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Identifying moderators of brand attachment for driving customer purchase intention of original vs counterfeits of luxury brands

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Abstract:

Few studies have examined the relationships between brands and consumers in the context of counterfeiting. In this context, this research aims to explore how the attachment of a consumer with a luxury brand can affect her/his decision to buy counterfeits, and how this relates to her/his public self-consciousness. Two survey based studies were conducted among potential counterfeit buyers in Brazil. Innovatively, this research provides convincing implications for the need to differentiate counterfeiting theory between emerging and developed economies. Evidence of the positive impact of actual self-congruence and ideal self-congruence on brand attachment to luxury brands in emerging economies is provided. Interestingly, the results demonstrate that the purchase of counterfeits is a more hedonic process compared to the purchase of originals (study 1). Moreover, the effect of brand attachment on the willingness to buy counterfeits may vary according to how attachment is measured (study 2). Producing increments in the emotional brand attachment level can reduce the behavioral intentions of purchasing counterfeits. Hence, the findings suggest that the creation of emotional links with brands can be an appropriate strategy to reduce counterfeiting.

Keywords: Consumer-Brand Relationships, Self-Brand Connection, Brand Prominence, Emotional Brand Attachment, Counterfeiting, Luxury Products

1. Introduction

The luxury industry has a significant share in the global market of luxury brands growing from about 90 million consumers in 1995 up to 330 million in 2013 (Bain & Company, 2014). And this market is estimated to reach 500 million people by 2030. Brazil is the eighth country in the world considering economic losses due to counterfeiting (Havocscope, 2015). The Brazilian Federation of Industries estimates that tax losses attributable to counterfeiting amount to US\$ 25 billion (Fiesp, 2015).

A significant challenge for luxury brands remains the growing number of companies that are counterfeiting and creating a parallel or shadow market (Kapferer & Michaut, 2014). Yoo and Lee (2005) define counterfeiting as the practice of manufacturing or selling products using a brand owner's trademark without the permission or the trademark owner's oversight. Usually, these goods are cheaper and inferior in quality. While counterfeits may stimulate demand in an economy (Givon et al., 2005) and provide social status and symbolism at a fraction of the original cost (Nia & Zaichkowsky, 2000), counterfeit products mislead consumers by making them believe that they are an original brand (Kim et al. 2008). Hence, counterfeit products bring serious economic losses for the original luxury brands.

While the growth of luxury markets is caused by emerging countries (Kapferer & Michaut, 2014), most of the research about counterfeiting was carried out in developed economies (Eisend & Schuchert-Guler, 2006, Staake, Thiesse & Fleisch 2009). According to OECD (2007) studies, counterfeiting differs among countries due to a series of factors (e.g. how local government deal and combat piracy). Sheth (2011) outlines five characteristics of emerging markets (heterogeneity, sociopolitical governance, chronic shortage of resources, unbranded competition and inadequate infrastructure) that are fundamentally different from the traditional industrialized economies. Yet, the speed of transformation has been somewhat too high for the enforcement agencies and many countries are now emerging as both large producers and consumers of fakes with counterfeiting being also considered a source of income for the population and a form of transference of technology (Staake, Thiesse & Fleisch 2009). Previous studies show significant differences between low and high income buyers of counterfeits in emerging economies, where the income differences are higher than in developed countries (Bacha, Strehlau & Strehlau, 2013; Gambim & Nogani, 2013). In the same vein, Hennigs et al. (2013) compared ten different nations in a large survey that included Brazil, United States, India and Germany, exploring luxury products. They observed that the importance of the above mentioned factors is significantly different among these countries confirming the need for conceptual differentiation.

An urgent need for more research on the relative importance of determinants of counterfeiting and the effect on individuals and the economy is noted (Bosworth, 2006; Yoo & Lee, 2012). This research aims to cover a still existing knowledge gap on the antecedents of purchasing counterfeited luxury products in emerging economies. Whilst counterfeiting is seen as a global phenomenon (Europol, 2015), the BRIC countries of Brazil (Provedel, 2009), Russia (Salnik, 2011), India (Europol, 2015) and, especially, China (Yao, 2006) exhibit a concerning high large scale production of counterfeited products. As emerging countries offer a higher level of vertical social mobility, a potential positive effect of counterfeits is seen in that they may actually advertise the sales of the original brand (Qian, 2008, in Kapferer & Michaut, 2014). However, this might alienate more exclusive clients, as indicated by Kapferer and Michaut (2014, p.61): "A sense of exclusivity thus is of paramount importance, but this sense gets diminished by the multiplication of wearers of the same logo, real or fake, such that aspirational consumers might abandon widespread brands - a negative externality of the growth of counterfeits". In this context, Manser (2013) points to a still existing research gap in explaining purchasing behavior

of counterfeit luxury products in emerging economies. Manser (2013) suggests to differentiate behavioral patterns within cultures (i.e. between China and other Asian cultures), across cultures and, going beyond cultures, also between individual countries in emerging markets. Eisend and Schuchert-Guler (2006) conducted a meta-analysis of 29 empirical studies about counterfeiting and observed that only two studies have focused on particular brands within a product category (Leisen & Nill 2001; Yoo & Lee 2005). They also observe that research was mostly conducted with consumers from Asia or North America. Most studies relate to different product categories and only few are related to luxury brands (Mourad & Vallete-Florence, 2011). Many studies on counterfeiting examine its effect on brand evaluation of the original brand. These studies overlook the effect of a brand on the intention to purchase originals and counterfeits (Comurri, 2009; Cademan, Henriksson & Nyqvist, 2012; Hieke, 2010; Nia & Zaichowsky, 2000).

With some exceptions (Randhawa et al., 2015; Raza et al., 2014), there is sparse knowledge on the role of brand attachment on purchasing intentions of counterfeits. Thomson et al. (2005) proposed a scale of consumer emotional attachment to brands but acknowledged a need to test the generalizability of the scale by using non-student samples. This paper tests the role of their scale in the context of purchasing behaviour towards counterfeits based on data from a more homogenous population of consumers. The data is likely to display therefore a larger scale variance. Moreover, there is a need to evaluate the dimensionality of brand attachment, given that two scenarios of single and second-order factors were proposed in the literature (Park et al., 2010).

In summary, notwithstanding the importance of brands on consumer behavior, there is gap involving the influence of brand (more specifically brand attachment and brand self congruence) on the purchasing of counterfeits and originals. There is also a lack of studies on luxury markets in emerging economies.

This work is innovative in this field exploring how personal and brand-related factors, including two alternative measures of brand attachment, affect purchase intentions of brands and counterfeits in the emerging market of Brazil. In other words, the paper expands Yoo and Lee's (2009) framework of consumer purchasing behavior of counterfeits by integrating the role of public self-consciousness, actual and ideal self-congruence (Malär et al., 2011) and attachment to luxury brands (Park et al., 2011). Thus the paper includes a wide range of personal as well as, so far, overlooked brand-related factors in providing an improved understanding of purchasing behaviour toward counterfeits vis-a-vis original brands. After a very comprehensive and conscientious literature review, to the knowledge of the authors, this paper innovatively measures the impact of two ways of measuring brand attachment on purchasing counterfeits. The relationship of this latter concept with types of self and purchasing behavior of counterfeits and originals is considered. Finally, the paper fills a knowledge gap on purchasing behavior of counterfeits in emerging economies.

The objectives of the paper are: i) to explore the role of types of perceived benefits of buying counterfeits and consumer characteristics on purchasing intentions of original luxury brands and their counterfeits; ii) to investigate how brand attachment impacts these purchasing intentions; iii) to test the moderating role of product involvement, self-esteem and public self-consciousness in the relationships between ideal, actual self-congruence and brand attachment. An evaluation of whether the effects of brand attachment on behavioral intentions are dependent on how attachment is measured will be undertaken.

2. Conceptual underpinning and hypotheses development

The first stream of research on counterfeits focused on supply factors (Bamossey & Scammon, 1985). In subsequent research the focus shifted to demand factors (Nia & Zaichkowsky, 2000; Wilcox et al., 2009). While past studies emphasized price and quality in understanding purchasing behavior of counterfeits (Cordell et al., 1996), calls are made to move beyond these purely economic antecedents (Poddar et al., 2012).

