Consumer Attitudes Toward Fashion Counterfeits: Application of the Theory of Planned Behavior

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Abstract:

This study examines consumer motivations that can explain attitudes toward purchasing fashion counterfeit goods and tests the underlying mechanism of intent to purchase fashion counterfeits based on the theory of planned behavior. A random sample of female college students (N = 336) participate in this study. Product appearance, past purchase behavior, value consciousness, and normative susceptibility are significant predictors of attitude toward buying fashion counterfeit goods. Attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control are significantly related to intent to purchase fashion counterfeit goods. This research extends the theory of planned behavior and tests two additional paths that significantly improve explanatory power of the theory and prediction of consumer intent to buy fashion counterfeit goods.

Keywords: counterfeits | fashion | theory of planned behavior

Article:

Product counterfeiting is a global issue that causes significant economic and social problems (Gilgoff, 2004). Counterfeit trade is estimated at $500 billion globally, accounting for between 5% and 7% of the total world trade (Johnson, 2006). The U.S. share represents $286.8 billion (63%) of that (Tucker, 2005). The International Anti-Counterfeiting Coalition (ICC) reported that in the United States counterfeit goods and piracy are responsible for the loss of more than $200 billion and 750,000 jobs a year (Cook & Writer, 2006). The city of New York, with estimated annual counterfeit sales of $23 billion, loses approximately $1 billion in tax revenue annually (Tucker, 2005).

"Counterfeit" refers to copies made to deceive consumer into believing that the goods are authentic (Bamossy & Scammon, 1985), whereas "knock-off" refers to copies that are not identical but similar to the authentic goods in essence, name, form, or meaning (Prendergast, Chuen, & Phau, 2002). Counterfeiting is a serious problem for the fashion industry (Oldenburg, 2005). The U.S. Customs and Border Control reported at midyear 2006 that 45% of seized

counterfeits were fashion goods, including apparel and accessories (Casabona, 2006). Among the top five brands counterfeited, four (with Microsoft the fifth) were fashion brands: Louis Vuitton, Nike, Gucci, and Prada (McGlone, 2006). Many fashion companies (e.g., Rolex, Abercrombie & Fitch) use private investigators and spend millions each year to fight counterfeiting (Pallay, 2006; Ryan, 2006). Trademark protection costs directly affect consumers through higher prices on authentic goods (Bamossy & Scammon, 1985).

Although an increasing body of literature has investigated why consumers purchase counterfeits, most policies and previous studies have focused on the supply dimension (Bamossy & Scammon, 1985; Bush, Bloch, & Dawson, 1989). Despite the U.S. legal policies (e.g., the Trademark Counterfeiting Act of 1984) and industry efforts to limit production and sale of counterfeits, fashion counterfeiting is increasing (Casabona, 2006), driven by strong consumer demand for upscale brands and perceived price advantage over authentic goods (Bloch, Bush, & Champbell, 1993). Many people knowingly purchase counterfeit products (ICC Counterfeiting Intelligence Bureau, 2004), an activity termed as nondeceptive counterfeiting (Grossman & Shapiro, 1988). Therefore, in many cases the purpose of selling counterfeits is not to deceive but to satisfy consumers (Arellano, 1994). Thus, even though government authorities and industry fight to restrain this illegal activity, counterfeits are in the market because there is a demand. To develop appropriate policies, it is critical to focus on consumers' motivations, attitudes, and the underlying mechanism of intent to purchase fashion counterfeits. The purpose of this study was to (a) identify motivations that influence attitudes toward buying fashion counterfeits; (b) use the theory of planned behavior to examine the relationships among attitude toward buying fashion counterfeits, subjective norms influencing the purchase of fashion counterfeits, and intent to purchase fashion counterfeits; and (c) test the inclusion of additional relationships that are expected to improve the explanatory power of the theory in the context of buying fashion counterfeits.

Motivations for Buying Fashion Counterfeit Goods

Based on research that studied counterfeiting (e.g., Albers-Miller, 1999; Ang, Chen, Lim, & Tambyah, 2001; Bloch et al., 1993; Ha & Lennon, 2006), eight motivations were selected for investigation in the context of fashion counterfeits. These included psychographic characteristics, product appearance, and past purchase behavior.

