Why Consumers Buy Counterfeit Products ? A Case Study of the Indian Clothing Industry

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Abstract

The Indian textile and apparel industry is one of the pioneers in the world with an enormous raw material and manufacturing base. Globalization has brought radical changes for India in terms of increased FDI, trade, and commerce. However, it has also opened up the gates for the counterfeiters to use India's low-cost manufacturing base for the production and distribution of counterfeit apparels. The presence of counterfeiting in textiles and apparel industry has become a serious concern for genuine brand manufacturers, policy makers, and for the government. Counterfeiting has become a problem of immense magnitude. The present study explored the counterfeit markets of Chandigarh in order to study the counterfeit consumption behaviour among consumers and also tried to identify the key demographic determinants influencing consumers' buying intentions. The results confirmed that income and age of the consumers played a significant role in consumers' buying intentions for purchasing counterfeit products, while marital status was found to be insignificant. Finally, the study provided anti-counterfeiting measures and strategies to combat counterfeiting in the Indian apparel industry.

Keywords : **counterfeiting, globalization, foreign direct investment**

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In the present era of market driven economy, trademarks have become an important source of non-price competition and product differentiation. Trademarks have become a valuable asset and a marketing tool needed for the expansion of business operations in various countries to attain the goal of profit maximization. However, trademarks are getting a huge threat from counterfeiters and trademark infringers (Sridhar & Murthy, 2017), who are replicating the trademark products with their counterfeit ones and thus creating huge loss in terms of profits and erosion of prestige and exclusivity (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2015). Counterfeiting and piracy have been used correspondingly by some researchers ; whereas, some have drawn a clear distinction between all these illegitimate practices in the trade such as counterfeiting, piracy, imitation brands, knock-offs, and grey market surplus goods (Lai & Zaichkowsky, 1999).

The Agreement on Trade - related Aspects on Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) defines counterfeiting as :

> Counterfeit trademark goods shall mean any goods, including packaging, bearing without authorization a trademark which is identical to the trademark validly

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> registered in respect of such goods, or which cannot be distinguished in its essential aspects from such a trademark and, which thereby infringes the rights of the owner of the trademark in question under the law of the country of importation. (Staake & Fleisch, 2008, p.17)
>
> Counterfeiting is the practice of manufacturing, importing/exporting, distributing, selling or otherwise dealing in goods, often of inferior quality, under a trademark that is identical to or substantially indistinguishable from a registered trademark, without the approval or oversight of the registered trademark owner. (CAHSMUN XIII, 2017, p. 2)

The main aim of this study is to identify the key demographic determinants among marital status, income, and age which play a significant role in deciding consumers' buying intentions of purchasing counterfeit products.

The Indian Apparel Industry - An Overview

The Indian textile and apparel industry is one of the pioneers in the world with an enormous raw material and manufacturing base (Kalbag, 2017). The Indian textile industry is the second largest manufacturer of readymade garments and is the sixth largest exporter of clothing in the world ("India world's second largest textiles exporter : UN Comtrade," 2014). Furthermore, it is estimated that the industry will grow up to 100 billion USD in 2018 and to 141 billion USD by 2021 from the current level of 67 billion USD (Ministry of Textiles, 2016). The Indian textile industry is a significant contributor to the economy; both in terms of its domestic share and exports as it accounts for a phenomenal 14% of the total industrial production having 4.78% share in the country's total exports in 2013-14 (India Brand Equity Foundation, 2017).

Also, the industry is booming with a combined annual growth rate (CAGR) of 11.2%. Furthermore, it was estimated that the industry will grow up to 100 billion USD in 2017 and to 141 billion USD by 2021 from 67 billion USD (IBEF, 2017). The Indian textile industry contributes nearly about 4% to India's GDP, 14% to industrial manufacturing, and 27% to India's foreign exchange reserves. Reports have revealed that the value of FDI in the apparel industry was 6,170 crores (INR) during FY 2000-2014 (Wazir Advisors, 2016). Moreover, the Indian textile and apparel sector is the second largest employment provider in the country after the agricultural sector, employing nearly 51 million people directly and 68 million people indirectly (2015-16) ("Indian textiles and handicrafts is the largest employment after Agri : Ajay Tamta," 2017).