Eisend and Schuchert-Güler (2006) carried out a first meta-analysis regarding the reasons for why consumers buy and use counterfeits. They identify four categories of factors that influence purchasing behavior of counterfeits: personal, product-related, social and cultural context, and purchase situation and mood.

Personal factors are reported extensively in the literature (Chakraborty et al., 1996; Misbah & Rahman, 2015; Penz & Stöttinger, 2005) and include demographic and psychographic variables such as consumers' income, education, occupation, attitudes and personality traits. Product-related factors are associated with price, product attributes, brand image and scarcity (Jenner & Artun, 2005; Poddar et al., 2012; and Wilcox et al., 2009). The social and cultural context category includes factors such as cultural norms (Franses & Lede, 2015) or the extent to which the brand fulfills social goals, as well as the influence of family and friends (Prendergast et al., 2002; Wilcox et al., 2009). Purchase situation and mood-related factors (Harvey & Walls, 2003) can moderate the influence of attitudes on intentions (Eisend & Schuchert-Güler, 2006) and provide perceived symbolism associated with a purchase (Gentry et al., 2006).

The paper is grounded into the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975) and the attachment theory (Bowlby, 1979). According to TRA, attitudes towards performing a behaviour are good predictors of the intention of that specific behaviour. In this study attitudes toward buying counterfeits were found to be driven by hedonic and economic benefits. Hedonic benefits are more subjective and related to issues such as pleasure, personal benefits, self-expression and entertainment (Ahtola, 1985; Babin et al., 1994). These attitudes to the hedonic benefits of counterfeits represent a key driver of purchase intentions (Yoo and Lee, 2009). Relative to hedonic benefits, utilitarian benefits are thought to have a greater influence on loyalty towards the originals (Chiu et al., 2009). Yoo & Lee (2009) hold that consumers, who have more hedonic benefits than utilitarian benefits, will easily accept counterfeiting items. Therefore, these two types of benefits are regarded to be antecedents of intentions to purchase counterfeits.

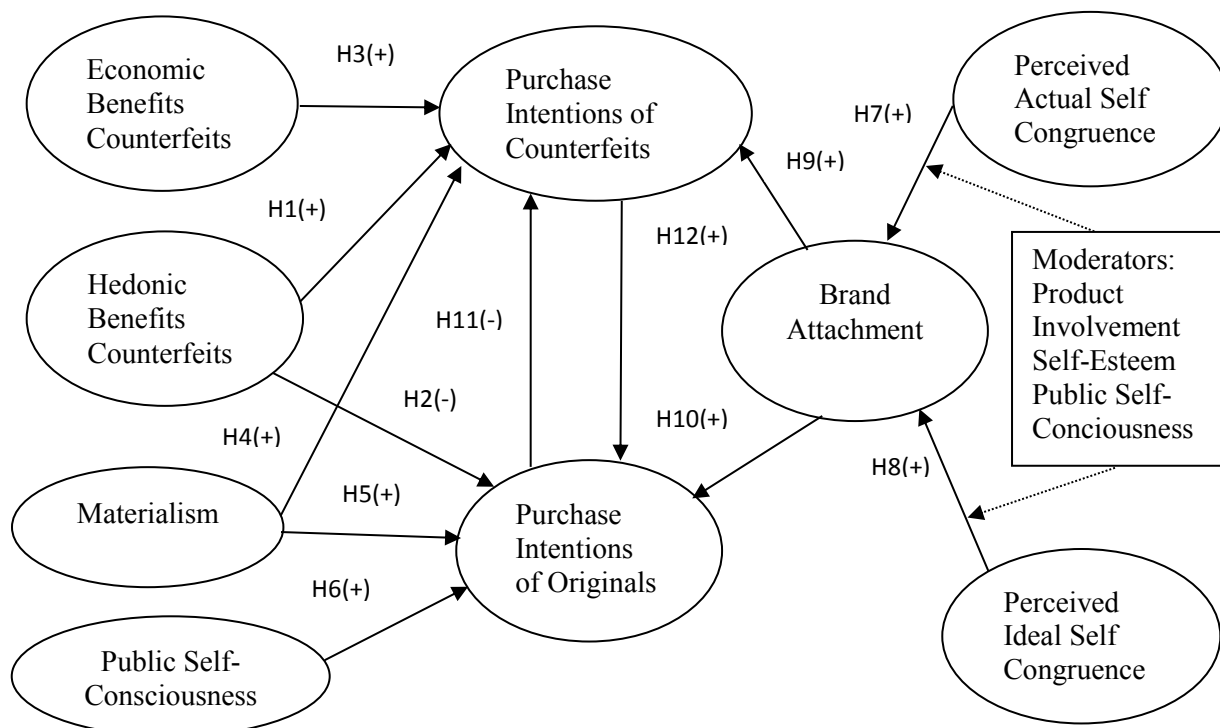
The attachment theory posits that one's emotional attachment to an object predicts the individual interaction with that object. These interactions can take various forms such as: favourable attitudes towards the object (Thomson et al., 2005); a material centrality of the object in personal life (Richins, 1994); mental representation and schemes related to self (Holmes, 2000); strong separation distress (Bowlby, 1979) and a strong commitment to engaging into a long-term relationship with the object (Miller, 1997; Thomson et al., 2005). The material centrality is a key dimension of materialism which increases the desire for counterfeits (Swami et al., 2009; Yoo & Lee, 2009). In this study emotional brand attachment is anchored into the attachment theory.

Yoo and Lee (2009) develop a model of antecedents of purchase intentions of counterfeits versus original luxury fashion brands. They propose that economic and hedonic benefits of counterfeits, materialism and the frequency of past purchases of counterfeits have a

positive impact on purchases of counterfeits. Purchase intentions of originals, however, have a negative effect. Yet, their study overlooks product-related, purchase-related or socio-cultural factors.

This research proposes a model of consumer purchase of luxury counterfeits versus originals by holistically integrating (Figure 1) an extensive range of personal factors as well as brand-related factors in the context of the emerging economy of Brazil.

Figure 1. A model of consumer purchase of luxury counterfeits versus originals



Source: developed and adapted from Malär et al. (2011), Park et al. (2011) and Yoo and Lee (2009)

This paper expands the current frameworks of the extant literature on consumer purchasing behavior of counterfeits (Chiu et al., 2009; Mourad & Valette-Florence, 2011; Triandewi & Tjiptono, 2013; Yoo & Lee, 2009). The model integrates the role of public self-consciousness (Bushman, 1993; Marquis, 1998; Nia & Zaichkowsky, 2000), actual, ideal self-congruence (Ahna et al., 2013; Hosany & Martin, 2012; Malär et al., 2011; Mugge et al., 2006) and attachment to luxury brands (Kapferer & Bastien, 2009; Kim et al., 2015; Park et al., 2011). Specifically, the proposed model expands Yoo’s and Lee’s (2009) framework of consumer purchasing behavior of counterfeits by integrating the personal and brand-related factors such as attachment to luxury brands (Park et al., 2011), actual, ideal self-congruence and moderating factors such as self-esteem, public self-consciousness and product involvement (Malär et al., 2011). Furthermore, the effect of two types of measures of brand attachment on intentions to buy original brands and counterfeits is evaluated.

Concerning personal factors, attitudes towards buying counterfeits driven by economic and hedonic benefits are consistently cited in the literature as antecedents of consumer behavior (Arnold & Reynolds, 2003; Babin et al., 1994; Batra & Ahtola, 1991; Dhar & Wertenbroch, 2000; Sarkar, 2011). Specifically regarding to counterfeits, extensive research from Chiu et al. (2009), Dodge et al. (1996), Nia & Zaichkowsky (2000), Triandewi & Tjiptono (2013) and Yoo & Lee (2009) suggest the impact of economic and hedonic benefits on purchase intentions of counterfeits.

Materialism is another personal factor attached with the acquisition of material goods (Park & Burns, 2005; Phau et al., 2009). Relations among purchase of counterfeits and materialism are suggested by Chuchinprakarn (2003), Furnham and Valgeirsson (2007), Kozar and Marcketti (2011) and Yoo and Lee (2009). However, studies relating materialism with intention of purchasing originals are scarce. Another personal factor considered in this research was public self-consciousness, as consumers would buy brands to construct their image in social situations (Burnkrant & Page, 1982). The influence of public self-consciousness on consumer behavior is observed in the literature (Bushman, 1993; Marquis, 1998; Xu, 2008), but research exploring its relations with counterfeiting are scarce and of qualitative nature (Nia & Zaichkowsky, 2000).

