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FACULTY OF COMMERCE
DEPARTMENT OF MARKETING**



DISSERTATION RESEARCH PROJECT

An analysis of consumer conspicuous behaviour, social consensus and price sensitivity of counterfeit women clothing.

BY

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my mother and my sister.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to analyse consumer conspicuous behaviour, social consensus and price sensitivity of counterfeit women clothing. The research was carried out to determine the relationship between social consensus and purchase intentions of counterfeit women clothing, to establish the relationship between price sensitivity and purchase intentions of counterfeit women clothing and to investigate the link between conspicuous behaviour and purchase intentions of counterfeit women clothing. In the literature review, theories which were used are social learning theory and the self-signalling theory. The research was causal in nature, with a sample size of 322 clients simply acquired. The researcher made use of a questionnaire as the research instrument and the data was analysed using the SPSS version 27 and SPSS Amos version 26 in order to analyse consumer conspicuous behaviour, social consensus and price sensitivity of counterfeit women clothing. Tables were used to present and explain data. The outcome of the research displayed out that social consensus has a statistically significant effect on purchase intention on counterfeit women clothing. The other findings also displayed that price sensitivity has a statistically significant effect on purchase intention of counterfeit women clothing and also that conspicuous behaviour has a significant effect on purchase intention of counterfeit women clothing. It is recommended that determining the role of social consensus and purchase intention of counterfeit women clothing can contribute to a deeper understanding of how social influences shape consumer choices, imitate the behavior of influential individuals.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter covers the back ground of the study, problem statement, objectives, research hypothesis, assumptions, delimitations, and limitations, definition of key terms and layout of the study.

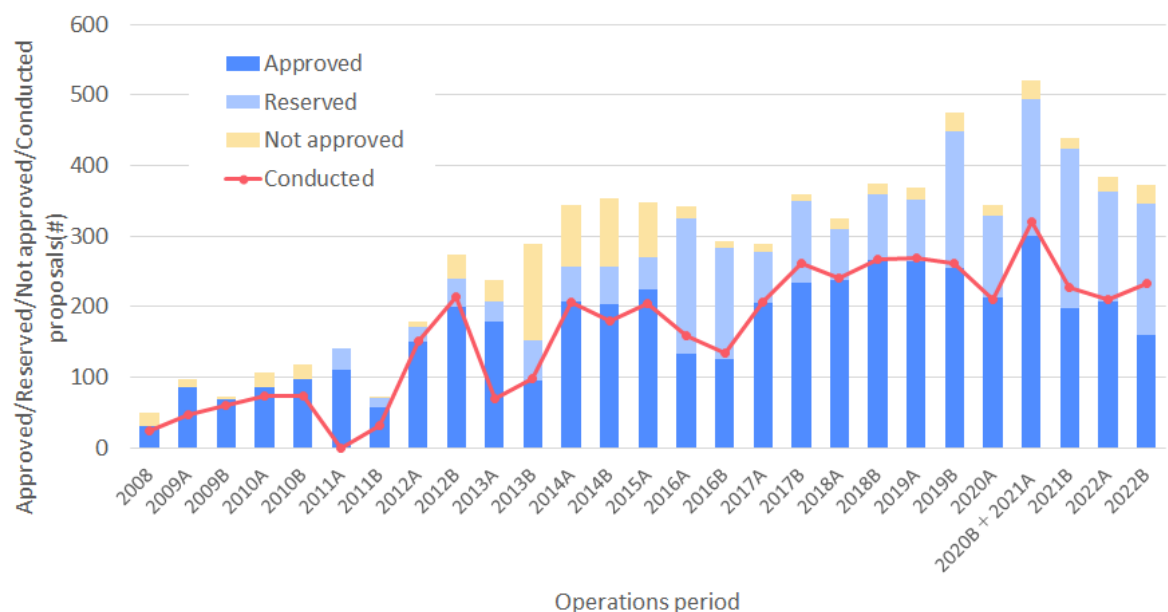
1.1 Background of the study

Globalization process has increased the diffusion of luxury brands across national borders (Frank and Watchravesringkan 2016). It is widely recognized that counterfeit brands are characterised by using a trade mark that is undistinguishable from another part's and violets the rights of the trade mark holder. While according to Laurent, (2016), trademarks can only be counterfeited. While recognizing the distinction between counterfeiting and piracy can be helpful in certain research areas, this study focuses on a broad category of clothing items that could be considered counterfeit. The production and sale of counterfeit clothing have become a significant global issue, affecting both consumers and legitimate businesses, (Sondhi 2019). The rise of globalized manufacturing and distribution systems has created an environment conducive to the production of counterfeit clothes. This, in turn, is raising concerns across various industries worldwide. Counterfeit clothing refers to the unauthorized production and distribution of clothing items that bear trademarks or logos resembling those of well-known brands, (Silvia 2021). A key factor for this analysis is the deliberate choice by consumers to seek out and buy imitation luxury clothing. Luxury goods hold significant value for many consumers as a way of expressing their lifestyle. They represent exclusivity, superior quality, and act as a status symbol for a selected group (Kapferer 2019). This fascination with luxury clothes has unfortunately coincided with a surge in counterfeiting. In 2020, the global counterfeit market for

luxury products reached a staggering USD 1.82 trillion, and this includes counterfeit clothing.

Non-deceptive counterfeiting is distinct because consumers are aware they're buying a fake. They can usually pick up on clues like a low price, the place they bought it from, or the materials used in the product itself. These giveaways tip off the consumer that the item isn't authentic. (Han and Kim, 2020). The emergency of mass production techniques, globalisation and digital technologies in recent decades has facilitated the proliferation of counterfeit clothes, (Chute 2015). The rise of e-commerce platforms and the ease of international shipping have further accelerated the growth of the counterfeit clothes market as shown by the diagram below.

Figure1 Counterfeit purchase patterns



The graph denotes the rate at which counterfeit clothes are purchased in the world and there have been an increase in the consumption of these counterfeit clothes from 2008 up to 2022 as shown on the above diagram. The world customs organisation estimates that counterfeit clothes contribute 5 to 7 percent of the global merchandise trade, (Cordell, 2017). This research also seeks to understand the consumer values that drive

counterfeit clothing purchases. It goes beyond simply analysing the direct benefits to the consumer, but also considers the "social effects" – how society perceives their choices. Interestingly, some consumers view buying counterfeit clothing as a form of environmentally friendly behaviour, a trend that has quietly gained traction in recent years (Allwood 2015). This perspective is supported by statistics showing a significant presence of counterfeit clothing, with recent figures indicating 38.9% and 37% of clothing and leather goods being counterfeit, respectively. (Jakarta 2017). In the area of consumer fashion goods the production of counterfeiting appears to be increasing. To add on there is ever a significant demand for counterfeit clothes evidenced by their growth in the market place and the fact that most consumers knowingly purchase counterfeit clothes (Mundel, Sopramanien and Huddleston, 2021). The acceptance of counterfeit clothes by consumers represents a moral dilemma, meaning the short term interests of individuals with the overall interest of the society.

The luxury business is undergoing a significant shift. Traditionally, access to luxury was limited to purchasing brand-name goods. However, the recent rise in popularity of counterfeit clothing has changed consumer behaviour. However the counterfeit luxury market of clothes is also challenging as consumers are driven by distinctive motivations. While traditionally, luxury was defined by the exceptional quality and craftsmanship associated with genuine brand-name products (Jauffret, 2018), recent studies suggest a shift in perception. According to Lai and Prendergast (2018), some men view conspicuous consumption of luxury goods, even if counterfeit, as a way to enhance a woman's attractiveness. This perspective highlights a changing dynamic in the perception of luxury value.

When it comes for fashion clothes consumers acknowledge the existence of risks associated with their purchase. However this does not deter them from buying such items, as they are able to attain the essence of a luxury brand name without having to incur higher costs (Bhatia, 2018). The decision to buy counterfeit luxury clothes can be influenced by a variety of personality traits, including how much a person values saving money (value consciousness), their honesty (integrity), their desire for pleasure (personal gratification), their openness to new experiences (novelty seeking), and their need for social status (status consumption) (Teal, 2015). Interestingly, some consumers view counterfeit clothing as a form of social justice, a way to bridge the gap between

the wealthy and disadvantaged by making luxury brands more accessible (Khan, 2020; Poddar, 2012). This aligns with the observation that as counterfeit quality improves, some consumers become less willing to pay a premium for genuine brands (Amar et al., 2018). Consumers appear drawn to branded clothes, but because they have less money to spend, counterfeit goods are considered suitable alternatives (Cheung and Prendergast, 2006). Carpenta and Edward (2013) attribute the sudden increase in counterfeit goods to two factors: the globalization of the market, which facilitates the transportation of counterfeit goods, and the accessibility of technology, which provides a range of methods for assembling high-quality counterfeit goods by imitating casings and symbols.

It's worth noting that the appeal of counterfeit goods is often driven by their affordability, rather than simply being a reflection of a consumer's limited financial resources. This suggests that even those who could potentially afford genuine products might be swayed by the lower price point of counterfeits. (Khan 2020). Therefore value conscious customers tend to exhibit a positive association with counterfeit clothes (Pathak, 2017 and Bhatia 2018). Also price has a bearing effect on the purchases of counterfeit clothes especially in developing countries such as Zimbabwe.

