

THE ALLUREMENT OF COUNTERFEIT PURCHASE BEHAVIOR: A CASE STUDY AMONG YOUTH CONSUMERS OF MALAYSIA

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Abstract: *Counterfeiting products are low-quality imitations of original products or fake luxury items. Producing and buying counterfeiting products are considered as the crime of the 21st century because its affect the luxury branded market. Lately, the rapid demand for these counterfeiting products caused the luxury branded market sufferer for losses, which strives for a low distribution to keep the demand high. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to determine the core factors on youth's purchase behaviors towards counterfeit goods. The study also set out three common factors to examine the relationship of consumers' buying behavior towards counterfeit products. The primary data were used, which was collected through questionnaires consisting of 27 questions. A survey of 200 respondents was conducted in Klang Valley. Correlation and regression analysis were used. The results of the study show that there is positive impact between past purchase experience on purchasing behavior of counterfeiting products. Thus, the experience of purchasing counterfeiting products is the core factors on purchasing of these products. By having a better understanding of the consumers' purchasing behavior of buying counterfeit products of the genuine brand products can make better marketing strategies.*

Keywords: *Counterfeiting Products, Past-Purchase, Purchasing Behaviour, Student's Purchasing Behaviour, Social Influence.*

Introduction

Counterfeiting, sometimes known as piracy, is undeniably a big business. Counterfeit products are defined as identical copies of authentic products and account for at least five percent of the world's trade (Carpenter & Lear, 2011). Counterfeiting products have coexisted with genuine brands on the market for many years. The impact of this phenomenon is that the manufacturers of the genuine luxury goods have lost more than \$600 billion in revenue (Turunen & Laaksonen, 2011). Nonetheless, the issue of counterfeiting still remains a major concern for global trade in many countries including Malaysia.

Consumers who want to separate themselves from other members of the society and want to create a different individual image from the others (Catry, 2003) need status consumption in order to position themselves as belonging to a culture and community. Especially when interpreted from the perspective of young consumers, luxury products can be defined as the tool's consumers use to express themselves, build self-esteem and provide prestige. Young people who want to identify themselves in a group or who want to prove their existence within a certain group seem to be leading to the consumption of luxury goods simply because of the psychological pressure of their peers (Alvandi et al., 2013; Gil et al., 2017 and Srinivasan et al., 2014).

Unlike wealthy customers who are seen as traditional luxury customers, young consumers who can be considered less wealthy are turning to buy counterfeit goods. It is estimated that more than 33 percent of consumers who would buy counterfeit goods with consent even though it is an illegal activity (Phau et al 2001). Therefore, it is significant to study the factors determine youth's purchasing behaviour towards counterfeit goods. Thus, this study aims to determine the core factors on youth's purchase behaviours towards counterfeit goods.

Research Problem

Counterfeit luxury fashion brands represent one-quarter of total sales in luxury fashion goods which account for 60–70 percent of the \$4.5 trillion in total counterfeit trade (Harvard Business Review ,2019). The global economic value of counterfeit and pirated products is rising persistently it was 0.9 trillion in 2015 and is estimated to reach \$1.9 trillion in 2022 (International Chamber of Commerce [ICC], 2017). According to Davidson et al. (2017) reported each year, counterfeit and pirated products account for approximately 5%–10% of the international market. The finding from world trade market review, the international trade in counterfeit and pirated products could have amounted to as much as \$509 billion in 2016, estimated to be 3.3% of world trade – up from \$461 billion in 2013, representing 2.5% of world trade (World Trademark Review,2021)

Owning luxury branded things is viewed as one of the most essential components of someone's reputation in today's culture, particularly among students. Most students want to appear confident, trendy, and up to speed with the current fashion trends. It would not be a problem to own local brand product because they are still affordable. With the luxury branded products being expensive, most students opted for a far cheaper option which is to buy counterfeit luxury branded products (Nora Mahpar ,2015). Most students, on the other hand, receive monies from their guardians, which some may feel is insufficient. The fixed costs of students outweigh their personal spending. According to (Chiu & Leng, 2015) to avoid this, students will choose to buy counterfeit luxury branded products because the price is much cheaper from the price of the genuine luxury brand. Furthermore, according to (Quoquab et al., 2017) the production of counterfeit luxury branded products is inferior. The purpose of this study is to look into the

elements that influence students' purchasing decisions when it comes to counterfeit luxury brand products. The elements that influence students' purchasing behaviour must be investigated in this study, as well as the relationship between pricing, previous purchases, and social influences on purchasing behaviour.