The Problem

The presence of counterfeiting in trade is a matter of concern for every nation. Globalization has brought radical changes for India in terms of increased foreign direct investment (FDI), trade, and commerce (Vasudeva, 2005). However, it has also opened up the gates for the counterfeiters to use India's low-cost manufacturing base for the production and distribution of counterfeit products (Verma, Kumar, & Philip, 2014a). According to anti-counterfeiting lawyers in India, the market for counterfeit luxury goods in the country is increasing by 40% each year (Rathore, 2013). The report on economic cost of intellectual property infringement revealed that the apparel industry loses around EUR 26 billion of revenue and 5,00,000 jobs worldwide due to the presence of counterfeiting (European Union, 2015). It has become a global phenomenon of immense magnitude and has been referred to as "The crime of the 21st century" (Anti-Counterfeiting Group, 2003 ; Verma, Kumar, & Philip, 2014b). Presently, India is facing huge losses in terms of tax evasion because of counterfeiting. Also, the apparel industry loses up to $12 billion USD due to the existence of counterfeiting in the Indian apparel industry (Havocscope, 2016). Also, the

presence of counterfeit apparels in the market pose serious health risks to the consumers because of their inferior quality make up of hazardous dyes and chemicals (Lambert, 2014). Globalization has brought radical changes for India in terms of increased FDI, trade, and commerce. However, it has also opened up the gates for the counterfeiters to use India's low-cost manufacturing base for the production and distribution of counterfeit products (Singh & Kane, 2011). Furthermore, Indian metropolitan cities have become a favourite location for the counterfeiters for manufacturing of counterfeit articles and are responsible for maximum violations of trademark infringements.

Materials and Methods

The main aim of the study is to identify the key demographic determinants responsible for influencing consumers' buying intentions of purchasing of counterfeit apparels. The present study is based on descriptive research design. The population includes all those consumers who were coming to buy counterfeit apparels at specific counterfeit markets of Chandigarh. For the selection of sample area and respondents, judgmental sampling was used. A sample size of 120 respondents agreed to participate in the study (answering the questionnaire). The present study was conducted between January - April 2016. Face to face interviews were conducted by using personal observation method. Respondents over 15 years of age were chosen because they were considered mature enough to make their own purchase decisions. The present study is focused on the counterfeiting of ready made garments only. The reason being that in non-deceptive counterfeiting, these are the products that are mostly counterfeited in India (Karmakar & Tewari, 2014).

(1) Data Collection : The study is based on both primary and secondary data. The required primary data were collected through a self-administered questionnaire. Personal interviews were conducted among 120 respondents in the three purposely selected counterfeit markets of Chandigarh region. The required secondary data were collected from the database of government organizations like OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development), WIPO (World Intellectual Property Organization), EUIPO (European Union Intellectual Property Office), FICCI (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry), and FICCI-CASCADE (Committee against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Activities Destroying Economy) along with the articles/papers published in various journals/blogs and other websites.

(2) Sample Area : The study covers the selected counterfeit markets of Chandigarh. These places are selected because these are the notorious locations of the sale of counterfeit readymade apparels in Chandigarh. These counterfeit markets were selected because these are the prime locations for the sale of counterfeit readymade garments in the Chandigarh region (Verma, Kumar, & Philip, 2015).

Table 1. Coding of Demographic Variables Done in SPSS 18.0

Age Group	1 = 15 to 25
	2 = 26 - 39
	3 = 40 - 50
	4 = 50 & above
Marital Status	1 = Unmarried,
	2 = Married
Disposable Income (Monthly)	
in INR	1 = Below 10,000
	2 = 10,000 - 20,000
	3 = 21,000 - 49,000

(i) Sadar Bazaar, Sector-19C, Chandigarh,
(ii) Shastri Market, Sector-22, Chandigarh,
(iii) Sector 17, Circus Ground, Chandigarh.

