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ANTECEDENTS OF CONSUMERS' BUYING BEHAVIOR TOWARDS COUNTERFEIT PRODUCTS: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

The purpose of this study is to explore the buying attitude to counterfeit products and further develop a pathway of relationship between consumer purchase intentions and buying behavior. The data was collected through the survey from 511 consumers aware of original brands and buyers of counterfeit products. The results revealed that attractiveness and relative acceptability have significantly resonated buying attitudes. This study is of value for managers of original brands engaged in strategic planning against counterfeit manufacturers, sellers, and buyers.

Keywords: *celebrity factor; prestige; retail; post-colonialism; counterfeit market; factor analysis; Pakistan.*

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ПОВЕДІНКА СПОЖИВАЧІВ ВІДНОСНО ПІДРОБНИХ ТОВАРІВ: ЕМПІРИЧНЕ ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ

У статті вивчено ставлення споживачів до підробних товарів і в даному контексті описано взаємозв'язок між наміром придбати і реальною споживацькою поведінкою. Дані зібрано шляхом анкетування 511 респондентів, які знали різницю між оригіналом та підробкою і при цьому мали досвід придбання підробного товару. Результати аналізу показали, що естетичні характеристики товару та відносне сприйняття товару суспільством значно впливають на таку покупку. Висновки даного дослідження можуть допомогти менеджерам, що працюють на бренди-оригінали та залучені до стратегічного планування боротьби з виробниками підробок, продавцями та покупцями.

Ключові слова: *фактор знаменитості; престиж; роздрібна торгівля; пост-колоніалізм; ринок підробок; факторний аналіз; Пакистан.*

Рис. 1. Табл. 8. Літ. 59.

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ПОВЕДЕНИЕ ПОТРЕБИТЕЛЕЙ ОТНОСИТЕЛЬНО ПОДДЕЛОЧНЫХ ТОВАРОВ: ЭМПИРИЧЕСКОЕ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ

В статье изучено отношение потребителей к подделочным товарам и в данном контексте описана взаимосвязь между намерением купить и реальным потребительским поведением. Данные собраны через анкетирование 511 респондентов, которые знали разницу между оригиналом и подделкой и при этом имели опыт в приобретении подделочных товаров. Результаты анализа показали, что эстетические характеристики товара и относительное принятие товара обществом значительно влияют на такие покупки. Выводы данного исследования могут помочь менеджерам, работающим на бренды-оригиналы и вовлечённым в стратегическое планирование борьбы с производителями подделок, продавцами и покупателями.

Ключевые слова: *фактор знаменитости; престиж; розничная торговля; пост-колониализм; рынок подделок; факторный анализ; Пакистан.*

Introduction. Counterfeit products are swaying the intentions of masses towards counterfeit buying. E. Penz and B. Stottinger (2005) have defined counterfeiting as "production of copies that are identically packaged, including trademarks and labeling, copied so as the genuine article". As counterfeits are tremendously increasing, it

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is difficult for researchers and managers to develop a conceptual framework for understanding consumer thinking and actions. From the last decade, it has been considered as an indispensable field to study consumer buying behavior and understanding their needs (Lysonski, Durvasula and Watson, 2001; Solomon, 2003). Today counterfeit consumption are at the growing stage that becomes thus leading to the need to understand such type of consumer buying behavior too (Norum and Cuno, 2011) and consumers are the real force behind counterfeit buying (Chan, Wong and Leung, 1998).

According to the OECD report, social and economic impact of counterfeiting is 775 bln USD every year (OECD, 2008). According to International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), 2.5 mln legitimate jobs at risk each year because of knock offs (ICC, 2011). The estimated growth rate of counterfeits from 2005 to 2008 was 22% annually and this growth rate will be continuing same speed or at least at the level of 15% (OECD, 2008). The amount of counterfeiting is approximately 5–10% of the world trade reaching 30% in some industries (Trainer, 2004). Some studies have suggested that counterfeits are 1–7% of the total world trade, becoming a multibillion dollar business (Chaudhry, 2006; Frontier, 2011; OECD, 2009; OECD, 2008; Paradise, 1999; Staake and Fleisch, 2008; Santiago, 2012).

