

From Impulse to Imitation: Hedonic Motivation as a Bridge to Counterfeit Consumption

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Abstract

The current research examines the relationship between impulsive buying behaviour, hedonic motives, and counterfeit consumption among young, city-dwelling apparel consumers in Pakistan. Based on Coaction Theory and McGuire's Theory of Motivation, the study constrained the hedonic motivations as a mediating variable, which interconnects impulsive tendencies with counterfeit buying. The study employed 503 mall-intercept respondents and utilised Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) for data analysis. It is observed that impulsive buying is a significant positive determinant of hedonic motivations and counterfeit consumption. Hedonic motivations are also highly indicative of counterfeit consumption and partially mediate the relationship between impulsivity and counterfeit demand. These results are indicative of the pleasure-seeking, novelty, and self-expression aspects of counterfeit purchasing, as it is not merely an economic choice. The study is theoretically helpful in expanding the hedonic motives in consumer behaviour literature as a psychological mechanism that explains maladaptive buying behaviour. In practical terms, it can provide information to brand managers and policymakers on how to intervene at an emotional level, rather than merely at an economic or ethical level, to limit the allure of counterfeit goods. The results demonstrate the necessity of awareness campaigns and marketing strategies that emphasise the hedonic value of authentic products and utilise this to overcome consumer vulnerabilities, specifically impulsive and hedonic temptations.

Keywords: Impulsive Buying, Hedonic Motivation, Counterfeit Consumption.

Introduction

Certain human behaviours are complex and potentially harmful to consumers and society. Psychology defines such behaviours as maladaptive, dysfunctional actions individuals use to cope with stress and anxiety (Bystritsky et al., 2013). In marketing, counterfeit consumption is one such behaviour that has been extensively studied. While not a new phenomenon, counterfeiting has evolved into a significant global economic issue over the past three decades (Zampetakis, 2014). It involves imitating branded products in design, packaging, and trademarks (Wilcox et al., 2009; Moon et al., 2018).

Counterfeiting affects a wide range of industries, including clothing, electronics, and pharmaceuticals. In 2021, global counterfeit imports were valued at \$467 billion and are projected to reach \$1.8 to 1.9 trillion by 2030 (OECD & EUIPO, 2025; Corsearch, 2025). The apparel

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industry is the most severely affected, accounting for 62% of the counterfeit trade, or approximately \$290 billion. This not only damages a brand's reputation and revenue but also fuels broader societal issues, such as unemployment, tax loss, and funding for criminal activities. Several behavioural addictions, such as gambling, binge eating, pornography, internet use, sex, and shopping, are classified as maladaptive behaviours (Griffiths, 2000). Among these, Impulsive and compulsive buying have been widely studied in consumer research (Lejoyeux et al., 1998; Mandolfo & Lamberti, 2021). Behavioural addictions typically involve progression, preoccupation, loss of control, and lasting consequences (Walters & Gilbert, 2000).

Shopping addicts often use buying to cope with negative emotions and maintain positive moods (West & Brown, 2013; Moon et al., 2022). With abundant choices, shopping has shifted from a fundamental need to entertainment and emotional compensation (Farooq & Moon, 2025; Moon & Attiq, 2018; Mukhopadhyay & Johar, 2009). Over time, this behaviour can become habitual and lead to psychiatric issues (He et al., 2018). Extensive research has examined maladaptive behaviours, identifying their causes and consequences (Challet-Bouju et al., 2020). Despite available therapies, behavioural addictions and counterfeit consumption continue to rise, highlighting the need to explore their relationship.

This study applies coaction theory (Prochaska, 2008), previously employed in the health sciences, to investigate the link between behavioural addictions and counterfeit consumption.

Conceptual Background

The current study employs Coaction Theory, which explains how the performance of one behaviour increases the likelihood of performing another, particularly when influenced by motivation (Johnson et al., 2014). According to this theory, engaging in a maladaptive behaviour can lead to the adoption of additional maladaptive behaviours under specific motivational conditions.

In line with this framework, our study proposes that impulsive buying behaviour may lead to counterfeit consumption behaviour, driven by hedonic motivations. Impulsive buying is defined as spontaneous, unplanned purchasing that arises in the moment and is driven by emotional arousal such as excitement, pleasure, or curiosity, rather than careful evaluation of need or utility (Rook, 1987; Beatty & Ferrell, 1998). In contrast to compulsive buying, not all impulsive purchase patterns are repetitive and/or uncontrollable in nature. Although, as noted, they are often situationally triggered by internal feelings (i.e., feelings of pleasure) or external stimuli (i.e., sales promotions and attractive displays) or social influence. In this respect, impulsive buyers can be motivated even more easily to purchase counterfeit products, as these kinds of goods can bring them closer to satisfying their immediate hedonic needs at a lower psychological and financial expenditure.

