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Counterfeit Cosmetics Perception Among Muslim Government Servants in Wisma Persekutuan Kota Bharu, Kelantan

*Ayu Kamareenna Abdullah Thani, Nurul Nadhira Amalin Azhari, Atiela Amran, Nurhidayah Rosely,
Nik Mohd Faris Nik Min, Muhammad Ammar Haidar Ishak
*Universiti Teknologi Mara, Malaysia
ayukamareenna@uitm.edu.my
Corresponding Author: Ayu Kamareenna Abdullah Thani

Abstract: The objective of this study is to determine if there is a notable disparity in the perception among Muslim consumers regarding counterfeit cosmetic items in Wisma Persekutuan Kota Bharu based on their level of religiosity and brand consciousness. A total of 219 questionnaires were gathered from Muslim government servants residing in Wisma Persekutuan, Kota Bharu, Kelantan through the simple random sampling technique, and the data were then subsequently examined using SPSS software. The study's results indicated a notable correlation between brand consciousness and the impression of Muslim government servants in Wisma Persekutuan Kota Bharu regarding counterfeit cosmetics. Additionally, the results indicated that there is no significant correlation between religiosity in relation to the attitude of Muslim government servants in Wisma Persekutuan Kota Bharu regarding counterfeit cosmetics. This study enhances the existing literature pertaining to the research in the field of Halal cosmetics and offers valuable insights to authorities regarding the perception of counterfeit cosmetic products among Muslim consumers. These findings can assist authorities in improving the regulation of the halal cosmetic industry.

Keywords: *Brand consciousness, counterfeit cosmetics, halal, perception, religiosity.*

1. Introduction

Nowadays, the usage and consumption of cosmetics become a main concern for consumers, particularly women, the key market segment, who use them daily. Cosmetic products encompass a wide range of product categories, including skin care, teeth, hair, bath, and fragrance products. Consumers today are more critical in terms of choosing products and they are attentive to the materials used in cosmetics, whereas in the past, choosing cosmetics was mostly based on branding and the impact of advertising. The need for halal cosmetics is growing rapidly. Customers across the world are selecting halal cosmetics made by Muslim entrepreneurs because they trust their honesty and dependability in guaranteeing the safety of the ingredients included in the products. Presently, Muslim consumers allocate a greater amount of their financial resources in terms of purchasing the cosmetics and care products available in the market. The increased purchasing power parallel to the rising number of Muslims has generally contributed widely to the demand growth for halal cosmetics worldwide (Bakar et al., 2021). Although the halal cosmetic sector has great potential, customers must be more familiar with halal brands. Consumers exhibit a limited degree of receptiveness towards halal cosmetic items.

The concerns surrounding Halal issues in the beauty industry are very insignificant in comparison to the concerns surrounding Halal issues in food consumption (Awang et al., 2020). There is a scarcity of research on the impression of counterfeit cosmetics among Muslim customers. The level of religious devotion significantly influences the way an individual's life is shaped. It is a significant factor that has a favorable impact on customers' ethical beliefs. Ng et al. (2021) conducted a study that found that religiosity had both a direct and indirect impact on buyers' desire to purchase counterfeit products. In addition, Pfordten et al. (2020) also clarified that given a religious setting, the purchase of counterfeit goods by consumers is not categorized as unethical based on his study conducted in Kuwait. The consumers in this study were leaning toward the intention to buy counterfeit products. This can also commonly be seen in Malaysia as our Muslim consumers basically continue to purchase and use counterfeit cosmetics although the products contain detrimental substances, disregarding the cautions issued by NPRA (Quah et al., 2022). Furthermore, this highlights the inadequate comprehension of the halal and tayyib principles in cosmetic items among Muslim customers. The problem of counterfeit cosmetics is intricately linked to the notion of halalan tayyiban.

