



Luxury for All? A study on how Imitation Jewellery makes Affordable Fashion Accessible to the people of Nashik

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ABSTRACT

This study, titled "Luxury for All? A study on how imitation jewellery makes affordable fashion accessible to the people of Nashik," examines a significant change in modern consumer culture: the democratization of luxury. Instead of just focusing on economic factors, this research uses a survey of 202 respondents in Nashik to investigate the complex role of imitation jewellery as a key driver of social and cultural change. The paper looks at two main goals: its practical role in closing the gap between high-end style and financial access, and its subtle social and emotional effects on different age groups. The findings tell a strong story of consumer desire and satisfaction. The data clearly shows that consumers are not just after a cheaper option; they want a "Trendy/Premium Appearance" and a wide "Variety of Designs." This intentional chase, along with an impressive 95% agreement that imitation jewellery makes luxury fashion reachable, positions the product as a major force in affordable luxury. Additionally, the analysis uncovers a notable generational difference in its psychological and social functions. For younger consumers, imitation jewellery is a key source of confidence and social acceptance, with most feeling "confident & stylish" and receiving compliments. In contrast, older generations have a more detached view, appreciating the accessories for their subtle style



and gentle imitation of authenticity. In conclusion, this research suggests that imitation jewellery is not a fake version of luxury; it is a genuine and lively force that is changing the very definition of luxury. It reflects the changing consumer mindset, where the pursuit of fulfillment and accessible beauty takes precedence over exclusivity, fundamentally transforming modern fashion.

INTRODUCTION

The idea of "luxury," which used to mean exclusivity and high prices, is being reshaped in the 21st century. With a growing desire among consumers and the rise of social media, the market is shifting toward what is called "affordable luxury." This change goes beyond just lower prices; it represents a broader access to high-fashion trends and sophisticated designs. The accessories market clearly showcases this shift, where products that appear valuable without costing too much are becoming very popular.

Imitation jewellery has become a strong player in this market, allowing people to join fashion trends that they couldn't access before. This type of accessory has evolved from simply being a substitute for fine jewellery to being a means of personal expression and a reflection of changing tastes. It serves as a way for more people to feel included in current styles. My research comes from a unique viewpoint on this trend. As a research partner for an imitation jewellery business owner in Nashik, I have seen how this market meets a real consumer need for stylish and affordable accessories. At the same time, my experiences as a consumer have shown me the emotional and social effects of these products, emphasizing their role in boosting confidence and style.

This study, titled "Luxury for All? A study on how imitation jewellery makes affordable fashion accessible to the people of Nashik," aims to explore this trend in detail. Using a structured survey and analysis, this paper will investigate the reasons behind consumer choices in imitation jewellery, examine its social and emotional impact, and argue that it plays a key role in making luxury fashion trends accessible to a varied population in a Tier 2 city like Nashik. By looking at the connections between affordability, design, and social perception, this research will show how imitation jewellery is not just a cost-effective option but also a way to enhance the experience of aspirational living.

KEYWORD



Affordable Luxury : Non-essential consumer goods which can compare with luxury in quality and design, but is less scarcity and expensive than luxury goods, can reflect the quality and taste of life.

OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the role of imitation jewellery in making premium-looking fashion more accessible and affordable.
2. To analyze the social and emotional impact of wearing imitation jewellery among different age groups in Nashik.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research type	Analytical
Scope of research	Adult Residents of Nashik City
Data Collection	<p>Primary source: Questionnaire - In this method google form with 7 questions has been prepared and shared with the target population to get responses.</p> <p>Secondary Source: Published or unpublished data, websites, research papers, observation.</p>
Population	Adult Residents of Nashik City
Sample Size	202
Sampling Techniques	Simple random
Data analysis tools	Pie Chart, Excel Sheet

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

H₀: There is no association between choosing imitation jewellery for affordability and the belief that imitation makes luxury fashion more accessible.

H₁: People who choose imitation for affordability are more likely to believe it makes luxury fashion accessible.



