



Consumer Attitude and Purchase Intention of Counterfeit Phones Among Masters Students in Selected Public Universities in Kenya

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ABSTRACT

Persistent increase of consumption of counterfeit goods despite government efforts to curtail it has justified further research to determine any factors that may not have been studied conclusively the studying the progression of the illicit goods consumption. The general objective of this study was to comprehend consumer attitude towards intention to purchase counterfeit mobile phones among masters' students in Kenya. Specifically, the study focused on effects of materialism attitude, subjective norm attitude and moral intensity attitude on purchase intention of counterfeit mobile phones among masters' university students in Nairobi. The study was premised on three theories, Theory of Planned Behaviour, the Theory of Reasoned Action, and the Attitude Function Theory. The study adopted descriptive survey design and used purposive sampling to select the four public university campuses to target from the 10 public universities licensed to operate in Nairobi's central business district and subsequently used stratified random sampling to choose the target respondents in the selected campuses. Semi-structured questionnaires were used to collect primary data for the study. Quantitative data was captured and organized using statistical package for social sciences and analysed using descriptive statistics which was shown using percentages frequencies and standard deviation. Inferential statistics comprising Pearson's correlation and multiple regression analysis were utilized to demonstrate the relationship between the independent and dependant variables. Content analysis was utilized to analyse qualitative data. Data was presented in the form of graphs and tables for simplicity of interpretation. This study will assist policy makers in coming up with plans to fight counterfeiting. The study found that materialism attitude, subjective norm attitude and moral intensity had a positive significant effect towards purchase intention of counterfeit phones among university students in Kenya. The study concluded that the consumers with a high level of materialism trait would be a very prospective segment for sustainable luxury brands. Subjective norm is a person's perception of pressure in the social environment that is accepted so that it shows certain behaviour through considerations made by someone. Through moral intensity attitude individuals encounter moral or ethical issues within the personal environments of their daily living. The study recommended that high-materialism consumers should be driven to acquire goods and phones primarily to symbolize and communicate status and success messages to others. In terms of brands, more attention should be paid to consumers' emotional needs and sensitivity. Organizations should emphasize the importance of moral judgment and attitude in explaining behavioural intentions and ethical behaviour in shaping demand for phones and also other goods.

Key Words: Consumer Attitude, Purchase Intention, Counterfeit Phones

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Consumption of counterfeit goods has risen, and it is now a big concern around the world due to the negative impact it has on legitimate businesses. The vice has been on rise due to the pricey and high-status attributes of some brands, growing public awareness of leading brands, consumer preferences and desire for the world's finest brands, and inadequacies in the supply chain for real goods. The “estimated value of the global market for counterfeit products exceeds \$600 billion, accounting for approximately 7% of world trade, with counterfeit luxury products accounting for 10% of this total” (World Customs Organization, 2004). Carpenter & Edwards (2013) opine that some causes for the increasing trade in counterfeits include technology improvements that have inadvertently made assembly of superior value imitations possible and easy and made transport and communication in the globalized arena more efficient for both genuine and fake products. Exponential growth of the manufacturing competence in countries such as China, Egypt, and Colombia, has also given competitors a chance to create fake products via illegal channels; and the absence of punitive consequences and penalties in a most countries for engaging in production of counterfeit goods (Yoo & Lee 2009). This combination of motivations on both demand and supply makes the trade continue to flourish despite efforts to reduce it.

Globally, Counterfeiting is a growing problem as indicated by an investigation by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) whose findings reveal that trade in fake goods continues to grow quickly throughout the globe (OECD 2009, 2012). Quoting reports of the Federal Bureau of Investigation department of organised crime reports, Wilcox et. al., 2009 predicted that counterfeiting would be headline crime in the coming centuries especially from the 21st Century. The counterfeit problem is no longer in just a few selected industries. It has penetrated all sectors with counterfeited automobile parts now being available in reputable repair shops, counterfeited pharmaceuticals openly displayed at chemists and pet food and milk products now adulterated with fake substitutes to appear genuine (Babich & Tang, 2012; OECD, 2012). Consumption of Counterfeit goods is on the upsurge partially due to low public understanding of the phenomenon. Studies by (Nia & Zaichkowsky, 2000) approximate that in North America; more than 59% of the populace has interacted with counterfeits at some point.

Due to the horrible effects of counterfeit trade in the world, the world is now paying attention to the vice. For example, according to Goodman (2002), an approximate 192,000 persons died in China in 2001 as a result of fake medications. while studies by Harris, Stevens & Morris (2009) unearthed that “counterfeit drugs for tuberculosis and malaria kill 700,000 people in Africa every year”. For the government and nation of Kenya, counterfeit consumption has been an economic problem for a long time. This has moved the Government to form a department within the ministry of trade (the anti-counterfeit authority of Kenya).to deal with the issue of counterfeiting. Studies on demand side have indicated that consumers buy counterfeit items with full knowledge of the



illegality of the products. This is aided by improvement of technologies and the internet which has resulted to speedy spread of the sale of counterfeit products (Bian & Veloutsou, 2008; Vida, 2007).

1.1.1 Consumer Attitude

Attitude refers to “instructed tendency to retort a situation in an advantageous or disadvantageous mode” (Chou, Huang & Lee 2005). According to Hoyer & MacInnis, 2004; Dossey & Keegan, 2009, attitude is a perceptual concept formed by cognition, values and emotions expressed toward some item. It is a mental state people use to conceptualise issues including buying behaviour, and to recognize and respond to the environment in an habitual manner as directed by attitude, which could be fruitful or damaging. (Matos, Ituassu & Rossi, 2007) report that consumer response to counterfeits rare not uniform, with some being negative and others positive about the same items. Studies have shown that for lavish brands, positive attitude towards fake products has positive linkage with purchase intentions, (Phau & Teah, 2009). This approving attitude toward fake business shows an approving point of view towards such business.