The ultimate aim of this particular research is to examine the correlation that is present between religion and the perception of Muslim customers in Wisma Persekutuan Kota Bharu, Kelantan regarding counterfeit

cosmetics. According to Mussanova (2021), consumers are more likely to buy counterfeit luxury brands when they can fulfill their urge to flaunt and show off, especially if the brand has great prestige and status. Undoubtedly, self-confidence is related to the act of utilizing a branded cosmetic product and generally, those who have a strong awareness of the brand are more likely to be less influenced to purchase counterfeit products. Nevertheless, renowned and branded cosmetics frequently carry a premium price tag, prompting consumers to choose counterfeit cosmetics at a more affordable cost. According to a study, women choose to choose artificial items available in the market since they are associated with well-known brands, even if these products may have negative impacts on their facial skin (Kumar & Kumar, 2022). The statement suggests that the increasing interest in popular cosmetic brands has led Malaysian beauty enthusiasts to use counterfeit cosmetics that are easily accessible and inexpensive. This study aims to investigate the correlation that exists when it comes to brand consciousness about the perception of Muslim customers in Wisma Persekutuan, Kota Bharu regarding counterfeit cosmetics.

2. Literature Review

Halal Cosmetics: Cosmetics, sometimes known as beauty products, are substances that are designed to be applied to the human body such as cleansing, enhancing beauty, boosting attractiveness, or modifying one's look. The definition of cosmetics, as stated in the USA Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act 2012, includes products ranging from skin moisturizers, lipsticks, makeup preparations, sunscreens, perfumes, shampoos, and any product range that are to be used as and categorized as a cosmetic product. It is a daily obligation for Muslims to exclusively consume halal and tayyib items. In the contemporary and interconnected industry, the term 'halal' extends beyond food goods. Currently, the term 'halal' includes several non-food items like cosmetics, personal care goods, tourism, medications, biotechnology, and more. The word 'halal cosmetics' encompasses all aspects of cosmetic manufacture, including the raw materials used. An individual must first consider the semantics of the word "halal" to comprehend the halal cosmetic. In Arabic, the word halal denotes something that is permitted or allowed (Nur & Sapir, 2021). The production, storage, packaging, and delivery processes are mostly adhering the Shariah criteria (Bakar et al., 2021). Halal cosmetic goods must also exclude components sourced from pigs, blood, human body parts, and any other substances forbidden by Shariah law. To meet the halal requirements, materials sourced from animals that are lawful in Islam must undergo the slaughtering process aligned with Islamic law. It is imperative to maintain hygiene and purity throughout the entire process of preparing, processing, manufacturing, storing, and transporting halal cosmetic items (Hadi et al., 2020).

Issues in the Halal Cosmetic Industry: Despite the potential of the halal cosmetics industry which can be seen today, the exposure towards the brands that promote halal cosmetics is still not significant compared to other cosmetic product ranges in the market. The issues of choosing halal cosmetics are still not as wide as the halal issues when it comes to food consumption (Rosmala et al., 2022). In reference to Bajwa & Singh (2019), non-Muslim countries were the ones monopolizing and dominating the global cosmetics industry. These highlighted issues have become the main challenge in the manufacturing of halal cosmetics products, especially in terms of the choice of ingredients to be used for the production. Nowadays, halal products have been highly competing with other products in the market in reference to different religions and beliefs as well as countries. This is eventually parallel to the choice made by consumers in terms of choosing halal cosmetics as halal products are also competing with other well-established brands available in the market across countries. Muslim consumers can only rely on certification from the authorities in determining whether the cosmetic products they use are halal. This has been proven difficult after porcine DNA was discovered in Cadbury products in 2014

Although the accusation is false, Muslim consumers' confidence that is declining towards the status of halal products remains up until today (Zaidi etal., 2022). Because Islamic law says that every Muslim must only eat halal and healthy foods (Sagban et al., 2023), Muslim customers need to know where the cosmetic ingredients come from and how they are made. Also, closely examining cosmetics can be hard and requires a technical understanding of the ingredients, where they come from, and how they are made. Cosmetics are complicated and are made from a lot of different highly processed chemicals that come from plants or animals. While cosmetics are being used, they can be eaten (like lipstick), breathed in (like perfumes), or absorbed through the skin (like alcohol or ingredients of critical origin (Yunus et al., 2023). Given the problems that already exist, companies that make cosmetics need to make sure that they are carefully made to be halal and to support all

the needs of daily Islamic practices like wudu (cleansing before prayer) and reading the Qur'an. When halal products are being made, several issues need to be thought through.