To explore this motivational pathway, we draw on McGuire's Theory of Motivation (1976), focusing on hedonic motivations, that are, the internal drivers that encourage behaviours aimed at enhancing positive emotions and alleviating negative ones (Phau & Teah, 2009; Khalid & Rahman, 2015). Hedonic motivations may thus act as a mediating mechanism through which impulsive buying behaviour leads to counterfeit consumption.

Literature Review

Impulsive Buying Behaviour

The consumer psychology of impulsive buying behaviour (IBB) has become a significant focus in consumer research due to the negative and possibly maladaptive character of the research area. It

is typified by unpremeditated buying that is frequently instigated by excellent, strong emotional motivations, as opposed to calculated decision-making (Rook, 1987; Xiao & Nicholson, 2013). An impulsive purchase is not as rational or utilitarian as other purchases because an individual does not buy something based on its necessity or usefulness but on the feeling that gratification or excitement will follow (Beatty & Ferrell, 1998; Verplanken & Herabadi, 2001).

Though the problem of impulsive buying may be sometimes seen as the harmless indulgence, several studies are proving that it can have various adverse psychological, monetary, and social effects, especially in situations when an individual purchase something to control the negative emotions (stress, boredom, or anxiety) (Amos et al., 2014; Darrat et al., 2016). Consumers often experience short-term satisfaction from an impulse buy, which is frequently followed by feelings of guilt, remorse, or even debt (Sharma et al., 2010; Lucas & Koff, 2017).

In theory, impulsive buying is frequently associated with low self-control and high sensitivity to external events, which conceptually links it to other pathological consumption behaviour patterns, including compulsive buying and addictive consumption (Verplanken & Sato, 2011; Tarka, 2021). It is a violation of the principles of rational consumption, impairing the financial stability of both the population and, in certain instances, the personal relationships of individuals (Lee & Workman, 2023).

Impulsive Buying and Counterfeit Consumption Behaviour

Impulsive buying behaviour (IBB) is defined as the impulsive and unplanned shopping, as opposed to rational planning, driven by strong impulsive emotions (Rook, 1987; Amos et al., 2014). This trend often causes people to prioritise short-term satisfaction and emotional benefits over long-term considerations, such as the authenticity, durability, or economic soundness of a product (Sharma et al., 2010; Lucas & Koff, 2017).

Studies show that shoppers with impulse-control issues are particularly susceptible to purchasing pirated items, as these items offer the same value in terms of symbolism and appearance as the original brands, but at significantly reduced prices (Wilcox et al., 2009; Tan et al., 2024). As the impulse purchase is based on an impulsive decision, the customer usually ignores moral, legal, or quality issues with fakes when their hedonic motives, such as excitement, novelty, and pleasure, are triggered (Chase & Ghane, 2023; Dimitrova, 2023).

In apparel and fashion markets, the impulsive buying habits are highly correlated with counterfeit consumption. Fake products enable consumers to quickly and inexpensively satisfy their needs for status representation, individuality, and self-expression, compared to the cost of purchasing original, luxurious products (Shaikh et al., 2022; Kumar et al., 2022). Research demonstrates that the young urban clientele, specifically, are particularly vulnerable, as their impulsive buying tendencies combine with aspirational consumer culture to increase the likelihood of purchasing counterfeits (Moon & Attiq, 2018; Nguyen & Tran, 2023).

To conclude, the activity of impulsive buying is a significant psychological factor that promotes counterfeit consumption. Impulsive buyers tend to make counterfeit purchases to satisfy their

emotional needs, as economic rationality is often the last priority, even though rational analysis is often discarded in favour of hedonic values like pleasure, novelty, and social image.

Therefore, we posit that:

H1: Impulsive buying behaviour positively influences counterfeit consumption behaviour.

Impulsive Buying Behaviour and Hedonic Motivations

Impulsive buying is closely associated with hedonism, as the pursuit of joy, excitement, and pleasure is often its primary driver (Hausman, 2000; Arnold & Reynolds, 2003). The high hedonic orientation implies that a consumer is more likely to buy a product based on the pleasure of use, as opposed to the utilitarian value of the good (Verplanken & Herabadi, 2001).