1.2 Problem statement

The ever increasing modern trends in fashion markets of clothes and the ever increasing inflation rates in the economy affected prices and the exchange rates in the market. Consumers are now being forced to purchase counterfeit clothes which in turn is affecting their purchasing behaviours as they are failing to afford genuine branded clothes and they are now resorting to counterfeit clothes to fit in the society they live and consume the clothes. Social consensus has a bearing effect on counterfeit clothes as it has posed a burden on the purchase intentions of social groups.

1.3 Purpose of the study

This study aimed to explore Zimbabwean consumer's views of counterfeit clothing for women in terms of conspicuous behaviour, social consensus and price sensitivity.

1.3.1 Research objectives

- To determine the relationship between social consensus and purchase intentions of counterfeit women clothing.
- To establish the relationship between price sensitivity and purchase intentions of counterfeit women clothing.
- To investigate the link between conspicuous behaviour and purchase intentions of counterfeit women clothing.

1.4 Research hypothesis

The research hypothesis is to investigate counterfeit women clothing.

H1: Social consensus has a statistically significant effect on purchase intention of counterfeit women clothing.

H2: Price sensitivity has a statistically significant effect on purchase intentions of counterfeit women clothing.

H3: Conspicuous behaviour has a statistically significant effect on purchasing intentions of counterfeit women clothing.

1.5 Assumptions

Consumers engaging in conspicuous consumption of counterfeit clothing may be more concerned with outward appearances and the perception of status than the quality associated with genuine luxury brands. The majority of society agrees that counterfeit

consumption is socially unacceptable and carries legal and ethical implications. Social circles, including friends, family, and influencers, play a significant role in shaping consumer preferences towards counterfeit clothing. Their opinions, choices, and behaviors can influence a person's decision to purchase or avoid counterfeit clothes. Consumers are influenced by prevailing fashion trends and seek to align themselves with the latest styles and designs. Counterfeit clothing appeals to price-sensitive consumers seeking the appearance of luxury at a lower cost.

1.6 Delimitations

This study focuses on an analysis of consumer conspicuous behaviour, social consensus and price sensitivity of counterfeit women clothing. In this study research will be conducted in Zimbabwe, Harare fashion markets boutiques in the city center buying counterfeit clothes.

1.7 Limitations

- **Wrong sample size** –the researcher may focus on the wrong sample size of population which can strain the research process.
- **Short time frame**- the study time frame might be short while the study requires a longer time frame.

1.8 Definition of key terms

Conspicuous behaviour - This refers to the practice where individuals purchase and display luxury or high-status goods or services and the primary motivation behind this behaviour is to signal wealth, social standing, and refined taste to others (Chris, 2022).

Social consensus - This term encompasses the shared beliefs, values, norms, and decisions that are generally accepted within a society or group and reflects a common ground in thinking and behaviour among its members, (Jakarta,2017).

Price sensitivity- This term refers to the extent to which consumer demand for a product or service fluctuates based on changes in its price, (Chakravarti, 2016).

Counterfeit clothes –Counterfeit clothing refers to garments that bear an identical trade mark to that of another party, thereby violating the rights of the trademark holder, (Frank and Watchravesringkan 2016).

1.9 Layout of the study

Following the introduction of the research, remaining work is organized under the following chapters. Chapter two focuses on the review of relevant literature of the topic under study. Chapter three focuses on the various research methodologies and data collection procedures used. Data presentation, interpretations and discussion are discussed in chapter four. Lastly chapter five focuses on the summary, conclusion on the project, the recommendations and areas of future study.

1.10 Chapter summary

This chapter laid the groundwork for the study by outlining the following: the context and existing knowledge on the topic (background), the specific issue or question being investigated (research problem), the overall goals of the research (purposes), the specific steps to be taken to achieve those goals (objectives), any predictions made about the outcome (hypothesis), and finally, clear definitions for important terms used throughout the research (key terms). The research framework was discussed in this chapter. The purpose of the following chapter is to provide a literature review relating to the topic under study.

CHAPTER II

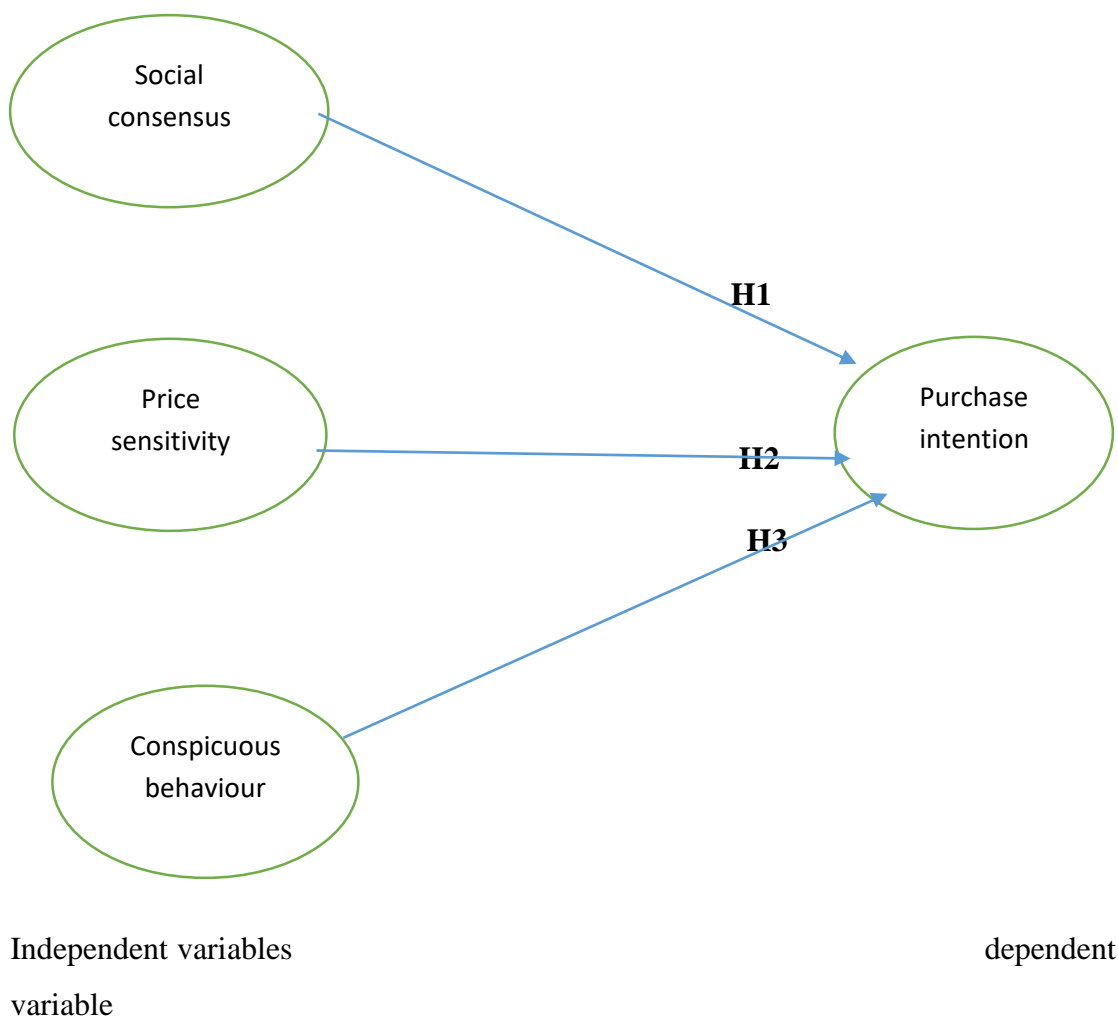
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The previous chapter served as an introduction to the research. This particular chapter is therefore focusing on conceptual framework, theoretical framework, empirical evidence and gap analysis for the justification of the study and the chapter summary.

2.1 Conceptual framework

Figure 2 Conceptual framework



2.2.1 Social consensus

It refers to the general agreement or shared perception held by members of the group on a particular group regarding certain beliefs, values, norms or decisions (Jarkarta 2017). It represents a collective acceptance approval of a particular idea practice or course of action by a significant portion of population. Social consensus are part of agreement over various matters and they unite and divide people of converging and different minds (Atmaja and Puspitawati, 2019).

These agreements between social actors shape and govern the interaction and perception of these actors where termed social consensus (Holbrook 2018). Social consensus fosters cooperation and collective actions among individuals and groups, when people agree on common goals or values they are more likely working together. Consensus contribute to the accumulation of social Capital which is vital for the overall wellbeing and resilience of a society.

2.2.2 Price sensitivity

Consumer response to pricing goes beyond simply the ability to afford something. Price sensitivity, as defined by Goldsmith and Newell (2016), captures the emotional aspect of paying for a product or service. It highlights how some consumers, regardless of income level, are more hesitant to spend their money if they perceive the exchange as unfair. In other words, price sensitivity also reflects the degree to which a change in price impacts a consumer's likelihood to buy or how much they're willing to pay (Wakefield and Inman, 2015).

