

Inhibitor or purchase in intention of fake drugs in Thailand: Role of spiritual, ethical, religious and moral factors.

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Abstract

The investigation of emerging customers and their needs is very crucial for the exploration of moral aspects in terms of advertisement. The basic purpose of the current study is also to find out the relationship or role of ethical concern, intrinsic and extrinsic religiosity and moral judgment on the purchase intention of the customers with the help of customer attitude as a mediating variable. The current study is designed based on a survey questionnaire. Additionally, the respondents are selected based on random as well as convenience sampling in which the respondents select from shopping malls, groceries, and streets. For all variables such as moral judgment, spirituality, intrinsic and extrinsic religious the five-item measurement scale is used. Under the analysis section, the descriptive statistics test and KMO test are applied to analyze the mean, median, and standard deviation values. Besides, the results have indicated that moral judgment, as well as intrinsic religiosity, has an insignificant impact on purchase intention while ethical concern and extrinsic religiosity have a positive impact on purchase intention. At the same time, the role of attitudes as a mediating between ethical concern and purchase intention is also insignificant. Finally, the given study is effective and beneficial for drug-making industry and the customers who want positive attitudes.

Keywords: Purchase intention, attitudes, ethical concern, extrinsic religiosity, intrinsic religiosity, moral judgment.

1 Introduction

The rising tendency of consumers to buy counterfeit products has a matter of concern, particularly when they are inclined towards buying fake drugs or medicines which may have propound impact on their health (Mackey & Liang, 2011). The production and consumption of counterfeit products are international phenomena which ranges from high end luxury goods to low end consumers' products. The reason is advancing technology and innovation has enabling the production of counterfeit products (Trott & Hoecht, 2007). However, the consumer's intention to buy fake product is significantly driven by their social norms, religious and ethical values and moral judgement. This study aims to explore the impact of moral and ethical aspects on the consumers' intention to buy fake drugs, along with taking into account of mediating role of consumers' attitude towards buying fake drugs in Thailand. Existing study of Jiang, Miao, Jalees, and Zaman (2019) also explore the impact of ethical and moral aspects on the consumers' intention to buy fake products. Drawing upon the planned behavior theory, the study proposed that ethical values and moral judgment has negative influence on consumers' purchase intention of fake products.

The FDA (Food and Drug Administration) organization in Thailand has confiscated the fake drugs of 2 million pills worth 5 million Thailand's Bhat. The illegal sale of unlicensed drugs by dealers is the matter of concern in Thailand. The poor performance of country regulatory quality from 2011 to 2018 has further exacerbated the issue. Figure 1 indicates that in the index of regulatory quality that ranges between -2.5 to 2.5 from worst to best, the country lies at somewhat 0.11 during

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2018. The regulatory quality of Thailand is lower than its immediate partners such as Malaysia and Singapore, which are also facilitating the diffusion of fake drugs in market.