Literature Review

This research focuses on the four domain factors that influence student's purchasing behaviours in buying counterfeit luxury branded products, and the factors are students purchasing behaviour, price, past purchase, and social influence. Each factor is chosen based on previous studies that has been linked to the student's purchasing behaviour especially in buying counterfeited luxury branded products. Thus, by conducting this research will help in giving the researchers a deeper understanding of the student's purchasing behaviour in purchasing counterfeit luxury branded products especially the products that are already well known among students.

Student's Purchasing Behaviour

A student is someone who is enrolled in a university and is currently pursuing their education. Student purchasing behaviour usually refers to the selection and purchase of products or services that meet the wants and needs of the student. The purchasing habit among young consumer mostly influenced by subjective factors such as personal attitude and subjective norms (Švecová, Jana Odehnalová, Pavla,2019).

According to Ramya & Ali (2016), the consumer purchasing behaviour is referring to the selection, the purchasing, and the consumptions of both goods and services to satisfy their wants. There are numerous elements, features, and qualities that influence students' shopping behaviour, purchasing preferences, and the things they purchase. The result from the listed variables is a buying decision as stated by Ramya, N. & Ali (2016).

Mramba (2015) stated that a student's purchasing behaviour in buying counterfeit luxury branded products are usually influenced by a lot of factors such as personal, psychological, social, and also cultural factors. Noor (2017) describe counterfeit goods as copies of the real products. The study examines the extent to which student behaviour influences buyers, implying that consumer intent could be a good explanatory factor in the decision to buy counterfeit goods based on student behaviour.

Furthermore, the student's information processing and behaviour may be influenced by previous purchases of high-quality counterfeit products. Past experience would affect student's purchasing behaviour to buy counterfeit luxury branded products (Lianto, 2015).

In additional, exposure to social media also can contribute on purchasing behaviour among the teenagers and adults (Tackie, N.N.,2019). According to NN Abd Aziz, N Abd Wahid (2018) past experience effects on perceived benefits and perceived ease of use is the main factor on online purchase intention behaviour.

Based on the findings, this study will look at pricing, previous purchases, and social influence as factors that influence students' purchasing behaviour when it comes to counterfeit luxury branded products.

Past Purchase and Price

According to previous studies, students are more likely to buy counterfeit products as a result of the positive experience they had with counterfeit branded goods. The effect is due to the fact that the consistency and durability are almost identical to the genuine luxury branded products (Long & Vinh, 2017).

A past purchase, according to Bian, X., Wang, K.Y., Smith, A., and Yannopoulou, N. (2016), is described as a student's previous experience in purchasing a product from which they evaluate the product they purchased.

According to Pueschel et al., (2017) students who are smart about buying counterfeit products would know the extent of benefits that the counterfeit products can give them and would consider counterfeit products to be a cheaper and less dangerous alternative to their original counterparts.

Past purchases could measure the student's satisfaction towards the items that they previously purchase, student's preferences and also point of view of the products that they have bought over other products. Therefore, based on the previous researches, past purchases do have an impact on the student's purchasing behaviour in buying counterfeit luxury branded products. Claessens (2015) defines price as the amount of money a client must spend to obtain a product or service. According to Long & Vinh (2017), pricing is one of the factors that influences students' purchasing decisions. In research conducted by Albari & Safitri (2018) has stated that the price perception a product will affect the student's decision in purchasing the product. Furthermore, students who are concerned about the cost of particular things would typically seek out products that are inexpensive but of high quality. Therefore, student will search for counterfeit products, because counterfeited products are sold at cheaper price and are generally high in terms of the quality of the products itself (Prakash & Pathak, 2017).

According to Hussain et al. (2017), the low price of counterfeit luxury branded products influences students' purchase decisions. Auf et al. (2018) also stated that student purchase behaviour is influenced by price. His study found that most of the students are confident in purchasing the counterfeit products if offered at a reasonably low price but with high quality products.

Social Influence

Pressure from peers, family and society could be one of the factors that influence student's decision to purchase genuine products or counterfeit luxury branded products, depending on their social group standard. (Sharma and Chan, 2017). Besides that, the social influence is the crucial aspects in enhancing the desire to buy and use fashion clothes and accessories rather than individual vanity. (Sandra Marina Correia et al, 2017)

The desire of students to develop consistent beliefs, views, and specifications of buying decisions with others is known as susceptibility to normative influence (Wang,2017).