The study of the relations of brands and counterfeiting are more frequently explored in literature in order to understand how the spread of counterfeits would impact the original brand (Comurri, 2009). Considering product related factors, brand attachment is frequently cited as a relevant antecedent of consumer behavior (Escalas, 2004; Park et al., 2010). Schmalz and Orth (2012) explore how brand attachment would impact unethical behavior. Mourad and Valette-Florence (2011) propose a theoretical model in which brand attachment would impact attitudes of consumers towards purchasing counterfeits. Penz and Stöttinger (2012) observe that emotional aspects have significant impact on purchasing counterfeits and originals, indicating the importance of exploring relations among brands and purchase of counterfeits.

Several theoretical and empirical studies on the relations of the self-concept with consumer behavior have been developed in the last years (Kressman et al., 2006; Sirgy, 1982; Sirgy et al., 2000). Hosany and Martin (2012) observe that empirical studies about self-congruence are found in the marketing literature since 1968. More recent studies suggest that self-congruence could affect product and brand attachment, but none was designed to exploring the purchase of counterfeits (Kim et al., 2015; Malär et al., 2011; Mugge et al., 2006).

Considering aspects related to the consumer identity, Gistri et al. (2009) point out that counterfeit products lack identity, as they are always evaluated by their “alter ego”: the originals. Producers could argue that efforts to make the fake somehow real would be ineffective, since the products’ “soul” would remain unauthentic. These authors suggest that an individual cannot enhance his/her identity on faking roots. This is despite the fact that she/he may attempt to extend her/his self to the members of a social group by exhibiting fake products (Gistri et al., 2009). On the other hand, Kapferer and Michaut (2014) stress that the core identity of the original brand, in the sense of the core values of exclusivity and high quality, is violated by the faking offspring. This relationship therefore is based mainly on superficial logo effects. Latter authors suggest that this effect is caused by an overemphasis of the original on increased accessibility and conspicuous branding to appeal to ever bigger segments of consumers.

The significant relevance of the micro sociological concept of identity for Russian consumer luxury brand relationships is confirmed by Kaufmann et al. (2012). Individual factors of the identity concept are integrated in the hypothesized conceptualization (Figure 1).

A second study examines whether the impact of two types of self on brand attachment is moderated by product category involvement, self-esteem and public self-consciousness in a similar way as in developed economies (Malär et al., 2011). Investigating if brand attachment needs to be differentiated as to emerging markets, this research also hypothesizes that the effect of brand attachment on purchase intentions of originals and counterfeits may vary according to how brand attachment is measured. Brand attachment can have mixed effects on the purchase intentions of counterfeits. On the one hand, attachment to a luxury brand in the absence of affordability of originals can lead to greater willingness to buy counterfeits (Randhawa et al., 2015). On the other hand, brand attachment, particularly when emotional bonds are strong, may

be also associated with lower intentions to buy counterfeits. This is particularly the case when originals may be regarded as a single source of prestige and gratification.

Raza et al. (2014) explore relationships between brand attachment, low prices, and the attitude towards counterfeits, brand image and past experiences on purchasing intentions of mobile phones. According to this study, past experiences with counterfeits have a strong impact. However, factors related to the past purchases of originals and counterfeits are excluded from the study. Self-reported measures of such behavior can be subject to desirability bias and do not represent the focus of the study.

2.1 Attitudes towards counterfeits: economic benefits and hedonic benefits

A concise summary of the literature on perceived customer values is provided by Mathews et al. (2009). This points to the generic categorizations of utilitarian and hedonic values based on two seminal papers (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982, and Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982, in Mathews et al., 2009) and differentiated perspectives as to brands, products, services, stores or shopping experience. By pursuing utilitarian motives a buyer applies logical problem solving (Sarkar, 2011) for purchase decisions related to more instrumental and functional goods (Dhar and Wertenbroch, 2000).

Purchase decisions for more hedonic products (i.e. designer clothes, sports cars, luxury watches, etc.) are driven by emotion. Experience, fun, pleasure, and excitement are related motives (Dhar & Wertenbroch, 2000; Sarkar, 2011). Expanding on the role of emotions and developing an emotional concept, Hirschman and Stern (1999, p.4) reviewed a tripartite set of literature: “These include (1) the cognitive stream, typified by inquiries regarding emotion’s role as the affective component of attitude (e.g., Aaker & Stayman, 1989) or as a precursor to cognitive restructuring (Isen, 1984); (2) the hedonic consumption stream as exemplified early on by the work of Holbrook and Havlena (Havlena & Holbrook, 1986) and most recently by Celsi, Rose and Leigh (1993) and Arnould and Price (1993); (3) the compulsive/addictive consumption stream beginning with early work on impulse purchasing by Rook (1987) and evolving into more general models as exemplified by Faber and O’Guinn (1989), Hirschman (1992) and Rindfleisch, Burroughs and Denton (1997)”.

Hedonic benefits make people think that the experience and characteristics of the goods themselves are already valuable requiring less attention to the quality of the products (Babin, Darden, & Griffin, 1994). A positive influence of the consumers’ attitude toward hedonic benefits of counterfeits on their purchase intentions is expected (Yoo & Lee, 2009; Hidayat & Diwasasri, 2013).

Lianto (2015) reports evidence of a positive influence of hedonic benefits on the purchase intention of counterfeits aligned with the findings of Hidayat and Diwasasri (2013). However, Lianto (2015) argues that Triandewi and Tjiptono (2013) find no significant effect of hedonic benefits on the purchase intention of counterfeits and suggests that results could be dependent on product category or culture.

Yoo and Lee (2009) observe that economic values are one of the main antecedents of purchasing counterfeits, since the consumers believe that they can have similar benefits from counterfeit goods in comparison to original products. This is confirmed by the results of Dantas et al. (2012) who found that status and low prices are the main drivers of purchasing counterfeits. When consumers have high affordability of original luxury brands, economic benefits of counterfeits may not necessarily influence their intentions to purchase originals (Yoo & Lee, 2009). Hence no theoretical link between economic benefits of counterfeits and consumption of originals is proposed. The above discussions frame the following hypotheses:

H1: Hedonic Benefits have a positive effect on the purchasing intention of counterfeit products.

H2: Hedonic Benefits have a positive effect on the purchasing intention of original products.

H3: Economic Benefits have a positive effect on the purchasing intention of counterfeit products.

2.2 Materialism

According to Johnson and Attmann (2009), materialism is the attached importance on possession and acquisition of material goods, seeking to achieve life goals and desired comfort conditions (Phau et al., 2009; Park & Burns, 2005). This paper follows the definition by Shrum et al. (2013) mainly because it stresses self-related functions and as it emphasizes the motives of materialistic behavior. Both aspects are consistent and integral to the developed initial conceptualization (Figure 1). Materialism is regarded as the extent to which individuals attempt to engage in the construction and maintenance of the self through the acquisition and use of products, services, experiences, or relationships that are perceived to provide desirable symbolic value.

Materialists place “possessions and their acquisition at the center of their lives” and view them “as essential to their satisfaction and well-being in life” (Richins & Dawson, 1992, p. 304). Their primary goal of material possessions is to impress others rather than themselves. From this perspective, both counterfeits and originals fit the purpose of consumers’ external physical vanity. This is achieved through prestige and display effect, despite significant quality differences.

External physical vanity refers to “an excessive concern for, and/or a positive (and perhaps inflated) view of, one’s physical appearance” (Netemeyer, Burton, & Lichtenstein, 1995, p. 612). Consumers will have the identical appearance whether they wear a counterfeit or an original. Consumers of counterfeits need only verisimilitude and therefore purchase just the prestige of the originals without paying for it (Penz & Stöttinger, 2005).

Yoo and Lee (2009) argue that materialism attracts those consumers who tend to ignore the negative consequences of counterfeiting. These include threats to the consumers' safety and health, losses for the economies and national societies and damages to the reputation of an original brand. When consumers are not aware of these consequences, they are more likely to purchase counterfeit products, driven by a materialistic desire.