(3) Instrument and Reliability Analysis : A two part self-administered questionnaire was formulated for the present study comprising of standard scale items. Part-I of the questionnaire consisted of the demographic profiles of the consumers such as income, age, and marital status. Part-II of the questionnaire consisted of five statements related to consumers' buying intentions of purchasing counterfeit apparels on the basis of a 5 point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *disagree*, 3 = *neutral*, 4 = *agree*, and 5 = *strongly agree*). The scale related to consumers' buying intentions of purchasing counterfeit products was adopted from the study conducted by Zeithmal, Berry, and Parasuraman (1996). To check the reliability of the different constructs, inter consistency reliability test (ICR) was used. The reliability coefficient Cronbach's alpha values of the constructs were calculated. Cronbach's alpha value of more than 0.70 or above is acceptable (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

(4) Data Analysis : The collected data were analyzed using various mathematical and statistical tools. The hypotheses formulated were tested using independent *t* - test and one way ANOVA. IBM SPSS version 18.0 was used for the data analysis. The Table 1 illustrates the coding of demographic variables done in SPSS 18.0.

Analysis and Results

An independent sample *t* - test and one way ANOVA was conducted between the demographic determinants and consumers' buying intentions to evaluate how well the demographic determinants predict consumers' buying intentions of purchasing counterfeit products. Demographic determinant : marital status was analyzed by using independent sample *t*-test, whereas determinants like age and income were analyzed by using one-way ANOVA. The analysis has been categorized into three broad heads mentioned below :

(1) Marital Status and Consumers' Buying Intentions

↳ **H1:** There is no significant difference between marital status and consumers' buying intentions for purchasing counterfeit apparels.

The independent sample *t* - test was conducted to identify the relationship between consumers' marital status and their respective buying intentions. The Table 2 depicts the frequency distribution scores for consumers' marital

Table 2. Frequency Distribution for Marital Status

	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Unmarried	59	49.2	49.2	49.2
Married	61	50.8	50.8	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 3. Mean Statistics for Marital Status and Consumers' Buying Intentions

	Marital Status	*N*	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Buying Intentions	Unmarried	59	2.5975	.60710	.07904
	Married	61	2.5301	.59881	.07667

Table 4. Independent Samples *t* -Test for Marital Status and Consumers' Buying Intentions

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		*t* - test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	*t*	*df* (2-tailed)	Sig. Difference	Mean Difference	Std. Error
Buying Intentions	Equal variances assumed	.112	.738	.612	118	.542	.06740	.11009
	Equal variances not assumed			.612	117	.542	.06740	.11011

Note : *The mean difference is significant at p <.05 level.

status. The Table 3 indicates the mean scores for the two categories of marital status of the respondents. Furthermore, the Table 3 illustrates that the mean score of unmarried respondents (M = 2.59, SD =.60) is significantly higher than the mean score of married respondents (M = 2.53, SD =.59). In addition, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and satisfied by using Levene's test for equality of variance.

The Table 4 depicts the results of Levene's test which clearly states that Levene's F- statistics indicate equal variances among categories of marital status for the present analysis [F = .112, p = .738]. Hence, the statistics of "equal variances assumed" is considered for analysis. Furthermore, the results of the independent sample t-test are not found to be statistically significant [t = .612, p =.542, (p >.05)]. Thus, it can be stated that there is no difference in the buying intentions of married and unmarried respondents in purchasing counterfeit apparels, and hence, H1 is accepted.

(2) Income Level (Disposable) and Consumers' Buying Intentions

↳ **H2:** There is no significant difference between income and consumers' buying intentions for purchasing counterfeit apparels.

The analysis was conducted using one-way ANOVA to identify the relationship between consumers' income level and their buying intentions for purchasing counterfeit apparels. The frequency distribution scores for consumers' income level are depicted in Table 5. Also, Table 6 indicates the mean scores for the three categories of marital status of the respondents. It shows that the maximum respondents were from the per month income bracket of ₹ 10,000 - ₹ 20,000 with the mean score of 2.7042.

