


## The effect of social influence mediated by attitude toward decision to purchase counterfeit luxury products

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
<b>Keywords:</b> Purchase Decision, Social Influence, Attitude, Counterfeit Luxury Products	<p>The phenomenon of purchasing counterfeit luxury products is increasingly widespread among the public. Research related to purchasing decisions about counterfeit luxury products is very important and has an impact on a country's economy. Counterfeit luxury products are products that are sold to resemble genuine luxury goods but are sold at a much lower price. This can divert potential customers from the original shop, thereby causing a decrease in sales and income. The aim of this research was to determine the effect of social influence on the decision to purchase counterfeit luxury products which is mediated by attitude. This research is quantitative research. The population of this research is people who have purchased counterfeit luxury products. The sampling technique is convenience sampling. The number of respondents who participated in this research was 200 respondents. Data processing was carried out using Structural Equation Model analysis via the PLS application. The research results show that social influence and attitude partially influence the decision to purchase counterfeit luxury products. The results also found that social influence was able to provide a decision to purchase counterfeit luxury products which was mediated by attitude.</p>
This is an open access article under the <a href="#">CC BY-NC</a> license 	<b>Corresponding Author:</b> Olivia Agatha International Business Management, Ciputra University, Surabaya, 60211, Indonesia <a href="mailto:oagatha@student.ciputra.ac.id">oagatha@student.ciputra.ac.id</a>

### INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of purchasing counterfeit luxury products is becoming increasingly common in society. The data in Figure 1 shows luxury products that are generally sold counterfeitedly. According to U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the most frequently purchased luxury products include clothing and accessories, bags and wallets, footwear, followed by watch accessories and jewelry.

In Amankwah-Amoah's (2022) research, counterfeit goods not only pose significant economic challenges for genuine luxury products, causing loss of income and damage to reputation, but also have far-reaching impacts on consumers and society as a whole. Individuals who purchase counterfeit luxury goods are often unaware of the ethical and safety issues associated with such products such as differences in product quality and support for illegal activities (Antonopoulos et al., 2020). Understanding the underlying

factors that drive consumers to make these choices is critical for businesses and policymakers to develop effective strategies to combat the counterfeit market.



**Figure 1.** Counterfeit luxury products (U.S Customs and Border Protection)

Research related to factors that can influence the decision to purchase counterfeit goods is very important and has an impact on a country's economy. Counterfeit products often resemble genuine luxury goods but are sold at much lower prices. This can divert potential customers from the original store, thereby causing a decrease in sales and revenue. Counterfeiting causes loss of revenue through unpaid taxes and duties. The government is losing legal taxes that should be collected from the sale of genuine luxury products. Counterfeit luxury products negatively impact genuine luxury goods stores through lost revenue, reputational damage, and operational costs. At the same time, the government also faces challenges related to loss of tax revenue, IPR violations, and ensuring consumer safety (Davidson et al., 2019)

Khan et al., (2022) stated that pressure to adhere to certain lifestyle standards and display a luxury image can cause people to look for fake products that imitate the appearance of genuine luxury products. According to Dhaliwal et al., (2020) social pressure plays an important role in shaping consumer behavior, because individuals often give in to the desire to conform to their peers and social circle.

Jhamb et al., (2020) quote that social pressure, originating from peers, family, social media, and societal norms, can shape a person's attitude towards certain products. This attitude plays an important role in determining consumer behavior, especially in the context of purchasing decisions. When individuals experience social pressure, this often influences their attitudes toward that product or brand. Positive social pressure, such as recommendations from friends or influencers, can create positive attitudes towards a product, thereby increasing the perceived value and desirability of the product in the eyes of consumers. Conversely, negative social pressure or criticism may lead to unfavorable attitudes, thereby impacting perceptions of product quality or relevance. Attitudes shaped by social pressure have a significant impact on customer purchasing decisions. Consumers tend to align their purchasing behavior with attitudes they believe in. According to Ajitha and Sivakumar (2019) positive attitudes resulting from social support can increase purchasing decisions, because individuals are more likely to buy products that are positively perceived or recommended by existing social circles.