Studies show that the emotional consequences of impulse purchases are primarily positive, including the pleasure of ownership or the thrill of acquisition or hunting (Dittmar, 2005; Silvera et al., 2008). Shopping can be an effective form of emotional regulation, temporarily mitigating boredom, stress, or loneliness (Youn & Faber, 2000; Horvath & Birgelen, 2015). However, these effects usually fade quickly, followed by guilt or remorse, creating a purchase cycle (Sharma et al., 2010; Maraz, Griffiths, & Demetrovics, 2016). Recent research suggests that hedonic consumption has a substantial impact on impulsive buying, particularly among younger consumers who are exposed to materialism and media-stimulated consumerism (Kukar-Kinney et al., 2016; Ahmed et al., 2022). For them, the purchasing experience is not characterised by the functional value of the product, but rather, its meaning and emotional fulfilment that results from the purchase.

This is also reinforced by the retail and digital environment, which offers personal recommendations, experiences, and aspirational lifestyles (Zhou & Wong, 2021; Zhao et al., 2022; Lee & Workman, 2023). Such characteristics increase emotional stimulation, particularly among consumers who are susceptible to external influences. Hedonistic reasons, therefore, both serve as triggers of impulse purchases and reinforce impulse compulsions, made through the logic of emotional satisfaction (Tarka, 2021; Roberts et al., 2020).

Understanding this relationship becomes critical in identifying vulnerable consumer groups and devising intervention approaches that promote less deleterious consumer behaviours. It emphasises the necessity of considering the psychological aspect in the analysis of consumer incentives, particularly maladaptive ones. Thus, we propose the following hypothesis:

H2: Impulsive buying behaviour positively influences hedonic motivations.

Hedonic Motivations

Hedonic motivation is also referred to as the intrinsic urge to engage in activities that bring an individual pleasure, enjoyment, excitement, and a sense of fulfilment, rather than being driven by functional or utilitarian considerations (Babin et al., 1994; Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982). In terms of consumer behaviour, hedonic motivation is described as seeking emotional experiences (such as fun, entertainment, and novelty) through shopping or consuming products (Arnold & Reynolds, 2003). In contrast to utilitarian motives, which are goal-driven and problem-solving in nature, hedonic motives centre on the experiences one has when consuming the item (Chiu et al., 2014; Akram et al., 2021).

Highly hedonic consumers tend to interpret shopping as a leisurely and mood-enhancing activity, rather than a necessity (Pham et al., 2012; Kim et al., 2021). To such consumers, the experience matters just as much as the purchase itself, and it provides not only stimulation and exploration but also pleasure (Hanzaee & Rezaeyeh, 2013; Lee & Workman, 2023). Positive affect is

associated with hedonic visits, during which one experiences excitement, inspiration, and indulgence, and it may establish a strong emotional attachment to a brand or store (Bhatia, 2019; Zhou & Wong, 2021). New research has demonstrated the specificity of hedonic motives in making a hasty purchase, as being excited and following positive emotions, while avoiding negative ones, are key (Ahmed et al., 2022; Tarka, 2021). In the clothing industry, hedonic motives play a significant role in variety-seeking, novelty-seeking, and self-expression, as consumers rush to follow new trends and express their personal identity (Scarpi et al., 2014; Kim et al., 2021). Given its significant impact on consumer consumption, hedonic motivation is a key factor. It has been considered a considerable psychological driver of not only positive consumption experiences but also maladaptive consumption behaviours, such as impulsive buying and the purchase of counterfeit products (Moon & Attiq, 2018; Lee & Workman, 2023).