Psychographic characteristics. Others' influence is one of the most important determinants of an individual's behavior (Bearden, Netemeyer, & Teel, 1989). Ang et al. (2001) suggested that informational susceptibility and normative susceptibility, as social influences, affect attitudes toward purchasing counterfeits. Informational susceptibility is the tendency to learn about products or brands by seeking information from knowledgeable others, or making inferences based on observing people's behaviors (Bearden et al., 1989). For instance, a consumer may observe that some people have luxury fashion items and they appear to be popular. Therefore, the consumer may purchase counterfeits as an alternative to authentic goods. Normative susceptibility refers to ''the tendency to conform to the expectations of others'' in consumption context (Bearden et al., 1989, p. 474). When people think that significant others may not like or approve of buying fashion counterfeits, or that buying these goods will not make good impressions, they are likely to have negative attitudes toward purchasing counterfeits. Ang et al. (2001) reported a positive relationship between informational susceptibility and a negative

relationship between normative susceptibility and attitude toward counterfeit music CDs.

Value consciousness is defined as ‘‘a concern for paying lower prices, subject to some quality constraint’’ (Lichtenstein, Netemeyer, & Burton, 1990, p. 56). Value consciousness differs from price consciousness in that value includes ‘‘get’’ (i.e., the benefits a buyer acquires from seller’s offering) and ‘‘give’’ (i.e., the cost the buyer pays to acquire the offering) components (Parasuraman & Grewal, 2000). Consumers tend to select counterfeits when there is a distinct price advantage over authentic goods (Albers-Miller, 1999; Bloch et al., 1993; Cordell, Wongtade, & Kieschnick, 1996; Prendergast et al., 2002; Wee, Tan, & Cheok, 1995). Ang et al. (2001) found a positive relationship between value consciousness and attitude toward counterfeit music CDs. Tom et al. (1998) reported that counterfeit buyers rated fake t-shirts as comparable to the legitimate products in terms of brand, durability/quality, and function, but superior in price. Therefore, in purchasing fashion counterfeits, consumers may perceive that what they get exceeds the amount they pay because of the design and/ or status associated with upscale designer names.

Integrity, as it is related to lawfulness, is linked to responsibility, honesty, and self-control (Rokeach, 1968). Although in the United States purchasing counterfeits is not criminal or illegal, lawfulness may predict whether a consumer is likely to engage in the practice because counterfeiting involves illegal activities (e.g., infringing intellectual property and selling unlawful products). Researchers have found that more lawful-minded consumers are less willing to buy counterfeits (Cordell et al., 1996), and integrity is negatively associated with attitude toward counterfeits (Ang et al., 2001; de Matos, Ituassu, & Rossi, 2007). Researchers have tested informational and normative susceptibility, value consciousness, and integrity in the context of counterfeited general consumer products and CDs, not specifically fashion counterfeits. Because fashion goods are consumed publicly, they are often acquired to make a statement and impress others. In contrast, CDs are often used in private settings, when few people can observe the products. The difference in product usage may trigger different motivations for buying counterfeits. Therefore, it is important to retest these constructs in the context of fashion goods.

Status consumption is ‘‘the motivational process by which individuals strive to improve their social standing through conspicuous consumption of products that confer or symbolize status for both the individual and surrounding others’’ (Eastman, Fredenberger, Campbell, & Calvert, 1997, p. 54). Possession of specific products or brands may symbolize status, such as social class (O’Shaughnessy, 1992). Fashion goods are used to project socioeconomic status (Damhorst, Miller, & Michelman, 2001). For instance, carrying designer goods is like having a permit into high society, even though the item might be not real (Garza, 2006). When consumers cannot afford genuine goods, they may purchase counterfeits hoping to convey the status associated with the authentic brand. Wee et al. (1995) found that brand image was positively related to intent to purchase counterfeits and suggested that status conscious consumers were more likely to purchase fashion counterfeits.

Materialism refers to the importance an individual attaches to worldly possessions (Belk, 1984). Richins and Dawson (1992) identified three materialistic traits: acquisition centrality, acquisition as the pursuit of happiness, and possession-defined success. Acquisition centrality means that materialists view possessions and acquisitions as the core value of their lives. Acquisition as the pursuit of happiness means that materialists consider possessions or acquisitions as requisite to satisfaction and happiness. Possession-defined success refers to the tendency to judge people’s achievements by their possessions. Researchers have found that consumers tend to perceive counterfeits as a way to obtain lower-priced branded goods to satisfy

materialistic needs (AlbersMiller, 1999; Bloch et al., 1993).

Product appearance. Wee et al. (1995) identified three types of product characteristics related to purchase of counterfeits: durability, quality, and physical appearance. We considered only physical appearance for two reasons. First, in fashion counterfeiting, product appearance, including trademarks or logos, is counterfeiters' main reason for copying the product and indicates the original source of the product. Second, consumers have reported (Kim & Karpova, 2005) that appearance is the major reason for buying fashion counterfeits. Scholars argue that distinctive design of fashion luxury goods, including trademark and logo, motivates consumers to purchase fashion counterfeits (Ha & Lennon, 2006; Prendergast et al., 2002).