Table 5. Frequency Distribution for Income (Disposable)

	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Below 10,000	45	37.5	37.5	37.5
10,000-20,000	60	50.0	50.0	87.5
21,000-49,000	15	12.5	12.5	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 6. Mean Statistics for Income and Consumers' Buying Intentions

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Below 10,000	45	2.3370	.56991	.08496
10,000-20,000	60	2.7042	.54601	.07049
21,000-49,000	15	2.6778	.72980	.18843
Total	120	2.5632	.60131	.05489

Table 7. One - Way ANOVA for Income and Consumers' Buying Intentions

	Sum of Squares	*df*	Mean Square	*F*	Sig.
Between Groups	3.691	2	1.845	5.489	.005*
Within Groups	39.337	117	.336		
Total	43.028	119			

Note : *The mean difference is significant at p <.05 level.

Table 8. The Post Hoc Test for Difference in Means of Income Categories (Tukey HSD) Multiple Comparisons

	(I) Income	*(J)* Income	Mean Difference *(I - J)*	Std. Error	Sig.
Tukey HSD	Below 10,000	10,000-20,000	-.36713*	.11435	.005*
		21,000-49,000	-.34074	.17287	.124
	10,000-20,000	Below 10,000	.36713*	.11435	.005*
		21,000-49,000	.02639	.16738	.986
	21,000-49,000	Below 10,000	.34074	.17287	.124
		10,000-20,000	-.02639	.16738	.986

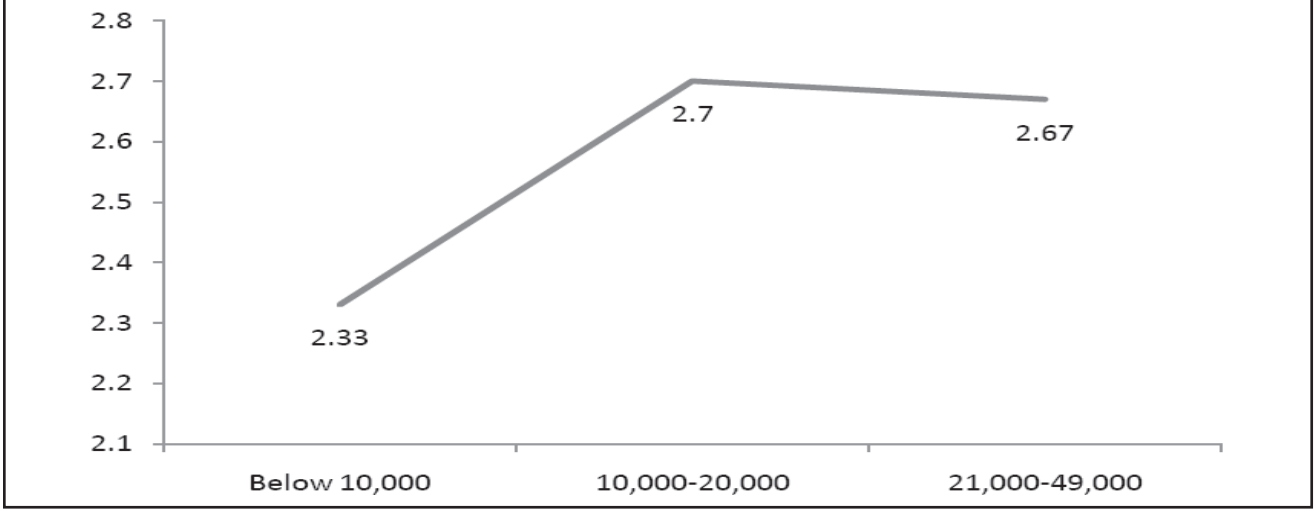
Note : *The mean difference is significant at p <.05 level.

The Table 7 lays out the results of one-way ANOVA and indicates that a significant relationship is found between consumers' buying intentions for purchasing counterfeit apparels and their respective income levels at p <.05 level for the three conditions [F (2,117) = 5.489, p = .005] and hence, H2 is rejected. The post hoc test for differences in means through Tukey's method was used to examine which income group's buying intentions for purchasing counterfeit apparels differed from each other.