The theory of planned behaviour (TPB) Ajzen, 1991, which is the lead theory in this study deals with background of attitude including subjective norms and asserts that “behaviour is a function of salient information, or beliefs, relevant to the behaviour” (Ajzen, 1991) which shows that salient beliefs are considered as the main factor in forming the general attitude towards an object (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975, Ajzen, 1991), where Prominent beliefs are “the subjective probability of a relation between the object of the belief and some other object, value, concept, or attribute” (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Marketing researchers have indicated that consumer attitude is a crucial component for better marketing operations (Solomon, Bamossy, Askegaard & Hogg 2010). It is good to understand the attitude that consumers have towards a certain product so as to be able to shape an offering for the consumers, since such understanding gives opinions about a product or brand. Attitude predicts behaviour and it’s mutually related to intention. Attitude refers to the state of the mind used by individuals to structure the ways to perceive and re-join to their situation. It shows the motivation and need to perform an act in cases of both genuine and counterfeits and it could be affirmative or undesirable. While some consumers have a positive attitude of the fake goods, others have negative. Positive attitude about counterfeits positively influences the consumer purchase intentions for them.

1.1.2 Purchase Intention

Purchase intention is a person’s resolve to acquire a specific product offering, and is typically interpreted as a proxy for the actual purchase. It identifies a person's decision to purchase a particular brand that they have made after careful consideration. Studies by (Laroche & Sadokierski, 1994) have indicated that consumer purchase intention of an item depends on attitude towards the said item. Intention is believed to be a pre cursor to a given behaviour. Purchase intention is regularly related with consumers’ behaviour, perception and their attitude. Ghosh A (1990) stated that consumer purchase intention is a proficient instrument for predicting purchasing behaviour. The intention is based on attitude towards the performance of an act. According to the Theory of the Reasoned Action (ToRA) (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1980), intention plays a crucial part in influencing real behaviour. The Intention depends on the attitude towards any specific activity but also on inspirations of other people. Purchase Intention is an individual’s comparative power of purpose to execute a purchase. A consumers’ positive attitude towards counterfeits have a similar impact on purchase intentions.



Chan and Lau's (2001) studies found that the individual's behaviour is more often than not influenced by the intention they have to realize a given behaviour. Such intention is swayed by the attitude an individual has toward such behaviour, his drive to comply with subjective norms, and the intensity of the apparent control he exhibits over any given behaviour. Purchase intention is derived from potential buyer's use of their prior knowledge and experience, External Environment as well as first time that enables them in collecting information and making the choice to buy or not after also considering the available substitutes (Zeithaml, 1988; Dodds et al. 1991).

1.1.3 Counterfeit Goods Purchase in Kenya

There has been an upsurge of trade in counterfeit products goods over the last few years with some estimates putting the illicit industry in the country at Sh.70Billion (nearly US\$.835 million), matching key Gross Domestic champions such as tourism, coffee and tea (Opala 2009, November, 21) "Merchants of Fakes Reap Sh70bn and Put Lives and Jobs at Great Risk," *Daily Nation*, retrieved from: <https://nation.africa/News/tem/1/wkyff9/index.html> Data from the Kenya Association of Manufacturers, (2008) shows that the cost of counterfeits to Kenyan Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) is above 50 billion shillings (\$650 million), while the government on its part lost 19 billion shillings (\$250 million) in taxes in 2008 (GOK, 2010). According to data from the Kenyan Association of Pharmaceutical Industry, roughly 30% of the pharmaceuticals available on the Kenyan market are counterfeit, and it is estimated that each year, Kenyans spend 4 billion Kenyan Shillings (US\$47 million) on such drugs. The body mandated to deal with counterfeits in Kenya; the Anti-Counterfeit Agency (ACA) has informed the public that about 40% of the malaria drugs in the Kenyan country are likely to be fake.

Phau & Teah, 2009 reports that in luxurious goods, attitude towards fake goods is co related to the Purchase intentions of the same albeit with some cultural influence on the way both suppliers and consumers deal with counterfeits, making it important to understand all variations in cultural practices and identify the differences in methods of production and consumption of counterfeits between countries (Husted 2000; Marron & Steel 2000). Preceding studies on counterfeiting has been found to focus a single cultural setting (Bian &, Veloutsou 2008) which has makes it hard to make culture cutting comparisons. This is because most studies on counterfeiting so far were done in the west (Europ and America) and Asia. This lack of cross cultural data makes it imperative to study the phenomena in different cultures, situations, products, and backgrounds that have not been studied so far.

As far as the researcher knows, not many studies have been done on this subject in Kenya. Furthermore, even those few studies are mainly on the area of supply chain and allied services and their effect on counterfeits. Moreover, there is non-done in moving consumer goods as far as we know. Specifically, there has been no investigation on the correlation between consumer attitude and purchase intention of counterfeits in East Africa as far as the researcher knows. For instance, Muthiani & Wanjau 2011 investigated the phenomena in the pharmaceutical industry while Karingu et al 2013 did the same in agro-based products with both having emphasis on supply side. The current study was designed to investigate counterfeiting in different cultural contexts from the existing literature.