It is hard to be sure that animal-based chemicals in cosmetics like gelatin, lecithin, glycerol, fatty acids, and collagen are halal. Since some colorings may come from animals, they are considered haram. Adding items that come from cows is also tricky since the cows might be killed in a way that isn't halal. For cosmetics to meet the requirements of Islamic customs, they must not only be made with halal ingredients, but they must also work properly overall. As an example, a nail that has been lacquered must be able to be rinsed off with water, and any makeup that is put on the skin must also be able to be rinsed off totally so that Muslims can follow their rituals. There are ways to find materials that are against Islam, but making kosher cosmetics and testing how well they work are still in their early stages. Non-halal cosmetic manufacturers (Harun et al., 2020) make most of the cosmetics, but their methods do not follow the rules of halal science. This shows how important it is to create guidelines for this reason. Also, there are not many papers that explain how to make fully halal cosmetics or how to test them.

Counterfeiting in Cosmetic Industry: Counterfeiting is the act of replicating a brand's items and unlawfully distributing them in the market. Counterfeit products, commonly referred to as "knockoffs", are fraudulent imitations. As the definition of counterfeit goods is close to being illegal, unauthorized, and involves unethical consumption behavior, there are two conditions exist in reference to purchasing counterfeit goods (Eisend & Schuchert-güler, 2006; Phau et al., 2009a; Staake et al., 2009). Counterfeiting could be categorized into deceptive and non-deceptive which is determined by consumers' level of awareness, knowledge and willingness to commit to this consumption practice (Grossman & Shapiro, 1998). Besides awareness, knowledge, and experiences; consumers' intention is a crucial factor for the intention to purchase counterfeit goods. Basically, deceptive counterfeiting revolves around a scenario where consumers who are lacking in knowledge or unaware of the authenticity of the goods they are going to purchase are deceived while handling the purchase of goods. Meanwhile, non-deceptive counterfeit purchase generally occurs when one is aware of their purchase while at the same time has adequate knowledge in distinguishing between genuine and counterfeit products but in the end still chooses counterfeit goods (Eisend & Schuchert-güler, 2006; Wiedmann & Hennigs, 2017). Hadi et al. (2020) explain that counterfeits establish their identity by imitating genuine and original brands, thereby closely associating the fake with legitimate products or brands to deceive buyers into believing it is an authentic item.

Whatever products that breach trademarks, infringe copyright, and fail to comply with packaging, labeling, and brand requirements are classified as counterfeits. Counterfeiting can manifest in a wide range of branded products available in the market, including but not limited to clothing, handbags, watches, accessories, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, perfumes, CDs, DVDs, computer software, games, and several other items. The susceptibility of luxury brands to counterfeiting is well-documented, mostly attributed to their accessible marketing strategies and cost-effective manufacturing processes (Harun et al., 2020). Counterfeiting is a widespread problem that impacts multiple businesses and sectors. However, counterfeit cosmetics specifically pose a particularly hazardous threat within the counterfeit market (Kumar & Kumar, 2022). While counterfeit handbags, watches, sneakers, or other devices may lead to forbidden black-market operations as well as global criminal activity, it is rare for customers to experience adverse health effects or physical harm from using these counterfeit products. However, it is important to note that cosmetic and pharmaceutical items have the potential to inflict injury and detriment upon customers. Counterfeit cosmetics pose a significant health and safety hazard to customers if they are not created correctly, like counterfeit drugs that may have insufficient active ingredients or harmful pollutants, leading to severe injury (Awang et al., 2020).