	Agree	Disagree
Affordable Price	39	2
Safety	14	4
Trendy or Premium Appearance	72	2
Variety of Designs	67	2

Calculated value (Chi-square) = 12.824

P-value = 3.422E-4, which is equivalent to 0.0003422

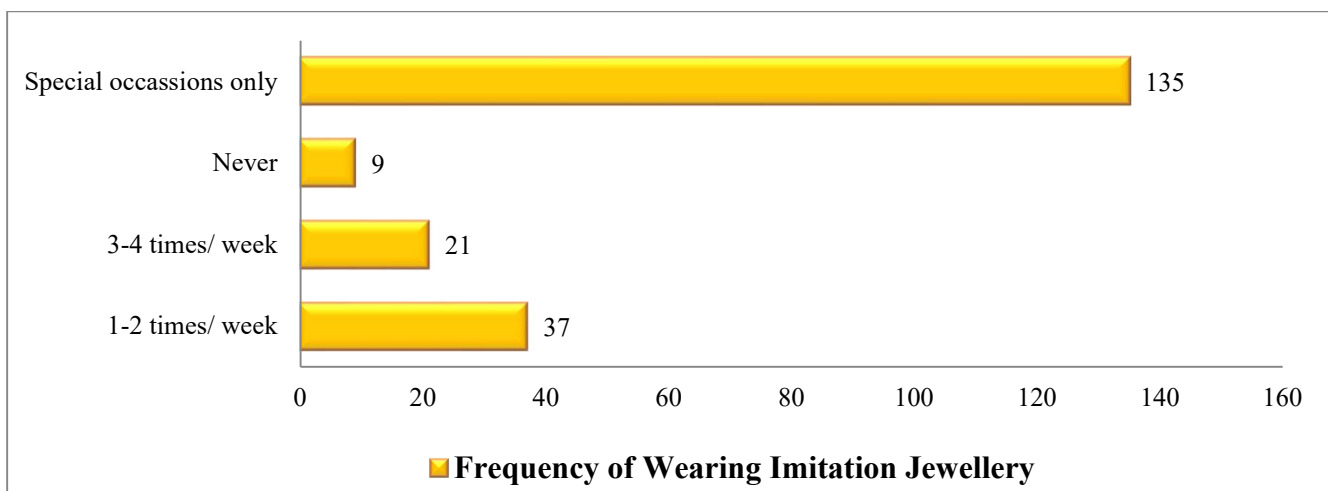
A p-value of 0.0003422 is much smaller than the significance level of 0.01. This indicates that the observed association is **statistically significant**.

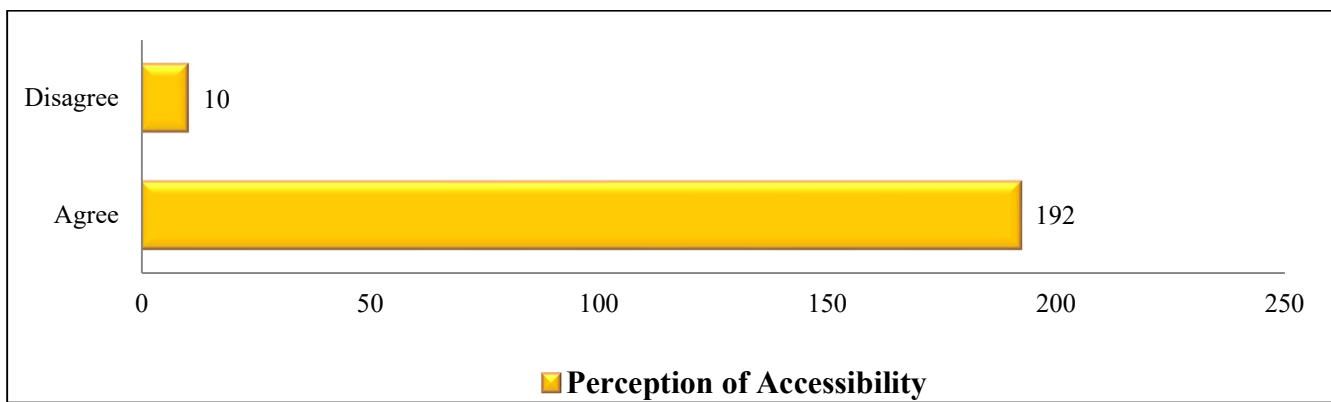
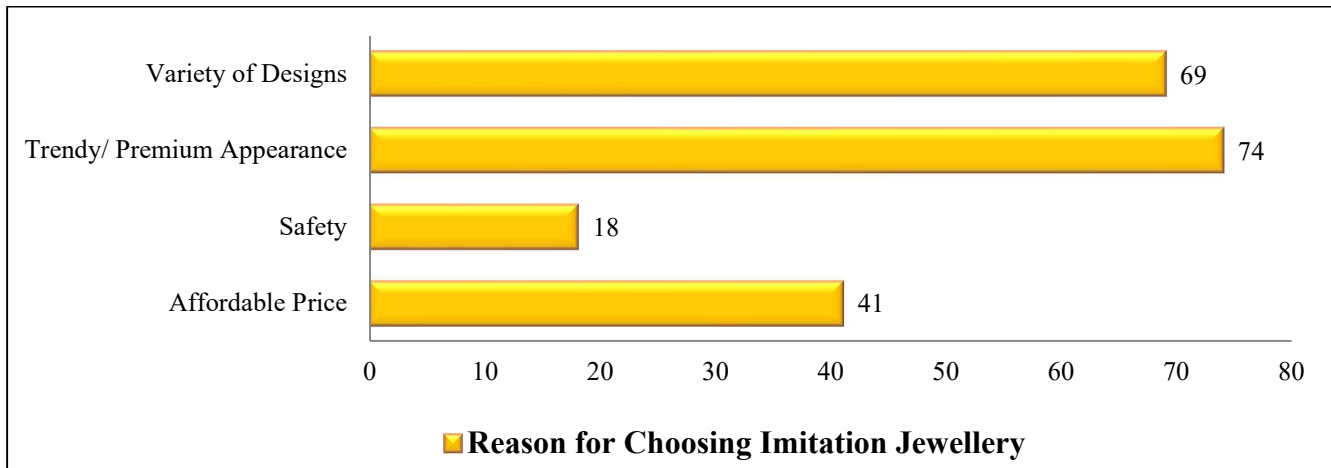
Since the p-value (0.0003422) is less than the significance level (0.01), we **reject the null hypothesis** (H0).