1.1.4 University students in Kenya

The researchers considered University students to be the suitable population to use in this investigation because earlier studies have shown that students are at risk of using product classes



that are popular with counterfeiters (Cordell et al., 1996). Earlier studies have acknowledged Tertiary level students including those in university as one of the population segments that consciously purchase counterfeits (Chakraborty, Allred, Suk dial, & Bristol, 1997). University students are therefore chosen for this study because students are easily available for data collection, many previous studies examining counterfeit products used students as samples and the fact that in the Kenyan scenario, university students are opinion leaders and can affect other people's consumption and finally this target population offers an homogeneous population hence a chance to get valid results. The research was purposely carried out in and around the universities since being national institutions; they draw membership and students from the whole nation and hence would have heterogeneous and representative data.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Progression of illicit trade is a concern for growing economies including Kenya. Despite Government efforts to check it, purchase and consumption of counterfeit goods is on the rise growing year on year with devastating effects on legitimate trade. According to Opala (2009), illicit trade is rivalling key foreign exchange earners as it cost Kenya Shillings 70 Billion (approximately US\$835 million). This is a threat to the SMEs as it cost them about 50 billion shillings (KAM, 2008). Prevalence counterfeit purchase intention is therefore costing the government revenue and the traders profits owing to decline in legal business. Companies and manufacturers need to know the consumer behaviour in general and towards counterfeits in particular as a way of growing their own muscle in terms of competitive edge in the market. The companies need to understand the reason for increasing trade in this trade despite all Government efforts to curtail it. Previous studies have indicated that a person's attitude toward a product may be able to foretell or directly influence their purchasing behaviour (Tarkiainen & Sundqvist, 2005) and as such there exists a desire and gap to comprehend what encourages a buyer to select a counterfeit and sometimes illicit product. Marketers need to understand some of the factors that affect consumer attitude before attempting to positively influence consumer attitude. To make a positive modification of consumer attitude towards counterfeits, marketers should scrutinise the factors that influence it and use the information to facilitate putting together of plans to modify the attitude, which is a key objective of most marketing strategies (Solomon et al., 2010).

Finally, most of the available studies on the scope of counterfeiting are subjective. The Kenya Association of Manufacturers report of 2007 (KAM, 2007) accepts that a problem exists but does not give ways to solve the problem. A gap exists therefore in the area of counterfeiting in fast-moving consumer goods industry in an African context since, as shown by literature, culture affects consumer behaviour. This study shows how and to what extent attitude affects and directs consumer plans and intentions to purchase one item or the other and to discover new knowledge if any about the dynamics that stimulate consumers and inform their attitude and view about consumption hence plans to obtain counterfeit phones among students in Kenya.

1.3 Objective of the Study

This study investigates the effect of buyer attitude on purchase intention of counterfeit phones among university students in Kenya.



2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Review

Fox & Bayat (2007) defines theoretical framework as the application of concepts drawn from a theory to explain events or give aptitudes on a research problem. Three pertinent theories serve as a basis for this investigation, Theory of planned behaviour (TPB), Theory of reasoned action (TRA) and the Functional theory of attitude (FTA). The theory of planned behaviour was used as the leading one as it fully addresses the study variables. The dominant theory (TPB) would give a framework integrating consumers' expectation and perception. The concepts in this theory explain the mental processes and in particular how an individual's attitude leads to their behavioural intention (Janzen 1991). This framework would be used to scrutinize consumers' attitude towards purchase of counterfeits (represented by purchase intention). The theory would show how sub constructs of attitude including social norm, materialism and moral intensity affect their behaviour towards purchase intention. The three theories would help to demonstrate that purchase intention social pressure pushes a consumer to try to conform to expectations which affects the consumers' perception and the subsequent purchasing activities.

2.1.1 Theory of planned behaviour

This theory holds that the objective to exhibit a given plan of action heralds the actual performance of the behaviour. Social psychologists pronounce that intentions intercede between attitudes and actions (Fishbein & Janzen, 1975). This sequence of events has been conceptualized by earlier studies as the belief-attitude-intention ladder (Follows & Jobber, 2000). Theory of planned action explains what influences attitude toward a given behaviour namely subjective norm and perceived behavioural control. This attitude, subjective norm, and perception of the level of control one has on their behaviour motivates the intention to behave in a given way. It is acknowledged that the apparent level of behavioural control rises as attitude and subjective norms do, leading to an increase in a person's intention to perform the behaviour in question. Intention is therefore recognized as a direct forerunner of behaviour (Ajzen 1985, 1987).

2.1.2 Theory of reasoned action

According to Janzen & Fishbein (1980) this theory gives guidance on the existence of an association between attitude, intention and behaviour. Attitude according to TORA is a variable based on people's perception and appraisal of a situation and is premised on people's projection of consequences once behaviour is executed. The elements of ToRA are Intention, Attitude and Norm. The theory (TRA; Fishbein & Janzen, 1975), postulates that a person's attitude is an important factor that may influence how they consume. Summers, Belleau, & Xu (2006) says that the attitude to perform a behaviour and social perception significantly predict purchase intention. The theory suggests that attitude and subjective norm are indicators of behaviour is intention (what one intends to do or not to do). The Theory of Reasoned Action (ToRA) proposes that "attitude is derived from the beliefs one holds about an object or the behaviour and evaluations of the consequences of the beliefs" (Marcketti, & Mack (2009) and therefore an individual's intended behaviour can be projected based on the attitude they have toward the action question.

2.1.3 Functional theory of attitude

This theory was advanced by Daniel Katz (1960), a psychologist and explains the place of attitudes in determining social behaviour. The theory postulates that attitudes are function different from



one person to the other. In this theory attitudes are said to exist because of the particular functions they serve for people and they depend on the particular person's motives. The theory pronounces that Consumers who anticipate facing certain situations in future form attitudes in anticipation of this occurrence, so that the attitude would have been formed in expectation and to solve certain projected events. According to Katz (1960) and Grewal, Mehta & Kardes (2004) attitudes have been found to serve the purposes of knowledge, Value-expression, Utilitarian function and Ego provision. The four constructs respectively are about the way of organising beliefs about objects or activities, expression of a person's central values and self-concept, explanation of how people form positive attitude towards rewarding positive features and finally as Ego protection whereby attitudes are used by individuals as a defence mechanism when their egos and images may be threatened or deficient.