Other research conducted by Tunçel (2022) shows that customer attitudes play an important role in the spread of fake luxury goods. Attitudes towards counterfeit goods vary

among consumers, with some viewing counterfeit goods as a more affordable alternative to genuine luxury products, while others justify purchasing products based on the belief that luxury brands are too expensive. Iyer et al., (2022) found that these attitudes are often shaped by perceived values, personal ethics, and willingness to take risks related to purchasing counterfeit products. Based on the explanation above, research is needed to see whether social factors influence consumer purchasing decisions in purchasing luxury products

## **Literature Review**

### **Theory of Planned Behavior**

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) provides a valuable framework for understanding the factors that influence consumers' decisions to purchase counterfeit luxury products, particularly in the context of social pressures, lifestyles, and customer attitudes. According to TPB, which was first put forward by Ajzen (1991), individual behavior is determined by three main factors: attitude towards behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. In the case of purchasing counterfeit luxury goods, attitudes are formed by customers' perceptions of product quality, social desirability, and affordability compared to genuine luxury products (Ajzen & Schmidt, 2020). Subjective norms reflect the influence of social pressure, including the opinions and expectations of friends, family and society. While social circles consider counterfeit luxury products to be socially acceptable or even desirable, individuals may succumb to this pressure and engage in such behavior (Ajzen & Schmidt, 2020)

### **Purchase Decision**

A quote from Ashraf, (2021) says that purchasing decisions refer to the process in which consumers evaluate various options and choose a particular product or service to obtain. This process involves a series of considerations and behaviors that individuals go through before making a final choice, namely purchasing a product. The purchasing decision phase begins with the recognition of a need or desire, encouraging consumers to actively seek information about available products or services (Kim & Yoon, 2021).

In the context of counterfeit luxury products, purchasing decisions involve the choice made by a consumer to purchase or acquire a counterfeit or counterfeit luxury product, rather than the genuine version offered by or original manufacturer. Cheah et al., (2020) said that one of the factors that pressures consumers to purchase counterfeit luxury products compared to genuine products is consumer attitudes towards luxury products.

### **Social Influence**

Setiawan et al., (2023) explained that social pressure refers to the influence exerted by individuals, groups, or society as a whole on an individual's thoughts, feelings, attitudes, or behavior (Setiawan et al., 2023). This includes the expectations, opinions, judgments and demands of others, which can influence how a person views themselves and how they act in various situations. Social pressure can be explicit, such as direct requests or orders from others, or implicit, manifested through social norms, cultural values, or subtle cues. According to Stathopoulou & Balabanis (2019) social pressure can arise from various sources, including family, friends, social media, and wider societal expectations. Individuals

often conform to social pressures to gain acceptance, approval, or validation from their social circle or community.

In their research, Singh et al., (2021) stated that social influence significantly impacts attitudes by shaping individual perceptions, beliefs and evaluations of various products, brands or concepts. This is related to social interactions, cultural norms, peer pressure, and media exposure. Through these influences, individuals often align attitudes with their social group or reference point, seeking acceptance, approval, or conformity. Social influence can change attitudes by reinforcing existing beliefs or introducing new perspectives, ultimately shaping how individuals view and evaluate products or ideas (Cheah et al., 2019). Attitudes toward certain goods can be significantly influenced by the prevailing social context and the opinions of others in one's social circle.

Other research by Al-Abdallah et al., (2021) also confirms previous findings where social influence has a large impact on purchasing decisions by significantly shaping consumer behavior. The decisions individuals make regarding purchasing products or services are often influenced by the opinions, recommendations and behavior of other people. This is done by considering opinions from friends and family, and support from influencers, or adapting to societal norms and trends (Tobon and García-Madariaga, 2021). Consumers have a tendency to adopt certain preferences, change purchasing patterns or even choose certain brands or products due to the influence of social factors

### **Customer's Attitude**

Setiawan et al., (2023) explained that customer attitude refers to an individual's overall evaluation, feelings and beliefs about a particular product, service, brand or company. These attitudes include customers' preferences, perceptions and emotional responses, which are shaped by their experiences, beliefs, values and expectations. According to Kassim et al., (2021) attitudes can be positive, negative or neutral emotions and are influenced by various factors. A positive attitude shows a good perception of the product or brand, making customers more likely to make a purchase. Conversely, negative attitudes can prevent customers from buying a product or using a service.