Hedonic Motivation and Counterfeit Consumption Behaviour

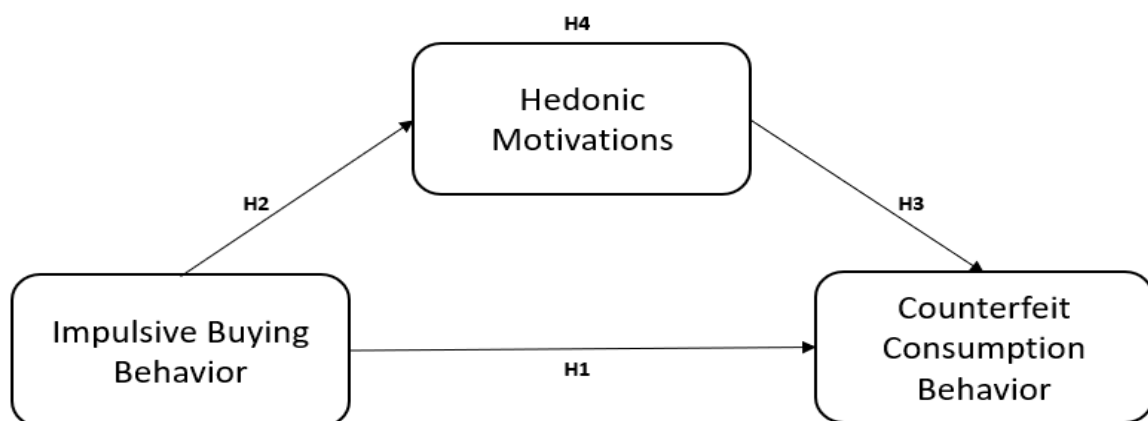
Counterfeit products often closely resemble original branded items in terms of design, logos, colours, and overall appearance. This similarity generates emotional gratification for consumers, as it allows them to experience the symbolic value of a luxury product without bearing the high financial cost (Moon et al., 2018). Consumers are drawn to counterfeit items not only for their affordability but also for the emotional satisfaction of acquiring visually similar goods (Geiger-Oneto et al., 2013; Turunen & Laaksonen, 2011).

Moreover, counterfeit products are often available in more styles, colours, and variants than their genuine counterparts, which enhances the pleasure, excitement, and novelty experienced during the purchase process (Wee et al., 1995). Consumers who are hedonically motivated tend to seek variety and newness as a means of emotional stimulation and fulfilment of curiosity (Nagar & Singh, 2019). Due to their lower prices, counterfeit goods also serve as a low-risk means of satisfying these hedonic desires, enabling consumers to enjoy the thrill of consumption without significant financial consequences (Wee et al., 1995).

Thus, we propose the following hypothesis:

H3: Hedonic motivations have a positive influence on counterfeit consumption behaviour.

Figure 1: Structural Model



The subject of hedonic motivations and consumer impulsivity is deeply interconnected, as both are fueled by excitement, pleasure, newness, and emotional gratification (Chase & Ghane, 2023).

Impulse buyers often make purchases without planning, driven by the emotional satisfaction of acquiring a new item, prioritising emotional satisfaction over practicality (Dimitrova-Georgieva, 2023). Similarly, hedonically oriented customers buy goods mainly for pleasure, enjoyment, sensory satisfaction, and escapism, rather than for necessity.

Such motives are associated with variety-seeking, self-expression, and escaping monotony or boredom. The sensory or experiential aspect of the shopping experience provides an escape for impulsive customers, offering them novelty. However, some argue that this may resemble addiction, as novelty merely provides short-term gratification (Dursun et al., 2023). Hedonic benefits are also motivated by social identity and image management, as a consumer may engage in impulsive purchases of luxury and fashionable products to supplement their lifestyle or assert their status.

Although buying behaviour is often impulsive and unplanned, it may be driven by lower-order hedonic needs, including personal taste, social status, and self-continuity. In this sense, shopping can be a coping mechanism to alleviate negative feelings, such as stress or sadness (Dursun et al., 2023). The immediate positive effect of spontaneous purchase further conditions the activity, making it more likely that consumers will repeatedly engage in it to feel good.

Purchasing counterfeit goods is one way impulsive buyers fulfil these hedonic needs. Counterfeits offer a similar aesthetic and symbolic value to genuine branded merchandise, but at a significantly lower cost. This makes them appealing to impulse, hedonic-oriented buyers (Wilcox, Kim, & Sen, 2009). Combined with low monetary risk, optical resemblance to high-end brand status products, and the euphoria of procurement, the temptation of buying knockoffs may become an attractive proposition to consumers interested in short-term gratification, as well as self-expressive utility. Therefore, we further propose that:

H4: Impulsive buying behaviour leads consumers to purchase counterfeits to fulfil their hedonic needs.

Methodology

Sample

The sample for this study consists of young urban apparel consumers in Pakistan, a demographic known for high fashion orientation and susceptibility to impulsive buying. According to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (2018), 63% of the urban population in Pakistan falls within the age range of 18 to 33 years, making this group the most relevant to the study's objective.

The sample for this study comprises a total of 542 consumers, systematically intercepted at shopping malls across five major cities (Lahore, Karachi, Islamabad, Faisalabad, and Multan), who were approached. All respondents fell within the 18- to 33-year age bracket and were engaged in purchasing apparel products. Shopping malls were selected as the data collection sites because these environments are known for higher incidences of excessive buying behaviour. This is due to the various contextual and situational factors that can influence consumer behaviour in such settings (Mitchell et al., 2006; Moon & Attiq, 2018; Horváth et al., 2013; Horváth & Adigüzel, 2017). Therefore, shopping mall consumers were considered the most appropriate target respondents for this study.