Triandewi and Tjiptono (2013), Jain and Khanna (2015) as well as Chuchinprakarn (2003) state, that materialism has a significant impact on purchase intention of counterfeits. Strehlau et al. (2014) suggest a positive relation between proneness to counterfeits and materialism in Brazil. Sharma and Chan (2011) find similar results. Materialism has been also reported to contribute to the intention to purchase counterfeit goods (Swami et al., 2009; Wee et al., 1995). Thus, the following additional hypotheses are specified:

H4: Materialism has a positive effect on the purchasing intention of counterfeit products.

H5: Materialism has a positive effect on the purchasing intention of original products.

2.3 Public self-consciousness

According to Kernis (2003), a good self-image is considered to be one of the strongest psychogenic needs of human beings, because it encourages people to feel good about themselves. Self-image relates to “how we see ourselves, which is important to good psychological health. Self-image includes the influence of the body image on inner personality. At a simple level, we might perceive ourselves as a good or bad person, beautiful or ugly. Self-image has an effect on how a person thinks, feels and behaves in the world” (Rogers, 1959, in *Simply Psychology*, 2014). According to Malär et al. (2011), the self-verification theory indicates that people are motivated to validate objects to be consistent with their existing self-concepts. Individuals tend to behave in a manner consistent with how they see themselves. An identical mechanism is relevant for the ideal self, which supports them in their self-enhancement activities by giving them a feeling of getting closer to their ideal self (Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967, cited in Malär et al., 2011).

In line with Burnkrant and Page (1982), this paper regards public self-consciousness as a more active variant of the self compared to self-image. Consumers scoring high on public self-consciousness display higher levels of sensitivity regarding the kind of image called for in specific social situations. These consumers use consumer brands strategically to construct this image and to present themselves accordingly. Malär et al. (2011) point out the importance of self-image for publicly self-conscious people. Lee (2009) observes that public self-consciousness is strongly related to both the benefit beliefs and the risk beliefs of purchasing fashion counterfeits, which in turn, influenced college students’ attitudes regarding purchase counterfeits. Yang (2012) points out indirect effects of public self-consciousness on the intentions to purchase originals and counterfeits. Given the positive effect of self-image on purchase intentions of originals (Yoo and Lee, 2009), the study assumes and tests whether public self-consciousness has a positive effect on such intentions.

H6: Public self-consciousness has a positive effect on the purchasing intention of original products.

2.4 Brand Attachment and Self Congruence

Brand attachment is defined as the strength of connection between self and the brand. Two critical factors reflect brand attachment properties, namely brand-self connection (the cognitive and emotional connection to the brand (Escalas, 2004) and brand prominence the degree to which “feelings and memories about the attachment object are perceived as top of mind” (Park et al., 2010, p.2). The self-verification theory holds that people are motivated to verify, validate and sustain their existing self-concepts (Swann, 2012). Hence, individuals behave in ways consistent with how they see themselves or their actual self (Lecky, 1945).

The purchase and consumption of brands congruent with their actual self represent a means of accomplishing this desire for self-expression. Based on the logic of this theory, both the actual self and the aspirational self (ideal-self) are expected to have a positive impact on the emotional attachment to brands conveying images and values feeding this self and personal identity (Kaufmann et al., 2012). Considering this logic and referring to Malär’s et al’s. (2011) aforementioned view the following two hypotheses are proposed:

H7: Actual self-congruence has a positive effect on brand attachment.

H8: Ideal self-congruence has a positive effect on brand attachment.

Park et al. (2010) state, that companies increasingly emphasize a strong emotional connection between them and their consumers. Using qualitative data, Penz and Stöttinger (2012) confirm that emotional aspects are important drivers of purchasing decisions of counterfeits. However, their results indicate different patterns of positive, negative or mixed emotions as antecedents of purchasing originals and fake products.

Relating to Brazil, Fetscherin et al. (2014) observe that brand love, highly related with brand attachment, has significant relations with purchase intention and word of mouth. This applies to most of the product categories in their study. Similarly, Olhats et al. (2013) find that brand attachment may create significant intention of buying specific original brands. Accordingly, Borges and Teixeira de Mello (2014) conduct a survey in Brazil that identifies a high impact of brand attachment on word of mouth.

The brand association used to construct self-concept and connection to others (Escalas & Bettman, 2005) can be satisfied through material ownership. Consumers can act dishonestly (Mazar et al., 2008) and are tempted to regard the behavior of using a prestigious brand without paying a high price as acceptable (Bian & Moutinho, 2009). According to Gosline (2009), the counterfeit product actually serves as a placebo for brand attachment. Consumers become increasingly attached to the real brand even though they never own one. This pseudo-access to the brand via the counterfeit allows the consumers to form a paradoxal relationship with the original brand. This democratizes the exclusivity of the luxury product. Raza et al. (2014) hypothesize the effect of brand attachment on the purchase intentions of counterfeits, but found no significant relation, probably because the study was not focused on luxury products. In line with Randhawa et al. (2015) a positive brand self-connection, an integral part of brand attachment, is positively linked to counterfeit purchasing. The following hypotheses are therefore proposed:

H9: Brand attachment has a positive effect on purchasing intention of counterfeits.

H10: Brand attachment has a positive effect on the purchasing intention of originals.

Yoo & Lee (2009) argue that consumers who prefer legitimate products do not desire the counterfeit products being more satisfied with the originals. Experiences with original products provide greater satisfaction due to a better physical quality and interpersonal approval of the products. These characteristics therefore reduce the interest in counterfeits. This is confirmed by Kapferer's and Michaut's (2014) study, stating that consumers who are driven by sustainability motives prefer the original product. Therefore, the following hypothesis is tested:

H11: Purchasing intention of originals negatively affects the purchasing intention of counterfeit products.

Reversely, Yoo and Lee (2009) suggest that the intentions to buy counterfeits may be associated positively with intentions to buy originals. As little testing of this relationship has taken place so far in emerging economies, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H12: Purchasing intention of counterfeits positively affects the purchasing intention of originals.

Given the immediacy of actual self to consumer identity and ideal self being shaped by goals, aspirations and imagination (Wylie, 1979), one expects that a brand is psychologically closer

to actual self-congruence. The ideal self is linked to a more abstract high-level construal (Malär et al., 2011). While advertising campaigns in the west successfully activate both actual ('Dove loves your body campaign') and ideal self (e.g. idealized images of celebrities). In line with Malär et al. (2011), a more concrete construal activated by actual self is hypothesized to be stronger in emotional connection to brands including luxuries. The following hypothesis provides a testing opportunity in an emerging economy context:

H13: Actual self-congruence has a stronger effect on emotional brand attachment than ideal self-congruence.

2.5. Moderating effects

According to the self-discrepancy theory (Higgins, 1987), people compare themselves using self-guides, like the actual and ideal self. The absence of an actual and ideal discrepancy is associated with emotions like satisfaction, as hopes and wishes were achieved (Higgins, 1987). On the contrary, high levels of self-discrepancy may lead to dissatisfaction and depression (Vartanian, 2012).

According to Malär et al. (2011), based on these self-verification processes, consumers will feel closer to a brand that is more congruent with their actual self. These authors argue that a person with low self-esteem would perceive her/his actual self as more negative. This person is less likely to create brand attachment with brands that converge to their actual self. Therefore, consumers with high scores of self-esteem would be more inclined to develop emotional brand attachment in this case.

In addition, Malär et al. (2011) point out that self-esteem has a positive moderating effect on the relationship between actual self-brand congruence and brand attachment. Malär's et al.'s (2011) postulated moderating effects of product involvement, self-esteem and public social consciousness are also explored by this study in the emerging economy of Brazil.

H14a. Product involvement strengthens the relationship between actual self-congruence and emotional brand attachment.

H14b. Product involvement weakens the relationship between ideal self-congruence and emotional brand attachment.

H15a. Self-esteem strengthens the relationship between actual self-congruence and emotional brand attachment.

H15b. Self-esteem weakens the relationship between ideal self-congruence and emotional brand attachment.

H16a. Public self-consciousness strengthens the relationship between actual self-congruence and emotional brand attachment.

H16b. Public self-consciousness weakens the relationship between ideal self-congruence and emotional brand attachment.

3. Method

To test the hypotheses, two studies are conducted. In Study 1, personal and product-related factors influencing purchasing intentions of originals and counterfeits are examined using the survey method. Study 2 replicates a concise subset of the conceptual model in Study 1 and provides two alternative measures of brand attachment. The focus of both studies is luxury fashion brands and corresponding counterfeits.