Past purchase behavior. Past behavior may predict attitude toward the behavior in the future. d'Astous, Colbert, and Montpetit (2005) suggested that an individual tends to use "I've-done-it-in-the-past" justification when determining whether to engage in some activities (p. 293). Past behavior is also a source of information for identifying one's attitude (Bem, 1972). d'Astous et al. (2005) found that past behavior was a significant predictor of attitude toward and intent to engage in music piracy. Therefore, compared with consumers who have not purchased fashion counterfeits, consumers who have purchased fashion counterfeit goods in the past may have more positive attitudes toward engaging in the behavior in the future.

Based on the above discussion, we hypothesized relationships between consumer motivations and attitudes toward buying fashion counterfeit goods as follows:

Hypothesis 1a: Informational susceptibility is positively related to attitude.
Hypothesis 1b: Normative susceptibility is negatively related to attitude.
Hypothesis 1c: Value consciousness is positively related to attitude.
Hypothesis 1d: Integrity is negatively related to attitude.
Hypothesis 1e: Status consumption is positively related to attitude.
Hypothesis 1f: Materialism is positively related to attitude.
Hypothesis 1g: Product appearance of counterfeits is positively related to attitude.
Hypothesis 1h: Past purchase behavior is positively related to attitude.

Attitude Toward Buying Fashion Counterfeit Goods

The theory of planned behavior (TPB) explains how an individual's attitude toward behavior, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control predict intent, which in turn, leads to behavior (Ajzen, 1985). The theory defines intent as decision to act in a particular way (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975), and subjective norm refers to social influence on a particular behavior (Young & Kent, 1985). For instance, an individual might have a favorable attitude toward buying counterfeit goods. However, intent to purchase may be influenced by the person's belief about the subjective norm related to counterfeit purchasing. Furthermore, behavior, at least in part, may be beyond consumer voluntary control. TPB addresses the issue by including perceived behavioral control, which refers to perception about how difficult it is to perform the behavior of interest (Ajzen, 1991). If the behavior is not completely determined by the individual's will, that person needs special resources and opportunities to carry out the behavior. The perceived availability of resources and opportunities may influence behavioral intent and performance of the behavior. Hypotheses 2 through 4 were based on TPB in the context of fashion counterfeits (see Figure 1):

Hypothesis 2: Attitude toward purchasing fashion counterfeit goods is positively related to purchase intent toward fashion counterfeits.
Hypothesis 3: Perceived behavioral control is positively related to purchase intent toward fashion counterfeits.
Hypothesis 4: Subjective norm is positively related to purchase intent toward fashion counterfeits.

Research has supported predictability of TPB in the context of immoral activities. Chang (1998) compared the validities of TPB and theory of reasoned action as applied to the context of illegal software copying. d'Astous et al. (2005) tested TPB in the area of online music piracy. Penz and Sto¨ttinger (2005) explored fashion counterfeiting using TPB. However, Randall and Gibson (1991) criticized studies that tested only relationships hypothesized by the theory and ignored other linkages between the constructs. Previous research has found that normative and attitudinal constructs may be dependent and, therefore, subjective norm could influence attitude toward behavior (Shepherd & O'Keefe, 1984; Vallerand, Deshaies, Cuerrier, & Mongeau, 1992). Burke (2006) argued that "norms not only prescribe attitudes and perceptions but also behavior" (p. 124). Attitudes are formed through interactions with people (Kiecolt, 1988), who may influence an individual through social pressure and behavioral regulations. Chang (1998) found that subjective norm was positively related to attitude toward software piracy.

Subjective norm may also affect perceptions about the ease or difficulty of performing a behavior. Perceived behavioral control reflects past experience, knowledge about products, and anticipated obstacles (Randall & Gibson, 1991). Because people share information, knowledge, and experiences with family and friends, opinions of significant others may influence perceptions about amount of control over certain behaviors. When a consumer thinks that others disapprove of buying fashion counterfeits, the consumer may experience a psychological barrier to carrying out the behavior, which would result in decreased perceived behavioral control. In this study, two paths (between subjective norm and attitude toward purchasing fashion counterfeit goods and subjective norm and perceived behavioral control) were tested in addition to the relationships suggested by TPB:

Hypothesis 5: Subjective norm is positively related to attitude toward purchasing fashion counterfeit goods.
Hypothesis 6: Subjective norm is positively related to perceived behavioral control.