2.2 Empirical review

2.2.1 Consumer Attitude

Attitude and the associated beliefs play a big role in decision-making (Tonglet, Phillips, and Read (2004). The choice to perform an action is a personal choice dependent on personal evaluation of behaviours and anticipated outcomes upon performing the behaviour. The way one behaves in terms of purchasing is a subjective decision dependent on attitudes towards performing such behaviour (Janzen & Fishbein 1980). Consumers and buyers participate in behaviour if their attitude towards an intention to actualise that behaviour is favourable (Janzen 1991). Laroche, Toffoli, Kim & Muller 1996 have said that consumers purchasing behaviour has an impact on many environmental and social problems. It's this respect for external environmental issues that characterizes the choices and preferences human beings make, which has positive or negative bearing on their final behaviour. (Chan, 1996). It's these inclinations that are usually called attitudes and beliefs (Janzen & Fishbein 1980). Janzen & Fishbein (1980) links attitude, intention and behaviour in a manner to indicate that people will usually act as motivated by their intentions. Numerous studies have shown the part attitude plays in determining consumer purchase intentions. Zimmerman, 2007) says people behave in accordance with their attitudes especially where the said attitudes result from personal know-how and their expectation of a favourable outcome.

2.2.2 Materialism Attitude and Purchase Intention

Materialism is defined as an attribute that describes people's personalities and describes the features that differentiates one person from another in terms of their view on possessions. Materialistic people are those who regard possessions as the defining elements that help to differentiate people and give them class and position in the society. They imagine that people cannot live without possessions (Belk R (1985). People with materialism attitude show off and value their earthly belongings and go to any level to achieve their show off goals. Richins & Dowson (1992) define materialism as "a set of centrally held beliefs about the importance of possessions in one's life" where people with this attitude put a lot of efforts to acquire material objects. Materialism attitude affects peoples view on items and influences their view towards purchasing and consumption. Materialism attitude influences the purchase and consumption patterns including the quality, quantity and type of goods or services purchased as consumers with this attitude are aware of the value in the goodwill that their purchases confer on them.



2.2.3 Moral intensity Attitude and Purchase Intention

Jones (1991) describes moral intensity (MI) as the degree to which a buyer or person consults their moral inclination before making a choice in a given situation. Maldonado & Hume, 2005 in their study concluded that ethics and morality predicted attitude towards counterfeit products strongly. (Koklic, 2011; Swami et al., 2009). De Lucio & Valero, (2013) pronounced that ethics and moral judgment are critical determinants of purchase intention and ranked higher than personality or products features in influential a person's purchase and consumption of counterfeits. Similarly, (Singhapakdi, Rawwas, Marta & Ahmed, 1999) in their study on culture, Perceptions and marketing ethics found that cultural contexts mediate the effect of moral intensity in a buying situation which shows that situation and contexts affect choices and moral obligation. The results confirmed the need to carry our further research on the effect of Moral Intensity attitude on purchase intention of Counterfeit phone. Vitell & Muncy (1992) studied 1900 heads of households within the United States to find their judgments and effect on attitude when in a situation requiring a check of the ethical content. The respondents found no harm in buying counterfeit goods as long as they did not initiate the counterfeiting activity like manufacture and distribution themselves

2.2.4 Subjective Norm Attitude and Purchase Intention

The word Subjective norms is taken to mean a person's view of social normative pressures and how they regard the opinion of other people regarding any given behaviour (Janzen & Fishbein 1975). According to Albers-Miller (1999), the subjective norm is a circumstance where shoppers are more likely to purchase counterfeit goods if they believe that their significant others would support their decision. Subjective norm attitude are the intrinsic pressures from the society to behave in one way or the other towards some subject matter of product (Janzen, 1991; O'Neal, 2007). Subjective norms attitude explain how an individual expects their reference group to react if act in a certain way or exhibit certain behaviour. It explains the pressure that an individual undergoes in an attempt to comply with the needs and consumption patterns of their peer group, and how such pressure informs demand. Several investigations have shown the existence of a causal path between subjective norm attitude and buying intention. Tarkiainen & Sundqvist (2005) for instance studied the issue of Subjective Norm and their findings suggested that there is a substantial co relation between subjective norm attitude and buying intention. This makes it necessary to carry out further study on the issue of subjective norm attitude and its effect on consumption.

2.2.5 Purchase Intention

Janzen and Fishbein (1980) have defined Purchase intention to be a person's freewill and zeal to purchase a product, which is alleged to be foreseen by attitude toward the behaviour, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control. In many past cases, the intention to purchase is taken to be a surrogate for actual purchase behaviour (Follows & Jobber 2000). The current study also treats Intention as surrogate for Purchase. This is because the very nature of the issue of counterfeiting in an African setting cannot be investigated directly and any attempt may result in wring data because some people may fear arrest or further investigation. Fishbein & Janzen, (1975) says that a persons perceived intention are a good surrogate for a certain behaviour because to realize a behaviour, one must be ready and in in full control of performing the said behaviour.

According to Phau et al. (2009), eagerness to buy should be considered as a sign of intention to buy. He suggested if one is willing to purchase that act should be treated like real purchase such



that to predict purchase, one should measure how keen a consumer is in terms of the purchase plan of a specific product. Therefore, according to Phaul *et al.*, 2009, the term "intention to purchase" ought to be considered to signify "actual purchase". Several studies have been done to show the relation between attitude, intention, and Purchase. Weisheng & Leng, (2016) carried out a survey among 295 consumers (168 Taiwanese and 127 Singaporeans). They compared intention to purchase fake goods between students of Singapore and Taiwan origin. Results confirmed that in both countries subjective norm attitude predicted purchase intention with the intention usually translating to actual purchases in many cases.