Long and Vinh (2017) discovered that social factors have a negative impact on consumer attitudes toward counterfeit products. This is due to the fact that there are two types of consumer sensitivity to social influence which is sensitive ability to information and sensitivity's ability to standards. The sensitive ability to information is related to buying decision based on expert advice or recommendations from close friends. As a result, the

assurance of others' opinions serves as a valuable reference. This occurs when a consumer has little knowledge or information about the product or brand that they intend to purchase.

When experts or other people's opinions strongly influence the consumer's decision, the consumer may be sensitive to information (such as one person is unfamiliar with or unaware of the product). When a consumer is more concerned with how to make a positive impression on others, they have a sensitive ability to standards. As a result, both sensitive information ability and standards have a negative impact on consumer attitudes towards counterfeit products. Furthermore, customer experience and trustworthiness also significant relation on both social influence among teenagers (Xi,Hu et al.,2016)

Conceptual Framework

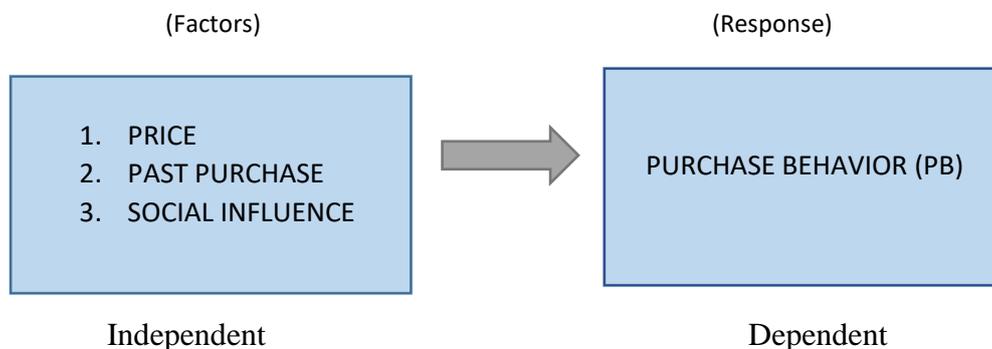


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Research Methods

Research Design

This study employs cross-sectional quantitative research design in order to determine the core factors on youth's purchase behaviours towards counterfeit goods. This study was cross-sectional since the data was collected at one particular time across the selected respondents (Cooper & Schindler, 2008; and DeVaus, 2001). According to Creswell (2005), the use of such methods may gather accurate, less bias, and high-quality data. A survey is chosen as the research instrument of this study as surveys provide a numeric (quantitative) description of the trends, attitudes, or opinions within a given population. Therefore, data in this research are analysed using a quantitative approach.

Sample Study and data collection method.

The target respondents are luxury fashion consumers youth in Shah Alam. Most of potential luxury fashion consumers are either living in Kuala Lumpur or Klang Valley. Thus, to reach these target participants within huge and unstable population, nonprobability sampling technique is used since there is unequal chance of selecting individuals within the huge population into the sample. Therefore, purposive sampling method is adopted to reach the available samples due to time and location conditions (Andaleeb & Hasan, 2016). Data is collected via google form and email. This study was a cross-sectional study (Sekaran,2003) where the total of 200 responded to the posted questionnaires, which were collected within a three-month period. A statistical analysis of the results was performed using the IBM SPSS Statistics package. A correlation analysis was performed in order to access the association

between the testing variable and then multiple regression analysis were applied to test whether have a significance relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

Reliability Test

The internal consistency of the items utilised in this research instrument was used to determine the dependability of the research instrument. This method can be used to demonstrate the consistency of the questionnaire items on the research instrument's reliability. Cronbach's coefficient alpha value was utilised to determine the consistency of the instrument items. It is the most popular reliability metric used by researchers to identify each questionnaire item as an equivalent test, with all correlations between items being the same.

Discussion

Reliability test analysis for this survey in **Table 1** shows the demographic profile of the respondents. The total number of respondents is 200. The majority of the respondents as identified by categories are 55.5% females, 35% aged between 24 and 27, 49% degree, 77% students, and 44.5% PTPTN as their source of income and 29.5% income level lower than RM500.