To determine an appropriate sample size, several methodological guidelines were followed. First, Bentler and Chou (1987) and Hair et al. (2010) suggest that each estimated parameter should have between 5 and 10 responses. Given 35 measurement items in this study, this would require a minimum of 175 responses. Second, Kline (2015) recommends that for structural equation modelling (SEM), the sample size should be at least 200 respondents. Third, previous research in

the fields of impulsive buying, addictive buying, and counterfeit consumption has employed sample sizes around 331 respondents, which were deemed sufficient for similar studies (Kukar-Kinney et al., 2016; Moon et al., 2018; Tang & Koh, 2017; Septianto et al., 2019).

Based on these three well-established guidelines, the final sample size of 542 respondents in this study is considered both appropriate and adequate, and statistically robust for the intended analysis.

Measures

All constructs were measured with validated scales from prior studies. Impulsive buying behaviour was assessed using three items adapted from Ridgway et al. (2008) on a 5-point Likert scale. Hedonic motivations were measured using five items from Voss et al. (2003) on a 7-point scale. Counterfeit consumption behaviour was assessed using four items from Matos et al. (2007), also on a 7-point scale. The questionnaire additionally recorded demographics (age, gender, income, purchase frequency).

Data Collection

Data were collected through self-administered questionnaires from systematically intercepted consumers at shopping malls across five major cities in Pakistan, which have high footfall and a high concentration of apparel outlets.

In each city, a team of three trained researchers (one male and two females) conducted the data Collection. Prior to fieldwork, all researchers were provided with detailed training on the study's objectives and ethical data Collection practices. Data were collected in person, targeting individuals near clothing-related sections within the malls. A systematic sampling method was employed, where every third individual passing through the selected areas was approached. Upon intercepting a potential participant, researchers asked about their willingness to participate in the study. Those who agreed were given a brief overview of the research purpose and were assured of the confidentiality and academic nature of the study. Verbal informed consent was obtained before the questionnaire was handed over.

A total of 772 individuals were initially approached. Out of these, 741 consented to participate. However, 199 respondents were excluded as they did not meet the inclusion criteria, which were:

1. The respondent must be 18 years of age or older, and
2. They must have purchased a clothing-related item during their current visit to the mall.

This left 542 eligible participants who received the questionnaire. Of these, 39 either did not return the survey or failed to complete it. Furthermore, after removing responses with missing demographic data, the final dataset consisted of 503 usable responses.

Data Analysis Procedures

The data were initially processed and organised using IBM SPSS Statistics 23, which was used to create the data file and conduct preliminary analyses. For testing the model fit and evaluating the proposed relationships among variables, Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was performed using AMOS 23.

Prior to proceeding with data analysis, we conducted a data screening process to detect and eliminate potential errors in the dataset, which could have compromised the findings (Moon & Abbas, 2024; Moon et al., 2024). First, the process involved finding and correcting the missing values using the mean of the related variable (Cousineau & Chartier, 2010; Gallagher et al., 2017). The dataset did not contain any aberrant values. Some outliers in the data were addressed with the mode of the respective variable. The normality of the data was also assessed using skewness and

kurtosis. The skewness and kurtosis values were within the suggested limits of ± 1 and ± 3 , respectively, as indicated by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007). Furthermore, the levels of VIF and Tolerance (VIF < 10, Tolerance value > 0.10) also showed that there is no evidence of multicollinearity among the independent variables of the manuscript.

Structural Equation Modelling

Following Anderson and Gerbing's (1988) two-step approach, we first evaluated the measurement model for the three latent constructs: Impulsive Buying Behaviour, with three observed variables; Hedonic Motivations, with five observed variables; and Counterfeit Consumption Behaviour, with three observed variables. A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted using 11 observed variables. Factors were eliminated by items with low factor loadings (FL < 0.60), low squared multiple correlations (SMC < 0.20), or standardised residual covariances of greater than 2.58 (Byrne, 2013; Kline, 2015). The resulting refined model evidenced good fit (CMIN/DF = 2.52, CFI = .973, GFI = .968, AGFI = .953, TLI = .964, NFI = .956, IFI = .973, RMSEA = .040, PClose = .997). The reliability and validity were established, and all constructs exceeded the guidelines used in Cronbach's alpha (> 0.70), composite reliability (> 0.70), and average variance extracted (> 0.50).