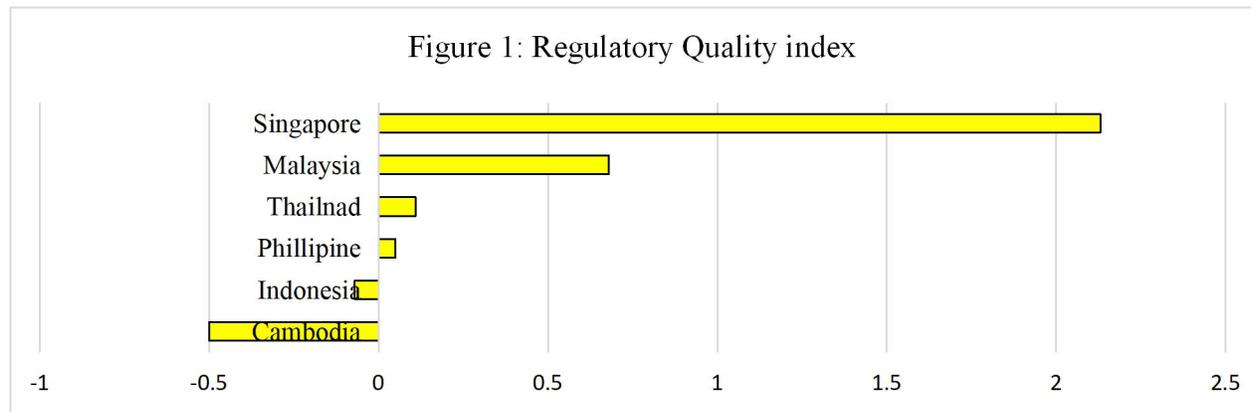


Table 1 indicates that the regulatory quality in Thailand decrease from 0.2 to 0.11 from 2011 to 2018, respectively. Thus the worsening regulatory quality in Thailand has exacerbated the selling and buying of fake products. This study adds in literature by exploring the impact of ethical and moral aspect on consumer purchase intention of buying fake drugs. Moreover, the study fills gap in literature by emphasizing the mediating role of attitude in reinforcing the linkages of moral and ethical values with consumers intention to buy fake product.

Year	Thailand's Regulatory Quality
2011	0.20
2012	0.24
2013	0.23
2014	0.27
2015	0.29
2016	0.17
2017	0.14
2018	0.11

The objectives of the study are

- To empirically explore the impact of Spirituality on consumers' purchase intention of fake drugs in Thailand
- To empirically indicate the impact of moral judgement on consumers' purchase intention of fake drugs in Thailand
- To empirically explore the impact of religiosity on consumers' purchase intention of fake drugs in Thailand
- To empirically explore the impact of ethical values on consumers' purchase intention of fake drugs in Thailand
- To identify the mediating role of attitude in reinforcing the linkages of moral and ethical values with consumers intention to buy fake product

The studies on consumer's intention to purchase fake goods in context of moral judgment and ethical values are dearth in literature. Few studies have supported the role of moral judgement, negative attitude towards fake product, and ethical norms in discouraging consumers to buy fake product (Chen, Teng, & Liao, 2018; Ha & Lennon, 2006; Jiang et al., 2019). Drawing upon the planned behavior theory, the studies have offered tremendous insights for future research in this context, and also hold robust practical and theoretical implications. This study also aim to contribute in literature by exploring the role of ethical and moral judgment in discouraging consumers to buy fake drugs in Thailand. The study based on five sections including introduction, literature, methodology, empirical findings and conclusion.

2 Literature Review and Theoretical Background

The fake merchandise and product are the internal phenomenon which is more rampant in emerging and developing economies. The fake or counterfeit products are the indistinguishable copies of product which are usually sell at relatively lower prices. European commission indicated that instance of fake product in EU has growing in different industries from luxury items to other merchandise products (Martinez & Jaeger, 2016). Moreover, few studies also highlight that fake and counterfeit inflict tremendous loss of billions of dollar to Asian economies such as Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, South Korea, China and Hong Kong (Pueschel, Chamaret, & Parguel, 2017; Yeap & Ramayah, 2006). Building upon the theory of planned behavior and theory of reason action indicated this study aims to indicate that how the perceived more judgment and ethical behavior, and attitude impact the purchase intention of fake and counterfeit products (Fernandes, 2013; Kim & Karpova, 2010; Lang, 2017).

2.1 Spirituality and purchase intention of fake drugs

Spirituality in business in key indicators of fair business operations by embracing the values of accountability, integrity, honesty, service intuition, respect, justice, and cooperation. Researcher have been identified the positive implication of spirituality in promoting fair business practices by nourishing their creativity, and moral commitment. Existing literature on spirituality supported its role is discouraging the purchase intention of counterfeit or fake products. Quoquab, Pahlevan, Mohammad, and Thurasamy (2017) also supported that ethical aspects including spirituality has negative impact on the consumers' attitude of buying fake product. The study has empirically explore the impact of spirituality on purchase intention of fake product by conducting survey of 737 respondents in Malaysia, China Town. Moreover, Riquelme, Abbas, and Rios (2012) by empirically investigating the factors that affect the purchase of fake product in Islamic countries indicate that performance risk, ethical consciousness, norms, and value consciousness influence the consumers attitude towards buying fake products. Existing studies on spirituality indicate that it thwart the costumers to buy counterfeit product, thus the following hypothesis may proposed:

H1: spirituality has negative impact on the consumers' intention to purchase fake drugs

2.2 Moral judgement and purchase intention of fake drugs

Drawing upon the theories of moral judgment various studies have emphasized that moral judgement of consumers about products influence their attitude towards buying fake products (Kos Koklic & Vida, 2016). The moral judgment about product either it is good or awful is significantly impact the consumption pattern of customers (De George, 2011). The customers' negative perception about the fake product to excite other will make them feel humiliated by buying fake drugs. Moreover, Jiang et al. (2019) also empirically explore and identify that moral judgment of consumers about fake product negatively impact their intention to purchase fake products in China. Additionally, Souiden, Ladhari, and Zarrouk Amri (2018) also indicate that the consumers perception about fake product is that buying counterfeit or fake product is sin, will discourage them to buy counterfeit product in Tunisia. Hence, drawing upon above literature the following hypothesis may proposed:

H2: Moral Judgement has negative impact on the consumers' intention to purchase fake drugs

2.3 Intrinsic and Extrinsic Religiosity and purchase intention of fake Drugs

The impact of religiosity on purchase intention of counterfeit or fake product is negative. The religiosity is the practice of religious values and ethics in quotidian activities. There are two classes of religiosity such as intrinsic and extrinsic religiosity. The former referred to how religion impact daily life matter and later referred to how much religion are utilizes for different purpose. Quoquab, Pahlevan, and Hussin (2016) proposed in their study that religion plays a fundamental role in maneuvering the purchase intention of counterfeit products. Asghar (2019) by conducting the survey of pharmaceutical organization in Islamabad, Pakistan indicates that not merely religiosity of consumers but also salesman also impact the consumers purchase intention of buying fake products. Despite, the religiosity has profound impact on consumer's materialism, which consequently will prevent them to purchase counterfeit products (Firgosti Flamboyant & Ruswanti, 2017; Jiang et al., 2019; Khan, Ghani, & Aziz, 2019; Quoquab et al., 2017). Thus, drawing upon above literature the following hypothesis may build:

H3: Religiosity has negative impact on the consumers' intention to purchase fake drugs

2.4 Ethical Concern and purchase intention

Moral guidelines and ethical values of consumers have profound impact on their purchasing patterns (Chaudhry & Stumpf, 2011; Koklic, 2011; Kozar & Marcketti, 2011; Ozdasli et al., 2018). Jirotmontree (2013) also investigated the purchase intention of fake products in Thailand's and Singapore Market by examining the role of moral and business ethics. The empirical results of the study proposed that moral and ethical values and subjective norms have significant impact on the consumers' purchase intention of fake products. Subjective norms have a profound impact on the consumer's attitude towards buying fake products. Thus, building upon the above literature, the following hypothesis may be constructed:

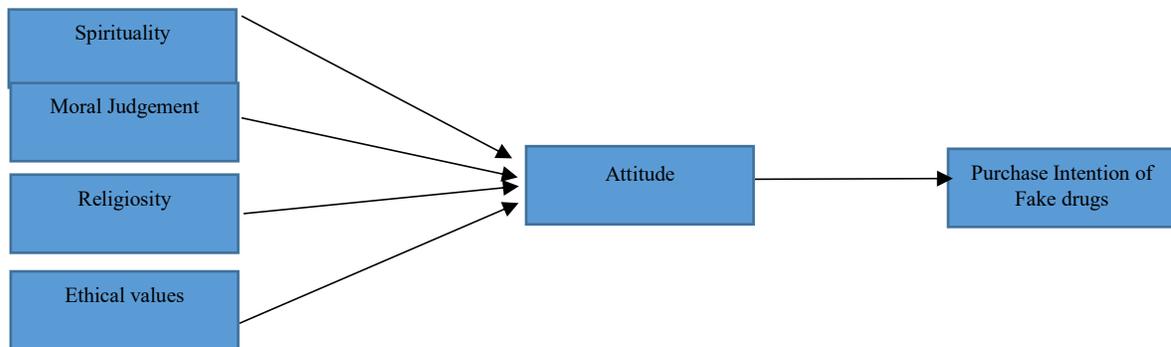
H4: Ethical Concern has negative impact on the consumers' intention to purchase fake drugs