It is important to identify the imperative factors that sway the demand for counterfeit products. Consumers' intention to purchase counterfeit products at least once is the compelling need to understand buying patterns (Romani, Gistri and Pace, 2012). A large group of domain experts admit the fact that geographic, economic, social, cultural, demographic and psychological indicators influence consumer attitudes and their buying decisions (Dibb, Simkin, Pride and Ferrell, 2001; Jobber, 2001; Boyd, Walker, Mullins and Larreche, 2002; Solomon and Stuart, 2003). Plethora of work has been done on the antecedents of counterfeit buying. However, rare study has been found in which the influence of exaltation of celebrities, prestige of retail space, post-colonialism, relative acceptability and aesthetics are examined together in relation to counterfeit buying.

The foremost objective of this research is to examine the influence of certain novel factors on consumers buying attitudes that further develop a pathway of relationship between consumer purchase intentions and buying behavior.

Literature review. According to (Stake, Thiesse and Fleisch, 2009: 277), counterfeiting trade is "trade in goods that, be it due to their design, trademark, logo, or company name, bear without authorization a reference to a brand, a manufacturer, or any organization that warrants for the quality or standard conformity of the goods in such a way that the counterfeit merchandise could, potentially, be confused with goods that rightfully use this reference". G. Grossman and C. Shapiro (1988a) defined two types of counterfeiting: deceptive and non-deceptive ones. Deceptive counterfeiting is the one in which consumer is unaware about the originality of a product and unknowingly purchases fake thinking is it original. The focus of this study is on non-deceptive counterfeiting, when consumers intentionally purchase knock-offs.

Exaltation of celebrities. Celebrity is a person commonly well known in society, attains greater recognition and often appears in advertisements through which people know about products (McCracken, 1989). Consumers, who have taste for celebrity

products, will make their buying accordingly (Bush et al., 2004). Individuals inspired by celebrities are trying to show association with them by copying the brands used by celebrities. Buying counterfeit products are justifiable for those consumers who are cognitively strong and give solid justifications backed by celebrity choice (Kim et al., 2012). Thus implies that buying counterfeit products is strongly triggered by exaltation of celebrities.

H_1: Exaltation of celebrities significantly increases consumers' buying attitude towards counterfeit products.

Income level. Income level has great impact on buying decisions of consumers particularly in relation to counterfeit products (Lohse et al., 2000). Counterfeit products are available at cheaper rates and lower income household tends more toward these products (Staake et al., 2009). Income level acts as a moderator between exaltation of celebrity and buying attitude. It is largely observed that teenagers are more attracted towards celebrities (Bush et al., 2004) while their budgetary constraints trigger them towards buying counterfeit products (McCracken, 1998). In general, brands worn by celebrities are exorbitant and do not come into the budgets of average people thus leading towards counterfeit buying.

H_2: Exaltation of celebrities and buying attitude is moderated by income level.

Prestige of retail space. Sometimes products are bought due to trust to a shopkeeper or prestige of an outlet. Retail environment guides consumers' buying experience including consumer enjoyment, perception of quality and price (Zeithaml, 1988). Retail environment encourages and transforms consumer buying behavior (Turley and Milliman, 2000). Salespersons' behavior in retail atmosphere positively impacts consumers buying attitudes (Sharma and Stafford, 2000). Consequently, consumers' buying attitude would be positively high when prestige of a retail space is up to the mark.

H_3: Prestige of retail space significantly enhances attitude to buy counterfeit products.

Post-colonialism. "Post-colonial theory, as epistemology, ethics, and politics – addresses the matters of post-colonial identity (cultural, national, ethnic), gender, race, and racism, and their interactions in the development of a post-colonial society, and of a post-colonial national identity that how knowledge about the world is generated under specific socioeconomic relations between the powerful and the powerless" (Walder, 2005). Hybridity is the dimension of post colonialism that reveals cultural norms as the mixture of powerful and powerless nations' attributes. In the context of Pakistani nation, British rule in Hindustan left its imprint on local tenants' life, and thus a resonate majority tend to copy them (Shohat, 1992). People followed most of rules, customs, and trends set by the colonizers and as a result people became more Western-oriented. Consequently, people follow only those trends/customs or brands which are admired by Western society. Furthermore, some people follow Western trends for social approval and few also want to relate with international community.