Once the reliability and validity of the measurement model have been confirmed, we proceeded to test the structural model, examining the assumed hypotheses concerning the hypothesised relationship between Impulsive Buying Behaviour, Hedonic Motivations, and Counterfeit Consumption Behaviour. The findings of the structural equation modelling included an adequate model fit (CMIN/DF = 2.61, CFI = .970, GFI = .965, AGFI = .950, TLI = .961, NFI = .953, IFI = .970, RMSEA = .042, PClose = .992).

Results and Discussion

The path analysis indicated that impulsive buying behaviour had a positive and significant impact on Hedonic Motivations ($p < 0.001$) and counterfeit consumption behaviour of individuals ($p < 0.001$). Furthermore, hedonic motivations significantly predicted Counterfeit Consumption Behaviour ($p < 0.001$).

Table 1: Hypothesis

Hyp.	Structural Paths			Std. Reg (γ)	S.E.	t values	P	Decision
H1	IB	→	CNT	0.32	0.072	5.298	***	Accepted
H2	IB	→	HD	0.21	0.055	3.795	***	Accepted
H3	HD	→	CNT	0.24	0.039	5.343	***	Accepted

Furthermore, we also test the mediating effect of hedonic motivations between impulsive buying behavior and counterfeit consumption behavior. The results indicate that there is a substantial relationship between impulsive buying behavior and counterfeit consumption behavior, with hedonic motivations serving as a mediator. The findings revealed that the direct relationship between impulsive buying and counterfeit consumption behavior was positive and statistically significant ($\gamma = 0.96$, $p < 0.05$). When hedonic motivations are included as a mediating factor, however, the effect turns negative but still significant ($\gamma = -0.022$, $p < 0.05$), which denotes that hedonic motivations perform as a suppressor mediator.

Table 2: Mediation

Hypothesis	Structural Paths	Direct Effect		Indirect effect		R2	Mediation
		γ	P-values	γ	P-values		
H4	IB → HD → CNT	.96	.02	.022	.04	.55	Mediation

The structural model results presented in the table above indicate that hedonic motivations positively influence the counterfeit consumption behaviour of an individual. The findings depicted a standardised regression coefficient of 0.32 ($\gamma = 0.32$) with a p-value indicating significance at $p < 0.05$. This translates to a considerable, positive association between HD and CNT.

The results reinforce the fact that impulsive purchases have a substantial impact on the consumption of counterfeit products, both directly and indirectly, in terms of hedonistic desires. This is in concurrence with the Coaction Theory, which holds that one maladaptive behaviour increases the likelihood of another being committed in the case of motivational reinforcement. In this case, impulsivity will encourage counterfeit buying, as both phenomena are associated with instant emotional satisfaction.

In turn, the findings confirm the Theory of Motivation presented by McGuire, which suggests that hedonic motives, pleasure, novelty, and self-expression act as psychological mediators. Impulsive consumers are less selective about the product and buy counterfeit items mainly to obtain a sense of luxury and novelty, as they are available at a low economic price. This is consistent with the earlier literature, which asserts that counterfeit demand cannot be dissected using rational cost-benefit analysis but rather must be discussed within the hedonism-based psychology of the consumer.

These findings complement the existing body of literature on consumer behaviour, establishing a context for counterfeit consumption as part of broader maladaptive consumption patterns. They also show that interventions should focus on altering the hedonic appeal of counterfeits by enhancing the experiential and emotional value of genuine brands or by developing awareness campaigns that address the fleeting and maladaptive nature of hedonic gratification.

The positive relationship implies that purchasing counterfeits is not a purely economic choice that depends solely on the cost of the product, but is closely related to the functional and emotional needs of consumers. Imitation goods usually offer all the aesthetic and non-material value, together with superiority, that authentic brands are known to deliver, allowing hedonistically driven customers to obtain the joy of possession and of owning something new and much different at a comparatively reduced financial expense (Wilcox et al., 2009; Kumar et al., 2022). For individuals with hedonic motives, counterfeits can provide a readily available source of experiencing the euphoria of luxury or fashionable consumption without incurring the high financial costs associated with purchasing genuine branded items. Such consumers are less concerned about authenticity, ethics, or legality, and more concerned about the emotional and sensory satisfaction of the shopping experience. Consequently, they can consider buying fake products as a substitute for luxury or status-image products, which only means instant satisfaction without having to deal with the financial costs.