According to (Gao, Zhang and Mittal 2017), demonstrated that consumers with a local (vs. global) identity are less price sensitive because they have a greater sacrifice mindset. High price sensitive indicates that customers can easily reject buying a product since its costs is unreasonable. Price sensitivity is also a measure that shows the difference price for products or services influence purchasing behaviours (Kur 2023).It

indicates how purchase behaviour of counterfeit and pre-loved women clothes changes with an increase and decrease in a price.

2.2.3 Conspicuous behaviour

According to Chaudhuri (2021) conspicuous behaviour is defined as intentional purchases of goods and services, as well as their symbolic and conspicuous use, with the intention of projecting a particular image of oneself to others. They also state that things that are obvious and could be seen as reflecting a person's social standing are more strongly influenced by social circles. According to Veblen (2019), flamboyant spending refers to the possession and exhibition of pricey goods that reflect opulence, draw attention to one's riches, and boost one's ego. Items that stand out from the ordinary because they can fulfil both material and social demands, and because they are more likely to be used overtly in public than other commonly acquired items.

Research suggests that for certain groups, conspicuous consumption is a way of using symbolic items to flaunt wealth and achieve social recognition, status, a sense of self-importance, and a feeling of being unique. (Kastanakis and Balabanis 2017). The trend of conspicuous consumption appears to be particularly pronounced in affluent societies. This is likely because individuals with higher education, income, and wealth feel a greater need to use their purchases to signal status. (Prodeshen 2016). It also serves as a way for individuals to signal their status and establish their position in a social hierarchy and gain recognition and admiration from their peers. Conspicuous consumption functions as a shortcut for consumers to cultivate an image of wealth and success, thereby boosting their social standing and self-esteem.

2.2.4 Purchase intention

Komalasari, (2021) states that purchase intention refers to a consumer's inclination or desire to buy a specific product or service. Purchasing a good or service is a customer preference. The intensity of a consumer's intention to carry out a particular activity or

decide to buy a good or service is measured by their purchasing intention. (Cuofano 2024). It is believed that consumers will take purchase actions on the premises that they have purchase intentions for a certain product. Grefen and Straub (2018) argued that consumer's purchase intention recommend products to consumers based on their preferences thereby increasing consumers purchase possibilities. The intention to make a purchase is typically associated with the consumer behaviour, perceptions and attitude which are typically linked. The purchasing behaviour plays a crucial role for consumers in terms of accessing and evaluating the particular product. The intention to make a purchase can be altered due to factors such as price, perceived quality and value.

2.3. Theoretical framework

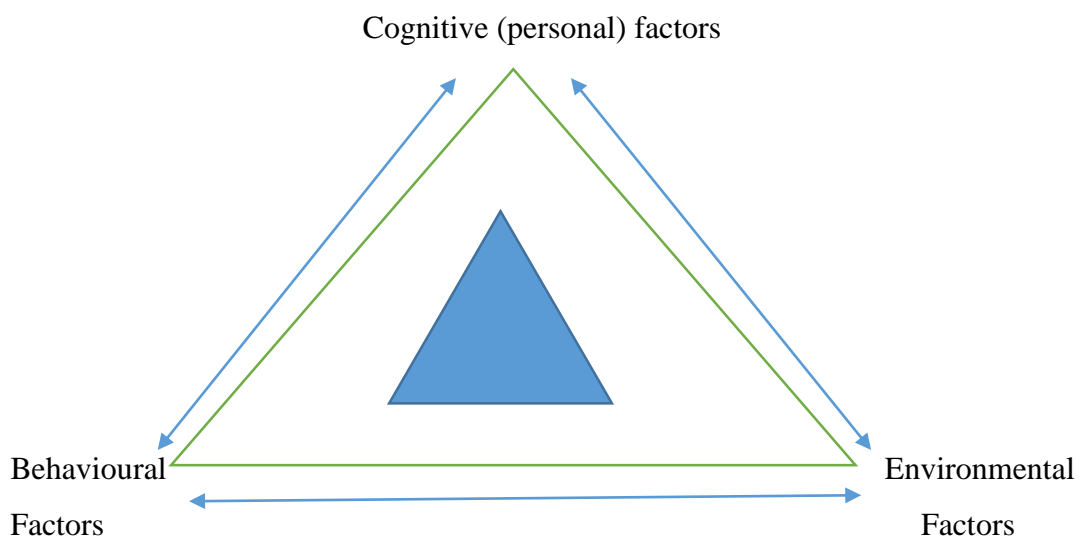
The social learning theory, self -signaling theory and the theory of planned behaviour helps in supporting this study. These were put forward by different authors in a bid to ascertain consumer's views of counterfeit women clothes in terms of conspicuous behaviour, social consensus and price sensitivity.

2.3.1 Social learning theory

Stemming from the work of Bandura (1986), social learning theory posits that learning occurs through social interactions. In other words, we acquire knowledge and behaviours by observing and interacting with others. This theory alludes that for one to learn and behave they learn through observing their immediate reference groups and surroundings as well as copying from a trusted model. Separately, by observing the behaviors of others, people develop similar behaviors. Goldsmith (2006), proposed Socialist ideals and practices within families and neighborhoods can influence individual and family behavior. This influence is often learned through observation of these practices in everyday life. A consumer's decision to buy counterfeit clothing can be significantly swayed by the attitudes, choices, and behaviors of the people around them, including friends, family, and even broader social circles. In other words, seeing others purchasing and wearing counterfeits can influence an individual's own

willingness to do the same. Social learning theory emphasizes the powerful influence of social interactions on human behavior. People are concerned with how others perceive them, and their behavior often reflects a desire to maintain a positive social reputation. The potential disapproval of others can significantly impact our actions (Goldsmith, 2006). This theory further emphasizes the concept of social communication, where information gleaned from social interactions becomes internalized. This internalized information then shapes our future thoughts, feelings, and actions (Goldsmith, 2011), as illustrated in the following diagram.

Figure 3 social learning theory



Source: Bandura, A (1971) Social Learning Theory. General learning, New York. pp.225

2.3.2 Self signalling theory

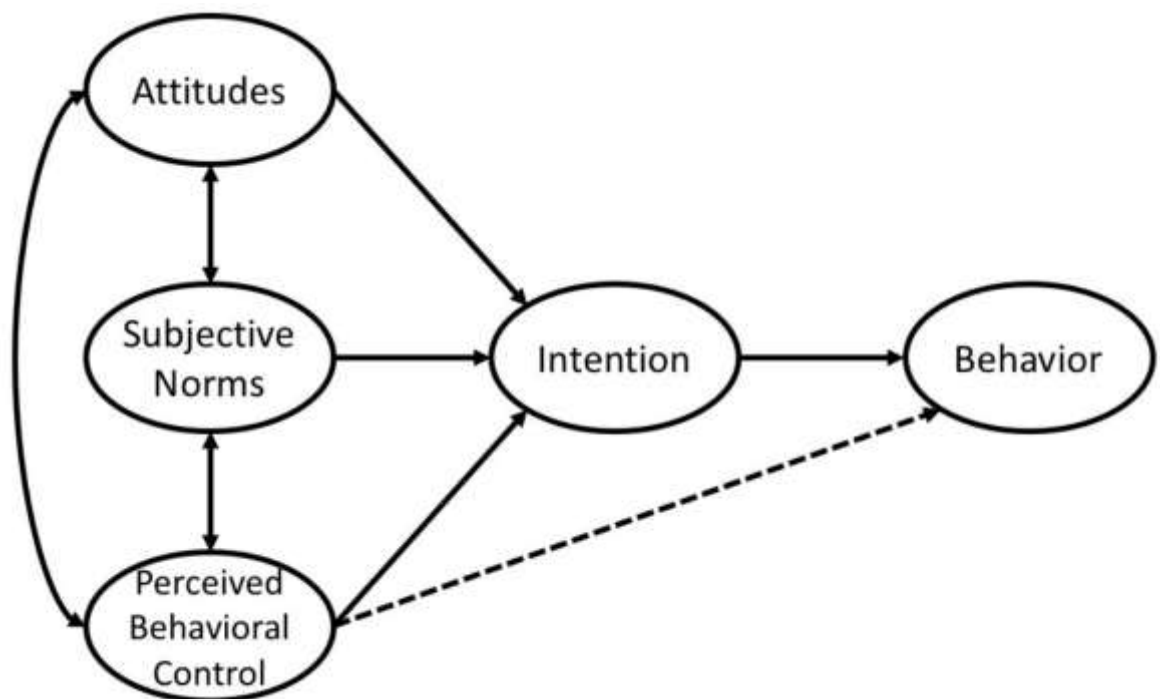
The signaling theory was propounded by (Spencer 1973). Signaling theory argues that communication through signals is pervasive in everyday life. This theory proposes a model examining the connection between information, how signals are sent, and how they are interpreted. One key concept is that the value a consumer places on a product (their "wage") reflects the social image it conveys. In other words, consumers may choose counterfeit clothing that aligns with their income level and social standing. However, signaling theory also suggests that if a signal becomes too common (e.g., everyone buys expensive-looking clothes, regardless of cost), it loses its effectiveness in conveying social status (Spencer, 1973). Self-signaling theory suggest that individuals use their own consumption (choices) clothes to signal their self-identity and desired image to themselves in society, (Spencer 1973). Social consensus plays a crucial role in shaping consumers preferences. Consumers may have purchase intentions for counterfeit clothes items as a means of self-signaling their commitment to sustainability, or individuality, they can signal their values and personal identity to themselves, aligning with the perceived benefits of sustainable fashion consumption, (Spencer 1973). This theory examines how social norms and the drive for social acceptance shape individual behavior. Consumers engage in conspicuous consumption of counterfeit clothes due to the influence of their peers or the desire to conform to societal expectations.