2.5 Mediating role of attitudes

The consumer's attitude towards buying counterfeit products significantly impacts their intention to purchase fake products. The positive attitude of consumers towards fake products, due to their low prices, positively impacts their intention to purchase fake goods. Conversely, the negative attitude of consumers towards counterfeit products, due to their low prices, negatively impacts their intention to purchase fake goods (Jiang et al., 2019; Michaelidou & Christodoulides, 2011; Teah & Phau, 2008; Egbuniwe, 2019). Despite the considerable role in driving the purchase intention of consumers, literature has done little research on the mediating or moderating role of attitude on consumers' purchase intention. Hence, building upon the above literature, the following hypothesis may be constructed:

H5: Attitude has significant mediating impact on the linkages of ethical and religious factors with consumers' intention to purchase fake drugs

2.6 Theoretical Framework



3 Methodology

3.1 Sample Characteristics

A survey design was utilized for this study. The research instrument was a questionnaire. The method of convenience sampling was utilized. The respondents were randomly chosen from the streets, malls, shopping complexes, grocery stores etc. They were asked whether or not they are involved with purchasing drugs and their experience with fake or counterfeit drugs. Then they were explained the purpose of the study and a self-administered questionnaire was used to record responses. The researcher followed the directions of the item response theory and the criteria of ten responses against each item was utilized i.e. $30 \times 10 = 300$.

3.2 Measures

All of the scale items have been measured at a five point Likert scale, ranging from "1=strongly disagree" to "5=strongly agree".

3.2.1 Spirituality

The scale for measuring spirituality was adapted from the study of Narang (2013). The scale consists of eleven items and is known as the CONSPIRIT scale of Narang. A sample item includes "I prefer to use products that are efficient and less energy consuming for both my personal and society's benefit".

3.2.2 Moral Judgment

The construct for moral judgment was adapted from the study of Reidenbach and Robin (2013). The scale consists of 4 items and the reliability of this construct in previous studies has ranged between 0.87 and 0.8. A sample item includes “It is tacitly promised to purchase counterfeits of luxury brands in recent business environments”.

3.2.3 Intrinsic Religiosity

The scale for religiosity was developed by Kirkpatrick and Hood Jr (1990). The items for intrinsic religiosity were extracted from it. The scale consists of three items and the reliability score in previous studies has ranged between 0.8 and 0.83. A sample item includes “It is important to me to spend time in private thought and prayer”.

3.2.4 Extrinsic Religiosity

The scale for religiosity was developed by Kirkpatrick and Hood Jr (1990). The items for extrinsic religiosity were extracted from it. The scale consists of three items and the reliability score in previous studies has ranged between 0.8 and 0.83. A sample item includes “What religion offers me most is comfort in times of trouble and sorrow”.

3.2.5 Ethical Concern

Ethical concern is characterized as the lawful and moral characteristics of an individual. The scale by Chaudhry and Stumpf (2011) was adapted for this study. Four items have been incorporated into this study and the reported validity in previous study (of this scale) has ranged between 0.7 and 0.84. A sample item includes “Pharmaceutical counterfeiting infringes on intellectual property”.

3.2.6 Attitudes

Attitude was measured using the scale developed by Francis, Burgess, and Lu (2015). The scale was adapted and modified to fit the requirements of the present study. Five items were used to measure this construct and the reliability score of this study in previous researches has ranged between 0.7 and 0.9. A sample item includes “There is nothing wrong with purchasing counterfeit pharmaceutical products”.