The Dangers of Counterfeit Cosmetics: Counterfeit or phony cosmetics, as defined by the Ministry of Health Malaysia (MKN), are items that include illicit, toxic, or hazardous ingredients that pose a threat to the body and overall health. The indiscriminate utilization of counterfeit cosmetic items might present a significant hazard to the well-being of customers. The National Pharmaceutical Regulatory Agency (NPRA) has confiscated approximately 15 counterfeit cosmetic items from the local market. These products were found to contain illicit and hazardous ingredients, including hydroquinone, mercury, and tretinoin (Zaidi et al., 2022). Substances such as hydroquinone, mercury, and tretinoin are known as pharmaceutical substances that need to be registered with the Drug Control Authority and these substances can only be used under the guidance of

healthcare specialists. In general, hydroquinone is known as a depigmenting chemical commonly being added to products to lighten hyperpigmented areas such as freckles, melasma, age spots as well as acne scars (Sagban et al., 2023).

Improper use of hydroquinone in the production of a cosmetic product to lighten the skin as well as reduce the pigmentation without proper supervision from a healthcare practitioner can result in skin thinning, redness, and itching. Excessive utilization of hydroquinone can result in serious complications including inflammatory responses, persistent skin irritation, and a significant risk of developing skin cancer (Yunus et al., 2023). Using tretinoin without supervision might result in major skin problems such as redness, irritation, stinging, peeling, and increased sensitivity to sunlight. Mercury is not allowed to be used in cosmetic goods since it has harmful effects on human health. Mercury exposure, even in small amounts, can lead to skin rashes, memory impairment, and muscle weakness. On the other hand, significant exposure to mercury can result in harm to the brain, kidneys, and nerves (Bakar et al., 2021).

Theory of Planned Behavior: The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is a rigorously studied conceptual framework that has proven effective in the prediction and explanation of human behavior across several fields. The transition from TPB to TRA occurred due to the realization that human conduct is not always subject to control and is also not entirely considered voluntary. The perceived behavioral control was included in the model where this theory was actually rebranded and called The Theory of Planned Behavior (Zaidi et al., 2022). Ajzen (1991) proposed the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which says that people act based on three things: behavioral beliefs, normative beliefs, and perceived power. Behavioral beliefs are what people think will happen if they do something, and perceived power is how strong these beliefs are. Normative beliefs are what other people expect from you, and why you want to follow their lead. Behavioral beliefs determine whether someone likes or dislikes a behavior; normative beliefs determine how people feel about social forces or subjective norms; and control beliefs determine how people feel about their ability to control their behavior. Attitudes toward behaviors, subjective norms, and how much control someone thinks they have over their behavior all work together to form behavioral purposes. Because of this, a person's intention to do the behavior in question goes up with how positive their mood and subjective norm are, as well as their intention to do the behavior.

Lastly, people are expected to follow through with their plans when the chance comes up if they have enough control over their behavior. Studies on the purchase of counterfeit goods have also considered motivation among consumers in response to the high demand which contributed to the survivability of the counterfeit market (Phau & Teah, 2009; Staake et al., 2009; Teah et al., 2015; Trinh & Phau, 2012; Viet et al., 2018). Eisend and Schuchert-güler (2006) in their study also claimed that understanding the underlying motives or intention of the consumers to be involved in purchasing counterfeit goods, will enable the researcher to understand the reasons why this unethical behavior is practiced. The Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) happens to be the main highlight of the research domain of counterfeit goods purchases especially when it comes to the aim of determining consumers' willingness to purchase counterfeit goods as well as their purchase intentions involving this type of goods. There has been a broad range of research which have evaluated the predictors of consumer attitudes based on subjective norms and perceived behavioral control (Augusto de Matos et al., 2007; Teah et al., 2015). The Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) has generally outlined the economic, individual, social, and functional values as the initiators that influence the consumers' attitude as well as their intention to purchase counterfeit goods (Farzana et al., 2017; Phau & Teah, 2009; Sharma & Chan, 2016a; Staake et al., 2009; Teah et al., 2015; Teo & Mohd Yusof, 2017; Trinh & Phau, 2012). Purchase intention also revolves around a consumer's awareness about their purchase in reference to a brand or a specific product (Harshini, 2015).