3.1. Study 1

3.1.1. *Selecting the product category*

The luxury fashion category of designer handbags was selected for the following motives: first, consumers have a high brand familiarity and recognition. According to Infomoney (2013), 56% of the consumers of the social class targeted in this study bought at least one fake product during the last year; second, the extent of counterfeiting practices in this category is high (Yoo and Lee, 2012); third, functional, emotional, experiential and symbolic benefits of this product are well represented.

3.1.2. *Data collection procedures and measures*

A total of 600 participants completed the questionnaire and the response rate was 40%. A sample of 532 consumers was eligible for analysis after the examination of missing data. Respondents consisted of middle class (C class) female fashion shoppers from Belo Horizonte, the third largest city in Brazil. Hemais et al. (2013) state that consumption for the C class has a meaning of “being part” and participating in the consumer society, and that this can bring higher levels of dignity to this population’s group. Brazil is stratified into five social classes and the C class represents 60.2 % of the population (Brazil Institute of Statistics and Geography, 2014).

A multi-stage systematic proportional sampling method was employed in recruiting respondents. In a first stage a proportional representation of each of the nine administrative regions of Bel Horizonte was determined. This was followed by a selection of specific locations/points of commerce in each region (i.e. supermarkets, salons, fashion outlets), distributed in blocks equidistant of each region. Finally, a systematic selection of respondents in each location took place to fill in each stratum. Each of 15th customer entering each location was approached and they confirmed their residential address in each observed region. Six interviewers were trained to collect data and quality control procedures were in place (time controls, cross-checks of 15% of questionnaire by independent market researchers).

The questionnaire was analyzed by eight PhDs in Marketing, in order to check face validity. All the scales were derived from previous studies as discussed in the literature review. A pre-test with 30 respondents was performed ensuring conceptual equivalence between the initial English and the translated questionnaire in Portuguese.

The first question explored the interest of the respondents in buying a luxury handbag. Respondents with low scores of interest were discarded. They were also asked to indicate a luxury handbag brand that they would like to buy. All the answers of the questionnaire were related to this specific brand, in order to supply a more objective context. In line with Malär et al. (2011) the unit of analysis for brand attachment and self-congruence was the individual relationship between a consumer and the specific indicated brand. Seven global luxury fashion brands were cited with the top three being Louis Vuitton (38%), Prada (21%) and Chanel (20%).

The sample profile was as follows: 7.3% were less than 20 years old, 39.7% were aged 20-29 years; 31.7% were aged 30-39, 21.3% were over 40 years old. The distribution based on education was: 6.4% primary school, 31.10% secondary school, 18.5% college student, 44% higher education degree. Most importantly, 61.6% presented a high interest to purchase a luxury handbag.

The questionnaire consisted of items related to materialism, perceived economic and hedonic benefits, public self-consciousness, purchase involvement, self-esteem and purchase intentions. At last they were asked to answer a set of questions regarding self-congruence, brand attachment and demographics. The survey's instrument was operationalized through validated scales from previous studies (see Appendix A). The moderators are measured as follows. Product involvement is viewed as the degree of personal relevance and importance of the product (Park & Young, 1986). Self-esteem is a person's global evaluation of her/his worth as a human being (Rosenberg, 1979) and reflects the attitude towards the self (Tafarodi & Swann, 1995). Self-esteem is measured on Rosenberg's (1965) scale, and six items are retained on the basis of Malär's et al's (2011) validation in three industries. Public self-consciousness is defined as one's awareness of self as a social object or the awareness that others have of the self (Fenigstein et al., 1975). The four items validated by Malär et al. (2011) from the seven-item scale proposed by Fenigstein et al. (1975) are employed. Brand attachment is measured with both brand self-connection and prominence (Park et al., 2010).

All constructs are measured on a ten-point scale (1=strongly disagree; 10=strongly agree) which was deemed the most suitable format to capture full construct variance based on the pilot study.

All the Composite Reliability (CR) statistics were higher than the recommended thresholds (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988; Nunally, 1978). All AVE (average variance explained) were also over 0.5 (Appendix 1). Cronbach alphas ranged between 0.71 and 0.96. All the items presented significant loadings and the AVEs exceeded the squared correlation between the corresponding construct and the rest of variables in the model indicating discriminant validity. Therefore, convergent and discriminant validity is confirmed applying the procedures suggested by Fornel and Larker (1981) and Bagozzi et al. (1991).

3.1.3. Analysis and results

After testing the measurement model's validity, a structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis was conducted (Hair et al., 2009; Malhotra, 2001) to test the hypotheses. The Confirmatory Factor Analysis was conducted using the "Lavaan package" of R software, version 3.0.2 and the structural models were estimated in Amos 22.0. The results are presented in table 1:

Table 1. Results

Hypotheses	Relationship	CS	Assessment
H1	Hedonic Benefits > Purchasing intention of counterfeits	0.26**	Supported
H2	Hedonic Benefits > purchasing intention of originals	-0.29**	Supported
H3	Economic Benefits > purchasing intention of counterfeits	0.55**	Supported
H4	Materialism > purchasing intention of counterfeits	0.11*	Supported
H5	Materialism > purchasing intention of originals	0.13*	Supported

H6	Public self-consciousness > purchasing intention of original products	0.23**	Supported
H7	Actual self-congruence (ASC) > Brand attachment	0.35**	Supported
H8	Ideal self-congruence (ISC) > Brand attachment	0.22**	Supported
H9	Brand attachment > Purchasing intention of counterfeits	-0.09	Not Supported
H10	Brand attachment > Purchasing intention of originals	0.31**	Supported
H11	Purchasing intention of originals > Purchasing intention of counterfeits	-0.09*	Supported
H12	Purchasing intention of counterfeits > Purchasing intention of originals	-0.12*	Not Supported

Note: CS = Completely standardized path coefficient; ** p < .05; * p < .01

Normed chi-sq=3.01 CFI=0.86; TLI=0.84; RMSEA=0.05

R² Purchasing intention counterfeits = 0.59; R² Originals = 0.30, R² Brand attachment = 0.29.

The goodness of fit indices are satisfactory but a marginally low TLI is noted. The second order brand attachment model outperformed the first order factor model ($\Delta\chi^2 = 460.61$; $p < .000$). The model explains a substantial share of variance in purchasing intention counterfeits and a good share in variance of behavior towards originals and brand attachment. In contrast to Malär's et al.'s (2011) findings, but in line with their theoretical expectations on the individual effects, both actual and ideal self-congruence have a positive effect on brand attachment. Nonetheless the effect of actual self-congruence is not statistically stronger (H13 not supported).

The role of product involvement and self-esteem as moderators of the relationship between two types of self-congruence and brand attachment is tested and reported in table 2.

Table 2. Results for hypotheses testing: role of moderators

		ASC→Brand Attachment (standardized estimate/CR)	ISC→Brand Attachment (standardized estimate/CR)	
Basic models				
	Moderated models			
Product involvement	Low	.44(3.53)	.07(0.62)	96.09**
	High	.32(4.08)	.24(3.18)	
Self-esteem	Low	.53(5.27)	.02(0.17)	131.04**
	High	.21(2.42)	.39(4.30)	

Moderating groups defined based on median split.

The invariant modes that constrained path coefficients to be equal across moderating conditions generated a worse fit than the variant model. The statistical test of differences in path coefficients elicit that product involvement is not a significant moderator (H14a,b rejected).

In contrast to Malär et al. (2011), self-esteem reduces the positive impact of actual self-congruence on brand attachment ($p < .05$) and increases the positive impact of ideal self-congruence on brand attachment ($p < .01$) (H15a,b rejected). Hence, self-esteem represents a significant moderator in the relationship between two types of self-congruence and brand attachment.

3.2. Study 2

The lack of statistical significance of differences in path coefficients regarding product involvement as well as the unexpected differences in the role of self-esteem between our findings in Brazil and those of Malär et al. (2011) called for a second study. This study evaluates whether the role of moderators may vary between developed and emerging economies (e.g. Brazil). The second study examines whether: i) the impact of two types of self on brand attachment are moderated by product category involvement, self-esteem and public self-consciousness similarly to developed economies (Malär et al., 2011); ii) the effect of brand attachment on purchase intentions of originals and counterfeits is dependent on how brand attachment is measured. The luxury fashion category of designer handbags and an identical sampling procedure were selected again for comparability of results with study 1.