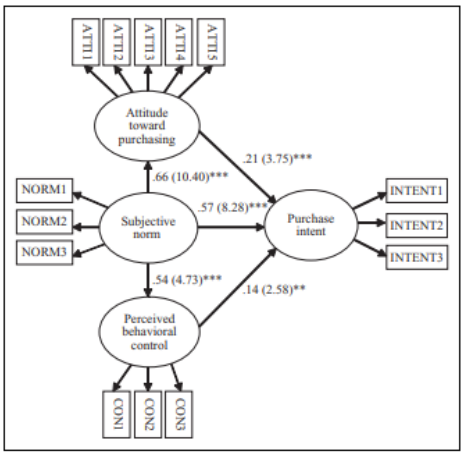

Figure 1. The Latent Model With 14 Indicators and 4 Latent Variables Note: Standardized estimates shown (t-values in parentheses) $\chi^2 = 228.93$, df = 72, p = 0.0, RMSEA = 0.077, NFI = 0.97, CFI = 0.98. ** p <.01. *** p <.001.

Method

Sample Procedure

The data were collected using a Web-based survey. A random sample of college women was drawn from a large Midwestern university. College women constitute an appropriate sample for this study because students are likely to be heavy users of product categories that are frequently counterfeited (Cordell et al., 1996). Compared with men, women are more likely to be heavy buyers of clothing and counterfeit clothing and accessories (Cheung & Prendergast, 2005). Researchers have identified college students as one consumer segment that knowingly purchases counterfeits (Chakraborty, Allred, Sukhdial, & Bristol, 1997). After Institutional Review Board approval, 4,000 e-mail addresses were randomly generated from the pool of all female students enrolled in the university at the time of data collection. A recruiting e-mail containing a letter of research introduction with consent elements and the survey URL was distributed to students. Along with a definition of counterfeits, the instructions defined fashion counterfeits to include apparel, bags, purses, shoes, watches, and perfume. To encourage participation, all participants' names were entered into 10 drawings for a $10 department store gift certificate.

Instrument Development

All scales, except attitude toward purchasing fashion counterfeit goods and past purchase behavior, used 7-point scales (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree). Consumer susceptibility was measured with eight normative ($\alpha = .82$) and four informational ($\alpha = .88$) susceptibility items developed by Bearden et al. (1989). Four items from Lichtenstein et al. (1990) were used to measure value consciousness, $\alpha = .81$ (Ang et al., 2001). Integrity was assessed by four items (honesty, politeness, responsibility, and self-control) from Vinson, Munson, and Nakanishi

(1977) and a 7-point scale (1 = least important; 7 = most important) was used (α = .78; Ang et al., 2001). Status consumption was measured using Marcoux, Filiatrault, and Che`ron's (1997) scale. Four (out of 18) conspicuous consumption items (α = .89) that measured social status demonstration and interpersonal mediation were adapted to reflect the fashion counterfeit context (e.g., ''Well-known designers' products mean higher socioeconomic status''). Materialism was measured using 18 items (6 Success: α = .74-.78, 7 Centrality: α = .71-.75, and 5 Happiness: a =.73-.83, subscale items) developed by Richins and Dawson (1992). Three product appearance items were developed for this study: ''I would buy fashion counterfeit goods because of the design''; ''I would purchase fashion counterfeit goods because of the appearance''; and ''I would buy fashion counterfeit goods because they look good.'' Past purchase behavior was measured by a nominal scale, ''Have you ever purchased fashion counterfeit goods?''

Five items from Chang (1998), Fitzmaurice (2005), and Madden, Ellen, and Ajzen (1992) assessed attitude toward purchasing fashion counterfeits using a 7-point semantic differential scale. The subjective norm measure (α = .82) included three items from Fitzmaurice (2005). The perceived behavioral control scale (α = .70) consisted of three items from Chang (1998). Purchase intent was measured by three items (α = .92) from Madden et al. (1992). Respondents' demographic characteristics were collected: age and major (open-ended), gender and ethnicity (close-ended).

Results

A total of 385 responses were collected, resulting in a 9.6% response rate; of these, 366 were complete, usable questionnaires. The average respondent was 22-years-old and the majority of participants (90.6%) were Caucasian American. Participants were enrolled in 80 different majors. Only 328 out of 366 participants answered the question about past purchase behavior: 169 (51.5%) had purchased fashion counterfeits, whereas 159 (48.5%) had not. Although the survey response rate was relatively low, the proportion between fashion counterfeit buyers and nonbuyers was consistent with those of other fashion counterfeit studies (e.g., Ha & Lennon, 2006).