3.0 Research Methodology

As this study deals with people's views which require precise measurement and reporting, it assumed a descriptive survey design so as to effectively capture the characteristics of any phenomena under investigation. Descriptive survey has been described by Grazino & Raulin (2000) as one of those appropriate when studying people's attitudes, feelings and thinking regarding specific aspects. Therefore, it is pertinent to our study because attitudes may be deduced from specific signs that reflect customer behaviour even though they cannot be explicitly measured or witnessed. Descriptive study is best fitted for this kind of data collection as it captures the event or situation under study by reporting observations by the researcher in a scientific manner.

As the research anticipated collection of empirical data to meet the objectives, it used quantitative methods of data collection including empirical assessments that require numerical measurement and analysis. Online as well as drop and pick methods were used to collect data. The target population was graduate students from the four selected public universities in Kenya with campuses in Nairobi City Central Business District (CBD), Kenya. The four universities campuses are the Nairobi CBD Campus of Kenyatta, Jomo Kenyatta university of Agriculture & Technology, Nairobi, and Moi Universities. The four were selected purposively based on the fact besides being accredited to operate within Nairobi CBD; they had the largest number of students by enrolment. The total population of students in the four universities is 204,850 (Kenya National Bureau of statistics 2018/19). Attitude was measured by scale from Mathiesson *et al.* (2001) and Shi I change (2011) Materialism was measured using a tool advanced by Richins & Dowson (1992). Subjective Norm was quantified by the scale as proposed by Shih *et al* (2011) while the measure for Moral Intensity (MI) was adopted from a scale developed by Ang *et al* (2001).

The scale for measuring variables was a five-point Likert-type. To measure each variable, a scale was employed. The measures ranged from "strongly disagree" (p1) to "strongly agree" (p5), with lower scores indicating lower levels of Materialism, Subjective Norm, and Moral Intensity attitude and vice versa. The research used multi-stage sampling design to come up with the sample. Both purposive and stratified random sampling techniques were employed. Purposive sampling was used to select the target campuses and subsequently, stratified random sampling applied to choose respondents in the selected campuses. Universities with representation in Nairobi Central Business District (CBD) were targeted as a sample because they draw students from the whole Republic and as such would be a good sample to represent views of all the university students with no bias. A second purposeful sampling was done to select the campuses to include in the study. The campuses were chosen based on their student enrolment levels, which were also supported by their accreditation to operate inside Nairobi CBD. Following the criteria, University of Nairobi, Kenyatta University, Jomo Kenyatta university of Agriculture & Technology and Moi University



were the biggest four (KUCCPS, 2020) as shown in appendix E. They are also ranked as the most popular with students by Kenya universities and colleges central placement service (KUCCPS data).

The researcher used the guidance of Krejcie & Morgan's (1970) in deciding the sample size for this study. This method is popular where the population is large like in the current study where the population was 204,850. Krejcie & Morgan's (1970) prescribes that 'to keep sampling error at minimum at a particular confidence, it's important to note that as population increases the sample size should increase but at a slower pace, finally plateauing (remaining constant) at just over 384 instances. Additionally, Krejcie, Morgan, and others (1970) noted that there was "nothing to be gained to justify the resources and effort spent sampling beyond 384 cases." This observation has also been validated by the findings of Alreck & Settle (1995).

The sample size calculation, based on Krejcie & Morgan's (1970) is based on $p = 0.05$ which indicates that there is a less than 5 % or $p < 0.05$ chance of committing type I error.

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

Where,

S=sample size.

χ^2 =the table value of chi-square for 1 degree of freedom at the desired confidence level (0.05=3.841).

N=the population size.

P=the population proportion (the formula assumes this to be 0.50 in order to maximize sample size)

d=desired proportionate degree of accuracy.

$$S = \frac{3.841 * 204850(0.5)(0.5)}{0.05^2(204849) + 3.841(0.5)(0.5)} = 382$$

The researcher applied for approval to carry out this research from the university (Kenyatta University Graduate School). Consequent to getting the approval, the researcher applied and obtained clearance to conduct research from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). The final stage was that the interviewer sought the campus of the chosen colleges for their permission to participate in the study. Purposive approach was utilized to choose the public university campuses from among the nine authorized public institutions in Nairobi CBD. Finally drop and pick later method was used to collect data using the Semi-structured questionnaires administered to the students from the selected university campuses in Nairobi CBD. Due to the Covid 19 pandemic experience and the restrictions and changes that have been put in place in universities where some campuses have opted for online teaching methodology email and online data collection was also used to collect data from those students who may not be in campus during the time of data collection.



Bryman & Bell 2004 has prescribed the ethical considerations that should be appreciated by researchers like informed consent before data collection, no harm to participant, respect of privacy and no deception. The current study respected those ethical expectations. The researcher sought consent from respondents before they completed the questionnaires. This thesis ensured there is no plagiarism cases above normal and respected and referenced all studies made by preceding investigators by citing them based on the rules of Kenyatta University in regard to referencing.

4.0 Research Findings and Discussions

4.1 Descriptive Statistic results for the variables

Results of descriptive data were presented in terms of Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD). The results are presented as per the study specific variables as follows.

4.1.1 Materialism Attitude

The study sought to examine the effect of materialism attitude towards purchase intention of counterfeit phones among university students in Kenya. The descriptive statistics of materialism attitude are presented in Table 1.