Thus, the predicted consumers' likelihood in their intention of purchasing counterfeit products or goods in the future can illustrate consumers' underlying motives for being involved in counterfeit consumption. Many studies have been conducted to investigate the consumption of counterfeit cosmetics and have employed the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) as a theoretical framework to assess consumers' intention to acquire and use counterfeit cosmetic items. These studies include the works of Zaidi et al. (2022), Ng et al. (2021) and Awang et al. (2020). The TPB pertains to the perceptions of numerous consumers. Nevertheless, its capacity to influence Muslim customers' perceptions of counterfeit cosmetics appears to be restricted. Hence, additional

investigation is necessary to evaluate the efficacy of alternative theories in forecasting customers' impressions, thereby enabling their integration into the advancement of the beauty sector. The Theory of Planned Behavior by Azjen (2002) is used in this study but with some changes. Wang et al. (2020) say that the Theory of Planned Behavior is built on how people's thoughts and actions are linked. The main goal of the current study is to determine how brand consciousness and religiosity relate to Muslim consumers' perceptions of counterfeit cosmetics. Muslim consumer perceptions about counterfeit cosmetics could be impacted by outside variables including brand consciousness and religiosity. It was decided to use brand consciousness and religiosity as the independent variables. In the meantime, consumers' perceptions will act as the dependent variable for this study.

The Impact of Religiosity on Consumer Perceptions: Religion is a structured framework of ideas and rituals through which communities interpret and engage with phenomena they perceive as supernatural and holy. Zaidi et al. (2022) conducted a study that revealed that religion has both a direct and indirect impact on buyers' intention to buy counterfeit products. Both religion and the intensity of an individual's religious devotion have a beneficial influence on their moral principles. Conversely, unethical conduct is inversely correlated with the level of severity. Sanctions, such as those imposed in the realm after death. Hence, the apprehension of divine retribution in both earthly existence and the afterlife compels those who adhere to a religious belief system to uphold moral principles and exhibit virtuous behavior. A recent study conducted by Awang et al. (2020) demonstrates that religiosity has a beneficial impact on consumers' sentiments, leading to an increased likelihood of purchasing counterfeit products.

Undoubtedly, the integrity of the consumers is closely related to aspects that involve ethics, religion, morale and one's perception of lawfulness (Augusto de Matos et al., 2007; Sharma & Chan, 2014). A stronghold of these related aspects will help consumers distinguish the negative decisions and positive decisions when it comes to purchasing counterfeit products (Farzana et al., 2017). Integrity is another crucial factor that affects consumers' attitudes and intentions in the purchase of counterfeit goods. Studies have generally observed that Malaysian consumers usually consider the integrity aspects before they decide to get involved in buying counterfeit goods (Farzana et al., 2017; Harun et al., 2012; Mohd Nordin et al., 2013; Teo & Mohd Yusof, 2017; Thurasamy et al., 2003). One's integrity is also considered closely related to personal values, family orientations, and environmental factors (Furnham & Valgeirsson, 2007).

The higher the integrity one possesses, it will be less likely for him or her to be involved in the purchase of counterfeit goods as this kind of act is apparently against their values (Farzana et al., 2017).

In reference to Mohd Noor et al., (2017), it has been found that the intention of consumers basically contributed to their actual purchase behavior in the purchasing of counterfeit products and this is mainly because of their consistency in what they believe or say or their intention together with the action they made. In contrast, as asserted by Phau et al. (2009) even when integrity was a significant predictor of attitudes, it did not necessarily reflect one's decision in making a purchase. On the other hand, it has been found by Pueschel et al. (2016) that although Muslim consumers were concerned with the law of 'haram' issues which does not allow them from acting against their religion, they ended it with a justification that stated that their involvement in counterfeit consumption is categorized as acceptable parallel to their intention in sharing the benefits of resources with others. Nevertheless, a study conducted by Bakar et al. (2021) revealed that there is a negligible correlation between customers' religion and their intention to purchase counterfeit products.