Preliminary Analyses

All multi-item variables were subjected to principal component analysis with varimax rotation and reliability (Cronbach's alpha) analysis. Unidimensionality was confirmed for all scales, except materialism; three factors were extracted for the scale (success, centrality, and happiness) as suggested by Richins and Dawson (1992). The factor loadings of each item were above .50, but below .30 on other factors (Kline, 1998). Cronbach's alphas for all measures were above .60: normative susceptibility (.92), informational susceptibility (.74), value consciousness (.85), status consumption (.84), success (.84), centrality (.84), happiness (.81), product appearance (.93), integrity (.63), attitude toward purchasing fashion counterfeit goods (.92),

subjective norm (.82), perceived behavioral control (.67), and purchase intent (.97). Although an alpha coefficient higher than .70 is preferable, it may fall to .60 (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1998).

Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses 1a through 1h were tested using a stepwise multiple regression analysis to determine motivations that account for attitude toward purchasing fashion counterfeit goods. The independent variables[1] were informational and normative susceptibility, value consciousness, integrity, status consumption, materialism, product appearance, and past purchase behavior. The dependent variable was attitude toward buying fashion counterfeit goods. The results showed that normative susceptibility, value consciousness, product appearance, and past purchase behavior were significant predictors of attitude toward purchasing fashion counterfeit goods, supporting Hypotheses 1b, 1c, 1g, and 1h (see Table 1).

Table 1. Results of Stepwise Multiple Regression

Step	Variable	b	SE	β	Two-Tailed Significance
1	Product appearance	.379	.040	.496	.000
2	Normative susceptibility	-.111	.047	-.110	.018
3	Past purchase behavior	.306	.124	.125	.014
4	Value consciousness	.134	.054	.114	.014

Note. R^2 = .330, F(4, 320) = 40.851, p = .000, b = unstandardized coefficients, SE = Std. Error, b = standardized coefficients, Dependent variable: attitude toward purchasing fashion counterfeit goods.

Hypotheses 2 through 6, based on the extended TPB, were tested through structural equation modeling (SEM), using maximum likelihood estimation with covariance matrix as the input. A measurement model, including 14 variables and 4 latent variables, was tested to examine the quality of the measures. Although the w2 goodness-of-fit statistic for the perfect fit model was significant (χ^2 = 218.53, df = 71, p = .00), based on established fit indices, the measurement model was considered to show a fair fit (RMSEA = .075; NFI = .97; and CFI = .98). All factor loadings were significant at the level of .001. The results of the confirmatory factor analysis provide evidence of convergent and discriminant validity of the measurement model (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) (see Table 2). Although the variance of perceived behavioral control (.48) was lower than the standard (.50) recommended by Fornell and Larcker (1981), the construct was included in the SEM model, considering the adequate reliability of the scale and

the importance of the construct in the model.[2] The correlations among the latent variables are shown in Table 3.

Table 2. Measurement Model Properties (14 items)

	Standardized factor loadings	Construct reliability	Variance
Attitude (α= .92)		.92	.71
1. Harmful/Good	.69		
2. Useless/Beneficial	.89		
3. Foolish/Wise	.89		
4. Worthless/Worthwhile	.94		
5. Not valuable/Valuable	.79		
Perceived behavioral control (α= .67)		.70	.48
1. I have complete control of purchasing fashion counterfeit goods.	.29		
2. For me, to buy fashion counterfeit goods is easy.	.89		
3. I will make an effort to buy fashion counterfeit goods in the future.	.75		
Purchase intent (α= .97)		.97	.92
1. I intend to buy fashion counterfeit goods in the future.	.95		
2. I will try to buy fashion counterfeit goods in the future.	.99		
3. I will make an effort to buy fashion counterfeit goods in the future.	.94		
Subjective norm (α= .82)		.81	.59
1. Close friends and family think it is a good idea for me to buy fashion counterfeit goods.	.80		

2. The people who I listen to could influence me to buy fashion counterfeit goods.	.75		
3. Important people in my life want me to buy fashion counterfeit goods.	.75		

Table 3. Correlation Matrix of Model Constructs

			Correlation			
Model Construct (n = 366)	M	SD	1	2	3	4
1. Attitude	3.93	1.23	1.00			
2. Perceived behavioral control	4.34	1.30	.44***	1.00		
3. Purchase intent	3.24	1.58	.64***	.53***	1.00	
4. Subjective norm	3.12	1.27	.64***	.51***	.77***	1.00

Because the sample in the study included two groups of consumers (consumers who had purchased fashion counterfeits and those who had not), multiple group analyses were performed to examine the group difference in terms of the SEM. The data set was split into fashion counterfeit buyers (N = 169) and nonbuyers (N = 159). Two multiple group models were tested, allowing the path coefficients to be variant and forcing the coefficients to be invariant. A chi-square difference test was performed to examine whether the two models were statistically different—the model allowing the coefficients to be variant (χ^2 = 320.80, df = 144, p = .00) and the model forcing the coefficient to be invariant (χ^2 = 326.90, df = 149, p = .00). The result showed that the two models were not significantly different ($\Delta\chi^2$ = 6.1, Δdf = 5) in terms of the path coefficients. Therefore, the two groups of consumers (buyers and nonbuyers) were combined to test the theoretical model.

