Does This Bag Make Me Look Good? The Impact of Post-Consumption Emotions on Re-Purchase Intention of Counterfeit Luxury Products

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Research Purpose/Rationale: Individuals often consume products as a means of expressing themselves to those they interact with. Previous studies demonstrate that consumers use branded products to enhance their self-identity, highlight individuality, and increase social approval. (Geiger-Oneto et al., 2013), which is evident particularly in luxury consumption behavior (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). While the majority of previous studies focused on examining predictors of luxury purchase intention (e.g., Bian & Forsythe, 2012), this study is interested in how consumers' post-purchase emotions influence their intention of re-purchasing a luxury counterfeit. The literature suggests that consumers assess situations based on appraisal factors such as goal congruence and agent attribution (Gelbrich, 2011; Lazarus, 1991). Thus, this study examines the conjoint effects of these two appraisal factors on negative (e.g., guilt, shame) and positive (e.g., joy, excitement) emotions, and how these emotions influence future behavior.

Conceptual Framework/Hypotheses Development: This study adopts emotion theory (Han & Back, 2009) and appraisal theories (Gelbrich, 2011) as conceptual framework to examine a study phenomenon of interest. We propose that the luxury counterfeit product successfully leads an individual to a heightened self-esteem status when the product is perceived to be original by others and/or when the person does not change his/her view of purchasing a counterfeit product after buying. In this case, the individual is likely to experience positive emotions such as joy and excitement (Marticotte & Arcand, 2017). In contrast, when individuals fail to achieve their goal of gaining social approval after purchasing a luxury counterfeit, they are likely to experience negative emotions such as guilt, shame, and regret. In addition, this study proposes that the effects of goal incongruence on aroused emotions are contingent upon the agent who causes the emotions (i.e., self, others) (Soscia, 2007). An examination of the interactive effect is expected to provide a solid understanding of causation of diverse emotions, and how these emotions affect a purchaser's consonance or dissonance with the person's initial view of buying a luxury counterfeit. Thus, we hypothesize that:

> **H1:** Goal congruence will generate delight.
> **H2:** Goal incongruence will generate anxiety.
> **H3:** Higher levels of guilt will be aroused when goal-incongruent outcomes are caused by self than by others.
> **H4:** Higher levels of mortification will be aroused when goal-incongruent outcomes are caused by others than by self.
> **H5:** When goal-congruence occurs, delight will increase re-purchase intention of a luxury counterfeit.
> **H6:** When goal-incongruence occurs, (a) guilt and (b) mortification will decrease re-purchase intention of a luxury counterfeit.

Research Design and Procedure: A self-administered online survey was conducted using a 2 (goal-congruence: congruent and incongruent) X 2 (causation agents: self and others) between-subjects experimental design. A total of 84 undergraduate students were recruited at a large university in the US. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four experimental conditions and exposed to a scenario that depicts a fictitious person's story of purchasing a counterfeit luxury product (i.e., a counterfeit Louis Vuitton purse). Scenarios in self-caused conditions presented stories of the protagonist's own conjecture on either achieving or failing social approval without interacting with others; scenarios in others-caused conditions presented stores of either achieving or failing social approval when she shared a picture of her new purse on Instagram. After the exposure, participants responded to questions that measure expected emotions that the protagonist were likely to experience and the likelihood of re-purchasing a counterfeit luxury product. All measures were adapted from previous literature.

Results: Using Richin's (1997) list of consumption emotions, a pre-test was conducted to identify positive and negative emotions that are relevant to our study context. Factor analysis was performed with identified emotions, which resulted in a dimension of positive emotion (i.e., delight) and three dimensions of negative emotions (i.e., mortification, anxiety, and guilty). Reliabilities of these constructs ranged from .80 to .96. Using SPSS 24, one-way ANOVA analyses were conducted to test H1 and H2. As predicted, the results of ANOVA analyses revealed that the effect of goal-congruence on positive emotion is marginally significant ($F_{1,83}$=3.66, p = .059), and level of anxiety is significantly higher in goal-incongruent condition than in goal-congruent condition ($F_{1,\ 83}$ = 5.76, p < .05). The results of MANOVA analysis revealed significant interactive effects of goal-incongruence and the agent on both guilt ($F_{1,\ 83}$ = 4.89, p < .001) and mortification ($F_{1,83}$ = 80.86 , p < .001). As predicted, level of guilt was higher when the emotion was caused by self (M= 4.00) than by others (M= 3.19), supporting H3. However, contrary to H4, level of mortification was higher when the emotion was caused by self (M=3.86) than by others (M= 2.02), rejecting H4. Multiple regression analyses were performed to test the effects of post-consumption emotions on re-purchase intention of a counterfeit luxury product. As predicted, delight increased likelihood of re-purchase behavior when goal-congruence occurs (R^2 = .64, $F_{1,127}$ = 225.97, p < .001); both guilt and mortification decreased the likelihood of re-purchasing when goal-incongruence occurs (Mortification: R^2 = .39, $F_{1,127}$ = 80.22, p < .001; Guilt: R^2 = .17, $F_{1,127}$ = 24.97, p < .001). Thus, H5 and H6 were supported.

Discussion and Implications: Our findings demonstrated that different post-consumption emotions are generated differently depending on the causation agent. Interestingly, while previous studies found that external motives such as social approval are key predictors of purchasing a counterfeit luxury product, findings from this study suggest that likelihood of re-purchasing behavior decreases when negative emotions such as guilt and mortification are caused by self rather than by others. This finding provides an insightful guideline to marketers of luxury brands for effective campaign development which prevents consumers from buying counterfeit products.

References available upon request.