3.2.7 Purchase Intention

Purchase item was measured using the scale developed by Wang, Zhang, Zang, and Ouyang (2005). The scale was modified and adjusted according to the requirements of the present study. Four items were used to measure the construct. A sample item includes “I will recommend that my friends and relatives purchase counterfeit pharmaceutical products”.

4 Results

4.1 Demographics

A sample of 315 people chosen from the general population were finalized to serve as respondents for the research. Out of these 315, 52.4 percent were male and the remaining 47.6 were females. The educational level of 76.5 of the respondents was equivalent to masters and age of 61.3 percent of the respondents was in between 31 and 50. The respondents were chosen at random and upon their experience with counterfeit pharmaceutical products. Therefore there is no appropriate reason the statistics in gender, age and qualification.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

The mean values are approaching 4, showing that most of the respondents were in agreement with the statements of the variables. The skewness values are also within the prescribed range, -1+1, thus it can be proclaimed that a normality distribution is followed by the data. Outliers were found present in the responses for internal religiosity.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
PurchInt	315	1.00	5.00	3.4821	1.13391	-.743	.137
Attitude	315	1.00	5.00	3.4632	1.17505	-.587	.137
EthCom	315	1.00	5.00	3.5405	1.14171	-.812	.137

ExtRel	315	1.00	5.00	3.5839	1.09568	-.859	.137
IntRel	315	1.00	5.75	3.3548	1.10808	-.376	.137
Spirtu	315	1.00	5.00	3.3654	1.14106	-.652	.137
MorJud	315	1.00	5.00	3.4495	1.20397	-.684	.137
Valid N (listwise)	315						

4.3 KMO and Bartlett's test

The KMO value is more than 0.6 and appears to be nearing 1, showcasing the adequacy of the sample. The Bartlett's sphericity is also significant which depicts the non-relevance of construct items, therefore the items can be forwarded for factor analysis and SEM.

Table 2: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.953
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	12598.133
	Df	496
	Sig.	.000

4.4 Factor Loading

Table 3 demonstrates, all items are significant, as the loadings are greater than 0.7 (Hassan, Hameed, Basheer, & Ali, 2020; Iqbal & Hameed, 2020). The issue of cross-loading hasn't been observed as well.

Table 3: Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
PI1						.733	
PI2						.786	
PI3						.807	
AT1		.809					
AT2		.855					
AT3		.854					
AT4		.837					
EC1			.824				
EC2			.847				
EC3			.887				
EC4			.817				
ER1					.796		
ER2					.854		

ER3		.802	
IR1			.715
IR2			.736
IR3			.812
SP1	.904		
SP2	.879		
SP3	.892		
SP4	.899		
SP5	.874		
SP6	.878		
SP7	.864		
SP8	.851		
SP9	.901		
SP10	.909		
SP11	.912		
MJ1		.738	
MJ2		.734	
MJ3		.722	
MJ4		.739	

4.5 Construct Validity

The CR values are greater than 0.7 and AVE values are greater than 0.5, indicating the convergent validity. The MSV values are less than the AVE values and self-correlation coefficients are also higher than those of the variable-variable correlation. Thus discriminant validity is also present.

Table 4: Convergent and Discriminant Validity

	CR	AVE	MSV	SP	PI	AT	EC	ER	IR	MJ
SP	0.935	0.859	0.584	0.927						
PI	0.889	0.728	0.384	0.452	0.853					
AT	0.941	0.800	0.384	0.292	0.620	0.894				
EC	0.940	0.795	0.359	0.364	0.533	0.599	0.892			
ER	0.904	0.758	0.339	0.393	0.561	0.582	0.480	0.871		
IR	0.878	0.705	0.486	0.636	0.554	0.361	0.413	0.437	0.840	
MJ	0.964	0.869	0.584	0.764	0.436	0.287	0.367	0.398	0.697	0.932