Table 1: Demographic profile data

Demographic variables	Categories	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	male	89	44.5
	female	111	55.5
Age	18-20	62	31
	21-23	68	34
	24-27	70	35
Race	malay	126	63
	chinese	42	21
	indian	32	16
Education Level	STPM/Foundation/Matrikulation	33	16.5
	Diploma	42	21
	Degree	98	49
	Master	22	11
	PhD	5	2.5
Employment Status	Students	154	77
	Employed	18	9
	Selfemployed	15	7.5
	Unemployed	13	6.5
Source of Income	Scholarship	26	13
	PTPTN	89	44.5
	MARA	35	17.5
	Parents	48	24
	others	2	1
Income (RM)	0-499	59	29.5
	500-999	30	15
	1000-1999	54	27
	2000-2999	43	21.5
	3000 above	14	7

Analysis and results

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics results for each of the variables. The results show that the Price have the highest mean $\bar{X}_P = 4.0617$ ($SD = 0.51643$), while Purchase Behaviour have the lowers mean $\bar{X}_{PB} = 3.8771$ ($SD = 0.55208$).

Table 2: Descriptive statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Purchase Behavior	3.8771	.55208	200
PRICE	4.0617	.51643	200
Past Purchase	3.9536	.52717	200
Social Influence	3.9083	.55761	200

A multiple regression analysis was performed to determine the relationship between Purchase Behaviour as the dependent variable and purchasing factors as Price, Past Purchase experience and Social Influence. To ensure the appropriateness of the outputs from the regression analysis, the requirement assumptions for multiple regression are met. **Figure 2** shows the Normal P-P plot, the points are laid in a reasonably straight diagonal line from bottom left to top right. It indicates no major deviation from normality.

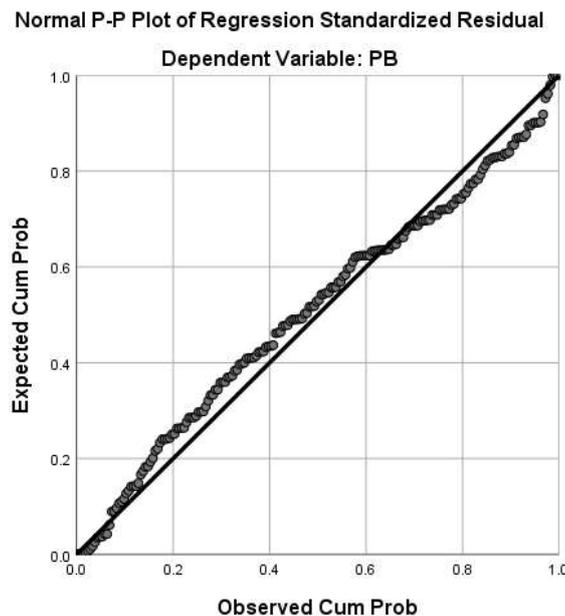


Figure 2: Normal P-P Plot of regression standardized residual for Purchase Behaviour

The scatter plot of residuals in **Figure 3**, shows that the independent variables are linearly related to the residual of the dependent variable. Thus, the homoscedasticity of the sample is satisfied. While results in table 4.4 shows that in the collinearity statistic tests all variable have tolerance values greater than 0.10, and variance inflection factor, (VIF) values less than 10. It reveals that there is no multicollinearity between the variables. The Durbin-Watson value in this analysis is 1.586, which falls in the range of 1.5 to 2.5, indicating that there is no autocorrelation in the residual. In conclusion, all the assumptions were complied with the regression analysis. Hence, the appropriateness of these findings was ensured. Therefore, the correlation analysis was performed to measure the relationship between variables.