A latent model, combining buyers and nonbuyers, was tested to examine the hypothesized relationships (Hypotheses 2 through 6). As a result of testing the latent model with 14 indicators and 4 latent variables, χ^2 goodness-of-fit statistic for the perfect fit model was significant, but based on established fit indices, the model had a fair fit (χ^2 = 228.93, df = 72, p = .00, RMSEA = .077, NFI = .97, CFI = .98). Based on the SEM analysis, Hypotheses 2 through 6 were supported (see Table 4 and Figure 1). Attitude toward purchasing fashion counterfeits was positively related to purchase intent (.21). Perceived behavioral control was positively associated with purchase intent (.14). Subjective norm positively influenced purchase intent (.57). The squared multiple correlation (SMC) of purchase intent was .65, indicating that a significant portion (65%) of variance in purchase intent was explained by attitude toward purchasing fashion counterfeits, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control. Subjective norm was

positively related to attitude toward purchasing fashion counterfeits and perceived behavioral control. The SMCs of attitude and perceived behavioral control were .43 and .29, respectively, indicating that 43% of variance in attitude and 29% of variance in perceived behavioral control were explained by subjective norm.

Table 4. Test of the Extended Theory of Planned Behavior

HP	Path	Est.	S. Est.	SE	*t*
H2	Attitude → purchase intent	.38	.21	.10	3.75***
H3	Behavioral control → purchase intent	.45	.14	.17	2.58***
H4	Subjective norm → purchase intent	.88	.57	.11	8.28***
H5	Subjective norm → attitude	.55	.66	.05	10.40***
H6	Subjective norm → behavioral control	.27	.54	.06	4.73***

Est. = parameter estimate; S. Est. = standardized estimate of parameter; SE = standard error

Table 5 compares the original model based on TPB and the two extended models. Chi-square difference tests indicated that Model 2, which included the path from subjective norm to attitude, showed a significantly better fit compared with the original Model 1. Furthermore, Model 3, which included two additional paths (from subjective norm to attitude and from subjective norm to perceived behavioral control), showed a significantly better fit compared with the Models 1 and 2. Adding the two paths to TPB significantly improved the explanatory power of the theory in the context of fashion counterfeits.

Table 5. Fit Statistics Comparison of the Theory of Planned Behavior and Its Extensions

Models	χ^2	*df*	$\chi^2_{diff.}$	RMSEA	NFI	CFI
Null model	8068.87***	91		.490	.46	.47
Model I						
Attitude → purchase intent						
Subjective norm → purchase intent						
Behavioral control → purchase intent	427.96***	74	7658.91***	.110	.95	.96
Model 2						

Attitude → purchase intent						
Subjective norm → purchase intent						
Behavioral control → purchase intent						
Subjective norm → attitude	283.21***	73	144.75***	.089	.96	.97
Model 3						
Attitude → purchase intent						
Subjective norm → purchase intent						
Behavioral control → purchase intent						
Subjective norm → attitude						
Subjective norm → behavioral control	228.93***	72	54.28***	.077	.97	.98

Decomposition of effects was calculated to increase understanding about the results and examine predictive validity of the model. Subjective norm indirectly affected purchase intent through attitude toward purchasing fashion counterfeit goods and perceived behavioral control. The estimate of the indirect effect from subjective norm to purchase intent through attitude was .14 (.66 .21), whereas the indirect effect from subjective norm to purchase intent through perceived behavioral control was .08 (.54 .14), indicating that 14% of the indirect effect was explained through attitude, whereas 8% of the indirect effect was explained through perceived behavioral control (Shrout & Bolger, 2002).

Discussion

In this study, we examine consumer motivations that can explain attitudes toward purchasing fashion counterfeit goods. The results indicate that product appearance, past purchase behavior, and value consciousness are positively related to attitude toward purchasing fashion counterfeit goods, whereas normative susceptibility is negatively related to the attitude. Consumers may be motivated to purchase fashion counterfeit goods because of perceived attractive appearance that is similar or identical to authentic goods. The beta for this relationship ($\beta^* = .50$) is the highest among the four predictors, implying that product appearance may be one of the main reasons for acquiring fashion counterfeits. This result supports the finding from the

studies of Kim and Karpova (2005) and Wee et al. (2005), who reported that product appearance, or design, was an important motivation to buy fashion counterfeits.

