



Public Service Motivation (PSM) and Attitudes toward Purchasing Fashion Counterfeits

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Conceptual Framework. Counterfeits are "reproductions that appear identical to legitimate products in appearance, including packaging, trademarks, and labeling" (Ang et al, 2001). In 2007, trade in counterfeits was estimated to be more than US \$600 billion a year – 5 to 7% of world trade (Pollinger, 2008). The cost of counterfeiting to South Korea in the last five years is estimated at \$60 billion (The Korea Times, 2010). Fashion products (clothing, shoes, watches, leather goods, and jewelry) are the most popular counterfeit products. Public Service Motivation Theory (PSM) was adopted for this research. Perry and Wise (1990) defined PSM as "an individual's predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions and organizations that might drive individuals to perform public service" (p.368). PSM can be explained from rational, affective, and normative reasons. The empirical PSM construct include four dimensions: Public Interest, Compassion, Attraction to Policy Making, and Self-Sacrifice (Perry, 1996). Several studies (e.g., Maesschalck et al., 2008) have illustrated how PSM promoted pro-social or ethical behaviors. There is, however, little research on the relationship between PSM and attitudes toward and the behavior of purchasing fashion counterfeits. It can be hypothesized that those with higher levels of PSM are less likely to purchase counterfeits and are more likely to disapprove of purchasing counterfeits. The purpose of this study was to examine how a set of attitude measures of PSM is related to attitudes toward purchasing fashion counterfeits and purchase of counterfeits. We tested whether PSM constrains anti-social attitudes and behaviors such as purchasing counterfeits. We analyzed (a) how PSM influences purchasing of fashion counterfeits with the whole sample and (b) compared PSM between those with and without past experience buying fashion counterfeits.

Method. A web based on-line survey (Gallup Korea) was conducted with South Korean citizens 19 years old or older from January 15th to 30th, 2013. Of the 5000 sampled, 3189 respondents completed the survey for a response rate of 63.78%. The sample is nationally representative in terms of gender (male = 51.2%; female = 48.8%), age (range = 19 to 81; mean age = 43.41), and regions (including seven metropolitan cities and nine provinces). The questionnaire included demographic items, items about social activities (reading books and newspapers and using email) and items about purchase of fashion counterfeit products (How likely do you agree that it's okay to purchase counterfeit products? 5-point Likert scale strongly agree to strongly disagree. Have you ever purchased counterfeit products? Yes/No). For measuring PSM, three dimensions of Perry's (1990) PSM scale were used: public interest (e.g., I think people should give back to society more than they get from it), compassion (e.g., It is difficult for me to contain my feelings when I see people in distress), and self-sacrifice (e.g., I seldom think about the welfare of people I don't know personally). Data analysis included descriptive statistics, frequency distribution, factor analysis, and ordered probit model.

Findings. Approximately 36% of respondents had purchased fashion counterfeit products such as handbags, shoes, clothing, and accessories. Men are more likely to agree with purchasing fashion counterfeits compared to women. Younger respondents are more likely to agree with purchasing fashion counterfeits. However, older women are more likely to have purchased fashion counterfeits. The results of the whole sample including those with and without past experience of purchasing fashion counterfeits show that social activities are negatively related to attitude of purchasing fashion counterfeits ($p < .01$ and all three sets of PSM (i.e., public interest, compassion, and self-sacrifice) are negatively associated with the attitude of purchasing fashion counterfeits (respectively $p < .05$, $p < .05$, and $p < .01$). However, the negative effects of PSM are statistically significant mostly for those without the past experience of purchasing fashion counterfeits (Public Interest, $p < .05$; Compassion, $p < .05$; Self-sacrifice, $p < .01$). Two factors of PSM, that is, Public Interest and Compassion are not significant for those who had purchased counterfeits but the factor of Self-sacrifice is still significant ($p < .05$). More interestingly, the impact of public interest on the negative attitude of purchasing counterfeits in the whole sample decreases for those with experiences to purchase fashion counterfeits, compared to those without such experiences ($p < .05$). In other words, the negative relationship between public interest and the attitude of purchasing counterfeits is weaker in those with experiences to purchase the counterfeits than those without them.

Implications. Previous research about counterfeits has focused on why consumers purchase fashion counterfeit products, but has not provided practical implications from a public policy approach. The empirical results of this study suggest that prior purchase of counterfeits can constrain or eliminate a strong negative mechanism between public service motivation and the attitude of purchasing counterfeits. The contagion effect derived from the past experience to buy counterfeits should be further examined in terms of gender, age and education. The consumption of fashion counterfeits is widespread and global, especially in Asian countries such as Korea. This consumption has a very negative effect on genuine fashion industries. Thus, a new social consensus against purchasing counterfeits needs to be nurtured to discourage counterfeit purchases, informing the public about various problems involved in counterfeit consumption. For example, public policy campaigns may contribute to reducing the purchase of the counterfeits. Several such campaigns have proven to be successful strategies in changing the consumption of smoking and drinking in Korea.

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