H_4: Post-colonialism significantly enhances buying attitude pertinent to counterfeit products.

Product accessibility. Product accessibility can be defined as easy availability of a product. It is observed that low price and easy access to counterfeit products inclined

consumers buy counterfeit products (Gentry et al., 2001). The hybridity effect on local residents in a way, they behave and wear like the nation who ruled them and in the absence of Western original products together it lead towards counterfeit buying to fulfill the desired satisfaction (Ha and Lennon, 2006). Product accessibility acts as a moderator between post colonialism and buying attitude.

H_5: Post-colonialism and buying attitude are moderated by product accessibility.

Relative acceptability. Relative acceptance is appreciable behavior by friends and family towards counterfeit goods consumption (Matos et al., 2007). Counterfeits are considered extremely unethical in some countries but not in developing countries like Pakistan since there are lots of worst issues than counterfeiting. Friends, relatives, and peer groups approve favorable or unfavorable behavior of buying counterfeit products (Ajzen, 1991). Social recognition as a motivator guides the behavior of consumers which is difficult to control by marketers alone (Hanzaee and Taghipourian, 2012). It is likely that collectivist societies do participate in counterfeit trading that motivates people buy fake (Chaudhry and Stumpf, 2011).

H_6: Relative acceptability significantly enhances buying attitude of counterfeit products.

Aesthetics is a judgment of value based on appearance of an object that urges to response emotionally. Aesthetics partially ensures product quality and manufacturer credibility (Constantinides, 2004). Studies reveal that the first impression of aesthetically attractive goods resonate with buying attitude as consumers do not give priority to product quality and durability on its physical look.

H_7: Attractive esthetically significantly enhances consumer counterfeit buying attitude.

Buying attitude. Consumers' attitude to brands can be defined as "the degree of satisfying the needs the consumer thinks this brand may provide" (Iranmanesh and Najafabadi, 2013). Buying attitude is considered as auspicious appraisal towards any product that demonstrates constructive buying intention (Yoo and Lee, 2009). S. Ang et al. (2001) concluded that consumers' attitude remarkably influences their buying intentions since consumers do not consider they are wrong while purchasing and consuming counterfeit products.

H_8: Buying attitude significantly enhances consumers' intention to buy counterfeit products.

Purchase intention. Purchase intention is a cognitive process leading to buying behavior (Iranmanesh and Najafabadi, 2013). The theory of reasoned action explains that "attitude positively correlates with behavioral intention that finally becomes antecedent of actual behavior" (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980). Prior research has revealed that consumer's attitude can affect the likelihood of purchasing (Singhapakdi, 2004). Most studies conclude that consumer purchase intention and buying behavior are positively correlated (Phau, Sequeira and Dix, 2009).

H_9: Purchase intention significantly enhances consumer behavior.

Buying behavior. Ph. Kotler and G. Armstrong (2010) defined "consumer behavior is the study of how people buy, what they buy, when they buy and why they buy". Buying intentions are considered as the indicators of consumers' buying behaviors

(Yoo and Lee, 2009). Consumer behavior studies reveal that how consumers make decisions about spending of their resources on different commodities (Schiffman, Hansen and Kanuk, 2008). Buying behavior is not a rapid process (Mohr, Webb and Haris, 2001) instead it includes buying attitude and intention as well.

Research model.