Consumer past purchase behavior has a positive influence on attitude toward buying fashion counterfeit goods, confirming the results of d'Astous et al. (2005). People who have purchased fashion counterfeits in the past tend to have more positive attitudes toward buying those goods. The finding implies that people may purchase fashion counterfeits habitually. Gentry, Putrevu, and Shultz (2006) found that tourists, both Caucasians and Asians, were the main shoppers of fashion counterfeit goods and considered them to be souvenirs. When purchasing fashion counterfeits becomes habitual, it may be more problematic to discourage the behavior. Therefore, it is important for the government and authorities to limit opportunities and resources (e.g., counterfeit-selling district) to purchase fashion counterfeit goods. U.S. Customs may develop an educational campaign at airports to provide people an opportunity to think about ethical issues and negative consequences related to counterfeit goods.

Value conscious consumers are more likely to have a positive attitude toward purchasing fashion counterfeits. Consumers who seek to maximize perceived utility for their money are more likely to purchase fashion counterfeits. This finding is consistent with previous studies that examined other product categories such as music CDs, clothing, and software (Ang et al., 2001; Bloch et al., 1993; Higgins & Rubin, 1986; Tom et al., 1998). Normative susceptibility is negatively related to attitude toward purchasing fashion counterfeits. Consumers who have a higher tendency to conform to societal expectations are likely to have negative attitudes toward fashion counterfeits. When a consumer believes that significant others may disapprove of acquisition of fashion counterfeits, or if buying these goods creates an unfavorable impression, the consumer is likely to have a negative attitude toward purchasing counterfeits.

Integrity is not related to attitude toward purchasing fashion counterfeits. This finding is somewhat consistent with that of Ha and Lennon (2006) who found no difference between fashion counterfeit buyers and nonbuyers in terms of ethical ideologies. In contrast, de Matos et al. (2007) found that integrity is negatively associated with attitude toward counterfeits. However, they used an interview technique; therefore, it is possible that a social desirability effect influenced the results. Although people may be aware that counterfeits are illegal, they may not necessarily view purchasing fake fashion goods as a serious dishonest and irresponsible action. Indeed, in the United States, unlike in some European countries, the act of purchasing counterfeits cannot be prosecuted (Custom regulations, n.d.). Therefore, consumers may not automatically connect their personal values (i.e., honesty, responsibility) with purchasing a fake Coach purse. It is important to further investigate the role of consumer values associated with lawfulness in the context of fashion counterfeits.

Status consumption and materialism are not associated with attitude toward purchasing fashion counterfeit goods. This finding conflicts with that of Wee et al. (1995) who reported that for Southeast Asian students brand status is a significant predictor of intent to purchase counterfeits. It is possible that consumers in developed nations (i.e., the United States) may place less importance on semi-durable goods such as apparel, bags, and shoes to convey social status

than do consumers in emerging markets, where relatively low average income prevents larger purchases such as cars or houses (Belton, 2002). In the wealthier markets, with the advance of "fast" and "disposable" fashion, clothing and accessories may be losing meaning as status symbols.

This study tests TPB in the context of fashion counterfeits. As proposed by the theory, we find that attitude toward purchasing fashion counterfeits, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control are positively related to purchase intent. People who have favorable attitudes toward purchasing fashion counterfeits are likely to express stronger intent to acquire them in the future. This is consistent with previous research related to dishonest behaviors such as shoplifting (Tonglet, 2001), music (Kwong & Lee, 2002), and software piracy (Peace, Galletta, & Thong, 2003). In these studies, the attitude is the strongest predictor of intent to perform the behavior. However, in the context of fashion counterfeits, subjective norm appears to be the most important predictor of purchase intent. The fact that social pressures from others have greater impact on fashion counterfeits purchase intent than consumers' attitudes toward the behavior is promising. Because people are influenced by opinions of significant others, purchasing counterfeits may be discouraged if potential buyers perceive that their family and friends will not support the behavior.

Perceived behavioral control is found to be the least important predictor of purchase intent. This might be because the contemporary consumer has more opportunities to purchase counterfeits, for example, through the Internet. However, the significant relationship between perceived behavioral control and purchase intent suggests the usefulness of the construct in non-volitional conditions, such as performing unethical behaviors. For instance, although consumers may not think about purchasing fashion counterfeit goods, if the resources (fashion counterfeits) and opportunities are readily available (e.g., counterfeit district in New York), they are likely to have a higher degree of purchase intent. In contrast, although some people may be interested in purchasing fashion counterfeits, if resources and opportunities are not easily available, or it requires some effort to find counterfeit goods (e.g., online search), purchase intent could be discouraged.