Jhamb et al., (2020) explained that attitudes towards purchasing decisions represent subjective evaluations or individual feelings regarding certain products. These attitudes are formed through beliefs, emotions and experiences towards certain products. A positive attitude usually leads to a higher propensity to purchase, because the individual views the product favorably. Therefore, attitudes towards purchasing decisions act as an important determinant in shaping consumer behavior, influencing whether someone decides to buy a particular item (Paschina, 2023).

In their research, Shaari et al., (2022) found that social influence was able to influence purchasing decisions through attitude as a mediator. Social factors, including recommendations, can significantly influence an individual's attitude toward a particular product. When individuals are exposed to social influences, they may adopt the opinions, preferences, or behavior of those around them. This can impact their attitude towards the product. Khan and Zaman, (2021) confirmed in their research that these changes in attitudes, which are shaped by social influences, then guide the individual's final purchasing

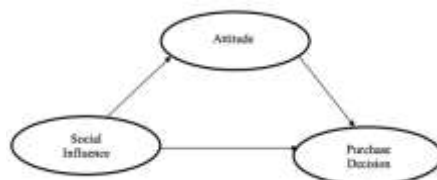
decision-making process. Therefore, social influence is able to strengthen attitudes, which ultimately direct consumers towards certain purchasing choices

## METHOD

This research is quantitative research. According to Ahmad et al., (2019) quantitative research is a systematic empirical investigation that uses statistical techniques to collect and analyze numerical data. This research method aims to measure relationships, patterns, and trends within a particular population or phenomenon, providing objective insight into aspects of the research topic. The type of data used in this research is primary data where data is obtained directly from the research object. Data collection was carried out by distributing questionnaires to respondents.

This research was conducted in Surabaya in October-December 2023. The population in this research were people who had previously purchased Counterfeit luxury products. The sampling technique for this research was carried out using the convenience sampling method. Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling technique in which researchers select individuals who are available and easily accessible to participate in a study or survey. This method was chosen based on ease or accessibility to obtain respondents. The sample used in this research was 200 respondents, where this sample size met the minimum number based on the rule of thumb for sampling using the Hair et al., (2011) technique. The sampling technique of Hair et al., (2011) was carried out by multiplying the number of indicators in the study x 10. The indicators in this study were 19 therefore the minimum number of samples required was  $19 \times 10 = 190$  samples.

Data analysis in this research was carried out using a structured equation model analysis method using the partial least squares method. Partial Least Squares (PLS) is a statistical method used to model relationships between variables. Structural equation modeling (SEM) to analyze complex relationships between several variables. PLS can be used to study the mediating effect of a variable between the independent variable and the dependent variable. This helps to understand the indirect influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable through the mediator. The data will first be analyzed using an outer model to test validity and reliability. After the data has gone through outer loading analysis, the next analysis that will be carried out is inner model analysis which includes predictive relevance analysis, model fit, r-squared, and hypothesis testing (direct and indirect).



**Figure 2. Research Model**

Source: Data Processed (2023)

H1: Influence has a significant effect on Customer's Attitude

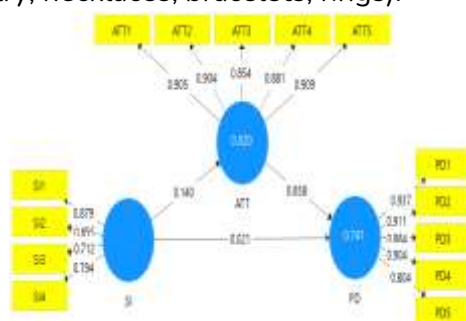
H2: Customer's Attitude has a significant effect on Purchase Decision

H3: Social Influence has a significant effect on Purchase Decision

H4: Social Influence has a significant effect on Purchase Decisions through Customer's Attitude

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the analysis regarding the respondent profile, it can be concluded that the majority of respondents in this study were male respondents, the majority aged 25-40 years (Gen Y). The majority of respondents are entrepreneurs and have a Bachelor's degree. The majority of respondents' annual income is below IDR 36,000,000 to IDR 60,000,000 / year. The costs incurred to buy a Luxury Counterfeit Product are IDR 500,000 – IDR 1,500,000 and the Luxury Counterfeit Products that are most in demand to buy are accessories (watches, jewelry, necklaces, bracelets, rings).