The post hoc results are explained in Table 8, which indicates that the differences in the mean scores of consumers' buying intentions for purchasing counterfeit apparels is found to be significant only between the consumers within the income bracket of below ₹ 10,000 and ₹ 10,000 - ₹ 20,000 (sig. value 0.005). However, there is no significant difference observed for other income categories.

The Figure 1 demonstrates the consumers' buying intentions mean scores for various categories of income

Figure 1. Income and Consumers' Buying Intentions for Purchasing Counterfeit Apparels : Mean Scores



levels, which reveals that consumers having a low income level were more prone towards the purchase of counterfeit apparels. Thus, it is quite evident from the results that income level of the consumers played a significant role in deciding consumers' buying intentions for purchasing counterfeit apparels.

(3) Age Group of the Respondents

↳ **H3:** There is no significant difference between age group and consumers' buying intentions for purchasing counterfeit apparels.

The Table 9 shows the frequency distribution scores for consumers' age groups. The mean statistics for the four categories of age group of the respondents are depicted in Table 10, which reveals that maximum respondents were between the age group of 26-39 years ($M = 2.68, S.D = .603$).

The results of one-way ANOVA are depicted in Table 11, which indicates that there is a significant difference between consumers' buying intentions for purchasing counterfeit apparels and their respective age groups at $p < .05$ level for the three conditions [$F(3,116) = 12.324, p = .000$]. Hence, H3 is rejected.

The post hoc results are explained in Table 12, which reveals that the differences in the means of the four categories of age and consumers' buying intentions for purchasing counterfeit apparels is found to be significant between the consumers from the age group of 15 - 25 years and 26 - 39 years (sig. value 0.000). No other significant difference is found among the other age groups.

The Figure 2 demonstrates the consumers' buying intentions mean scores for various categories of age group, which suggests that young consumers are more prone towards the purchase of counterfeit apparels. It may be

Table 9. Frequency Distribution for Age

	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
15-25	27	22.5	22.5	22.5
26-39	82	68.3	68.3	90.8
40-50	7	5.8	5.8	96.7
50 and above	4	3.3	3.3	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 10. Mean Statistics for Age and Consumers' Buying Intentions

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
15-25	27	1.9815	.33440	.06436
26-39	82	2.6809	.60332	.06663
40-50	7	2.8333	.67185	.25394
50 and above	4	2.1042	.38112	.19056
Total	120	2.5132	.62753	.05729

Table 11. One - Way ANOVA for Age and Consumers' Buying Intentions

	Sum of Squares	*df*	Mean Square	*F*	Sig.
Between Groups	11.326	3	3.775	12.324	.000*
Within Groups	35.535	116	.306		
Total	46.861	119			

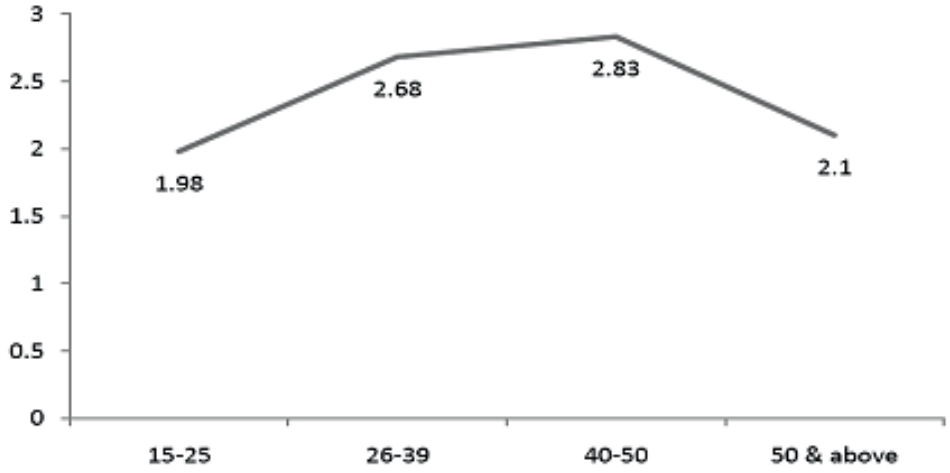
Note: *The mean difference is significant at $p < .05$ level.