These findings align with previous research, which associates purchases of counterfeits with hedonic types of consumption, including variety seeking, curiosity, and self-expression motivation (Wee et al., 1995; Nguyen & Tran, 2023). Given that some of these purchasers seek an outlet of emotional satisfaction and the freedom to project themselves in trendy lifestyles, fake goods, to some people, act as an easy source of emotional gratification, mainly when it comes to fashion and

other luxury-related categories whose original items can be beyond the reach of consumers financially. The results also strengthen the theoretical evidence that suggests hedonic motives underlie a psychological process behind maladaptive consumption behaviours. Focusing on emotional lifting and immediate satisfaction more than the key to their integrity and usefulness, consumers justify a counterfeit purchase as a method of fulfilling their short-term psychological needs (Moon & Attiq, 2018; Chase & Ghane, 2023).

Furthermore, we suggested that impulsive buying behaviour has a positive impact on hedonic motivations. The findings indicated a standardised regression coefficient of 0.21 ($\gamma = 0.21$), with $p < 0.05$ indicating statistical significance. This translates to a considerable, positive association between IB and HD.

The result aligns with earlier findings in other studies, which emphasise that impulsive buyers are primarily driven by the need for immediate pleasure and emotional satisfaction, rather than utility or functional needs (Sharma et al., 2010; Amos et al., 2014). Consumers who are inclined to purchase impulsively primarily aim for the joy of ownership and the emotional satisfaction of buying, directly relating to the pleasurable aspects of variety and self-identification (Hausman, 2000; Chase & Ghane, 2023).

Furthermore, the findings reinforce the theoretical argument that impulse buying is strongly linked to hedonic consumption. The hedonic motivation serves as a stimulus and incentive for making impulsive purchases, as it allows consumers to avoid unpleasant emotional experiences, such as stress, boredom, or anxiety, while also meeting the psychological need for novelty and excitement (Youn & Faber, 2000; Dimitrova-Georgieva, 2023).

The results of the study suggest that impulsive shoppers at shopping malls attempt to limit their purchases. However, they often revert to buying excessively because it provides a sense of enjoyment, and this shopping activity is highly thrilling and exciting for them (Wang & Gutierrez, 2018).

This finding supports the notion that counterfeit consumption is not only driven by an economic intent. Rather, hedonic and regulatory motivations, which are mainly prevalent in markets with low price sensitivity and high brand symbolism and status appeal, may drive it (Yaakop et al., 2021; Islam et al., 2022; Khan et al., 2022). This study offers a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of consumer motivation, suggesting that counterfeit buying can be a more complex expression of a broader psychological and emotional need, extending beyond cost savings.

Moreover, the results of this study confirmed our proposition that hedonic motivations positively influence counterfeit consumption behaviour. The results yielded a standardised regression coefficient of $\gamma = 0.24$, with a significant result at $p < 0.05$, indicating a significant positive relationship between the two constructs.

This implies that individuals with extremely high hedonic motives, which include pleasure, novelty, excitement, and emotional satisfaction, are more likely to engage in counterfeit purchases. This finding is consistent with the literature, which has established that counterfeit products meet the emotional and symbolic needs of consumers by replicating the aesthetics and status of authentic brands, as they are more affordable and diverse (Wilcox et al., 2009; Kumar et al., 2022). In the case of hedonically driven consumers, the excitement of purchase and the affective charge of possession take precedence over concerns about genuineness, legality, and the eventual quality of any given product (Nguyen & Tran, 2023).

Furthermore, the considerable positive impact suggests that the consumption of counterfeits involves not only economic rationality but also emotional motives that are psychologically supported. After purchasing fake products, consumers can then seek self-expression, social

signalling, and self-worth at a cheaper cost when they cannot afford online luxury goods in their markets (Shaikh et al., 2022).

The results also enhance our understanding that hedonic motives are a relevant psychological process linking maladaptive or impulsive purchasing behaviour to counterfeit consumption.

This supports past claims that the irrationality of most shopping processes is not merely a rational choice, but also a decision influenced by affective moods and a sense of experience (Arnold & Reynolds, 2003; Moon & Attiq, 2018).

The results further show that there is a substantial relationship between impulsive buying behaviour and counterfeit consumption behaviour, with hedonic motivations serving as a mediator. The findings revealed a positive and statistically significant direct relationship between impulsive buying and counterfeit consumption behaviour ($\beta = 0.96, p < 0.05$). When hedonic motivations are included as a mediating factor, the effect remains positive and significant ($\gamma = 0.022, p < 0.05$), indicating that hedonic motivations act as a partial mediator.