**Figure 3.** PLS Analysis Model  
Source: Data Processed (2023)

**Table 1.** Outer Loading

	ATT	PD	SI
ATT1	0.905		
ATT2	0.904		
ATT3	0.854		
ATT4	0.881		
ATT5	0.909		
PD1		0.937	
PD2		0.911	
PD3		0.884	
PD4		0.904	
PD5		0.804	
SI1			0.879
SI2			0.855
SI3			0.712
SI4			0.794

Source: Data Processed (2023)



All items in the questionnaire in this study could be extracted perfectly and had a loading factor value of  $> 0.7$ . This shows that the items used in this research have a good ability to explain the construct.

**Table 2.** Construct Validity and Reliability

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	AVE
ATT	0.935	0.935	0.951	0.794
PD	0.933	0.937	0.950	0.791
SI	0.827	0.848	0.885	0.660

Source: Data Processed (2023)

All variables are valid because they have an AVE value above 0.5. All variables are reliable because the composite reliability value is greater than 0.7 or it could also be that Cronbach's alpha is greater than 0.6.

**Table 3.** Fornell-Lacker Criterion

	ATT	PD	SI
ATT	0.891		
PD	0.861	0.889	
SI	0.140	0.142	0.812

Source: Data Processed (2023)

All variables are valid because the AVE root value of each variable is greater than the correlation value of that variable with other variables.

**Table 4.** Model Fit Analysis

	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.048	0.048
d_ULS	0.241	0.241
d_G	0.168	0.168
Chi-Square	197.244	197.244
NFI	0.917	0.917

Source: Data Processed (2023)

The results of the estimated SRMR model have a value of 0.048 where the results show a value of less than 0.15. The conclusion is that this research model is good at measuring how accurately the model predicts existing research results.

**Table 5.** R-Squared Analysis

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
ATT	0,020	0,015
PD	0,741	0,738

Source: Data Processed (2023)

In this case it can be seen that the R-Squared result on purchasing decisions is 0.741. This shows that social influence and attitude are able to have an influence of 74.1% on purchasing decisions. Meanwhile, the other 25.9% was influenced by other factors not examined in this study.

**Table 6.** Predictive Relevance Analysis

	SSO	SSE	Q <sup>2</sup> (=1-SSE/SSO)
ATT	1000.000	985.781	0.014
PD	1000.000	419.828	0.580
SI	800.000	800.000	

Source: Data Processed (2023)

The Q<sup>2</sup> predictive relevance value for the endogenous latent variable Attitude is 0.014 and the endogenous Purchase Decision variable is 0.580, the Q<sup>2</sup> predictive relevance value for both endogenous latent variables is > 0, so it can be concluded that the model already has predictive relevance.

**Table 7.** Direct Hypothesis Analysis

	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values
ATT -> PD	0.018	48.568	0.000
SI -> ATT	0.041	3.396	0.001
SI -> PD	0.009	2.359	0.019

Source: Data Processed (2023)

**Table 8.** Indirect Hypothesis Analysis

	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values
SI -> ATT -> PD	0.036	3.386	0.001

Source: Data Processed (2023)

- Attitude has a significant and positive effect on purchasing decisions because the t statistics value is 48,568 which is greater than 1.96 and also the p value is 0.000 which is smaller than 0.05. The results show that the first hypothesis in this research is accepted.
- Social Influence has a significant and positive effect on Attitude because the t statistics value is 3,396 which is greater than 1.96 and also the p value is 0.001 which is smaller than 0.05. The results show that the second hypothesis in this study is accepted.
- Social Influence has a significant and positive effect on Purchasing Decisions because the t statistics value is 2,359 which is greater than 1.96 and also the p value is 0.019 which is smaller than 0.05. The results show that the third hypothesis in this research is accepted.
- Social Influence has a significant positive effect on Purchasing Decisions through Attitude because the t statistics value is 3.386 which is greater than 1.96 and also the



p value is 0.001 which is smaller than 0.05. The results show that the fourth hypothesis in this research is accepted.