Table 12. The Post Hoc Test for Difference in Means of Age Categories (Tukey HSD) Multiple Comparisons

	(I) Age	*(J)* Age	Mean Difference *(I-J)*	Std. Error	Sig.
Tukey HSD	15-25	26-39	-.69941*	.12281	.000*
		40-50	-.85185*	.23475	.856
		50 and above	-.12269	.29653	.976
	26-39	15-25	.69941*	.12281	.000*
		40-50	-.15244	.21794	.897
		50 and above	.57673	.28341	.181
	40-50	15-25	.85185*	.23475	.176
		26-39	.15244	.21794	.897
		50 and above	.72917	.34691	.159
	50 and above	15-25	.12269	.29653	.976
		26-39	-.57673	.28341	.181
		40-50	-.72917	.34691	.159

Note : *The mean difference is significant at p <.05 level.

Figure 2. Age and Consumers' Buying Intentions for Purchasing Counterfeit Apparels : Mean Scores



because they always want to maintain their social status among their peer groups by purchasing counterfeits of originals. Also, due to the low-income level, they find counterfeit products more affordable.

Discussion and Conclusion

The present study explored the counterfeit markets of Chandigarh in terms of consumers' behaviour towards counterfeiting. The study reveals that consumers' behaviour towards counterfeit apparels varied from person to person based on their demographic backgrounds ; a similar result was obtained by Juyal (2013) for durable goods in the Indian context. Overall, consumers showed great interest in purchasing counterfeit apparels. The present study results in acceptance of two hypotheses while the other hypotheses are rejected. The study also shows that

consumers were well aware of the counterfeit apparels that are available in the markets and they were knowingly demanding counterfeit apparels.

The results of the present study reveal that there is a significant relationship between income and consumers' buying intentions for purchasing counterfeit apparels, which shows that counterfeit apparels attract consumers because of their low prices as compared to the prices of branded products. Similar findings were obtained by Bush, Bloch, and Dawson (1989) who established that price was the main motivator for consumers to buy counterfeit products. The study also finds a positive relationship between the age of the consumers and their respective buying intentions for purchasing counterfeit apparels, which suggests that consumers' buying intentions for purchasing counterfeit apparels varies with respect to their respective age groups. It may be due to consumers' purchasing power, buying habits, and maturity level with respect to social status and ethical issues, which changes with the age of the consumer. The study also indicates that marital status has no role in deciding consumers' buying intentions of purchasing counterfeit apparels, and this result is consistent with the findings of Krishnamurti and Gupta (2017).

Managerial Implications

In view of the above results, the present study is important for the trademark owners as it can help them to understand what consumers perceive about counterfeits. Genuine brand manufacturers should make a clear distinction in their products in terms of money invested, quality, durability, and value for money as compared to the counterfeit versions. They should adopt positive strategies to make their product a brand, aspiring among consumers an appeal of social status and recognition so that consumers will find buying genuine apparels worthy. Consumers cannot be prevented from buying counterfeit apparels, but they should at least be assured that they will get what they pay for. To eradicate the problem of counterfeiting, brand manufacturers should ink up a line between original products and their counterparts.

Efficient supply chain management (SCM) can be an important strategy which brand manufacturers can use against counterfeiting because incompetent distribution channels of branded products generally gives birth to counterfeiting. Continuous monitoring, transparency, and reliable and strong relationships with vendors and distributors can prevent the original products of manufacturers from being counterfeited. Brand manufacturers should assure the consumers that their sources are clean and then only counterfeiting will become a negligible activity.

Limitations of the Study and Scope for Future Research

Although, the study was conducted by considering all possible concepts and boundaries, still the present study is merely a tip of an iceberg because of the limited area covered under this study and that too with a small sample size. However, in order to generalize the findings of the study, it needs to be replicated extensively in other parts of the country where the possibilities of counterfeit may be present. This research can be further extended to other segments such as watches, shoes, sunglasses, other accessories, etc.

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