An Analysis of British Tourists’ Purchasing Behavior of Imitation Products: A Case of Fethiye

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Extended Summary

Introduction

Tourists form the basis of tourism activities, and maintain their consumption behavior in the countries they visit. Shopping is a tool of tourist consumption; and it is an activity that requires selection, benchmarking and browsing; also it may be the reason for the trip itself (Timothy, 2005:12). Brand is a tool that consumers use to make the choice at shopping and one of the factors affecting the purchase (Foxall and Goldsmith, 1998: 18). For some consumers, buying and using branded products is a status indicator or gives the impression that they are a part of a class or group. Therefore, foreign tourists visiting our country maintain their purchasing behavior of famous brands such as Gucci leather jacket, Channel perfume, Hublot watch, Adidas shoes, Louis Vitton bags etc. However, these products may also be imitation products of famous brands. Imitation products are the products that producers manufacture without the permission of brand owner and use similar name, logo or emblem which cannot be easily distinguished (Ateşoğlu and Erdogan, 2009: 43) and market these products in the tourist destinations as well. Products manufactured in illegal way can be a part of tourist consumption. Imitation product trade is increasing particularly in busy tourism season and this suggests that tourists coming to our country buy imitation products. There is a need for scientific research on imitation products trade for prevention of their trade and the required legal arrangements to be made. This study accordingly was planned and conducted to determine British tourists’ purchase behavior that had visited Fethiye and bought imitation products.

Method

In this study, target population was British tourists who visited Fethiye and purchased imitation products. Since, purchase behavior of British tourists who bought imitation products were examined in this study, the target population was restricted with the British tourists. The data was collected from 160 British tourists that had purchased
imitation products with convenience sampling method and 109 answers were taken into consideration. The questionnaire used as a data collection tool was prepared after the examination of related literature (Avery, 2008; Littrell et al., 2004; Oh et al. 2004; Prendergast et al., 2002; Reisinger and Waryszak, 1994; Swanson and Horridge, 2006; Timoty, 2005) and the European Statistical Norms (RAMON) and Turkey Statistical Institute (TUİK) classification criteria were used and expert opinions were applied.

The questionnaire was divided into four sections. In the first part questions were about sociodemographic characteristics of tourists and their holiday decision. The second part consisted of questions regarding the purchase behavior towards imitation products. The third part of statements aimed to determine their thoughts about purchasing imitation products; and lastly in the fourth part there were statements for determining their thoughts in the process of purchasing imitation products in relation to service quality. The questionnaire was subjected to a reliability test by using Cronbach's Alpha method and was identified Cronbach's alpha rate as 0.816. According to this result it was possible to say that data collection tool was highly reliable. (Kalaycı, 2010: 405).

By using absolute and percentage values, information on socio-demographic characteristics of British tourists, on the status of holidays in Turkey and on the purchase behavior towards imitation products were assessed. Additionally, the reasons of British tourists for purchasing imitation products, the amount of money they spent on imitation products and where they purchased these products, sociodemographic characteristics of the tourists were compared by using cross charts. Tourists’ thoughts about purchasing imitation products and service quality in the process of purchasing were analyzed using the absolute and percentage values, arithmetic mean (\( \bar{X} \)) and standard deviation (SD).

Tourists’ thoughts about purchasing imitation products were compared in terms of their gender by Student's t test; in terms of their education by variance analysis. Tukey test was used in order to determine the type of difference at the groups which had differences according to results of variance analysis. In addition, tourists’ thoughts related to purchase of imitation products were compared in terms of their age and income level, however since no significant results were achieved; it was not mentioned in the study. All the statistical analyses, significance level \( p <0.05 \) and \( p <0.01 \) values were considered.

**Results**

This study covers British tourists mostly from the United Kingdom, age of 30 and over, graduates of high school or higher education and with average annual income of 20 001£. More than half of those who purchase imitation products of international brands in Turkey stated that they had also purchased imitation products from other countries too.

As price was an important factor in British tourists’ purchasing imitation products; it was determined that the majority of these products were purchased from the weekly market. Shopping was mostly made in cash; the time spent on shopping was between 1-4 hours and it was found that tourists often found prices cheap. The majority of vocational school graduates and university graduates were shopping from local markets; the majority of master and doctoral graduates were shopping from stores. As
education level increased, the rate of shopping from stores also increased. It was found that the majority of those between 20-49 years of age were shopping from the local markets. The most preferred products were clothes, leather, shoes and sunglasses; it was noticed that nearly half of tourists purchased these products for themselves. Mostly preferred brands were Aber Crombie, Lois Vitton, Gucci, Armani, Ralph Lauren.

Almost half of the tourists who was included in this study were satisfied with the shopping experience and more than half of the tourists thought that dealing imitation products would contribute to Turkey's economy, they approved the trade of imitation products and were satisfied with the quality of the imitation products. Majority of tourist stated that only during the sale season they purchased genuine products of the brands. More than half of the tourists were undecided about whether they were happy with the purchases made in Turkey compared to other countries. Tourists’ thoughts about purchase of imitation products did not differ significantly in terms of gender; but those who did not approve of selling of the imitation products and majority of whom thought that production of imitation products was often benefited from the legal gaps were women; while those of whom were satisfied with the quality of imitation products and thought that those sales contributed to Turkey's economy was men. The thought that imitation products were manufactured by taking advantage from the legal gaps and this trade was for Turkey’s benefit were more common when compared in terms of education levels and there was found to be statistically significant difference. Also the thoughts that imitation products contributed to Turkey's economy, not approving trade of imitation products and that customer satisfaction with the purchase made in Turkey was noteworthy led to the determination that primary school graduates ratified more than average score of the other graduates.