The findings support the hypothesis that impulsive buying has both direct and indirect effects on hedonic motivation in counterfeit consumption. The direct relationship with a higher coefficient ($\gamma = 0.96, p < 0.05$) indicates that consumers who are more prone to being impulsive have significantly greater chances of buying counterfeit products. This aligns with previous studies, which indicate that the reason impulsive buyers act when they do is due to the immediate satisfaction and novelty they experience, rather than long-term considerations of quality or genuineness (Islam et al., 2022). Again, once the mediating factor of hedonic motivations was included, the relationship remained positive and significant ($\gamma = 0.022, p < 0.05$), indicating that the enjoyment, excitement, and pleasure experiences of shopping contribute to further supporting the association between impulsive tendencies and counterfeit consumption.

However, more recent literature also emphasises that the hedonic value is a strong input in predicting both the behaviour of impulse buying and the counterfeit purchase behaviour, as consumers are primarily motivated to buy the product based on emotions of satisfaction and pleasurable experience compared to the utilitarian aspect of the benefit (Mashilo et al., 2025). These findings imply that interventional efforts aimed at reducing counterfeit consumption should focus not only on the economic and ethical aspects of consumer behaviour, but also on addressing the hedonistic aspects of a behavioural problem that ultimately compounds purchasing pressures and contributes to impulsive buying.

Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate the relationships between impulsive buying behaviour (IB) and hedonic motivations (HD), as well as between counterfeit consumption behaviour (CNT). The structural equation modelling provided empirical evidence to support the existence of the hypothesised relationships. Findings also indicated that IB significantly influences counterfeit consumption ($\gamma = 0.32, p < 0.001$), so more impulsive individuals are likely to consume counterfeits. HD was also predicted by IB ($\gamma = 0.21, p < 0.001$), indicating that individuals who are emotionally satisfied and driven by pleasure and novelty are strong and motivated impulsive buyers. HD, in its turn, was influential to increased counterfeit consumption ($\gamma = 0.24, p < 0.001$), indicating that this counterfeit consumption is rooted in hedonistic drives of enjoyment, variety-seeking, and self-expression.

Interactionist analysis indicated that HD partially mediates the IB-CNT relationship ($\gamma = 0.96, p < 0.05$), and 0.55 of counterfeit consumption can be predicted under the mediation path. In this way,

impulsivity has a direct influence on the use of counterfeits; however, in large part, mediation goes through hedonic motives.

Generally, impulsive buying is one of the significant indicators of counterfeit purchase, whether directly or indirectly. These results re-emphasise psychological and emotional motifs that cannot be explained by economic factors, making HD a new important mediation tool that policymakers and marketers could use.

Implications

The findings of this research have multiple implications, both theoretical and practical, as well as policy implications. In conceptual terms, the study contributes to the understanding of consumer behaviour by revealing that the consumption of counterfeits cannot be attributed solely to their affordability or availability; the factors involved in their consumption, driven by psychological reasons of impulsivity and hedonic intention, are critical. The interventions should be targeted at curbing consumer vulnerability, rather than encouraging impulsive behaviour. According to the observations conducted by the researchers, brand managers should focus on the genuineness, functionality, and moral worth of actual products rather than investing in hedonic stimuli, such as one-time sales or limited availability. Promotional offers can promote mindful consumption by accurately communicating, narrating, and providing an experience that will place its satisfaction on the horizon, rather than on the immediate high. Policymakers, in turn, ought to target awareness procedures and policies aimed at addressing the psychological processes underlying counterfeit demand. Educational campaigns could emphasise the temporary nature of hedonic pleasure caused by counterfeit goods and highlight the dangers of purchasing low-quality goods or facing legal issues.

Limitations and Future Research

Despite the insights that the current study offers on how impulsive buying behaviour, hedonic motives, and counterfeit consumption relate to one another, it is not devoid of limitations. To begin with, the data were also obtained through self-reported questionnaires that are prone to bias. In the future, mixed methods or purchase tracking may be included in research. Second, the study sample focused on youthful city market members in Pakistan, which limits the possibility of generalising the research findings. Cross-demographic and cross-country comparisons provide a broader perspective. Third, only the types of apparel-related counterfeits were analysed; future studies may investigate other products, such as electronic products, as well as those related to makeup or medications. Lastly, a cross-sectional design represents associations at a single point in time. Longitudinal or experimental designs do a better job of evaluating the causal relationship and changes in impulsive behaviour during a period of time. Overcoming the identified weaknesses would enhance the theoretical knowledge base and provide practical advice on how to mitigate the intrusion of counterfeit consumption.

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