2.3.3 Theory of planned behaviour

According to Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior (1991), a consumer's decision to buy counterfeit clothes hinges on their intentions. These intentions, in turn, are influenced by three key factors: attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Attitudes reflect a person's evaluation of the potential consequences of buying counterfeits. Subjective norms capture the perceived social pressures, whether people around them would approve or disapprove of such a purchase. Finally, perceived behavioural control refers to a consumer's belief in their ability to buy counterfeits

easily (as illustrated in the following diagram). The theory emphasizes that both motivation (intention) and perceived ability (behavioral control) are crucial for actual behavior (Ajzen, 1991). This framework is often used by researchers to understand consumer attitudes and behaviours related to counterfeit clothing purchases.

Figure 4: Theory of Planned Behaviour Model



2.5.1 Relationship between social consensus and purchase intentions of counterfeit women clothing

Masri (2020) conducted a study on the Factors affecting consumer's intentions to purchase counterfeit clothing in China. A sample of 200 respondents was distributed. The results showed that People in our immediate environment greatly influence our behaviour and personal preferences, thus we should constantly seek their approval.

Philip and Lede (2015) investigated on the Cultural norms and values and purchase intentions of counterfeits clothes, in Netherlands. A sample size of 225 individuals were

conducted and where altered to a web- based survey. It alluded that norms and values for individuals in groups also translate to actual behaviour. The results shows that cultural norms and values could be the drivers of counterfeit clothes purchases.

Piyush (2015) studied on the Demystifying deliberate counterfeit purchase behaviour in China. A sample size of 380 female participants and 610 completed questionnaire together with a likert scale was used. The results showed that counterfeit proneness influence subjective norms towards buying counterfeit clothes much more rather than their moral compass.

Ahmed (2017) conducted a study on Purchase intentions towards counterfeit clothes in Bangladeshi. The study examines that consumers in undeveloped countries favour counterfeit clothes which attains a high level social status. A structured questionnaire together with a sample of 100 individuals was chosen on a convenient basis. Results of the study shows that consumers need for uniqueness, social status, family and friends have a positive influence towards the purchase of counterfeit clothes.

Mayasiri, Chris, and Wijanarka (2022), conducted a study on the Personal values and social aspects of consumers on counterfeit purchase intention on counterfeit purchase intention of fashion brands in Indonesia. A survey questionnaire together with a sample size of one hundred and ninety-three 193 were included in the study and data was analyzed using partial least squares. The results showed that novelty seeking and status consumption was the most important factor in the willingness to purchase counterfeit clothes.

H1: Social consensus has a statistically significant effect on purchase intention of counterfeit women clothing.

2.6 Relationship between price sensitivity and purchase intentions of counterfeit women clothing.

Chipambwa (2016) studied on Consumer perception towards counterfeit clothes carried in Zimbabwe. The aim was to investigate consumer's perception on price and purchase of second hand clothes. The interview respondents were taken from Avondale. The study findings suggest that price is the primary factor behind the purchase of

counterfeit clothes as it attracts customers from all walks of life as they can afford cheap price.

Duma (2022) and Oliver (2015) conducted a study on the Nascent Pre-loved luxury fashion markets in India. It explores how Indian consumers perceive counterfeit clothes high prices. A sample of participants aged 18 and above who volunteered provided their response on seven point likert scale. The study revealed a positive and significant correlation between consumers' environmental concerns regarding luxury fashion products and their likelihood to purchase them.

Liozu (2019) investigated on The elements that impact consumer price sensitivity in Germany. This research investigated the connection between consumers' personal development plans and their price sensitivity. The study utilized scanner panel data to examine this relationship for two distinct products. The participants were 141 members who participated and results showed that consumers would purchase more of counterfeit clothes when price is low, they will be more price sensitive.

Krishnamurth and Raji (2015) conducted a study on An empirical analysis to explore the relationship between brand loyalty and consumer price sensitivity in UK. A sample comprising of 163 women with a questionnaire were used. Their findings revealed that brand-loyal customers tend to be less swayed by price fluctuations compared to the average consumer. The results showed that a consumers' level of innovativeness positively affect brand loyalty and have a positive impact on the level of sensitivity towards pricing.

Riego, Lavanga and Codina (2020), conducted a study on the Consumption side of sustainable fashion in Spain. Based on a sample size of 1063 respondents and 23 focus group participants together with a questionnaire was used. Respondents indicated their agreements or disagreements on a five likert scale. The results showed that price is still a purchasing driver, giving preference to fast fashion markets customers.

H2: Price sensitivity has a statistically significant effect on purchase intentions of counterfeit women clothing.

2.7 link between conspicuous behaviour and purchase intentions of counterfeit women clothing.

Chaudri (2019) investigated on Conspicuous consumption in Zimbabwe. The results indicated that approximately 50 percent of all counterfeit luxury products are purchased intentionally to gain certain advantage due to the value these clothes have in society.

Jun (2020) conducted a study on The perception of risk can significantly associated with consumer's intention to purchase counterfeit clothes in China. To ensure the questionnaire's effectiveness and gather feedback, we piloted it with three additional students. The results showed that the link between conspicuous consumption and purchase intentions is not significantly between consumers, as the reason consumer purchase counterfeit clothes, is about its uniqueness.

Brain and company (2017) investigated the Impact of conspicuous luxury consumption on brand attachment in France. Considering the two fields of second hand clothes and counterfeit clothes, the results indicated that nostalgic connection has a moderating influence between status seeking and brand attachment.

Turumen (2019) conducted a study on Selling counterfeit luxury in Italy. He emphasizes that social factors persists within the counterfeit clothes consumption. The results showed that consumers pass on counterfeit clothes especially to people whose status is lower than others.

Doss and Robinson (2015), examined the Attitudes of young females towards luxury fashion brands and their counterfeit in United States. A sample was randomly composed of various age, income and education groups. The results indicated that the attitude and consumption of counterfeit and the acceptance of counterfeit greatly prevail in the markets.

H3: Conspicuous behaviour has a statistically significant effect on purchasing intentions of counterfeit women clothing.

2.8 Gap analysis

Most researchers have come up with studies which focuses on consumer conspicuous consumption, social consensus and price sensitivity but their main focus was on luxury Guinean clothes consumption in developed countries. However the study aims to investigate the consumer's views of counterfeit clothing for women. Past researchers from India, China and UK have found no significant relationship on counterfeit women clothing in terms of conspicuous consumption, social consensus and price. Since past researchers focused on social classes in society, this study aims to compare consumer's views in women clothing separately in Zimbabwe thereby leaving room for exploring all the three variables.

2.9 Chapter summary

This chapter gave more insights into the theories that have been used in scrutinizing the study. The theories used were social learning theory, self- signaling theory and theory of planned behaviour. Overview of the definitions was given. The justification of the study was made and a summary to cap the chapter. The abstracted material was presented in the order that it was relevant to the investigation. The following chapter covers on data analysis and presentation.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

3.0 Introduction

This chapter covers on different types of methods and techniques used in collecting information from respondents. It focuses on the research philosophy, research designs, target population, sampling techniques and sample size determination, research instruments, validity and reliability, pilot study, data collection and ethical issues.

3.1 Research philosophy

Research philosophy refers to the underlying beliefs about how researchers approach a topic. It encompasses the methods used to collect, analyze, and interpret data (Saunders et al., 2009). Lewis and Thornhill (2009) emphasize that it also concerns the source and development of knowledge, reflecting the researcher's perspective on the world. A pragmatic approach, as described by Saunders et al. (2012), acknowledges multiple ways of understanding and researching a phenomenon. It recognizes the limitations of a single viewpoint and allows for the integration of various research methods, including qualitative, quantitative, and action research (Collis & Hussey, 2014)

3.2 Research design

This study employs a causal research design, which acts as a blueprint for the entire research process, guiding data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Saunders et al., 2009). Causal research specifically aims to identify cause-and-effect relationships between variables. In this study, the focus is on understanding how conspicuous behaviour, social consensus, and price sensitivity influence consumers' decisions to purchase counterfeit women's clothing. The research methods used in this study encompass both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Qualitative methods involve collecting and analysing non-numerical data, such as interviews or focus groups, to gain deeper insights into people's experiences, opinions, and motivations (Saunders et al., 2009). Conversely, quantitative methods involve collecting and analysing numerical data, such as surveys or sales figures, to identify patterns, trends, and relationships (Bhandari, 2023). By employing both approaches, this study aims to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing counterfeit clothing purchases.

3.3 Target population

Myers (2018) defines a population as the entire group a researcher aims to understand and draw conclusions about. This can be a broad category, such as all adults in a country. Gupta (2010) introduces the concept of a target population, a specific subgroup within the larger population that shares certain characteristics, such as age, gender, or health conditions. Researchers often focus on target populations because they can be more effectively studied and may yield more relevant findings. The researcher targeted urban consumers in Harare Central Business district (CBD) Boutiques in the city center buying new counterfeits clothes.