Hadi et al. (2020) conducted a study that revealed that customers did not consider counterfeit products to be ethically reprehensible. The study also argued that individuals do not consider their purchase of counterfeit products as morally wrong, even while in a religious setting. Meanwhile, in the other study conducted by Rahayu et al. (2020), it was found that there is a significant relationship between consumers' religiosity and their intention to counterfeit products purchasing. Arli et al. (2021in a study also highlighted that religiosity, directly and indirectly, affected the intention of customers to purchase counterfeit products. Based on several previous studies that reveal inconsistent findings, hence, this study aims to investigate the correlation that exists between religiosity and the perception of Muslim government servants in Wisma Persekutuan. Kota Bharu towards counterfeit cosmetics. Consequently, the subsequent hypotheses were formulated:

H1: There is no significant relationship between religiosity and perception of counterfeit cosmetics among Muslim government servants in Wisma Persekutuan. Kota Bharu.

Brand Consciousness and Its Influence on Consumer Perceptions: Brand consciousness pertains to the psychological intention towards brand-name products throughout the consumers' pre-purchase process. Brand-conscious consumers prefer to acquire a certain line of products from highly renowned and prestigious brands in the industry. According to a study conducted by Ng et al. (2021), branded items were highly counterfeited due to the strong desire of brand-conscious consumers to maintain the same reputation as the original. By using branded products and counterfeits, they can achieve the goal of retaining their reputation. Quah et al. (2022) conducted a study on the intention of customers to buy counterfeit sporting goods. The study revealed that individuals who prioritize brand awareness are less intentional in acquiring counterfeit goods. It demonstrates that the awareness and preference for specific brands impact the likelihood of purchasing counterfeit items. The finding from another study conducted by Sagban et al. (2023) is that brand consciousness has a detrimental impact on customers' attitudes toward buying counterfeit products. Brands play a crucial role in product purchases, serving as a representation of quality and inspiring customer trust. This trust, in turn, deters brand-conscious consumers from buying counterfeit products.

Nevertheless, Harun et al. (2018) conducted a study that revealed that there are instances when consumers who are cognizant of brand names may be unable to afford authentic branded products and may develop an intention to purchase counterfeit alternatives. The other study conducted by Azzari and Pelissari (2021) shows that positive relationship between brand consciousness and the purchase intention of customers among students. Ilyas et al. (2020) emphasize that there is a strong relationship between brand consciousness and purchase intention among 200 respondents in Indonesia. Due to the contradictory results from earlier research, this study aims to investigate the correlation between religion and the perception of Muslim government servants in Wisma Persekutuan, Kota Bharu towards counterfeit cosmetics. Consequently, the subsequent hypotheses were formulated:
H2: There is a significant relationship between brand consciousness and the perception of counterfeit cosmetics among Muslim government servants in Wisma Persekutuan. Kota Bharu.

3. Methodology

The study utilizes the quantitative research method to establish the correlation between variables, specifically the correlation between religiosity and Muslim consumers' perceptions of counterfeit cosmetics, as well as the correlation that exists between brand consciousness and Muslim consumers' perceptions of counterfeit cosmetics. The research in this study uses questionnaires as the primary research instrument. The survey was conducted by creating the questionnaire using Google Forms, and the same was sent to the respondents online. Google Forms is chosen as the platform for surveying because the questionnaires can be made compulsory, and respondents cannot submit the survey if mandatory questions are not being answered. The link access to this form will be sent through emails and WhatsApp to reach as many respondents as possible. The questionnaire was administered online to 242 and 219 filled responses were received from Muslim consumers in Wisma Persekutuan Kota Bharu. The participants in this study are chosen by a process called convenience sampling. Convenience sampling is a kind of nonprobability or non-random sampling in which study participants are selected for convenience based on practical factors like geographic proximity, ease of accessibility, availability at a specific time, or willingness to participate. In simpler terms, convenience sampling is inexpensive, simple, and has quick access to the subjects (Etikan et al., 2016).