3.2.1 Data collection procedures and measures

A total of 276 consumers were eligible for analysis after the examination of missing data. Respondents consisted of middle class (C class) female fashion shoppers from Belo Horizonte. A multi-stage systematic proportional random sampling method was employed in recruiting respondents similar to Study 1. The sample profile was as follows: 5.4% were less than 20 years old, 34% were aged 20-29 years, 28.9% were aged 30-39, 31.7% were over 40 years old. The distribution based on education was: 8% primary school, 27.3% secondary school, 13.1% college degree, 51.6% higher education degree. Most importantly, 67.5% presented a high interest to purchase a luxury handbag.

The scales for actual and ideal self-congruence, purchase intentions of originals and counterfeits are identical with those in study 1 (Appendix B). Additionally, brand attachment was measured with both self-connection and prominence (see Study 1) as well as with the six-item emotional brand attachment scale (Thomson et al., 2005). Appendix B describes the measures for Study 2. Following the procedure of Little et al. (2002) (described in Malär et al., 2011) item parcels are used to measure emotional attachment. For each dimension of attachment indicators created by average values for affection, connection and passion are used in defining the higher-order construct of emotional brand attachment.

All ten-items of emotional brand attachment are internally reliable ($\alpha = 0.90$). The EBA has been constructed as an index of three factors (passion, connection and affection) to retain comparability of results with those of Malär et al. (2011). All composite reliability coefficients were satisfactory (above 0.70). The AVE coefficients were all above 0.50 with one exception (0.43) for self-esteem. The comparisons of AVEs with squared correlations of each construct and the remaining constructs demonstrate discriminant validity. All factor loadings were significant ($p < .05$). On the basis of the tests constructs can be regarded reliable and with

adequate convergent validity.

3.2.2 Analysis and results

Six of the initial set of hypotheses of the overall model were again tested in Study 2 (see Table 3). Given the replicability of measures and sampling procedure, this test can be viewed as an evaluation of validity based on an independent sample. In contrast to Park et al. (2011), all ten-items of brand attachment were used given the high and significant loadings indicated by CFA.

Table 3. Hypotheses testing: Brand attachment as self-connection and prominence

Hypotheses	CS	Assessment
H7	.26*	Supported
H8	.36**	Supported
H9	.12**	Supported
H10	.19*	Supported
H11	-.91**	Supported
H12	-.90**	Not Supported

Note: CS = Completely standardized path coefficient

** $p < .05$; $p < .01$

Normed $\chi^2=2.96$ CFI=0.94; TLI=0.92; RMSEA=0.08

R^2 Purchasing intention counterfeits = 0.85; R^2 Originals = 0.87, R^2 Brand attachment = 0.31.

The model with brand attachment as second-order factor outperformed the model with first order factor ($\Delta\chi^2=165.52$; $p.000$). The consistency of results with those of Park et al. (2011) shows that attachment should be modelled as a second order factor of brand self-connection and prominence in further studies.

Table 4 tests the same subset of six hypotheses based on a different measure of brand attachment which focuses on emotional bonds.

Table 4. Hypotheses testing: Brand attachment as emotional attachment

Hypotheses	CS	Assessment
H7	.22+	Supported
H8	.36**	Supported
H9	-.20**	Supported
H10	.23*	Supported
H11	-.90**	Supported
H12	-.91**	Not Supported

Normed $\chi^2=3.73$; CFI=0.95; TLI=0.92; RMSEA=0.09

R^2 Purchasing intention counterfeits = 0.83; R^2 Originals = 0.85, R^2 Brand attachment =0.32.

The majority of path estimates are comparable across models. A major difference in estimates is noticeable. The effect of attachment on purchase intentions of counterfeits is negative, as expected. This applies only to emotional attachment, whereas the effect of brand attachment on

these intentions is positive and similar to study 1. In other words, measuring brand attachment through self-connection and prominence systematically generates a positive sign on future plans to buy counterfeits. Hence the type of measure of consumer attachment to luxury brands corresponds to differences in results.

Brazilians who score high on self-connection to and brand prominence of their favourite fashion luxury brands are more likely to purchase either originals or counterfeits. Yet importantly, when an emotional attachment is high they are more likely to buy originals and less likely to purchase counterfeits.

While the difference in sign in path coefficient between attachment and willingness to buy counterfeits across study 1 and 2 may not be attributed to sample composition, more research is warranted. H12 is systematically rejected which represents another contrast in findings between Brazil and South Korea and, again, points to differentiate between emerging economies. In contrast to Malär et al. (2011), both actual and ideal self-congruence have a statistically comparable effect on emotional brand attachment (H13 not supported).

The role of product involvement, self-esteem and public self-consciousness as moderators of the relationship between two types of self-congruence and brand attachment is reported in Table 5.

Table 5. Results for hypotheses testing: role of moderators

Models		ASC→Emotional Brand Attachment (std path estimate/CR)	ISC→Emotional Brand Attachment (std path estimate/CR)	$\Delta\chi^2$
Basic models				
Moderated models				
Product involvement	Low	.18(0.93)	.34(1.75)	8.22
	High	.38(2.11)	-.05(-0.27)	
Self-esteem	Low	.50*(2.55)	.17(.94)	8.29
	High	.09(0.42)	.43*(2.01)	
Public Self Consciousness	Low	.09*(0.57)	.50**(2.99)	7.33
	High	.50(1.85)	.11*(0.41)	

Note: Critical ratios reported in brackets. Moderating groups defined based on median split.

The moderators did not generate significant differences in path coefficients based on chi-square or t tests (inconclusive evidence regarding H14-H16). Nevertheless, similar to study 1, self-esteem reduces the impact of actual self-congruence on emotional brand attachment and increases the impact of ideal self-congruence. While the tests are insignificant in study 2 (possibly due to lower sample size), the consistency of results for self-esteem with study 1, regardless of how attachment is measured, points out that Brazil requires a localised approach

in communicating about counterfeits. The role of self-esteem is different in Brazil from what has been reported in developed economies such as Switzerland (Malär et al., 2011). The sign of moderators for public self-consciousness and product involvement is compatible with that of Malär et al. (2011).

4. Discussion and implications

Considering how important the counterfeiting is for firms and economies, the study contributes to the creation and development of new knowledge in order to understand and mitigate these critical societal and economic phenomena.

The literature review suggests that self-esteem would have a different moderation impact in emerging and developed countries. As Brazilians have higher scores for unhappiness, they are more likely to rely on ideal self to achieve their goals and wishes, a view which seems to be confirmed by the findings. The study entails convincing evidence that Brazil requires a localised approach in communicating about counterfeits as the role of personal factors is different in Brazil compared to those in developed economies.

The proposed theoretical framework (study 1) explains a large variation in the purchasing intention of originals (30%) and particularly counterfeits (59%). Findings on this structural model show that, the stronger the purchasing intentions in buying counterfeits, the lower the purchasing intentions to buy original luxury fashion brands. Regarding the benefits, the results revealed a relevant impact of economic benefits on the purchasing intention of counterfeits. These results are similar to previous work conducted by Gistri et al. (2009) and Yoo and Lee (2009). The economic issues are very relevant to counterfeit buyers, unlike the consumers of authentic brands.

Regarding the hedonic benefits, study 1 explains that they influence both the intentions to purchase counterfeit products and the intentions to purchase original products. However, they present a stronger influence on the counterfeits' consumers. Both original and fake brands can promote hedonic benefits. Both can be used as the symbols of a social group, which can respond to the use of these products with "positive" reactions (as they could not be able to differentiate fakes from originals). However, the Brazilian consumer of luxury counterfeits strongly seeks a "social hedonic" pleasure, using the fake brand to promote herself/himself more intensely than the buyers of the originals.

Similarly, "materialism" has a modest but significant impact on the intention of purchasing either original or counterfeit products. Consumers of original goods are much more materialistic than the consumers of counterfeits. Buyers of original products usually think that the possession of very expensive and luxury original products is very important. The real material ownership of the product is sought, not just exhibiting the brand. These findings confirm Kapferer's and Michaut's (2014) views pointing to refocus on core values such as high quality and exclusivity.