3.4 Sampling techniques

According to Argerich and Cruz-Cázares (2017), sampling is a statistical analysis strategy in which a pre-set number of observations are chosen from a large population. It is a method or process for selecting study participants from a subset of the population. Shiu et al. (2009) claim that providing an accurate probability for each sampling unit to be incorporated into the sample being used is a necessary step in the process of drawing a sample using probability. With non-probability sampling, the likelihood that each sample unit will be selected is unknown. The researcher used the snowball sampling method in Harare city centre fashion Boutiques to collect data of counterfeits clothes as consumers with specific traits might be difficult to identify.

3.5 Sample size

According to Albers and Lakens (2018), sample size refers to the number of participants (individuals) or data points chosen from a larger population to statistically represent it. A critical factor in research, sample size directly affects the reliability of the findings and the extent to which they can be generalized to the broader population. The researcher's choice of sample size depends significantly on several factors, including the desired confidence level, population size, type of analysis and preferred error rate. In this study a sample size of 322 was employed (Saunders, & Thornhill 2005). The Krejcie's sample size determination formula was selected as it considers more appropriate for quantitative studies. The formula is provided below

$$S = \frac{x^2 NP(1-P)}{d^2(N-1) + x^2 P(1-P)}$$

X² represents the chi-square value for one degree of freedom, and S is the necessary sample size. At the appropriate degree of confidence, N is the population size (2000 customers), P is the population percentage (0.50), and 3.8416 is the population size multiplied by N. d is the accuracy level represented as a percentage (0.05 in this research). The sample size is estimated as follows using the formula above since the study's target population was in 2000. The calculation for determining the sample size is as follows: Where:

$$s = \frac{1.96^2 \times 2000 \times 0.5(1 - 0.5)}{0.05^2(2000 - 1) + 1.96^2 \times 0.5(1 - 0.5)}$$

Therefore, the sample size was determined as follows **322**.

3.6 Research instrument

The term research instrument refers to any tool that you may use to collect or obtain data, measure data and analyses data that is relevant to the subject of your research. The format of a research instrument may consist of questionnaires, interviews, checklists or simple tests. Questionnaire and interview are effective tools when conducting research. In this study the researcher employed a questionnaire as the chosen method for data collection.

3.6.1 Questionnaire

Bhandari (2023) defines a questionnaire as a standardized research tool used to collect data from a large group of people. It typically consists of a series of questions (open-ended or closed-ended) related to a specific topic, allowing researchers to gather quantitative or qualitative data. The researcher opted for a questionnaire as the data collection method due to its suitability for quantitative analysis. Questionnaire proved advantageous as they allowed the translation of research objectives into clear and easily answerable questions or statements for respondents. The use of questionnaires ensured consistency in the questions, facilitating the measurement of identical objectives across various responses. This uniformity enhanced the robustness of the research findings.

The questionnaire was structured to effectively communicate the research objectives and was divided into five sections, section A being conspicuous behaviour, section B social consensus, section C being price sensitivity, section D purchase intention and section E consisting of demographics. The purpose of the questionnaire was to assist respondents in providing accurate information encouraging clear thinking. It typically required approximately 10-15 minutes to complete due to certain items that required clarification clarity. The measurement scales utilised in the questionnaire are outlined below.

3.6.2 Measurement scales for the construct

3.6.2.1 Social consensus

In order to measure social consensus, the study adopted Yang, He and Lee (2007) scale of items with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.784. A 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree) was used to measure social consensus.

3.6.2.2 Price sensitivity

Goldsmith (2005) price sensitivity scale was adopted consisting of 5 items. The rating of the scale was (5=strongly agree, 1=strongly disagree) measured with the 5 point likert scale with the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.910.

3.6.2.3 Conspicuous behaviour

Chaudhuri and Majumdar (2006), measurement scale which had a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.820 was used. A likert scale consisting of six points was employed to measure conspicuous behavior ranging from 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=somewhat disagree, 4= neutral, 5= somewhat agree, 6=agree, 7=strongly agree.

3.6.3.3 Purchase intention

To measure purchase intention, the study adapted Diallo's (2012) measurement items that had a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.872 and three items from (Giridah 2015). The rating of the scale was based on a 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

3.7 Validity and reliability

Nikolopoula (2023) defines convergent validity as the extent to which a measure correlates with other measures that assess the same concept. In simpler terms, it indicates how well our new measure aligns with existing measures of the same construct. An action, attitude, or concept that is not readily visible is called a construct. By employing factor loadings to examine whether two tests should be highly connected to one another, convergent validity compares test scores to the outcomes of at least one or more tests measuring the same or a related construct. When a test is intended to assess a specific construct, discriminant validity reveals if it correlates with tests measuring other constructs. To test discriminant validity the researcher compared results of different measures and assessing whether or how they correlate. The correlation must not exceed 0.5. Reliability tells how constantly a method measures something, Middleton (2023).

To ensure the instruments used in this study produced consistent and accurate results (reliability), Cronbach's alpha was employed. Additionally, the researcher meticulously monitored the data collection process to guarantee the instrument's validity, meaning it truly measured what it was intended to measure. This careful approach aimed to guarantee that all information collected through questionnaire and document analysis was directly relevant to addressing the research hypothesis for the investment topic. To achieve this, the researcher utilized plain English in the question, conducted pre-testing of the questionnaire and maintained confidentiality. As a result the reliability of the study was enhanced.

3.8 Pilot study

The research design was piloted with a convenience sample of 10 individuals, consisting of family members and friends. Their responses were assessed to ensure that they had understood the requirements of the questionnaire. It worked well and only a

few of individuals needed translation in vernacular. They responded in maximum of 15 minutes.

3.9 Data collection

Bhandari (2023) defines data collection as the systematic process of gathering and analysing information relevant to specific research questions. This methodical approach allows researchers to gather data on predetermined variables, test their hypotheses, and ultimately derive meaningful results. The researcher distributed the questionnaire directly to respondents in Harare central business district boutiques for counterfeit clothes buyers to collect data.

3.10 Data analysis and presentation

Shamoo (2003) defines data as the systematic utilisation of statistical or logical techniques to depict exemplify and assess the information. The collected data is then analysed using SPSS and the findings are presented in the form of tables and descriptive statistics and figures.

3.11 Ethical issues

According to Hunger (2006), ethics, in research, refers to a set of moral guidelines and principles that ensure research protocols comply with legal requirements, professional standards, and social expectation. The research in question evaluated the protection of participants and their provided information during the study. In order to safeguard participants and ensure that no individual would be victimised by the research findings all participants were prohibited from including their names on the questionnaires. The data collected was exclusively for the purpose of the study with the respondents' full consent and the assurance of anonymity. Additionally the researcher had the discretion to include or exclude specific items in the questionnaire.

3.12 Chapter summary

This chapter summarised on research methodology which illustrated the research design, target population, sample size and sampling techniques. The section provided a foundation for the methodology adopted in the investigation as well as the sources of information used and the techniques the scientist employed for information gathering. The part also described how the research was carried out in the test plan. In addition to the introduction of the material, research tools were also highlighted. Reliable and accurate information was acquired from the participants of the exploration by using an adequate examination procedure. To gather important information from which recommendations may be made, this information was investigated. Chapter 4 contains the demonstration and discussion of these results.

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

The following chapter delves into the analysis of the data collected, presents the key findings of the research, and explores their significance through discussion. The collected data from the questionnaire was analysed and presented revealing the response rate of the questionnaire. This section explores demographic characteristics of the population under study, including factors such as age, gender, marital status, employment level and educational background. Findings of the study were connected to the study's objectives specifically: relationship between social consensus and purchase intentions of counterfeit women clothing, relationship between price sensitivity and purchase intentions of counterfeit and women clothing and link between conspicuous behaviour and purchase intentions of counterfeit women clothing. The research involved 322 participants, and the data analysis was performed using SPSS software version 27 and SPSS AMOS version 26

4.1 Questionnaire response rate

The study distributed a total of 322 questionnaires to individual customers in Harare CBD boutiques. The number of fully answered questionnaire returned amount to 320, while 2 questionnaires were not returned. This resulted in a favourable response rate of 99%. The table presented below illustrates the responds rate of the respondents.

Table 4.1 Presents questionnaire response rate.

	Frequency	Rate
Questionnaires distributed	322	100%
Questionnaires returned	320	99%

Simulation from SPSS output

According to Brickman 2014) for a quantitative study to be deemed satisfactory, it is necessary to achieve a response rate of at least 70%. The response rate is 99%. This approach strengthens the research by enhancing both its reliability (consistency of findings) and validity (accuracy of inferences). Thus response rate was high because the individual customers were willing to complete the questionnaires. According to the researchers, the high response rate is large enough to validate the study and give relevant results for the circumstance under examination.

4.2 Demographic profile representation

Table 4.2 demographic profile.