The findings provide empirical evidence that two additional paths (subjective norm to attitude and subjective norm to perceived behavioral control) are important extensions of TPB (see Figure 1) because they help improve the ability of the theory to predict purchase intent of fashion counterfeits. Subjective norm is significantly related to perceived behavioral control, and this path substantially improves the model fit. According to TPB, perceived behavioral control is predicted by control belief and perceived facilitation. Because people may influence each other by sharing information and opinions, consumer beliefs about the availability of counterfeits and perceived facilitation may come from friends or family members.

A positive relationship between subjective norm and attitude toward purchasing fashion counterfeit goods indicates that influence of one's community on buying fashion counterfeits not only directly affects consumer intent to purchase them but also may play an important role in shaping attitudes toward the behavior. For example, if a community expresses strong views on

behaviors as socially undesirable and harmful to the society as a whole, such behaviors can be perceived as unworthy to engage in despite promising individual gains (i.e., famous brands for less money). This implies that anticounterfeiting campaigns should stress the link between fashion counterfeits and highly undesirable social phenomena such as sweatshops, loss of legitimate manufacturing jobs in the country, and unpaid taxes. Furthermore, it is important to emphasize consumers' personal responsibility for these social problems if they purchase fashion counterfeits. Taking into account that normative susceptibility (consumer willingness to conform) is negatively related to the attitude toward the behavior, the anticounterfeiting campaigns might be especially effective if highly respected and well-known politicians or celebrities were to communicate the message. For instance, Sean John Canada, a popular hip–hop clothing brand designed by Sean ''Diddy'' Combs, initiated the ''Don't Buy A Lie'' campaign to make consumers aware that when they buy counterfeits, they are supporting an underground economy, such as factories that operate illegally, have no code of conduct, pay employees unfair wages, and frequently exploit child labor (Sean John Canada, n.d.).

Another strategy to fight counterfeiting would be not only to educate consumers who tend to believe that purchasing fashion counterfeits is practical, but also target those who already recognize the damaging effect of the phenomenon and do not engage in this behavior. It is important to let this segment of consumers realize the power they have in influencing others' intentions and behaviors related to counterfeits. Encouraging people to openly express negative opinions on this socially undesirable behavior in casual conversations (i.e., word-of-mouth communication) might be an effective approach to prevent counterfeit purchasing.

In the fashion industry, the concept of copying (knocking-off) designers' creations is a pervasive and widely accepted practice (Marcketti & Parsons, 2006). Therefore, college students as well as other consumers may not take fashion counterfeiting seriously and do not think that the practice is illegal or unethical. To help students understand the fashion counterfeiting phenomenon and its damaging consequences, educators might develop special anticounterfeiting units as a part of a curriculum that addresses social responsibility. In connection with consumer social responsibility, students might conduct group projects investigating counterfeiting of different product categories and share the information in class.

Limitation and Future Research

Generalization of the research findings may be limited because of the use of a specific population (i.e., female college students) and relatively low response rate. Future research may use a sample that is more heterogeneous in terms of gender, age, educational and income levels, marital status, ethnic group, and geographic location to confirm the findings. It may be important to investigate the effect of demographic variables on attitude and purchase intent toward fashion counterfeits. The investigation of consumer demographic information may benefit policy makers to influence the market of fashion counterfeits.

Market of fashion counterfeits. In this study, the reliability of integrity scale is relatively low (.63). Although research shows that reliability higher than .60 is acceptable (Hair et al., 1998), the findings involving the variable should be interpreted with caution. The variance of perceived behavioral control is slightly lower than .50, which indicates that the variance because of measurement error is larger than the variance explained by the construct. Consequently, the validity of the individual indicators and the construct may be questionable (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Future studies may consider including additional items to improve the variance of the variable.

Through this study, we find that product appearance is the most important predictor of attitudes toward purchasing fashion counterfeit goods. To tap into consumers' underlying perceptions and impressions of fashion counterfeits and the association between product appearance and brand status, an in-depth exploration of the topic is needed. As discussed above, with the growth of e-commerce, there are numerous opportunities for consumers to purchase fashion counterfeits through the Internet. According to a report, online counterfeit sales exceed $25 billion (Imitating property is theft, 2003). Investigating consumers' awareness of online fashion counterfeits and attitude and intent toward purchasing fashion counterfeit goods via Internet is an important topic for future research.

Notes

1. Based on the tolerance (.468-.920) and VIF (1.087-2.137) values (Stevens, 2002), no multicollinearity was evident among independent variables. The correlations between the independent variables were lower than .70 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).
2. Low variance of perceived behavioral control appears to be because of the low factor loading of the first item. The item was retained in the analysis because, according to the measurement model, it was significantly related to the factor at the .001 level. When another latent model was tested without the item, the significance of path coefficients among variables remained consistent with the model with the item. Other fit indices were better when the item was included.

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