . If the r_{count} is more than r_{table} then the question is valid. The value of r_{count} is more than r_{table} therefore all item questions are valid. The following value of r_{count} are: Belief_design (.622), Belief_price (.404), Belief_quality (.674), Belief_fashiontrend (.538), Belief_material (.731), Belief_brand (.291), Belief_easeofcare (.734) Evaluation_design (.459), Evaluation_price (.245), Evaluation_quality (.418), Evaluation_fashiontrend (.517), Evaluation_material (.500), Evaluation_brand (.400), and Evaluation_easeofcare (.506). The value of r_{table} is 0.165. The value of Cronbach Alpha is 0.780 (> 0.60) which means this research is reliable to examine the consumer attitude towards fashion luxury counterfeit product, and also the respondents contribute a consistent answers in the questionnaire.

Result of Fishbein Multi-attributes Analysis

Using Fishbein's model to measure consumer overall attitude, the research objective in this study can be answered. The result is in a form of a score. The measurement is based on the calculation of belief (b_i) and evaluation (e_i) towards the identified attributes. Here evaluation also can be referred to how consumers weight a particular attribute by its importance or priority. The evaluation score for all the attributes represent the value up to consumers of counterfeit fashion luxury product in general.

Table 1. Average Score of Evaluation

Attribute	Average Score of Evaluation (e_i)	Rank
Design	4.11	2
Price	4.08	3
Quality	4.27	1
Fashion trend	3.69	6
Material used	4.00	4
Brand name	3.52	7
Ease of care	3.91	5

Source: Data Processed 2013

Table 1 shows all the attribute average scores regarding the evaluation of the importance and the rank from 1 to 7, where the first rank presents the most important attribute and the seventh rank presents the most unimportant attribute among all the attributes given. Therefore, quality is found as the most important attribute in counterfeited fashion luxury product with score of 4.27, followed by design and then price. Thus shows that consumers consider quality, design, and price as the attributes of counterfeited fashion luxury products in general as the most significant in forming the attitude. The most unimportant attribute is the brand with the average of 3.52, which means consumers are tend to dismiss the attribute of brand in the evaluation of counterfeited fashion luxury products. The other component to measure consumer attitude is belief that shows how consumer belief that counterfeited fashion luxury product holds certain attribute that is complementing the product. Through the statements of each attribute given in the questionnaire, consumer give agreement presented by score 1 to 5; from very disagree to very agree.

Table 2. Average Score of Belief

Attribute	Average Score of Belief	Rank
Design	3.81	2
Price	4.14	1
Quality	3.32	7
Fashion trend	3.79	3
Material used	3.35	6
Brand name	3.54	4
Ease of care	3.59	5

Source: Data Processed 2013

Table 2 presents the average score of belief of consumers toward fashion luxury counterfeit products. The result exhibits the highest agreement to the statement regarding the price, that the price of counterfeited fashion luxury product is affordable. The second attribute that consumer belief the object holds is design, that the design of counterfeited fashion luxury product is attractive. The attribute of fashion trend is the third, where the consumer belief that the object is up-to-date with the latest trend of fashion. The last attribute consumers agree less to be found in counterfeited fashion luxury product is the quality. To the statement regarding the quality, that the object has quality accord with the expectation, consumers give the lowest score of agreement that resulted in the lowest average score. To answer the objective of this study, then the calculation of consumer attitude using Fishbein's multi attribute model is conducted. The belief linked with evaluation that reflects how favorably consumers perceived the attributes. Average scores of evaluation and belief of each attribute recorded in Microsoft Excel is multiplied one after another then added up.

Table 3. Attitude Score

Attribute	Belief (b_i)	Evaluation (e_i)	Attitude ($b_i \times e_i$)
Design	3.81	4.11	15.65
Price	4.14	4.08	16.89
Quality	3.32	4.27	14.17
Fashion trend	3.79	3.69	13.98
Material used	3.35	4.00	13.40
Brand name	3.54	3.52	12.46
Ease of care	3.59	3.91	14.03
$A_0 = \sum b_i e_i$			100.58

Source: Data Processed 2013

Overall score of the consumers' attitude towards fashion luxury counterfeit product has been found based on different attributes from the Fishbein's model. Table 3 presents how the calculation of consumer attitude is computed. The score of consumer attitude towards fashion luxury counterfeit product in general is 100.58. After that, the next step is to determine in which scale the score is, whether the score is favorable or not, firstly the maximum score of attitude is computed.

To make the interval from the most unfavorable score to the most favorable score of attitude, the scale of belief from 1 as the lowest score, to 5 as the highest score consumer give to the statements given, are multiplied by the evaluation score consumer given to each attribute that already calculated before. Table 4 below shows the result of maximum attitude score if the maximum belief scale of 5 is used. Therefore, the score of 138 are the highest score of attitude towards counterfeited fashion luxury product.

Table 4. Maximum Score of Attitude

Attribute	Ideal score of belief	Evaluation (e_i)	TOTAL
Design	5	4.11	20.55
Price	5	4.08	20.4
Quality	5	4.27	21.35
Fashion trend	5	3.69	18.45
Material used	5	4.00	20
Brand name	5	3.52	17.6
Ease of care	5	3.91	19.65
TOTAL			138

Source: Data Processed 2013

If the calculation continues until the lowest scale of belief, which 1, then the maximum to minimum score of attitude acquired is 27.6, 55.2, 82.8, 110.4 and 138. The minimum score of attitude towards fashion luxury counterfeit product with the evaluation score computed through data analysis before is 27.6. This is the lowest score of attitude could get with the given evaluation scores. While 138 is the maximum score that indicates the most favorable attitude towards fashion luxury counterfeit product. The attitude score acquired in this research is 100.58, thus when placed to the scale above, consumer attitude of fashion luxury counterfeit product is:

- Attitude 1, A_0 between 1 – 27.6 = very unfavorable
- Attitude 2, A_0 between 27.6 – 55.2 = unfavorable
- Attitude 3, A_0 between 55.2 – 82.8 = adequately favorable
- Attitude 4, A_0 between 82.8 – 110.4 = favorable
- Attitude 5, A_0 between 110.4 – 138 = very favorable

Therefore, based on the scale, the score of 100.58 is lying in the fourth area, in the favorable category. It means, consumer attitude towards fashion luxury counterfeit product is considered as favorable. Thus, the objective of this research is answered.