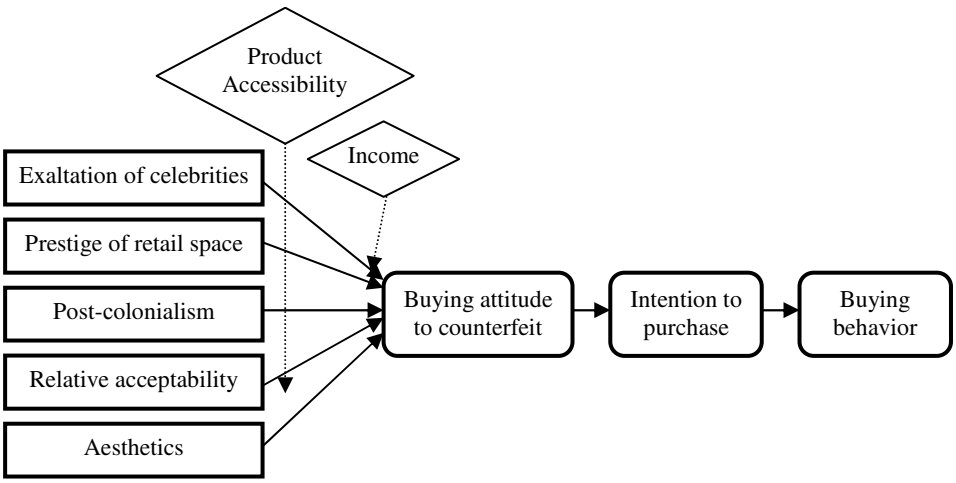

Figure 1. **Research model,** *authors'*

Research methodology. Questionnaire was developed with the help of domain experts and basing on the literature review. Survey method was used to collect data from 511 respondents. Sample size was decided on the basis of statistical formula of proportion. Primarily, 650 questionnaires were distributed and 511 were collected, so the usable sample has 79% response rate. The respondents of this study were those individuals who are brand conscious and deliberately habituate to buy counterfeit products in apparels. The data was collected from 10 cities of Pakistan. Except demographic attributes, all items were measured on the 7-point Likert scale suggested by (Likert, Roslow and Murphy, 1934) (7 = strongly agree, 4 = neither agree nor disagree, 1 = strongly disagree). All items were self-developed except relative acceptability, buying attitude, and intention to purchase that were adapted from (Phau and Teah, 2009). Content validity was tested by domain experts.

Data analysis and results.

Reliability analysis. Cronbach alpha was employed to check whether all items are internally correlated or otherwise. The suggested value of Cronbach alpha is greater than 0.70 but greater than 0.60 is also acceptable (Nunnally, 1978, 1967). Table 1 shows the reliability coefficients of each construct being greater than acceptable (Schmitz-Justen and Wilhelm, 2005).

Exploratory factor analysis. EFA was carried out through SPSS 19, the factors were selected on the basis of Eigen values and the method of verimax rotation as well as principal component analysis were employed. J. Pallant (2001) suggested that Bartlett's test must be significant and KMO value should be equal to or greater than 0.60. Table 2 shows the scores for KMO and Bartlett in the acceptable ranges. The items of each latent variable are presented that carry the acceptable threshold loading

scores, i.e. at least 0.40 (Lee and Crompton, 1992; Hair et al., 1998). The overall variance explained lies in the suggested range (Hair et al., 2006).

Table 1. **Reliability analysis,** *authors'*

Variable	Cronbach Alpha	# of items
Product Accessibility (PA)	0.80	4
Attractive Aesthetically (AA)	0.79	5
Exaltation of Celebrities (EC)	0.84	4
Prestige of Retail Space (PRS)	0.80	5
Relative Acceptability (RA)	0.79	5
Post-Colonialism (PC)	0.87	6
Intention to Purchase (IP)	0.80	5
Buying Attitude towards Counterfeit (BAC)	0.82	5
Buying Behavior (BB)	0.80	5

Table 2. **Exploratory factor analysis,** *authors'*

S. No.	PA	AA	EC	PRS	RA	PC	IP	BAC	BB
1	0.80	0.64	0.79	0.68	0.63	0.79	0.62	0.74	0.76
2	0.72	0.69	0.84	0.75	0.74	0.84	0.77	0.71	0.76
3	0.84	0.73	0.86	0.79	0.77	0.84	0.80	0.82	0.79
4	0.79	0.82	0.80	0.77	0.79	0.86	0.80	0.81	0.71
5		0.79		0.72	0.77	0.73	0.71	0.75	0.72
6						0.61			
KMO	0.77	0.80	0.79	0.80	0.82	0.86	0.79	0.83	0.81
Bartlett	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Variance explained, %	63.21	55.38	68.50	56.12	55.62	61.89	56.08	59.43	56.70

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is suggested to examine the relationship between the observed and unobserved variables (Podsakoff et al., 2003). CFA was performed through AMOS. According to J. Ford, R. MacCallum and M. Tait (1986), the values of standardized loading scores of each item must exceed the minimum threshold of 0.40 at the 5% significance level. In Table 3, all values are within the suggested ranges.