Table 1; Materialism Attitude

	M	SD
You cherish material possessions including phones	4.52	0.48
How well I'm doing in life is indicated by the things I own	4.57	0.43
Encourage friends and relatives to buy counterfeit product	4.30	0.70
Luxury is an important thing in my life	4.14	0.86
You get pleasure in buying Status phones	4.23	0.77
My life would be much better if I had all the things I desire.	4.69	0.31
You believe that counterfeit goods are convenient	3.72	1.28
You find counterfeit Phones beneficial and a status symbol	4.56	0.44

Source: Survey Data (2023)

The results in Table 1 shows that the respondents strongly agreed on the statements that life would be much better if they had all the things they desire (M=4.69, SD=0.31), how well they doing in life is indicated by the things they own (M=4.57, SD=0.43), they find counterfeit phones beneficial and a status symbol (M=4.56, SD=0.44) and that they cherish material possessions including phones (M=4.52, SD=0.48). According to Belk (1985) people with materialism attitude show off and value their earthly belongings and go to any level to achieve their show off goals.

The respondents agreed on the statements that they encourage friends and relatives to consider counterfeit product when shopping (M=4.30, SD=0.70), they get pleasure in buying Status Phones (M=4.23, SD= 0.77), Luxury is an important thing in their life (M=4.14, SD=0.86)) and that they believe that counterfeit goods are convenient (M=3.72, SD 1.28). Richins & Dowson (1992) define materialism as “a set of centrally held beliefs about the importance of possessions in one’s life” where people with this attitude put a lot of efforts to acquire material objects.



4.1.2 Subjective Norm Attitude

The study sought to determine the effect of subjective norm attitude on purchase intention of counterfeit goods among university students in Kenya. The descriptive statistics of subjective norm attitude are presented in Table 2.

Table 2; Subjective Norm Attitude

How one is likely that:-	M	SD
You are likely to buy an item if you peers or colleagues approve	4.55	0.45
Important friends have to approve your purchase	4.51	0.49
Parents approve your buying decisions	4.63	0.37
My siblings influence your buying patterns	3.84	1.16
My friends and relatives support my decision to buy counterfeit Phones	4.39	0.61

Source: Survey Data (2023)

The results in Table 2 show that the respondents strongly agreed that parents approve their buying decisions (M=4.63, SD=0.37), are likely to buy an item if their peers or colleagues approve (M=4.55, SD=0.45) and that important friends have to approve their purchase (M=4.51, SD=0.49). According to Albers-Miller (1999), the subjective norm is a circumstance where shoppers are more likely to purchase counterfeit items including counterfeit phones if they believe that their significant others would support their decision.

The respondents agreed on the statements that their friends and relatives support their resolution to purchase counterfeited Phones (M=4.39, SD=0.61) and that their siblings influence their buying patterns (M=3.84, SD=1.16). Janzen (1991) observe that subjective norm attitude is the intrinsic pressures from the society to behave in one way or the other towards some subject matter of product. According to O’Neal (2007) subjective norms attitude explain how an individual expects their reference group to react if act in a certain way or exhibit certain behaviour.

4.1.3 Moral Intensity attitude

The study sought to investigate the significance of moral intensity attitude towards purchase intention of counterfeit phones among university students in Kenya. The descriptive statistics of subjective norm attitude are presented in Table 3.

Table 3 Moral Intensity Attitude

	M	SD
It’s my view that honesty as an important quality	4.53	0.47
I respect government rules and regulations	4.49	0.51
It’s not pleasurable to see businessmen suffer	4.01	0.99
I take responsibility in whatever I purchase	3.98	1.02
I can buy genuine phones even if they are expensive	4.25	0.75
I respect copyright and patent of goods and phones	4.60	0.40



	M	SD
I hate counterfeit goods sellers	4.51	0.49
I detest counterfeit phone dealers	4.44	0.56

Source: Survey Data (2023)

The results in Table 3 show that the respondents strongly agreed that they respect copyright and patent of goods and phones (M=4.60, SD=0.40), it is their view that honesty as an important quality (M=4.53, SD=0.47), they hate counterfeit goods sellers (M=4.51. SD=0.49), and that they respect government rules and regulations (M=4.49, SD=0.51). Jones (1991) describes moral intensity (MI) as the degree to which a buyer or person consults their moral inclination before making a choice in a given situation. Maldonado & Hume, 2005 in their study concluded that ethics and morality predicted attitude towards counterfeit products strongly.

The respondents agreed on statements that they detest counterfeit phone buyers (M=4.44, SD=0.56), they can buy genuine goods even if they are expensive (M=4.25, SD=0.75), It is not pleasurable to see businessmen suffer (M=4.01, SD= 0.99) and that they take responsibility in whatever they purchase (M=3.98, SD=1.02). (Koklic, 2011; Swami et al., 2009). De Lucio & Valero, (2013) pronounced that ethics and moral judgment are critical determinants of purchase intention and ranked higher than personality or products features in influential a person’s purchase and consumption of counterfeits. Similarly, (Singhapakdi, Rawwas , Marta & Ahmed, 1999) in their study on culture, Perceptions and marketing ethics found that cultural contexts mediate the effect of moral intensity in a buying situation which shows that situation and contexts affect choices and moral obligation.

4.2 Results of Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was done to determine the effect of one variable to the other and find out the nature of the relationship between the dependent and independent variables but also test the model fit to establish the predictive power of criterion variable in the Models. The results are presented in Table 4, 5 and 6.