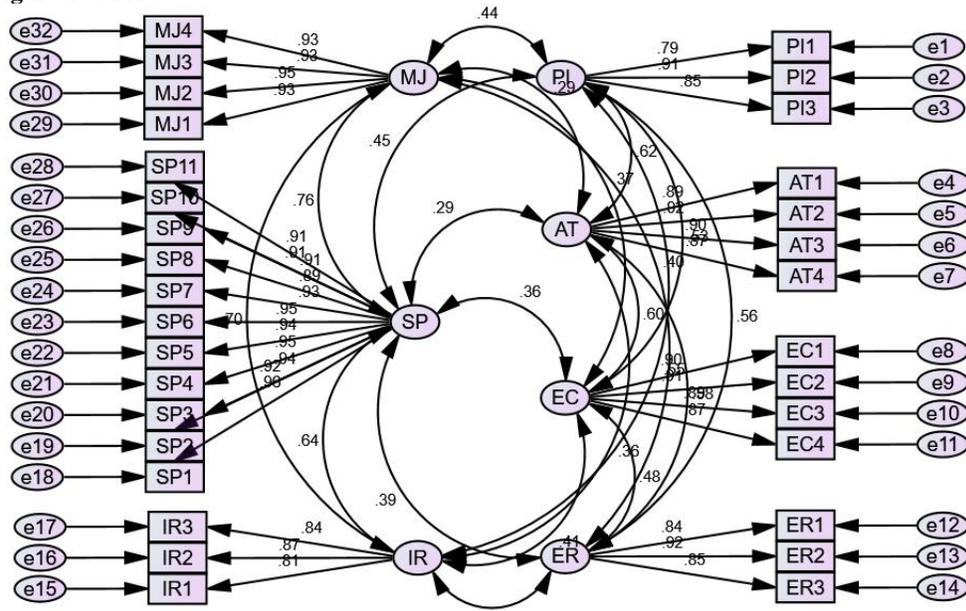
4.6 Model Fitness

CFA test is used to confirm the model fitness. CMIN is under 3, GFI is greater than 0.8, CFI and IFI are above 0.9 and RMSEA is less than 0.08 therefore the model is deemed fit.

Table 5: Confirmatory Factors Analysis

Indicators	Threshold range	Current values
CMIN/DF	Less or equal 3	2.600
GFI	Equal or greater .80	.807
CFI	Equal or greater .90	.944
IFI	Equal or greater .90	.944
RMSEA	Less or equal .08	.071