Table 3. **Confirmatory factor analysis,** *authors'*

S. No.	AA	EC	PRS	RA	PC	IP	BAC	BB
1	0.54	0.66	0.70	0.73	0.45	0.61	0.70	0.72
2	0.63	0.81	0.70	0.67	0.81	0.58	0.62	0.74
3	0.61	0.75	0.56	0.65	0.86	0.59	0.68	0.71
4	0.71				0.74		0.65	0.57

Measurement model fit indices. Global fit indices are considered as a benchmark for model fitness (Bentler, 1990; Hair et al., 2006; Kelloway, 1995). Table 4 explains the individual construct's global fit indices. In the current study, all global fit indices are in the acceptable ranges (Eggert and Ulaga, 2002; Hooper et al., 2008).

Plethora of indices was discussed to examine the fitness of model, most imperative indices reported in other studies were checked for the present one. In Table 5 the scores of all indices are presented which the lie within suggested range. According to global fitness scores, the model of current study is best fitted.

Table 4. **Measurement model fit indices,** *authors'*

Construct	CMIN/df	p-value	RMR	GFI	AGFI	NFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
AA	2.50	0.057	0.026	0.994	0.971	0.990	0.980	0.994	0.054
EC	1.75	0.185	0.014	0.998	0.983	0.998	0.995	0.999	0.038
PRS	1.41	0.235	0.020	0.997	0.985	0.994	0.994	0.998	0.029
RA	2.39	0.035	0.037	0.991	0.973	0.983	0.980	0.990	0.052
PC	2.17	0.054	0.031	0.993	0.970	0.993	0.989	0.996	0.048
BAC	1.16	0.323	0.019	0.997	0.986	0.996	0.998	0.999	0.018
IP	2.19	0.086	0.023	0.995	0.974	0.992	0.985	0.995	0.048
BB	2.27	0.059	0.032	0.993	0.972	0.988	0.830	0.993	0.050

Table 5. **Measurement model fit indices,** *authors'*

Indices	Scores
CMIN/DF	1.785
P value	.000
RMR	.074
GFI	.924
AGFI	.907
NFI	.902
TLI	.948
CFI	.954
RMSEA	.039

Regression weights. The Table 6 results show that exaltation of celebrity insignificantly enhances consumer buying attitude to counterfeit ($\beta = 0.11$, p-value > 0.05) thus not supporting the first hypothesis Prestige of retail space is positively affecting attitude towards counterfeit ($\beta = 0.10$, p-value > 0.05) but insignificantly, so the third hypothesis is also rejected. Post-colonialism insignificantly decreases consumer buying attitude ($\beta = -0.06$, p-value > 0.05) thus rejecting the fourth hypothesis. Relative acceptability significantly enhances buying attitude to counterfeit products ($\beta = 0.40$, p-value < 0.05) thus supporting the sixth hypothesis. Aesthetics significantly enhances consumer buying attitude ($\beta = 0.40$, p-value < 0.01), supporting the seventh hypothesis. The eighth hypothesis stated that buying attitude towards counterfeits positively leads towards intention to purchase ($\beta = 0.91$, p-value < 0.01) and this one is accepted. Intention to purchase significantly increases consumer, also behavior is accepted ($\beta = 0.97$, p-value < 0.01).

