

COLLEGE STUDENTS ETHICAL PERCEPTIONS ON BUYING COUNTERFEIT PRODUCTS

Angela Cuno

Dr. Pamela Norum, Thesis Supervisor

ABSTRACT

This study was designed to investigate the ethical purchasing behavior of college students with regards to purchasing counterfeit merchandise. Students from several different majors were surveyed and compared. TAM majors and non-TAM majors were surveyed to determine if TAM majors who had been sensitized to the issue of counterfeiting would be less likely to purchase counterfeit goods than students from non-TAM majors. T-test results indicated significant differences between buyers of counterfeit goods and non-buyers on eleven of the twelve attitudinal questions asked. Consumers who have previously purchased counterfeit goods hold attitudes more supportive than consumers who have not. These consumers feel that purchasing a counterfeit product is just as good as purchasing the real brand and by doing so they are not hurting the U.S. Economy. These results do support hypothesis one of the research. In testing hypothesis 2, the results indicated that there was not a significant difference between students who had, or had not, discussed counterfeiting in their classes and the purchase of counterfeit goods. There were also no significant differences with respect to TAM verses non-TAM majors. Hypothesis 2 was not supported by the data.