Figure 1: CFA



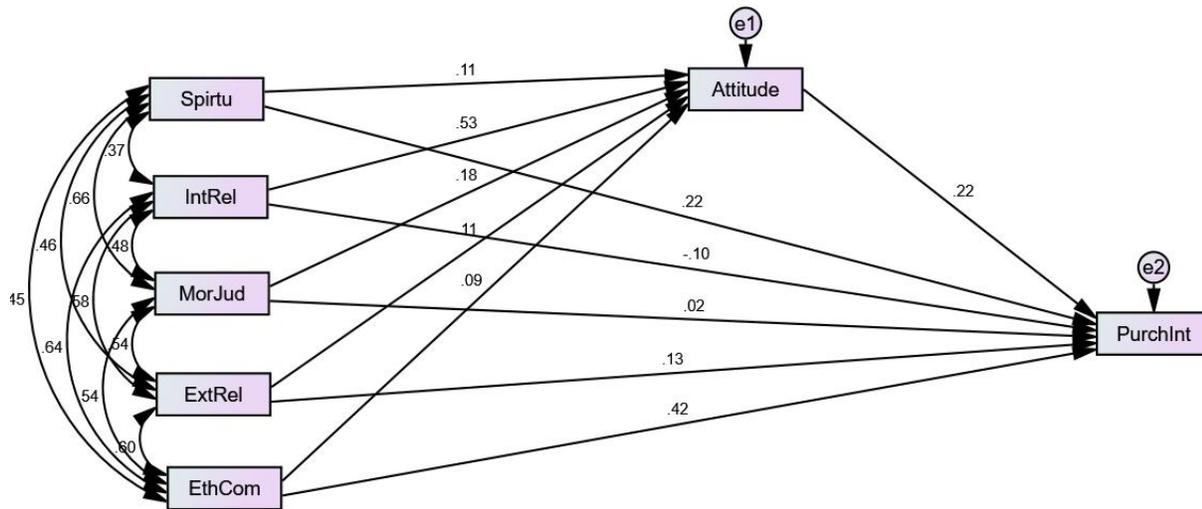
4.7 SEM

The direct effect was used to measure the variance in purchase intention predicted due to variation in independent variables. One unit change or increase in ethical consideration produces a positive variation of 42.5 percent in purchase intention. One unit change in external religiosity produces an effect of 13.4 percent in purchase intention. A unit change in spirituality produces an effect of 22.1 percent in purchase intention. All three hypotheses are accepted as the relationships are significant. The relationships between moral judgement and purchase intention and internal religiosity and purchase intention are insignificant and the hypotheses are rejected. The mediation of attitude is significant and brings about variations of 2.4 due to ExtRel, 4.1 due to MorJud, 11.8 due to IntRel and 2.4 due to Spirtu. The hypotheses are accepted. However, the mediation of attitude on EthCom and PurchInt is insignificant and the hypothesis is rejected.

Table 6: Structural Equation Modeling

	Total Effect	EthCom	ExtRel	MorJud	IntRel	Spirtu	Attitude
Attitude	.087*	.105*	.182**	.531***	.109**	.000	
PurchInt	.444***	.157**	.059*	.018	.246**	.223**	
Direct Effect		EthCom	ExtRel	MorJud	IntRel	Spirtu	Attitude
Attitude	.087*	.105*	.182**	.531	.109	.000	
PurchInt	.425***	.134*	.019	-.101	.221**	.223**	
Indirect Effect		EthCom	ExtRel	MorJud	IntRel	Spirtu	Attitude
Attitude	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
PurchInt	.019	.024*	.041*	.118**	.024*	.000	

Figure 2: SEM



5 Discussion

Ethical attitudes of consumers have a great impact on the intentions of purchasing fake products and brands, moral-spiritual factors also play a significant part in the purchasing process. According to the initial results of the research study, it is stated that the impact of spirituality on the purchase intention of fake products has insignificant, this is because according to a study by Sharma and Sharma (2017) state that a high degree of spirituality in a consumer generates a feeling of being targeted by fake things like drugs in this case. Therefore, the impact of spirituality is negative on the purchase intention of fake products. Furthermore, the results of the study also demonstrate that moral judgment, intrinsic religiosity, and extrinsic religiosity also harm the purchase intentions because Hashim, Musa, Nazri, and Ab Rahman (2020) argued that the religious traditions of consumers are often forbidden and discourage the individuals from buying fake products like drugs, that is the reason that third and fourth hypothesis of the study has been rejected.

According to the last results of the study, it is indicated that the mediating impact of attitude on the purchase intention is significant and positive, this is because positive attitudes of a consumer can increase the faith level of an individual which directly mediates the intentions of purchasing products and brands (Testa, Cosic, & Iraldo, 2016).

6 Conclusion

The main purpose of this research paper is to identify the impact of spirituality, moral judgment, intrinsic religiosity, and extrinsic religiosity on the purchase intention of fake products in the context of Thailand. The role of ethical concern has also been identified in the study along with the mediating role of attitudes of consumers. Different significant techniques and methods have also been used in this research such as confirmatory factor analysis, KMO, descriptive statistics and SEM for the calculation of data and information.

6.1 Implications and Limitations

The results of the study have many implications like practical and social uses and it also helps the communities of Thailand in purchasing drug products. The verdicts of the study help consumers of fake drugs in Thailand and also help them to understand the relationship between attitudes of an individual and purchase intentions. Makers of drugs and related products and also the local bodies of Thailand also gain information from the findings of this research study. This research study also provides significant material for fellow researchers to explore the relationship between spirituality and purchase intentions.

There are some limitations of this study such as the use of self-reporting tools may not catch a legitimate impression of consumers and their behaviors, and therefore it is recommended to future research that they should use other appropriate tools. The second limitation is that the study was conducted only in the arena of Thailand.

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