Rejecting the null hypothesis means there is **evidence to support the alternative hypothesis** (H1), which states that people who choose imitation jewellery for affordability are more likely to believe it makes luxury fashion accessible.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

1. Analysis of Objective 1: The Role of Imitation Jewellery in Democratizing Fashion





- Dual Function of Use:** Most respondents (66.8%) use imitation jewellery for special occasions, but many also wear it regularly. This shows it acts as both an eye-catching accessory for events and a practical item for daily fashion.
- Aesthetic-Driven Choice:** The main reasons for choosing imitation jewellery are its "Trendy/Premium Appearance" (74 respondents) and "Variety of Designs" (69 respondents), followed by "Affordable Price" (41 respondents). This suggests that consumers want stylish, high-end looks, not just low prices.
- Perceived Accessibility:** An overwhelming 95% of respondents agreed that imitation jewellery makes luxury fashion more accessible. This strong agreement highlights its role in making aspirational fashion available to the public.

The analysis of consumer behavior in Nashik supports the idea that imitation jewellery is an effective tool for making fashion available to everyone. The data shows that consumers are not just looking for cheap alternatives; they are actively seeking stylish aesthetics and a wide range of designs. The high percentage of respondents who believe these products make luxury accessible clearly links this desire for style to a sense of financial and social empowerment. This positions imitation jewellery as an important



connection between high-end fashion and everyday consumers, fundamentally changing the definition of luxury.

2. Analysis of Objective 2: Social and Emotional Impact by Age Group

Emotional Impact by Age Group

Age Group	Confident & Stylish (%)	Neutral (%)	Insecure (%)	Don't Think About It (%)
13-28	70.6%	22.06%	2.94%	4.41%
29-44	56.5%	30.43%	0.00%	13.04%
45-60	41.66%	38.88%	2.77%	16.66%
61-71	28.57%	21.42%	0.00%	50.00%

Social Impact by Age Group

Age Group	They Compliment Me (%)	They Can't Tell (%)	They Don't Notice (%)	Negative Remarks (%)
13-28	55.88%	26.47%	13.23%	4.41%
29-44	34.78%	43.47%	21.73%	0.00%
45-60	22.22%	55.55%	19.44%	2.77%
61-71	7.14%	64.28%	28.57%	0.00%

Overall Impact

- **Positive Emotional Impact:** 57.43% of all respondents feel "confident and stylish" wearing imitation jewellery.
- **Neutral Social Impact:** 40.59% receive compliments, and 40.10% say others "can't usually tell" the jewellery is imitation.

Generational Differences

**• Younger Consumers (13-28):**

- **Emotional:** A high 70.6% feel "confident and stylish," showing a strong emotional connection.
- **Social: 55.88% receive compliments, indicating that positive emotions are reinforced by social feedback.**

• Older Consumers (45-71):

- **Emotional:** Emotional connection decreases with age; 50% of those aged 61-71 "don't think about it," suggesting a more detached view.
- **Social:** They value discretion, with 64.28% of the 61-71 age group reporting that people can't tell it's imitation, pointing to a preference for subtlety over social validation.