Concerning the impact of economic benefits on the purchasing intentions of counterfeits, a stronger influence of the economic benefits is possible in Brazil compared to South Korea (Yoo & Lee, 2009). Note that Brazil has lower average incomes than South Korea, a fact that may have had a bearing on these results.

Materialism (personality trait) has a comparable effect on behavior in both samples: for Koreans and Brazilians, consumers of original products are more materialistic than consumers of counterfeit products. Similar findings were found in a study conducted in India with the consumers of luxury products (Srinivasan et al., 2014).

Public self-consciousness impacts positively on the intention of purchasing originals (study 1). Interestingly, a separate analysis highlights no significant impact of this variable on the purchasing intention of counterfeits. These findings suggest that buyers of counterfeits, who know that the product is not original, are not proud to own it. Buyers of counterfeits have significant hedonic benefits resultant from the exhibition of products to social groups. Owners of originals experience a reinforcement of self-image, as they know that they were able to acquire the ownership of an original product.

The hypothetical framework test also reveals that the brand attachment has a positive influence on the purchasing intentions of originals and a negative impact on the purchasing intentions of counterfeits (study 2). Emotional attachment tends to be fulfilled by originals rather than counterfeits, with one exception (model 1, study 2). Concerning the counterfeit buyer, the study shows that this type of consumer has lower levels of attachment to the brand. In other words, if these consumers were attached to a brand, they would buy less counterfeits, and vice versa.

To summarize, buyers of counterfeits are looking for hedonic benefits originated from the social group. They are not attached to the brand and do not have their public self-consciousness enhanced with the ownership of a fake product. For them, the brand acts more like an instrument to derive pleasure in front of others.

This research also explores the impacts of actual self-congruence and ideal self-congruence on brand attachment, as suggested by Malär et al. (2011). Aforementioned findings showed significant impacts of both constructs. This is in terms of brand attachment supporting the theoretical expectations but not necessarily the empirical findings of Malär's et al.'s (2011) study. The results of this work contribute to the extant literature, as most of the previous studies that explored relations between self-congruence and brands were not developed in the hedonic luxury markets (Hapsari & Adiwijaya, 2014).

Study 2 provides evidence of the impact of actual self-congruence and ideal self-congruence on brand attachment to luxury brands. This is in the context of understanding purchasing behavior towards counterfeits in emerging economies. The importance of actual self-congruence and ideal self-congruence on brand attachment varies slightly across the two studies. The effect of ideal self on attachment is significant and positive in both studies, regardless of how attachment is measured contrasting Malär's et al.'s (2011) findings. The effect of actual self, however, seems to vary according to how attachment is conceptualized. The impact of perceived actual self-congruence and ideal self-congruence on emotional brand attachment is positive and significant (Tables 5 and 6). This finding is consistent in both studies. While the findings are aligned with theoretical expectations of Malär et al. (2011), they provided full support for the role of both actual and ideal self-congruence on attachment.

The ideal self may create attachment to luxury brands through aspirational and compensatory mechanisms. Schmitt and Allik (2005) measured self-esteem in 53 countries, and concluded that self-esteem of the Brazilian population is greater than self-esteem of Swiss people. However, based on the 2015 World Happiness Report, Switzerland is ranked first and Brazil 16th. These results are similar to the OECD Better Life Index (OECD, 2015).

The effect of brand attachment on purchase intentions of counterfeits varies according to how brand attachment is measured. Yet, brand attachment has a systematic positive effect on intentions to purchase originals. The effect of attachment on intentions to purchase counterfeits tends to be negative in study 1 and study 2 (when measured as emotional attachment). In Study 2, when attachment is measured through brand self-connection and prominence, the impact on counterfeit purchase intentions moderately positive. The results are in sharp contrast with those of Raza et al. (2014) who report no significant effect of attachment on purchase intentions of counterfeits. These mixed findings suggest the need for further research on the specificity of emerging economies.

4.1 Managerial Implications

Significant managerial implications emerge from this study. One of them is the opportunity for CMOs to increase emotional brand attachment in order to reduce the counterfeit purchases in emerging economies. Previous research as accomplished by Gosline (2009) indicated that brand attachment may reduce purchase, intention of counterfeiting and increase purchase intention of originals, but the results are limited by sample size. Raza et al. (2014) aims to verify these hypotheses, but not in the luxury markets. This is the first quantitative study that examines the relations of brand attachment and brand self-congruence in emerging markets. Results show that consumers that buy counterfeits associate perceived hedonic and economic benefits, and that they feel pleasure using fakes. CMOs need to consider that consumers of counterfeits want to use and show their brands, but have low emotional connections. Hence, creating marketing programs to develop brand attachment is one important keystone to reduce counterfeiting of luxury products. These strategies should reinforce the exclusive role of original brands to provide prestige and gratification.

Communication strategies of original luxury brands should reinforce their credentials by emphasizing the image conveyed by owning an exclusive and high quality original. This communication will magnify the risk of owning counterfeits for personal image, reputation and pride. Corresponding strategies could be directed to brand communities using increasingly social media channels. This approach will develop and nurture attachment to a specific brand. Idealized images may be used successfully to promote luxury brands in Brazil but such images may cautiously be presented in order to make sure standards are perceived as attainable.

Marketing strategies planned for emerging countries could also be driven by enhanced awareness of the potentially detrimental effects of counterfeits on the luxury brand's market share. By departing from results reported in Switzerland by Malär et al. (2011), this study offers evidence of the need to tailor marketing strategies to idiosyncratic conditions of emerging economies to promote originals and deter consumers from buying counterfeits. market conditions. Due to the high importance of economic benefits for counterfeit purchasers, brand manufacturers might consider to provide increasingly economic benefits to consumers. Furthermore, disruptive innovation and blue ocean strategy might be promising strategic avenues to follow. Eliminating all unnecessary and costly gadgets, brand affordability is increased whilst simultaneously focusing on differentiation.

To address the salient importance of ideal self congruence, the brand owners should research the respective real life situations of brand buyers. By researching associated consumer values, products can be promoted in a visualized and visionary way. This suggestion is also in line with the finding that brand ownership reinforces the self-image pointing to the pursuit of ideal value congruence. In brand leadership terms, the brand should strive for authenticity. This should be the brand's corporate social responsibility strategy, credibly contributing to the actual achievement of this desired social end state. This attitude should also be reflected in the behavior and communication of employees in customer contact (i.e. behavioral branding). As materialistic motives proved significant for brand owners, these values should include exclusivity, quality, prestige and pride can be the subject of future research. This approach might also trigger enhanced brand attachment. In terms of localized marketing mix strategies and tactics, more emotional/experiential marketing is recommended, i.e. emphasizing event marketing to facilitate social experience, or exclusive retail channels.

Considering how important the counterfeiting is for firms and economies, it is possible to observe that this is a relevant field of study, which can be useful for the creation and development of theoretical and empirical backgrounds thought empirical studies, in order to understand and mitigate this critical societal phenomena. In this sense, this research innovates, as it argues that consumer-brand relationship concepts (as brand attachment and self-congruence) have a key role in shaping anti-counterfeiting strategies.

4.2 Limitations and avenues for further research

Given the interesting results regarding the role of public self-consciousness and facets of brand attachment, new research questions and hypotheses on how consumer-brand relationships can affect counterfeiting should be proposed and explored in future studies. In particular, differentiating brand attachment levels and their implications on the intentions to buy counterfeits could further differentiate between high context and low context cultures, both in established and developing economies.

The brand respondents selected were corporate, as opposed to specific product brands. Future research may examine whether the level of brand has an impact on the emotional attachment. Some goodness of fit indices in this research were slightly below thresholds. Given the large number of variables and items in this research, future studies can employ larger samples to further test the proposed model. Finally one discriminant test between ideal and actual self-congruence is marginally under thresholds. While this is not a major drawback, future studies using larger samples may correct this issue. An additional research avenue would be the exploration of the proposed conceptual model in other emerging economies. This would be valuable given the extent of counterfeiting in these markets and the importance of emerging economies to the world economy.