Table 4; Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.558 ^a	.628	.615	.773

Source: Survey Data (2023)

The results in Table 4 above show 0.615(61.5%) as the value of adjusted R square demonstrating the extent to which purchase intention of counterfeit phones among university masters students in Kenya is determined by the materialism attitude, subjective norm attitude and moral intensity attitude towards such phones. This indicates that up to 61.5% of the variation in the independent variable (PI) is explained by the independent variables and that therefore, the remaining percentage (38.5%) account for other variables not studied.



Table 5; Analysis of Variance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	9.907	4	2.477	13.749	.001 ^a
	Residual	67.560	375	.1802		
	Total	77.466	379			

Source: Survey Data (2023)

The value 0.001^a shows the significance level is less than 0.05 showing a statistical significance of the model on how materialism attitude, subjective norm attitude and moral intensity attitude influenced the purchase intention of counterfeit phones among university students in Kenya. The results confirm the significance of the model since $P=0.001$ at $F(4,375)= 13.749$, $p<0.05$. The interpretation of this set of data is taken as reflective of the co relation between consumer attitudes and purchase intention of counterfeit mobile phones among masters’ students in Kenya.

Table 6; Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
1	(Constant)	0.581	.698		4.273	.001
	Materialism attitude	0.659	.164	4.045	1.360	.000
	Subjective norm attitude	0.699	.091	1.369	2.192	.001
	Moral intensity attitude	0.580	.086	3.324	2.081	.003

Source: Survey Data (2023)

The findings in Table 6 revealed that holding materialism attitude, subjective norm attitude and moral intensity attitude to a constant zero, the purchase intention of counterfeit phones among university students in Kenya would be at a factor of 0.581. A unit increase in materialism attitude would lead to a unit increase in the purchase intention of counterfeit phones among university students in Kenya by a factor of 0.659. A unit increase in subjective norm attitude would lead to a unit increase in the purchase intention of counterfeit phones among university students in Kenya by a factor of 0.699 and that a unit increase in moral intensity attitude would lead to a unit increase in the purchase intention of counterfeit phones among university students in Kenya by a factor of 0.580.

The established regression equation was as follows;

$$Y = 0.581 + 0.659X_1 + 0.699X_2 + 0.580X_3$$

Where, Y= Purchase intention of counterfeit phones
 X₁= Materialism attitude



X_2 = Subjective norm attitude

X_3 = Moral intensity attitude

The study established that materialism attitude had a positive and significant influence on purchase intention of counterfeit phones among university students in Kenya as indicated by the standardized beta value ($\beta=4.045$, $p < 0.05$). These results indicate that for a change of 1 standard deviation in the independent variable of materialism brings about a 4. Standards deviation change in the purchase intention. This underlies the strength of materialism attitude as a significant contributor of consumer Purchase Intention. The studies are in congruence with those of Ang, et al (2001) who carried out studies to establish the demand side of counterfeits. They conducted investigations among a hundred individuals in two different settings in the United States: a shopping mall and an open market. The findings showed that consumers who place high premium on material belongings held a favorable attitude toward the purchase of fake products as they assumed that possession of such items carrying renowned brand names, logos, and symbols was likely to extend to them the same status, social standing, standard, and an image of success that are normally be credited to the genuine product.

The study revealed that subjective norm attitude had a positive and significant influence on purchase intention of counterfeit phones among university students in Kenya as indicated by beta value ($\beta=1.369$, $p < 0.05$). These results indicated that as subjective norm attitude changed by one standard deviation, purchase intention whole change by 1.3 standards deviations. The results agree with the findings of Lee et al (2009) who collected data from 342 Korean students and carried our examination of the results to find out how social status pressure and materialism could affect consumer intention to purchase fake fashion designer brands. The results confirmed that social pressure among other variables determined purchase intention of counterfeits.

The study revealed that moral intensity attitude had a positive and significant influence on purchase intention of counterfeit phones among university students in Kenya as indicated by beta value ($\beta=3.324$, $p < 0.05$). This standardized beta value shows a unit standard deviation change in moral intensity would lead to 3.3 unit change in purchase intention which indicates that respondents would still buy the counterfeit goods even in the face of morality issues. These results are in line with those of Vitell & Muncy (1992) who collected data from 1900 heads of households within the United States to find their judgments and effect on attitude when in a situation requiring a check of the ethical content and concluded that the respondents found no harm in buying counterfeit phones as long as they did not initiate the counterfeiting activity like manufacture and distribution themselves. The results are also in tandem with those of Ang et al. (2001) who conducted a study titled “Spot the difference: consumer responses towards counterfeits among 3,621 Singapore individuals who had previously purchased a Compact Disc (CD). They found that the consumers found nothing wrong, unethical or risky in buying counterfeits CD’s and therefore did not believe there was anything wrong doing in buying such products.

5.0 Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Summary of Findings

The current study investigated the impact of buyer attitude on purchase intention of counterfeit phones among university students in Kenya. The buyer attitude was measured in terms of materialism attitude, subjective norm and moral intensity attitude. The study data was collected



using questionnaires. Analysis of data was done using descriptive statistics and regression analysis methods. The findings are presented as follows;

The first research objective sought to examine the effect of materialism attitude towards purchase intention of counterfeit phones among university students in Kenya. The study found that materialism attitude had a positive significant effect towards purchase intention of counterfeit phones among university students in Kenya. The respondents strongly agreed on the statements that they find counterfeit phones cheap, they knowingly purchase counterfeited product, they find counterfeit phones beneficial and that they consider counterfeited products purchasing.

The second research objective sought to determine the effect of subjective norm attitude on purchase intention of counterfeit phones among university students in Kenya. The study revealed that subjective norm attitude had a positive significant effect towards purchase intention of counterfeit phones among university students in Kenya. The respondents strongly agreed that parents approve their buying decisions, are likely to buy if their peers or colleagues approve, important friends have to approve their purchase and that their friends and relatives support their resolution to purchase counterfeited products.