The target population in this study was government servants in Kelantan. Data collection for government servants took place at the government buildings of Wisma Persekutuan Kota Bharu which involved 16 departments including the National Registration Department, Immigration Department, Department of Statistics, Valuation and Property Services Department, and Kelantan State Health Department. Wisma Persekutuan was chosen because it is the biggest workplace in Kelantan with government agencies and departments inside the buildings. The data obtained from the questionnaires distributed were analyzed by utilizing the use of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) 28.0 software. The data were then analyzed by applying the descriptive analysis. Descriptive statistics were conducted to measure the mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage of the data obtained from the data collection. Subsequently, this

investigation employed standard multiple linear regression. Multiple linear regression is a statistical analysis method offered in SPSS that examines the influence of multiple independent factors on the variability of a dependent variable. The study employed multiple linear regression to examine the correlation between religion and brand consciousness in relation to Muslim customers' impression of counterfeit cosmetics. Consequently, these analysis methodologies were employed to determine the acceptance of the hypotheses.

4. Results and Discussion

Survey Return Rate: 219 sets of the questionnaire distributed to the respondents were managed to be collected by the researcher where the results portrayed a yielding response rate of 90.3% as tabulated in Table 1.0. The raw data were then keyed in and examined by utilizing the use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 28.0 and the analysis on reliability, correlation and regression was conducted parallel to the purpose of this study.

Table 1: Number of Respondents Involved (n=219)

Number of Questionnaires distributed	The number of Questionnaire returned	Percentage returned (%)	Number of valid Questionnaire	Percentage valid (%)
242	219	90.3	219	100.0

Mean and Standard Deviation: The purpose of conducting the mean and standard deviation analysis was to understand the average value of the factors and the degree of dispersion.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Religiosity, Brand Consciousness and Muslim Consumer Perception

Variables	Mean	SD
Religiosity	4.71	.38
Brand Consciousness	4.65	.34
Muslim Consumer Perception	4.58	.39

Descriptive analysis was performed on the variables in this study. As presented in Table 2.0 above, it shows the results of the analysis which involve mean value and standard deviation of each variable. The mean values are in the range of 4.71 and 4.58. Standard deviation values range from .34 to .39. The highest mean value is for Religiosity with a score of 4.71 and the lowest mean value is for Muslim Consumer Perception with a score of 4.58. Regression analysis is conducted to investigate the correlation between several independent variables and a single dependent variable. The variables investigated in this investigation include religiosity and brand consciousness. The dependent variable in this study refers to the perceptions of Muslim consumers regarding counterfeit cosmetics.

Table 3: Results of Regression Analysis with Muslim Consumer Perception as the Dependent Variable

Independent Variables	Standardized Beta Values
Religiosity	.175
Brand Consciousness	.293*
R	.385
R squared	.148
F values	6.252
Significant F values	.003
Durbin Watson	2.134

From table above shows that the R squared value is 14.8%, indicating that 14.8% of the variance in the regression model has been explained by the independent variables. The significance F value (F= 6.252, p = 0.003) indicates model fit and the Durbin Watson value is 2.134 and still within the acceptance range. Looking at the individual contribution of independent variables in explaining Muslim Consumer Perception as the dependent variable, Brand consciousness ($β$ = .293, p<01) is found to be a significant predictor. Therefore, the hypothesis is supported. This suggests that brand consciousness is positively associated with the perception of

Muslim government servants in Wisma Persekutuan, Kota Bharu regarding counterfeit cosmetics, and this association is statistically significant. This finding is based on a study conducted by Zia et al. (2021) revealed that brand consciousness has a strong effect on the intention to purchase counterfeit goods. Hence, this finding is consistent with a study conducted by Zollo et al. (2020), which demonstrates that being aware of brands has a positive engagement with or intention to purchase counterfeit products.