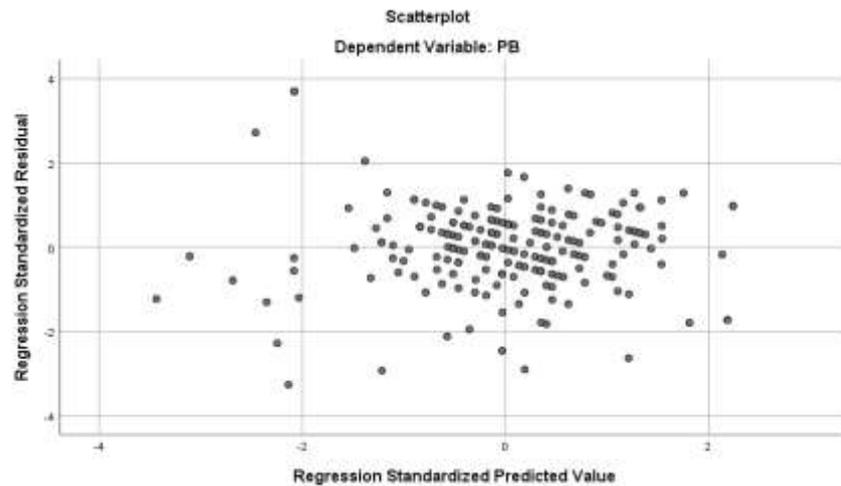


Figure 3: The scatter plot of residuals observed value and predicted value

Table 3: Correlations

Variables	1	2	3	4
1.Purchase Behavior	1	0.352**	0.522**	0.331**
2. Price	0.3522**	1	0.358**	0.331**
3.Past Purchase	0.522**	0.538	1	0.479**
4.Social Influence	0.331**	0.331**	0.479**	1

**Note: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 shows the results for correlation among variables. Purchase behaviour among the target customer was 52.2% (p -value < 0.01) associate with the past purchase factor of the luxury products. Besides, past purchase or experience on products also have positive associate with the price with 53.8% (p -value < 0.01). While social influence factor gives 47.9% (p -value < 0.01) associate with past purchase on the products.

In summary, correlation analysis illustrates that, the past purchase experience behaviour gives 53.8% influence by the price of the product compare to other variables. The results also show that, past purchase give 52.2% influence on purchase behaviours. Meanwhile, social influence not much dependent on purchase behaviours with only 33.1% associate. These results indicate that purchase behaviours are more influence by past purchase and by the price of the products, which means that the customer will make a purchase if they have good experience on that product.

Table 4: Regression Analysis Summary

Variables	B	95% CI		β	t	p-value	Collinearity Statistics	
		Lower.Bound	Upper.Bound				Tolerance	VIF
Constant	1.345	.722	1.967		4.259	.000		
Price	.096	-.056	.247	.090	1.248	.214	.704	1.420
Past Purchase	.448	.289	.608	.428	5.540	.000	.609	1.642
Social Influence	.095	-.040	.230	.096	1.385	.168	.763	1.311

R-Square = 0.287; Adjusted R Square = 0.276
Durbin-Watson = 1.586

Table 4, indicated that only one significant independent variable out of three independent variables are related to the purchase behaviour. These variables are Past Purchase (PP) ($t = 5.540, p < 0.01$). The results also show that the Past Purchase (PP) has the highest regression coefficient with 0.448. Therefore, effects from Past Purchase are insignificant with 44.8% changing on Past Purchase experience will influence on predicting Purchase Behaviour. The set of combinations for regression model is as follows:

$$\text{Purchase Behaviour (PB)} = 1.345 + 0.448 \text{ Past Purchase (PP)}$$

The 0.448 tells that the difference by one unit on past purchase are estimated to differ by 44.8% on purchase behaviours. Meaning that, relatively past purchase is estimated to give a positive impact on purchase behaviour. The R-square value is 0.287 indicated that only 28.7% variation on purchase behaviours are explained by past purchase, which mean differ one unit on past purchase will associate by 28.7% differ on purchase behaviours. Therefore, among these three variables which is price, past purchase and social influence, past purchase is the only variable shows the significant relationship on purchase behaviours. This shows that 28.7% on purchase behaviours among youngster are depend on their experience on the product compared to the price of the products.

Conclusion

The research found that the youth consumers in Shah Alam dependent on past purchase emerges as an important predictor towards their purchasing behaviour for counterfeit products. The study focus on social influence, price and past purchase becomes as a mediator in the relation towards the purchasing behaviour among the youth in Shah Alam. However, past purchase indicates the highest significant compared to other independents among the youth in Shah Alam. It is supported by Bian, X., Wang, K.Y., Smith, A., and Yannopoulou, N. (2016), past purchase is described as a youth previous experience in purchasing a product from which they evaluate the product they purchased. According to Pueschel et al., (2017) youth who are smart about buying counterfeit products would know the extent of benefits that the counterfeit products can give them and would consider counterfeit products to be a cheaper and less dangerous alternative to their original counterparts. Past purchases could measure the youth satisfaction towards the items that they previously purchase, youth preferences and point of view of the products that they have bought over other products. Therefore, based on the previous research, past purchases do have an impact on the youth purchasing behaviour in buying counterfeit luxury branded products.

These results indicate that youth consumers in Shah Alam attend to purchase counterfeit products by focusing on past purchase as this would be the main indicator for marketing strategies as trustworthy is an important element in purchasing counterfeit products.

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