Discussion

The findings of this research have various significances, such as the favorable attitude towards fashion luxury counterfeit product, and the aspect of evaluation and belief consumers have towards the object. In previous research with the same topic of counterfeiting, some intrinsic and extrinsic variables that affect the consumer attitude are identified. Personality traits, culture, fashion consciousness, perceived behavioral, self identity, price consciousness, access to counterfeits, demographic, and many things are the determining aspects that influence one's attitude towards the counterfeits. Nowadays, counterfeiting activity has become a vast growing business in the world, including Indonesia. Regardless of its illegality, consumers still participate in the transaction of this activity, though the purchase of a counterfeit is not a criminal act (Matos et al., 2007). As the technology rapidly developing, fake products become more and more like the real one. The well enhanced attributes of counterfeited fashion luxury product make it cannot be easily distinguished from the original only by plain view. Counterfeited fashion luxury product with more advanced material, more varies design, and added by the lower price attribute leads to the more positive attitude to this illegal product. This positive or favorable attitude towards an object is more likely to lead consumers to repetition of buying and impact the increase in the distribution and production. Otherwise, if consumer has a negative attitude, any act of counterfeit can be reduced or even stop.

Among all the aspect that influence the attitude, product attribute is studied in this research, and consumers in Manado are more likely to consider the attribute of quality as the most important attribute counterfeited fashion luxury product holds instead of other attribute (design, price, fashion trend, material, brand, ease of care). Meaning, the consumers in Manado are quality conscious. The evaluation of this attribute gain the highest score in the data calculation, thus compared with previous research, where price is the most important attribute. But the quality attribute has the lowest score of belief that consumer agree less to be consist in the counterfeit fashion luxury product. It means, consumer didn't get the good quality they expect the most. Regardless, consumers in Manado have a favorable attitude because of the attribute price which has the highest attitude score. Therefore, consumers agree to the statement given in questionnaire that the object has affordable price, compared to the luxurious original price.

Design, the second attribute that is important to consumer, rank the same in the measurement based on the aspect of belief. Even though the overall score of this attribute is the second highest, but its belief score is lower than the evaluation, which means regarding to the high importance of design, counterfeited fashion luxury product doesn't really fulfill the expectation of consumers. Price is the third attribute that is important to consumer and it has the highest score in the aspect of belief which score higher than the evaluation. It means, attribute of price is pleasurable to the consumers. Therefore, from the results, the correlation of price-quality is aroused. Towards counterfeited fashion luxury product, consumer belief that the lower the price, the lower the quality. And it is valid in this research. Some respondents are asked whether have experienced in buying counterfeited fashion luxury product, and only few of them have never experienced before, almost all respondents confessed their buying experience.

The examination of attitude that resulted in favorable manner, explains how people in Manado respond to counterfeited fashion luxury product. This favorable attitude will most likely encourage consumers to purchase the product, especially when the access to counterfeited fashion luxury stores is easy, which might be the reason why people buy counterfeits. But, what will happen if the original fashion luxury product, says, Chanel, Gucci, DKNY, or Louis Vuitton open their brand store in Manado, considering that the people of Manado that is viewed as consumers with high buying ability. The access to original products is easier and if the aspect of personal gratification is added, than the attitude towards counterfeited fashion luxury product might be decreasing. Other than the easy access of counterfeit product, another reason why consumers have positive attitude is because of status seeking. People look for status to get a position given by the society. The logo of well-known brand can affect someone's social status by giving them higher satisfaction and status even though the product is fake and far cheaper than the original. People who already got high social status like those who work in the highest position in a big and well-known company may not seeking social status, thus even though they use fake, other people might interpret it as original because they belief people with high social status have higher buying power. Thus, Bhardwaj (2010) concluded that the desire to own luxury product to gain the feeling of approval by society ay motivate individuals to purchase the look-alike of original products.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion

The conclusions gained are as follow: (1) consumer attitude towards fashion luxury counterfeit product in Manado are under the scale of favorable; (2) the attribute quality that gains the highest score of evaluation in shaping the evaluative aspect is the most important attribute while brand is the least important; and (3) the attribute price that gains the highest agreement score in shaping the strength of belief is the attribute which statement of affordable gets the highest agreement, while quality is the least.

Recommendation

From the result and conclusion above, the recommendations are:

1. As suggestion or recommendation for future research, other variable or component influencing the consumer attitude can be added. This study focus only on the attribute of counterfeited fashion luxury product. Later, the variable of feelings or emotion, social influence, culture, consumers' view on risk, attitude towards the law, demographic, access, etc can be added and considered as variables.
2. This study only focused on general product of fashion luxury counterfeit product. Later on, the study of understanding the consumer attitude toward counterfeited fashion luxury product can be conducted considering several brands, and can be in a form of comparison research.
3. As suggestion to the company of fashion luxury product, in order to not lose the market, it can introduce new attribute which is hard to be counterfeited as its specialty and competitive advantage.
4. As recommendation to government, they have to act as fair as possible for the sake of their people, and enhance the regulation about fake products. The government could change the attitude toward counterfeited product or at least decrease the positive attitude toward illegal objects.

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