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Appendix A

Table 1. Study 1: Construct measurement and validity

	Factor loadings
Economic Benefits of Counterfeits (Yoo and Lee, 2009): CR=0.88; AVE=0.62	
I buy counterfeit products if I think original designer products are too expensive.	0.85
I buy counterfeit products if I cannot afford to buy designer products.	0.85
I buy counterfeit products without hesitation if I have a chance to buy the counterfeits.	0.84
I buy counterfeit products, instead of the designer products, if I prefer specific brands.	0.85
I boast about counterfeit products as if they are the original brand products.	0.66
I usually purchase counterfeits when it is difficult to distinguish between the counterfeits and the original products.	0.63
Hedonic Benefits of Counterfeits (Yoo and Lee, 2009): CR=0.84; AVE=0.63	
I buy counterfeit products because counterfeiters are “little guys” who fight big business.	0.81
Buying counterfeit products demonstrates that I am a wise shopper.	0.85
I like buying counterfeit products because it is like playing a practical joke on the manufacturer of the non-counterfeit.	0.86
I would buy counterfeit products even if I could easily afford to buy non-counterfeit products	0.64
Materialism (Yoo and Lee, 2009): CR=0.77; AVE=0.50	
I like a lot luxury in my life	0.56
I put less emphasis on material thing than most people I know	0.63
I have all the things I really need to enjoy life*.	-0.69
My life would be better if I owned certain things I do not have.	0.77
I wouldn't be happy if I would not have interesting things	
I would not be any happier if I owned nicer things.*	-0.65
It sometimes bothers me quite a bit that I cannot afford to buy all the things I would like	0.61
I admire people who own expensive homes, cars, and clothes	0.64
Some of the most important achievements in life include acquiring material possessions	
I do not place much emphasis on the amount of material objects people own as a sign of success*	-0.54
The things I own say a lot about how well I am doing in life.	0.73
I like to own things that impress people.	0.51
I do not pay much attention to the material objects other people own*	-0.68

I usually buy only the things I need*	-0.65
I try to keep my life simple, as far as possessions are concerned*	-0.65
I enjoy spending money on things that are not practical.	0.68
I would be happier if I could afford to buy more things.	
Buying things gives me a lot of pleasure.	
<hr/>	
Actual Self Congruence (Sirgy et al., 1997 in Malär et al., 2011):	
CR=0.90; AVE=0.82	
The personality of brand _____ is consistent with how I see myself (my actual self).	0.87
The personality of brand _____ is a mirror image of me (my actual self).	0.93
<hr/>	
Ideal Self Congruence (Sirgy et al., 1997 in Malär et al., 2011):	
CR=0.92; AVE=0.85	
The personality of brand _____ is consistent with how I would like to be (my ideal self).	0.92
The personality of brand _____ is a mirror image of the person I would like to be (my ideal self).	0.92
<hr/>	
Brand Attachment (Park et al., 2010): CR=0.96; AVE=0.74	
Brand self-connection	
To what extent is (brandname) part of you and who you are?	0.81
To what extent do you feel personally connected to brandname? _____	0.87
To what extent do you feel emotionally bonded to brandname? _____	0.89
To what extent is (brand name) part of you?	0.89
To what extent does (brand name) say something to other people about who you are?	0.79
Prominence	
To what extent are your thoughts and feelings toward (brand name) often automatic, coming to mind seemingly on their own?	0.87
To what extent do your thoughts and feelings toward (brand name) come to your mind naturally and instantly?	0.87
To what extent do your thoughts and feelings toward (brand name) come to mind so naturally and instantly that you don't have much control over them?	0.87
To what extent does the word (brand name) automatically evoke many good thoughts about the past, present, and future?	0.83
To what extent do you have many thoughts about (brand name)?	0.83
<hr/>	
Intention to buy Counterfeits (Yoo & Lee, 2009): CR=0.90; AVE=0.70	
I have the intention on purchasing counterfeits bags in the future.	0.86
If I would purchase a bag now, I would buy one counterfeited.	0.91
I intend to purchase counterfeits bags when I need this product	0.90
Purchasing a counterfeit bag is my first choice	0.83
<hr/>	
Intention to buy Originals (Yoo & Lee, 2009): CR=0.72; AVE=0.56	
I intend to purchase original bags in the future	0.69

If I would purchase a bag now, I would buy one original	0.63
I intend to purchase original bags when I need this product	0.80
Purchasing original bags is my first choice	0.79
<hr/>	
Public self-consciousness (Feningstein, Scheier and Buss, 1975): CR=0.78; AVE=0.56	
I am concerned about the way I present myself	0.80
I usually worry about making a good impression	0.82
One of the last things I do before I leave my room is to look in the mirror	0.66
I am usually aware of my appearance	0.74
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Product involvement (Adapted from Malär et al., 2011) This product category of handbags is very important to me	
<hr/>	
Self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1965) : CR=0.75; AVE=0.53	
On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.	0.78
I feel that I am a person of worth.	0.72
All in all, I am inclined to think that I am a failure*	-0.67
I take a positive attitude toward myself	0.77
<hr/>	

Appendix B

Table 1. Study 2: Construct measurement and validity

	Factor loadings
Actual Self Congruence (Sirgy et al., 1997 in Malär et al., 2011): CR=0.90; AVE=0.82	
The personality of brand _____ is consistent with how I see myself (my actual self).	0.87
The personality of brand _____ is a mirror image of me (my actual self).	0.93
Ideal Self Congruence (Sirgy et al., 1997 in Malär et al., 2011): CR=0.92; AVE=0.85	
The personality of brand _____ is consistent with how I would like to be (my ideal self).	0.92
The personality of brand _____ is a mirror image of the person I would like to be (my ideal self).	0.92
Brand Attachment (Park et al., 2010)	
Brand self-connection: CR=0.85; AVE=0.53	
To what extent is (brandname) part of you and who you are?	0.81
To what extent do you feel personally connected to brandname? _____	0.87
To what extent do you feel emotionally bonded to brandname? _____	0.89
To what extent is (brand name) part of you?	0.89
To what extent does (brand name) say something to other people about who you are?	0.79
Prominence: CR=0.84; AVE=0.51	
To what extent are your thoughts and feelings toward (brand name) often automatic, coming to mind seemingly on their own?	0.87
To what extent do your thoughts and feelings toward (brand name) come to your mind naturally and instantly?	0.87
To what extent do your thoughts and feelings toward (brand name) come to mind so naturally and instantly that you don't have much control over them?	0.87
To what extent does the word (brand name) automatically evoke many good thoughts about the past, present, and future?	0.83
To what extent do you have many thoughts about (brand name)?	0.83
Intention to buy Counterfeits (Yoo & Lee, 2009): CR=0.90; AVE=0.70	
I have the intention on purchasing counterfeits bags in the future.	0.96
If I would purchase a bag now, I would buy one counterfeited.	0.95
I intend to purchase counterfeits bags when I need this product	0.94
Purchasing a counterfeit bag is my first choice	0.86
Intention to buy Originals (Yoo & Lee, 2009): CR=0.93; AVE=0.70	
I intend to purchase original bags in the future	0.67

If I would purchase a bag now, I would buy one original	0.87
I intend to purchase original bags when I need this product	0.80
Purchasing original bags is my first choice	0.82
Public self-consciousness (Feningstein, Scheier and Buss, 1975): CR=0.85; AVE=0.59	
I am concerned about the way I present myself	0.78
I usually worry about making a good impression	0.82
One of the last things I do before I leave my room is to look in the mirror	0.67
I am usually aware of my appearance	0.78
Self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1965): CR=0.76; AVE=0.43	
On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.	0.56
I feel that I am a person of worth.	0.52
All in all, I am inclined to think that I am a failure*	0.69
I take a positive attitude toward myself	0.72
Product involvement (Van Trijp, Hoyer and Inman, 1996; Malär et al., 2011) CR=0.85; AVE=0.59	
Because of my personal attitudes, I feel that this is a product that ought to be important to me	0.87
Because of my personal values, I feel that this is a product that ought to be important to me	0.85
This product is very important to me personally	0.88
Compared with other products, this product is important to me	0.65
I am interested in this product	0.69
Emotional brand attachment (Thomson, MacInnis, Park, 2005 and Park et al. 2010) CR=0.81; AVE=0.58	
Affection	0.89
My feelings towards the brand can be characterized by: Affection Love	
Connection	0.71
My feelings towards the brand can be characterized by: Connection	
Passion	0.91
My feelings towards the brand can be characterized by: Passion Delight Captivation	