The third research objective sought to investigate the significance of moral intensity attitude towards purchase intention of counterfeit phones among university students in Kenya. The study established that moral intensity attitude had a positive significant effect towards purchase intention of counterfeit phones among university students in Kenya. The respondents strongly agreed that they respect copyright and patent of goods, it is their view that honesty as an important quality, they hate counterfeit phones sellers and that they respect government rules and regulations, they detest counterfeit phones buyers and that they can buy genuine phones even if they are expensive.

5.2 Conclusions

The study concluded that the consumers with a high level of materialism trait would be a very prospective segment for sustainable status symbols like expensive mobile phones but is also a grey area for manufacturers of such mobile phones as it motivates buyers to acquire counterfeits of such world-famous telephone brands that are passed off as genuine products at higher margins for the counterfeiter because the counterfeiter would sell them at the genuine selling price. Materialism is a value structure through which individuals seek more than the instrumental value from the goods they acquire. Materialists tend to judge themselves and others by the quality and quantity of possessions owned. As such, people who have a higher level of materialism find it harder to be satisfied because they want to get the best quality products, including mobile phones. In cases where they cannot afford the best quality phones, they may be tempted to purchase counterfeits ones too.

The study concluded that subjective norm is a person's perception of pressure in the social environment that is accepted so that it shows certain behaviour through considerations made by someone. The social environment in question is an environment that is close to someone such as family, friends, colleagues at work and others. Inputs from social groups have an important and significant impact on the purchasing decisions of potential consumers. This is because information from each individual may be biased so that potential consumers will seek opinions from people, they trust such as family, friends, or co-workers. This pressure to conform to society expectations may lead buyers to purchase counterfeit Phones that they would not buy under normal conditions.



The study concluded that through moral intensity attitude individuals encounter moral or ethical issues within the personal environments of their daily living as they shop for mobile phones. These personal environments are complex, including diverse and sometimes conflicting social, economic, cultural and organizational elements. Once a moral dilemma is recognized, the individual is then asked to make a moral judgment and establish a moral intent. Included in the moral intent phase are individual and situational moderating variables as well as variables of opportunity and significant others. Failure to recognize a moral choice places the individual's behaviour outside the realm of the ethical decision making process, including possible pressure to make choices to purchase counterfeits.

5.3 Recommendations

From the findings of this study, recommendations are made to mobile phone companies in relation to product policy more so the area of influencing buyer decision making process in relation to mobile phones. Based on the results from this research, mobile phone company management should incorporate brand image building strategy in their market differentiation strategies since the results indicated a significant relationship between buyer persona and purchase choice. The mobile companies are advised to frame suitable marketing policies that enable buyers to make informed decisions in terms of the balance between the acquired image and value for money spend.

The study recommends that companies and manufacturers that determine that they have consumers and buyers with high-materialism should make phone products and versions of brands that still give the expected status symbol but are affordable to majority of buyers. On the other hand, the study recommends that the companies with high status brands should carry out promotion campaigns to drive affluent buyers to acquire phones primarily to symbolize and communicate status and success messages to others because Materialistic consumers should have an enhanced/magnified familiarity about available products in the market to exhibit their social status.

Multinational Manufacturers of mobile phones should design Phones that are differentiated to fit the financial capability of different countries so that counterfeiters find no motivation to bring in cheaper versions and imitations of the of the real phones. Such lower priced but branded phones would help buyers to feel that they have got value for their money in terms of showing off their newly acquired items to other.

The study recommended that organizations, including manufacturers of mobile phones should pay more attention to consumers' sense of environmental indebtedness. In terms of brands, more attention should be paid to consumers' emotional needs from the perspective of sensibility, which is conducive to promoting consumers' status symbol purchases. Companies should invest in research to determine consumer's emotional elements of demand so that they make products that give consumers appropriate status symbol at affordable prices which helps to awaken consumers' emotional compensation in case they don't afford the kind of phone they may have desired.

The study recommends further that organizations should emphasize the importance of moral judgment and attitude in explaining and shaping behavioural intentions and ethical behaviour in all purchases but specifically in the case of mobile phones. Marketing departments should put captions that advice consumers and buyers of the moral expectation in making purchases. They should advertise the need to buy original products rather than counterfeits. It's also recommended that to shape consumer attitudes towards an organisations goods, mobile phone companies and manufacturers should encourage ethical consumer behaviour in their adverts since the study has



shown that there exists a relationship between judgment (attitudes) and ethical consumer behaviour.

The study recommends that the Government should reduce taxes and duties on phones and allied products so that they become more affordable since materialistic consumers are driven to purchase counterfeit phones due to the high price of genuine products. The government should also invest in research and motivate companies to carry out research and make world brands locally so that they become more affordable to the citizens. The study recommends that Anti-counterfeiting authorities and all other agencies mandated to curtail counterfeit and illicit trade should use the study findings to make plans to act from the demand side since the study findings have indicated that there exists non-deceptive demand where shows that consumers and buyers are influenced by their peers, family and colleagues in making purchase and demand decisions. Its recommended that the authorities as well as NGOS should make efforts to influence the consumers by spreading and teaching the public about the dangers and immorality of counterfeit consumption for phones and other goods too.

The public and government relations departments of mobile phone companies need to involve the government and suggest ways to ensure that the mobile telephone industry enjoys fair competition. The Government should put in place stern guidelines to curb corporate malpractices like making or importation of fake or counterfeit mobile phones as well as other corrupt activities that would lead to unfair business environment. Dishonest traders import counterfeit and fake phones and position them as genuine high end brands which deceives un suspecting and genuine buyers and consumers into buying such knock offs.

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