A previous study conducted by Lee et al. (2019), discovered that consumer's intention toward brand awareness has a beneficial impact on their decision to buy counterfeit goods. In a separate study conducted by Mayasari et al. (2022), it was discovered that brand consciousness has a favorable influence on customers' intention to purchase counterfeit products. The statistical analysis reveals that there is no significant correlation between religiosity and the perception of Muslim government servants in Wisma Persekutuan, Kota Bharu about counterfeit cosmetics. Therefore, the hypothesis was accepted. Consistent with a study conducted by Yaakop et al. (2021), it was discovered that religiosity had a negligible influence on an individual's perspective toward counterfeit fashion items. This phenomenon indicates that the instructions regarding the ban on counterfeiting activities have not been sufficiently put into practice. Conversely, prior research has demonstrated that religiosity exerts a favorable influence on consumers' attitudes toward counterfeit cosmetics. For instance, Abraham et al. (2022) discovered that those who have a stronger religious intention tend to display a more morally upright stance when it comes to counterfeit goods.

Discussion
The study applied the Theory of Planned Behavior to analyze the influence of extrinsic factors namely brand consciousness, on Muslim customers' perceptions of counterfeit cosmetics. Ultimately, the main objective of this study is to examine the impression of counterfeit cosmetics among Muslim consumers in Wisma Persekutuan, Kota Bharu. The results of this study indicate that there is a notable correlation between brand consciousness and the impression of Muslim consumers in Wisma Persekutuan Kota Bharu about counterfeit cosmetics. Studies on counterfeit goods purchases in Malaysia have revealed value consciousness is one of the key factors that promote consumers' attitudes and purchase intention in counterfeit consumption (Ting et al., 2016). This notion contradicts the findings as consumers are fully aware of the perceived risks of using counterfeit cosmetics due to the existing knowledge and beliefs on counterfeits which influence their purchase intention.

Although Malaysian consumers have been exposed to the attitude of looking for bargains in spending every single cent of their money, however, factors such as safety and security become a priority for the cosmetics that the consumers choose which explains the negative attitudes and beliefs toward counterfeit cosmetics. Furthermore, religiosity does not have a significant correlation with the perspective of Muslim consumers in Wisma Persekutuan, Kota Bharu on counterfeit cosmetics. The findings of this study indicate that Muslim consumers in Wisma Persekutuan Kota Bharu had a high level of awareness regarding the presence of counterfeit cosmetic items in the local market. A prior study conducted by Pueschel et al. (2016) highlighted the concern of Muslim consumers regarding the law of 'haram' that does not allow them to practice anything that is against their religion and their justification has been made where it was stated that their involvement in counterfeit consumption is considered acceptable because their intention was sharing benefits of resources with others.

Despite having strong pillars in terms of their religion and personal values, consumers tend to legitimize their misbehavior through various rationalization strategies. Teo and Mohd Yusof (2017) have also found that consumers claimed that the purchase of counterfeit goods they made from a legal and registered store is acceptable and therefore highlighted that they are lacking in self-honesty in relation to their consumption behavior (Ting et al., 2016). The results of this study are anticipated to enhance the awareness of counterfeit cosmetic items among consumers, merchants, manufacturers, and government organizations. It is imperative to educate Muslim customers about the significance of halalan tayyiban in cosmetic products and to alert them to the hazards of counterfeit cosmetics, to prevent their susceptibility to purchasing and using counterfeit items. Cosmetics brands are anticipated to adopt more stringent criteria when selecting components, conducting manufacturing processes, packaging, and distributing cosmetic items to guarantee their quality.

5. Conclusion

Cosmetic products have evolved into indispensable components of the daily lives and routines of individuals, particularly Muslim consumers. The surge in halal cosmetic products production has been influenced by the growing demand for such products among Muslim consumers. Although there has been an increase, Muslim consumers continue to have a relatively limited understanding of the significance of halalan tayyiban in cosmetic products. Despite this, there are still consumers who fall victim to counterfeit cosmetics and endure the repercussions. As a result, governmental entities must increase their vigilance regarding the eradication of counterfeit cosmetics that are sold on the market without proper authorization or licensing. Additionally, government agencies should assist in educating the public about the significance of halalan tayyiban in cosmetic products. Awareness education can be implemented in schools so that pupils may acquire knowledge at a young age. Additionally, awareness regarding counterfeit cosmetics can be disseminated via television channels, columns, and other media outlets. Subsequent investigations may augment and refine the halal cosmetic study through a more comprehensive analysis.

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