Demographic information	Number	Percentage (%) of the sample
Age		
18-25yrs	55	17.2
26-35yrs	90	28.1
36-45yrs	111	34.7
46-60yrs	64	20
Total	320	100

Gender		
Female	320	100
Male	-	
Total	320	100
Marital status		
Single	42	13.1
Married	125	39.1
Widowed	111	34.7
Divorced	42	13.1
Total	320	100
Employment level		
US100 & below	39	12.2
US200-300	99	30.9
US301-450	122	38.1
US450& above	60	18.8
Total	320	100
Educational level		
Secondary education	122	38.1
Tertiary education diploma	68	21.3
Degree	83	25.9
Post grade	47	14.7
Total	320	100

Source: SPSSv27 Output

The table 4.2 shows the age group that holds the highest population share in Harare is the 36-45 accounting for the majority of the total population 34.7%. It is followed the age 26-35 which has the second largest representation 28.1%, and then the age group 46-60 which has 20%. Finally the age group comprises the smallest proportion of the

population 17.2% of 18-25 age group. The respondents were females 100% since the study focused only on women clothing.

The table shows that majority were married (39.1%) and widowed were (34.7%), followed by divorced which were 13.1% and singles 13.1%. This has also made the levels of income to be dominated by \$301-450 group which constitutes 38.1% of the total population followed by \$200-300 constituting 30.9%, followed by \$450 and above group constituting 18.8% with the least group being the \$100 and below group being 12.2% of the population.

On educational level, the majority of respondents had obtained secondary education (38.1%), followed by degree (25.9%), followed by diploma (21.3%) and lastly post grade (14.7%) This indicates that all respondents were educated they managed to have basic education

4. 3 Uni-dimensionality test

The uni-dimensionality of constructs were assessed using indices. These indices were based on the answering patterns, reliability, validity and some principal components. Factor analysis was carried out across all items of each constructs to determine the reliability, KMO, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was used in determining all items to be considered in the measurement models which was used for hypothesis testing. The test was carried out for the four constructs and items which had significant loadings were considered for the model. The items selected for each construct were analyzed as shown below.

4.3.1 Social consensus

The uni-dimensionality test was done on the 5 item scale to measure social consensus adopted by Yang, He and Lee (2007) and four items loaded significantly. The results are presented on the table on table 2 below.

Table 4. 3 factor analysis results for Social consensus.

People around me have encouraged me to buy counterfeit clothes.	.880
I have purchased counterfeit clothes due to social pressure.	.860
My choice of counterfeit clothes is influenced by my peers through word-of-mouth.	.854
My friends influence my intention to purchase counterfeit clothes.	.831
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.851
Reliability	.961

Source : SPSS output

4.3.2 Price sensitivity

Price sensitivity scale comprised of five items and after the Uni-dimensionality test was done, three items loaded on one factor and they were significant. This was evidenced by their P- values and the items were considered for input in the measurement model. The scale items are shown in table below.

Table 4 .4 Factor analysis results for Price sensitivity

SCALE ITEMS	FACTOR LOADINGS
Price isn't a major barrier for me when it comes to counterfeit clothing.	.721
Cost isn't a primary concern for me when considering counterfeit clothing	.688
I know that counterfeit clothes are probably more expensive, but it doesn't matter to me	.670
The Kaiser –Mayer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy	.685
Reliability	.731

Source : SPSS output

4.3.3 Conspicuous behaviour

The scale had nine items and after the Uni-dimensionality test, the three items found significant and they were included in the assessment model as they were significant. The factor loadings are shown on the presented table.

Table 4.5 Factor analysis results for conspicuous behaviour

SCALE ITEMS	FACTOR LOADINGS
By choosing counterfeit clothes displaying an exotic appearance and style, I demonstrate to my friends that I am unique.	.909
I always purchase high-end fake clothing.	.858
Some want their eyes could be as beautiful as mine of counterfeit clothes	.848
The Kaiser –Mayer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy	.750
Reliability	.907

Source: SPSS output

4.3.4 Purchase intention

The construct comprised of four items and after the Uni-dimensionality test was done, three of the items loaded on one factor and they were very significant. This was evidenced by their P-values and the items were considered for input in the assessment

model. The specific questions used to measure this concept are presented in the table below.

Table 4.6 Factor analysis results for purchase intention

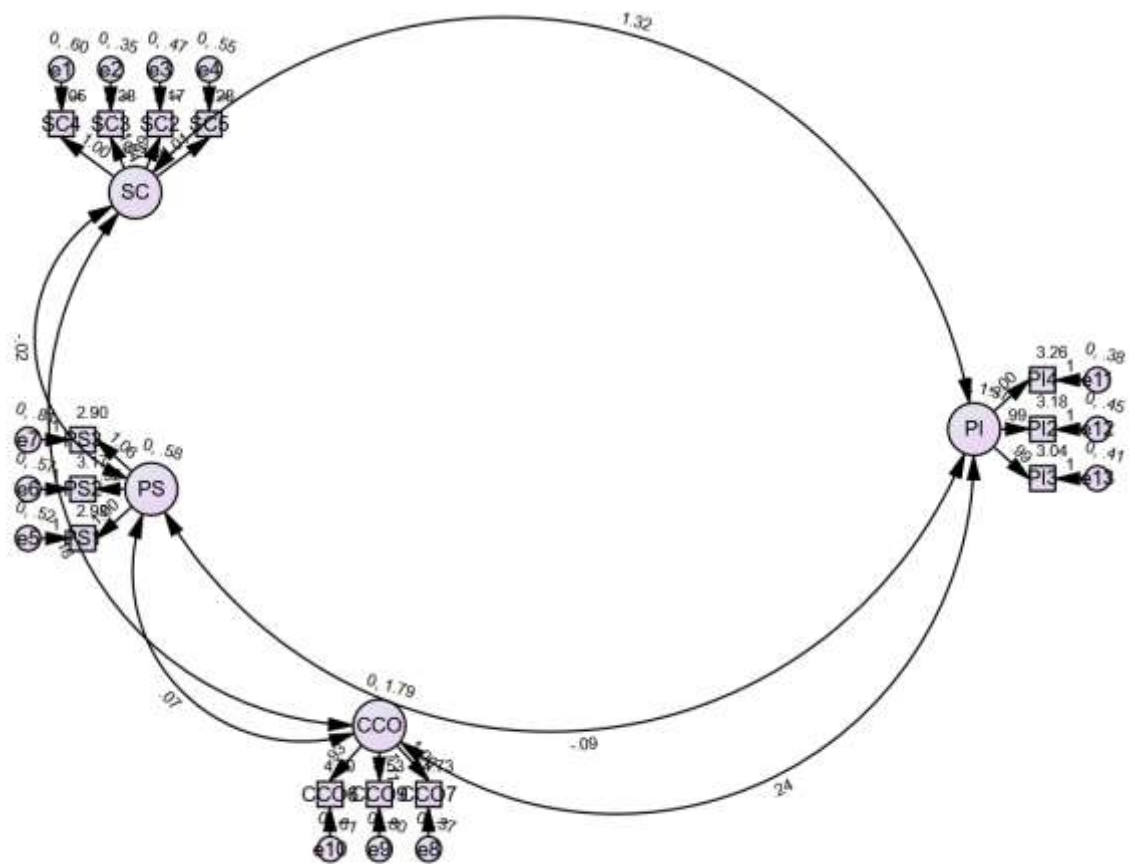
SCALE ITEMS	FACTOR LOADINGS
I intent to recommend others to buy counterfeit clothes.t	.884
I'm very likely to buy counterfeit clothes	.877
I intent to buy counterfeit clothes although there is new original clothes in the market.	.863
The Kaiser –Mayer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy	.756
reliability	.907

Source: SPSS output

4.4 Measurement model

The measurement model assessment served to ensure that the conceptual model accurately and consistently captured the intended outcomes. The study's measuring model is displayed below.

Figure 5 Measurement model for the study



Source : Amos output

The measurement model assessment above shows that all the items loaded significantly to their respective factors thereby indicating the presence of convergence validity. To evaluate how well the measures in our model capture their intended constructs (convergence validity), and to ensure they are distinct from each other (discriminant validity), we will analyse the average variance extracted (AVE). Thus average variance extracted values for all research constructs were above 0.5 which means that there is

convergent validity. Discriminant validity was achieved in this study and this is shown below the absence of correlation between factors. Reliability of the loadings was measured by the composite reliability, the results indicated that they was reliable and this is shown by a composite reliability which is above 0.7. The table below shows the AVE coefficients, composite reliability and shared variances results.