Table 6. **Regression weights,** *authors'*

			Beta	SE	CR	Sig.	Hypothesis
BAC	<---	EC	.11	.08	1.34	0.18	Not Supported
BAC	<---	PRS	.10	.08	1.26	0.20	Not Supported
BAC	<---	PC	-.06	.05	-1.05	0.29	Not Supported
BAC	<---	RA	.40	.07	5.4	***	Supported
BAC	<--	AA	.40	.18	2.13	0.03*	Supported
IP	<---	BAC	.91	.07	12.49	***	Supported
BB	<---	IP	.97	.07	12.30	***	Supported

Table 7 shows that product accessibility is significantly moderated between Post-colonialism and consumer buying attitude ($\beta = 0.015$, p-value < 0.05) thus supporting the fifth hypothesis.

Table 7. **Moderating effects,** *authors'*

Variable	Beta	SE	T	Sig.	Hypothesis
(Constant)					-
PA*PC	0.015	0.005	3.029	0.003	Supported

Table 8 demonstrates that income significantly moderates between the exaltation of celebrities and consumer buying attitude ($\beta = 0.041$, p-value < 0.05), thus supporting the second hypothesis.

Table 8. **Moderating effects,** *authors'*

Variable	Beta	SE	T	Sig.	Hypothesis
(Constant)					-
EC*I	0.041	0.008	5.110	0.000	Supported

Discussion. The study aims to examine 9 hypotheses that validate and confirm the objectives behind this research. The first hypothesis (Exaltation of celebrities significantly enhances consumer buying attitude) is rejected. On the other hand, the results are significant when exaltation of celebrities and consumer buying attitude are moderated by income level. This means exaltation of celebrities alone does not play any role without the income factor. Consumers having higher income level keep positive buying behavior (Dimitri and Dettmann, 2012). It is discernable that if people have fever of celebrities and have low income then they would buy counterfeits of those brands in which celebrities are endorsed.

The third hypothesis of this study (Prestige of a retail space positively impacts consumer buying attitude that) been rejected. It is observed that outlet image is playing a role for all products, both original brands and non-branded products. This is not particularly associated with counterfeits.

The fourth hypothesis (Post-colonialism significantly enhances consumer buying attitude) is rejected. People who have post-colonial thinking try to buy brands available in a colonizer state. Moreover, individuals buy available counterfeit products when original brands are not available in a colonial state since counterfeits are easily available. This demonstrates that product accessibility plays the vibrant role here. It supports the relationship between post-colonialism and consumer attitude towards counterfeit products in the existence of product accessibility as a moderator.

The sixth hypothesis (Relative acceptability significantly increases consumer buying attitude) is accepted. Social values and trends guide consumers attitude and relative acceptability of certain products as reflected through a plethora of social and cultural dimensions (Kacen and Lee, 2002) and it became a norm. The seventh hypothesis of this study (Aesthetics significantly increases consumers buying attitude towards counterfeit products) is supported thus validating the emotional attachment with product appearance influence.

The eighth hypothesis is "consumer buying attitude significantly enhances consumer buying intention". Attitudes and intentions keep direct relationship in a certain

cultural context (Bagozzi, Wonge, Abe and Bergami, 2000). The ninth hypothesis (consumer buying intention significantly increases consumer buying behavior) is accepted. Consumer buying intentions lead to certain consumer buying behavior dimensions (Ajzen, 1991).

Implications. This study way help a lot, particularly to those people who want to do research at Pakistani apparel counterfeit market. Counterfeit literature related to Pakistani context has enriched through this study. This study entails broader implications for all stakeholders including consumers, counterfeit manufacturers, and original brand owners. This research would greatly help those people who plan to launch their brands regarding how to launch strategies against counterfeiting. Predominantly, national brand owners should maintain their quality at least more than a-class copy of international brands. It helps stop counterfeiting in a way that some consumers today are inclined towards counterfeits due to low quality of original local brands.

Limitations and future research directions. Aside from the discussed factors, a number of other buying behavior factors can be addressed in future research like strategic flexibility and learning, bragging value, ending monotony, fragile ethical values etc. Future research can lead researchers to extend the existing theoretical model towards consumer post-purchase behavior which can be a turning point in repeated buying decisions. It can answer the question of whether consumers of counterfeit products buy these products second time or what are the chances they will go for original brands rather than buying counterfeit products.

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