Social Influence has a significant and positive effect on Attitude. Therefore, the first hypothesis in this research is accepted. The results of this research are supported by Jhamb et al., (2020) who found in their research that a person's attitude towards a particular product can be influenced by the environment around them. Consumer impressions are based on their information, emotions and experiences with the product. This is in line with previous findings by Singh et al., (2021) where previous research found that social influence had a significant impact on individuals. The results of accepting this hypothesis also strengthen the findings of previous research by Cheah et al., (2019) where the findings found that social influence can change attitudes by strengthening existing beliefs or introducing new perspectives, which ultimately shapes individual attitudes towards a product.

Attitude has a significant and positive effect on purchasing decisions. Therefore, the second hypothesis in this study is accepted. This finding is similar to the findings by Kassim et al., (2021) where attitude is able to emphasize emotions and feelings so that it can lead to purchasing decisions. Consumer attitudes towards a product reflect their personal assessment of the item. Jhamb et al., (2020) found that the better a person's perception of a product, the more likely they are to buy it. According to Paschina (2023), consumer attitudes towards a purchase have a significant influence in shaping consumer behavior, including consumer tendencies to make purchases.

Social Influence has a significant and positive influence on Purchasing Decisions. Therefore, the third hypothesis in this research is accepted. Social influence has the impact of influencing purchasing decisions (Al-Abdallah et al., 2021). The decisions individuals make regarding the acquisition of products or services are often influenced by the opinions, suggestions and behavior of others. Tobon and Garca-Madariaga (2021) explain that purchasing decisions are reached by considering the views of those closest to them so that individuals can adapt to prevailing social norms and fashions.

Social Influence has a significant positive effect on Purchasing Decisions through Attitude. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis in this study is accepted. This finding strengthens previous research by Shaari et al., (2022) where research found that attitude acts as a mediator between social influence and purchasing decisions. An individual's opinion of a product can be greatly influenced by social influences, such as recommendations. This can influence how they feel about the product. Ultimately, a person's purchasing decisions are influenced by the development of opinions of the people around them (Khan and Zaman, 2021). As a result, customers are more likely to make certain purchases after social influence

## CONCLUSION

The research results show that the four hypotheses in this research are accepted. Acceptance of the first hypothesis shows that Social Influence has a significant and positive effect on Attitude. The findings in the second hypothesis are that attitude has a significant

and positive effect on purchasing decisions. The findings in the third hypothesis are accepted where Social Influence has a significant and positive effect on Purchasing Decisions. Finally, the fourth research hypothesis is accepted, where Social Influence has a significant positive effect on Purchasing Decisions through the mediation of Attitude. In the content of counterfeit luxury products, the results of this research can be used as a reference for the government to make policies by understanding consumer behavior patterns in purchasing counterfeit luxury products. The government can understand the psychological and social factors behind purchasing counterfeit luxury products. The government can emphasize that the use of counterfeit luxury products is wrong and prohibited, thereby changing people's attitudes towards counterfeit luxury products. Apart from that, the research results are also useful for business people, where the research results can be used as a reference for creating marketing strategies for businesses to be able to encourage people to avoid buying counterfeit luxury products and choose to buy genuine luxury products. This, for example, carries out a campaign to use genuine goods among the wider community, so that when many people adopt this behavior, individuals who buy counterfeit luxury products will change and no longer buy counterfeit luxury products. It is hoped that this research will also be able to become an educational tool for the public to increase awareness to avoid purchasing counterfeit luxury products. The limitation of this research is that it only distributed questionnaires to the community in the city of Surabaya so that the research results were not able to cover purchasing decision making in Indonesia as a whole by considering consumer behavior in other cities. Further research is recommended to explore other factors that have the potential to influence product purchasing decisions, such as cultural, geographic background and people's purchasing behavior patterns through internet usage considering the widespread sale of counterfeit luxury products online.

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