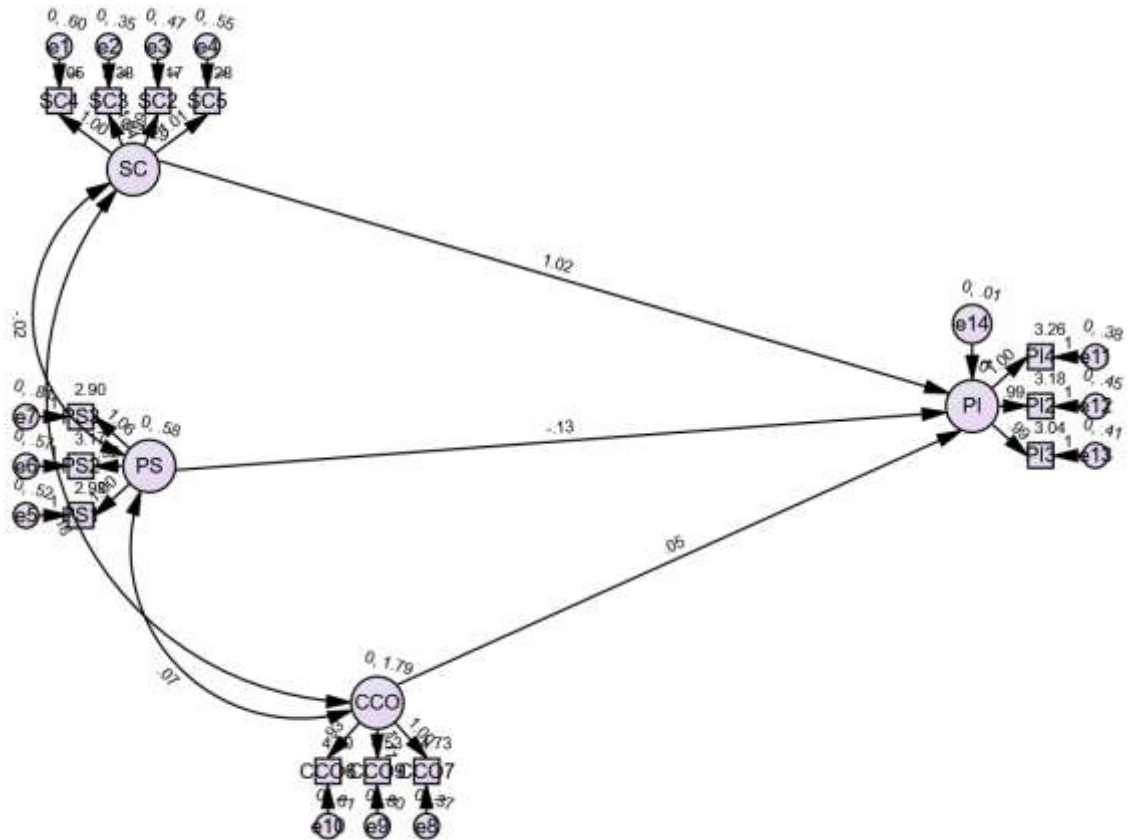
Table 4.7 Composite Reliability, Average Variance Expected and Shared Variance

Construct	Composite Reliability	AVE	Shared values			
			SC	CB	PS	PI
Social Consensus	0.9036	0.7011	1			
Conspicuous behaviour	0.9046	0.7599	0.0256	1		
Price sensitivity	0.7347	0.4804	0.0004	0.0049	1	
Purchase Intention	0.9068	0.7645	1.7424	0.0576	0.0081	1

4.5 Hypothesis testing

AMOS software was used to conduct the Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) to test the hypothesis of the study. The results showed that all the three of the hypothesis were accepted (See table4.8). The structural model for the study is shown in figure 4.3 below.

Figure 6 Structural model for the study



Source: Amos output

Table4. 8 Hypothesis testing results

	Hypothesis	β (Standard regression coefficient)	T (Critical ratio)	P (p-value)	Decision
H1	Social consensus has a statistically significant effect on purchase intention of counterfeit women clothing.	1.2	19 6651	***	Accepted
H2	Price sensitivity has a statistically significant effect on purchase intentions of counterfeit women clothing.	-.13	-2819	.005	Accepted
H3	Conspicuous behaviour has a statistically significant effect on purchasing intentions of counterfeit women clothing.	.05	2131	.033	Accepted

The first hypothesis for this research was proved that Social consensus has a statistically significant effect on purchase intention of counterfeit women clothing. This hypothesis was supported. The regression coefficient was 1.2 significant at the 0.05 level (see table 8) with the P-value less than 0.001. As a result consumers with a positive attitudes towards counterfeit clothes are likely to purchase these clothes to show up their status in areas they live.

The second hypothesis of this present study stated that price has a statistically significant effect on purchase intentions of counterfeit women clothing. This hypothesis was supported and the regression coefficient was $-.13$ which was significant at 0.05 significant level and the P-value was 0.005 which is below 0.05 (table 8). Negative coefficient means that price has an inverse relationship with consumer purchase intentions. The results indicate that consumers are more price sensitive when purchasing counterfeit clothes and they respond to changes in prices.

The third hypothesis of this study stated that conspicuous behaviour has a statistically significant effect on purchasing intentions of counterfeit women clothing, the empirical testing supported this hypothesis. The regression coefficient was $.05$ which was significant at 0.05 level and the P- value was 0.033 which is below 0.05. The findings indicate that conspicuous behaviour found to be positively associated with the way women purchase or consume counterfeit clothes. This means that women purchase counterfeit clothes as a symbol to display wealth.

4.6 Discussion of findings

This research aims to explore consumer conspicuous behaviour, social consensus and price sensitivity of counterfeit women clothing. The discussion of the research findings aim to explore whether the results are consistent with prior research or if they are any

disparities as well as to identify significant conclusions drawn from comparing the current results with previous findings.

H1: Social consensus has a statistically significant effect on purchase intention of counterfeit women clothing

In this hypothesis it was stated that social consensus will notably influence the purchase intentions of counterfeit women clothing. Social consensus of counterfeit women clothing significantly influences consumers' purchase intentions with standard coefficient regression β of 1.2, critical ratio = 196651 and a p-value $0.<0.001$ (see table 8). This hypothesis was supported. These results indicate that social consensus was a more reliable indicator of purchase intentions than individual beliefs. Consumers could feel pressured to follow the tastes of people they look up to or to follow fashion trends.

This is consistent with contentions of earlier studies (Masri, 2020; Philip and Lede, 2015; Piyush, 2015; Ahmed, 2017 and Mayasiri, Chris, Wiadi and Wijanarka 2022), that there is a positive association between social consensus and purchase intention of counterfeit women clothes. Therefore social consensus plays a significant role in influencing the purchase of consumer boutiques should address the advantageous part women dressing counter clothes.

H2: Price sensitivity has a statistically significant effect on purchase intentions of counterfeit women clothing.

In this hypothesis it was denoted that price sensitivity will notably influence the purchase intention of counterfeit women clothing. Consumers' sensitivity to price significantly impacts their likelihood to purchase of counterfeit women clothing with the standard regression coefficient β of -13, critical ratio = -2189 and a p-value = 0.005 (see table 8). This hypothesis was supported. These results shows that price has an inverse relationship with the purchase intention of counterfeit women clothing. It also means that Consumers who were more price-sensitive were more likely to consider purchasing counterfeit clothes, due to the lower price compared to genuine clothes.

This is consistent with the continents of earlier studies (Chipabwa, 2016; Duma and Oliver 2022; Krishnamurth and Raji (2015; Liozu, 2019 and Riego, Lavanga and Codina 2020). Therefore only consumers who were more price-sensitive tended to hold

more positive attitudes toward purchasing counterfeit products, which could influence their purchase intentions. Marketing efforts for women counterfeit clothes should be tailored on consumers' level of innovativeness as it positively affect brand and positively influence level of price sensitivity.

H3: Conspicuous behaviour has a statistically significant effect on purchasing intentions of counterfeit women clothing.

In this hypothesis, it is postulated that conspicuous behaviour notably influence the purchase intention of counterfeit women clothing. Conspicuous behaviour has a statistically significant effect with a standard regression coefficient $\beta = .05$; critical ratio=2131 and the p-value 0.033. This hypothesis was supported. Hence, consumers who engaged in conspicuous behaviour were more likely to express a higher intention to purchase counterfeit clothes to signal their wealth and social standing. Thus desire to display wealth motivates consumers to opt for counterfeit clothes.

This is consistent with the earlier studies of (Chaudri, 2019; Jun, 2020; Brian and Company 2017; Turumen, 2019 and Doss and Robinson, 2015), they conclude that conspicuous behaviour has a statistically significant effect on the purchase intention of counterfeit women clothing. Therefore consumers who engaged in conspicuous behaviour are more likely to view counterfeit clothes to show case and enhancing their self-image. Hence marketing efforts should align with new fashion trends, and conformity to societal standards to motivates consumers to purchase counterfeit clothes.

4.7 Chapter summary

This chapter presents the results of the study. The data was analysed, discussed its meaning, and explore its significance. This chapter depicts the demographic profile, demonstrating the total count of females and indicating an equitable representation within the population. The study acknowledged the statistical assumptions of standard regression and conducted hypothesis tests to explore how the independent variables influence (or predict) the dependent variables. It was observed that the variables had a significant association, and the debate that followed was predicated on the findings.

The results summary, recommendations, and other study areas are covered in the upcoming chapter.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

The chapter focuses on the research results, summary, conclusions, recommendation and additional research for aspiring researchers.

5.1 Summary

This study set out to analyse consumer conspicuous behaviour, social consensus and price sensitivity of counterfeit women clothing. The research was carried out to determine the relationship between social consensus and purchase intentions of counterfeit women clothing, to establish the relationship between price sensitivity and purchase intentions of counterfeit women clothing and to investigate the link between conspicuous behaviour and purchase intentions of counterfeit women clothing. In the literature review, theories which were used are social learning theory, the self-signalling theory and Ajzen's theory of planned behaviour (TPB). The research was casual in nature, encompassing a sample size of 322 participants. The research employed a questionnaire as the research instrument and the data was analysed using SPSS version

27 and SPSS Amos for analysis of consumer conspicuous behaviour, social consensus and price sensitivity of counterfeit women clothing. Data was presented and explained using tables. The study's findings stated that social consensus will notably influence the purchase intentions of counterfeit women clothing, indicating that social norms, peer pressure, and the opinions of their social circles have an impact on consumer behaviour. The study also found that both price sensitivity and conspicuous consumption significantly influence consumers' intentions to buy counterfeit women's clothing. In other words, consumers who are more sensitive to price and those who are driven by a desire to display wealth through their purchases are more likely to consider counterfeit options.

