# MeasuringKuwaiti consumer'sdrivers to purchase counterfeit apparel using the stimulus-organism-response (S-O-R) model

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## Abstract

The current research aims to use the Stimulus-organism-response (S-O-R) model to measure the effect of the previous experience of the product, the appearance of the product, the sleekness of the new, and the utilitarian attitudes on the Kuwaiti consumer's decision to buy counterfeit apparel. The research relied on designing a questionnaire that was distributed to a random sample of 318 consumers in Kuwait. The results of the research, using the partial least squares analysis method - structural equations analysis, indicated that previous experience had a positive effect on the utilitarian attitude of the consumer towards counterfeit apparel. Results also indicated that the appearance of the product had a positive effect on the consumer's sense of pleasure towards counterfeit apparel. It also turned out that the sleekness of the new had a positive effect on the consumer's feeling of pleasure towards counterfeit apparel, that the utilitarian attitude had a positive effect on the consumer's intention to buy counterfeit apparel, and that the hedonic attitudes had a positive effect on the consumer's intention to buy counterfeit apparel.

## Keywords:

Counterfeit apparel, the Stimulus-organism-response (S-O-R) model, purchase intention, Kuwait

## Introduction and theoretical framework:

Product counterfeiting has become a major economic threat at the international level (Zametakis, 2014). Some estimates indicate that counterfeit products cost the global economy more than $600 billion in losses (OECD/EUIPO, 2016). The clothing industry occupies the first place in the field of counterfeiting trademarks, which results in huge losses in reputation and profits for original products, which are losses estimated at billions of dollars. Despite the huge investments in anti-counterfeiting efforts at the governmental level and at the level of various industries, counterfeit products still occupy a large percentage of the market share at the global level. To understand the reasons behind this, it is necessary to understand what drives the consumer to buy counterfeit clothes.

It should be noted that the Theory of planned behavior (TPB) and Theory of reasoned action (TRA) have been frequently used as a theoretical basis in previous studies to explain counterfeit

product purchasing behavior (Amaral and Loken, 2016; Bian et al. , 2016). Causative event theory holds that consumer behavior can be predicted through attitudes and subjective norms (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980). But both theories address only the cognitive aspect of consumer decision, assuming that consumer behavior is rational. However, many researchers have criticized the two theories on the basis that psychological and emotional variables play a significant role in the purchase decision (Nejad et al., 2004).

Some researchers (Moon et al., 2017) have believed that the Stimulus-organism-response (S-O-R) model proposed by Mehrabian and Russell (1974) enables the researcher to study the influence of cognitive, affective, and psychosocial factors. psychological on behavior.

This study represents an important addition to previous studies by testing a new conceptual model that takes into account emotional and psychological-social motives in measuring the Kuwaiti consumer's motives for purchasing counterfeit clothing. Hence, the theoretical framework for this study is the stimulus-attitude-response model. This model consists of three elements: the stimulus, the individual organism, and the response. The model generally assumes that the individual is exposed to external stimuli and responds in some way according to those stimuli. In this study, we consider the stimulus to be the consumer's opinion of counterfeit clothing, while the trends represent the individual, in addition to the purchase intention as the response. Many researchers have recently used this operational definition of the stimulus-attitude-response model (Moon et. Al., 2018).

**Research Problem:**
• The spread of luxury products has led to the predominance of luxury consumption patterns. In addition, the high price of luxury products has led to a group of consumers rushing to buy counterfeit products, which represents a serious economic threat to companies that own brands.
• All of this led to raising questions about understanding the motives behind the Kuwaiti consumer's decision to buy counterfeit clothing, which we seek to identify through this field study.

**Research Aims:**
The research aims to achieve the following objectives:
(1) Raising Kuwaiti consumer awareness of the importance of staying away from buying counterfeit clothes.
(2) Identify the factors that affect the Kuwaiti consumer's intention to buy counterfeit clothing.

**Research Importance:**
• This research seeks to contribute to identifying the motives and harms that lie behind the Kuwaiti consumer's purchase of counterfeit clothing.
• The importance of this lies in the fact that individual consumer behavior can have a significant impact on eliminating markets for counterfeit products in the long term.

**Search Limits:**
The spatial boundaries of the research are represented geographically in the State of Kuwait. A simple random sampling method was used to conduct the research, which means that some

areas in Kuwait may not be represented in the sample. In terms of time, the questionnaire forms were distributed and collected in the period from April 2023 to June 2023.

**Research Methodology:**
The research adopted descriptive and analytical approaches by applying a questionnaire form that was approved after reviewing previous writings and sources before approving its final form (see the research appendix).

# •Results and discussion:
The statistical analysis was based on a large sample of 318 Kuwaiti consumers who were selected using the simple random sampling method. The mean age in the sample was 33.42 years (standard deviation = 11.03 years). Regarding educational level, there were 8 cases with no formal education, 26 cases with pre-university education, 219 cases with university education, and 180 cases with postgraduate studies. Regarding marital status, there were 119 single cases, 101 married cases, and 37 divorced or other cases.

From Table No. (1) mentioned above, we find that the Cronbach alpha coefficients were all higher than 0.7, which indicates the presence of internal consistency between the dimensions of the questionnaire.

The partial least squares analysis method - PLS-SEM structural equation analysis was used to test the research hypotheses. This method is a statistical method that is appropriate to the nature of the data, especially in the event that there is a limited deviation in the data from a normal distribution. Figure No. (2) and Table No. (2) show the results of the analysis.

# Recommendations:
• The need to enhance Kuwaiti consumer awareness of the problems resulting from imitation of trademarks, which results in serious losses in reputation and profits for original products.
• Encouraging the Kuwaiti consumer to buy original clothes.
• Motivating Kuwaiti women to promote the culture of buying original clothes.

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