5.2 Conclusions

5.2.1 To determine the relationship between social consensus and purchase intentions of counterfeit women clothing.

Findings of the study showed that social consensus has a significant effect on social consensus and purchase intentions of counterfeit women clothing. Social consensus and societal norms, peer opinions, and the choices of influential individuals heavily influences consumer decision-making regarding counterfeit women's clothing.

5.2.2 To establish the relationship between price sensitivity and purchase intentions of counterfeit women clothing.

The study results showed that price sensitivity have a significant influence on purchase intention of counterfeit women clothing. Price shapes counterfeit demand hence price sensitivity plays a significant role in the demand for counterfeit as consumers are attracted to lower prices offered by counterfeit products compared to genuine branded clothes.

5.2.3 To investigate the link between conspicuous behaviour and purchase intentions of counterfeit women clothing.

The study findings showed that conspicuous behaviour notably influence the purchase intention of counterfeit women clothing in Harare. The more individuals want to reflect their social status thus the more they are likely to purchase counterfeit clothes.

5.3 Recommendations

5.3.1 Social consensus has a statistically significant effect on purchase intention of counterfeit women clothing.

It is recommended that boutique owners should demonstrate their commitment to social responsibility by supporting causes related to women's empowerment, fair trade, or sustainability and communicate these initiatives through your store's marketing and engage customers in supporting these causes, reinforcing the positive influence of social consensus. Also women are recommended to engage in conversations and social media to identify boutiques that better clothing that can help shape social consensus and create awareness about the importance of supporting counterfeit clothes. Boutique owners should support their efforts to educate consumers and create positive change within the fashion industry.

5.3.2 Price sensitivity has a statistically significant effect on purchase intentions of counterfeit women clothing.

The researcher recommends that boutique owners should conduct market research to understand the price range at which counterfeit clothing is being sold and run periodic sales, discounts, or loyalty programs to make women's clothing more accessible and affordable for price-sensitive customers. Boutique owners should communicate these promotions through various channels, such as social media or in-store advertising and

also develop strategies to offer affordable women's clothing options that cater to price-sensitive customers thereby collaborate with manufacturers to optimize production costs, allowing for competitive pricing. For women they should look for affordable women's clothing brands that offer good quality products at reasonable prices.

5.3.3 H3: Conspicuous behaviour has a statistically significant effect on purchasing intentions of counterfeit women clothing

It is recommend that boutique owners should design store layout and ambiance to create a luxurious and exclusive atmosphere by using high-quality displays, elegant lighting, and comfortable fitting rooms to enhance the overall shopping experience. Also for consumers (women) instead of seeking validation through conspicuous consumption, seek social validation through knowledge and understanding of fashion. Educate yourself about fashion history, trends, and designers to enhance your fashion expertise and confidence.

5.4 Suggestion for further research

The study concentrated on analysing consumer conspicuous behaviour, social consensus, and price sensitivity of counterfeit women's apparel; nevertheless, it should be highlighted that in order to determine men's purchase intention, future research on men's clothing should also be taken into account.

Due to the time constraints, the study used a sample size of 320. Future research could benefit from employing a larger participant pool to enhance the applicability of the findings to a broader population.

Furthermore, since the study was limited to boutiques in the Harare central business district, it is necessary to make changes in order to conduct additional research in markets outside of Harare.

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APPENDIX A: CODED QUESTIONNAIRE

BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION

FACULTY OF COMMERCE

DEPARTMENT OF MARKETING



RESEARCH SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear participant

I am Yeukai Mawoko, a student at Bindura University of Science Education conducting a research on An analysis of consumer conspicuous behaviour, social consensus and price sensitivity of counterfeit women clothing. This research is in partial fulfilment of my bachelor's degree in Marketing. I would greatly appreciate your participation in this study. It comprises of five sections in which responses will be indicated by means of a tick or X. All the answers you will provide are neither right nor wrong. The information

that you are going to provide will be **strictly** used for **academic purposes only**. Every answer that you will provide will be kept with confidentiality.

For further clarity do not hesitate to ask.

Contact details

Phone number 0777 571 532 email mawokoyeu@gmail.com

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY

I confirm that the person asking m consent to take part in this research has told me to about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that m participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without any penalty. (if applicable)

I am aware that the findings of this study will be anonymously processed into a research report, journal publication and or conference proceedings.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participation signature.....Date.....

SECTION A

CONSPICUOUS BEHAVIOUR

Conspicuous behaviour is the act of purchasing and displaying luxury or high-status goods and services with the intention of signalling one's wealth, social status, or taste to others. **Please kindly tick ☐ or put an X in the appropriate box to show your response**

The scale is as follows 1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3=somewhat disagree, 4=neutral, 5= somewhat agree 6= agree, 7 strongly agree.

Variable	Conspicuous consumption	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Some disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
CC01	It says something to people around me when I buy high priced counterfeit clothes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
CC02	I buy some counterfeit clothes because I want to show others that I am wealthy.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
CC03	I would be a member in a counterfeit clothing posh club.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
CC04	Given a chance, I would hang counterfeit clothes in my room.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
CC05	I would buy an interesting and uncommon version of a counterfeit clothes otherwise available with a plain design, to show	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	others that I have an original clothes.							
CC06	I often try to find a more interesting counterfeit clothes, because I want to show others that I enjoy being original.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
CC07	By choosing counterfeit clothes having an exotic look and design, I show my friends that I am different.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
CC08	I choose counterfeit clothes to create my own style that everybody admires.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
CC09	I always buy top-of-the-line counterfeit clothes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

SECTION B

SOCIAL CONSENSUS

It's a general agreement or shared understanding among members of a society or a particular group regarding certain beliefs, values, norms, or decisions. **Please kindly tick ☐ or put an X in the appropriate box to show your response.**

The scale is as follows 1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3=undecided/do not know 4=agree 5=strongly agree.

Variable	Social consensus	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
SC1	I would buy counterfeit clothes if it will help me to fit in my social group better.	1	2	3	4	5
SC2	My choice of counterfeit clothes is influenced by my peers through word-of-mouth.	1	2	3		5
SC3	I have purchased counterfeit clothes due to social pressure.	1	2	3	4	5
SC4	People around me have encouraged me to buy counterfeit clothes.	1	2	3	4	5
SC5	My friends influence my intention to purchase counterfeit clothes.	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION C

PRICE SENSITIVITY

Price sensitivity is also the relative change in consumer purchase likelihood or willingness to pay after a price change. **Please kindly tick ☐ or put an X in the appropriate box to show your response**

The scale is as follows 1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3=undecided/do not know 4=agree 5=strongly agree

Variable	Price sensitivity	Strongly disagree	Disagree	undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
PS1	Price isn't a major barrier for me when it comes to counterfeit clothing.	1	2	3	4	5

PS2	Cost isn't a primary concern for me when considering counterfeit clothing.	1	2	3	4	5
PS3	I know that counterfeit clothes are probably more expensive, but it doesn't matter to me.	1	2	3	4	5
PS4	It's worth paying a lot of money for second hand clothes.	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION D

PURCHASE INTENTION

It is believed that consumers will take purchase actions on the premises that they have purchase intentions for a certain product. **Please kindly tick ☐ or put an X in the appropriate box to show your response. The scale is as follows 1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3=neutral 4=agree 5=strongly agree**

Variable	PURCHASE INTENTION	Strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	Strongly agree
PI 1	I intent to purchase counterfeit clothes in the future.	1	2	3	4	5
PI 2	I'm very likely to buy counterfeit clothes.	1	2	3	4	5
PI3	I intent to buy counterfeit clothes although there is new original clothes in the market.	1	2	3	4	5

PI4	I intent to recommend others to buy counterfeit clothes.	1	2	3	4	5
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SECTION E

DEMOGRAPHIC

This section is aimed at knowing your age, income as well as educational level. Please tick (X) in the appropriate box to show your response. DO NOT INCLUDE YOUR NAME.

Question 1. Please indicate your age group

AG1	18-25	
AG2	26-35	
AG3	36-45	
AG4	46-60	

Question 2. Please indicate your gender

GR1	FEMALE	
GR2	MALE	

Question 3. Please indicate your marital status

MS1	SINGLE	
MS2	MARRIED	
MS3	WIDOWED	
MS4	DIVORCED	

Question 4. Please indicate your employment level.

EL1	US 100&BELOW	
EL2	US200-300	
EL3	US301-450	
EL4	US451& above	

Question 5. Please indicate your level of Educational Background.

EB1	SECONDARY EDUCATION	
EB2	TERTIARY EDUCATION/CERTIFICATE/DIPLOMA	
EB3	DEGREE	
EB4	MASTERS	
EB5	PHD	

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.