The data reveals a clear generational gap in how imitation jewellery is viewed. Younger consumers see these accessories as a way to express themselves and boost their confidence, with positive feelings often confirmed by compliments from their peers. In contrast, older consumers choose imitation jewellery for its understated aesthetic appeal, valuing its authentic look more than its social aspect. This indicates that the same product has different emotional and social meanings for different age groups, acting as a bold fashion statement for the young and a subtle, practical accessory for the older generation.

FINDINGS

The analysis of the survey data, collected from 202 respondents in Nashik, provides a comprehensive insight into the role of imitation jewellery as a facilitator of affordable fashion and its subsequent social and emotional impact. The findings are organized by the two core objectives of this study.

1. The Role of Imitation Jewellery in Democratizing Fashion

The data overwhelmingly confirms that imitation jewellery serves as a crucial tool for making premium-looking fashion accessible and affordable. The study found that while imitation jewellery is a regular part of fashion for a significant minority of respondents, it is primarily worn on special occasions by **66.8%** of the population, underscoring its role in high-impact, event-specific attire.

The primary motivations for choosing imitation jewellery are rooted in aesthetics and variety rather than just price. The leading reasons cited were "**Trendy/Premium Appearance**" (74 respondents) and



"Variety of Designs" (69 respondents). While **"Affordable Price"** was the third most common reason, its importance is amplified by the fact that **95% (192 out of 202)** of all respondents agreed that imitation jewellery makes luxury fashion more accessible to them. This finding establishes a direct link between the desire for high-end aesthetics and the accessibility provided by imitation jewellery. The results collectively demonstrate that imitation jewellery is not merely a cheap alternative but a key driver in the democratization of fashion, enabling a wider demographic to engage with aspirational trends.

2. Social and Emotional Impact by Age Group

The analysis of the social and emotional impact revealed a significant generational divide in how imitation jewellery is perceived and utilized.

The emotional impact is largely positive, with **57.43%** of all respondents feeling **"confident & stylish."** This sentiment, however, is most pronounced among the youngest age group (**13-28**), where **70.6%** report feeling this way. As age increases, this emotional attachment diminishes, with older groups showing a greater tendency to feel **"neutral"** or report that they **"don't think about it."**

A similar pattern is observed in the social impact. The younger age group's positive emotional experience is reinforced by receiving **compliments**, with **55.88%** of respondents aged 13-28 reporting this social feedback. In contrast, older age groups experience more neutral social reactions. The percentage of respondents who believe people **"can't usually tell"** the jewellery is imitation increases with age, peaking at **64.28%** for the **61-71** age group. This indicates that while younger consumers use these accessories for self-expression and positive affirmation, older generations may prioritize the discreet and authentic appearance of the jewellery over its function as a statement piece.

In conclusion, the findings confirm that imitation jewellery in Nashik successfully bridges the gap between aspirational fashion and affordability. However, the study also highlights a nuanced generational dynamic, where younger consumers leverage these products for confidence and social validation, while older consumers integrate them as more of a functional and subtle fashion choice.

CONCLUSION

This research set out to explore a fundamental shift in modern consumer culture: the democratization of luxury, as exemplified by the burgeoning market for imitation jewellery. The findings of this study conclusively demonstrate that imitation jewellery is more than a mere alternative to fine accessories; it is



a powerful catalyst for socio-cultural change, enabling a profound redefinition of luxury from an exclusive commodity to a widely accessible aspiration.

The analysis of consumer behavior in Nashik has yielded two critical insights. Firstly, imitation jewellery successfully bridges the chasm between high-fashion aesthetics and financial accessibility. The data unequivocally proves that consumers are not simply settling for a cheaper option but are actively pursuing premium appearances and a vast variety of designs. This intentional choice, coupled with the overwhelming consensus that these products make luxury attainable, affirms their role as a primary driver of affordable luxury. This phenomenon fundamentally challenges the traditional notion that authenticity and high price are the sole determinants of value, revealing that for a new generation of consumers, perceived value and aspirational fulfillment are paramount.

Secondly, the study has illuminated the profound and nuanced social and emotional dynamics at play. The findings show that imitation jewellery is a significant source of confidence and a tool for self-expression, particularly for younger demographics who receive positive social reinforcement. Conversely, for older generations, the accessories serve a more discreet and functional purpose, valued for their aesthetic appeal rather than for social validation. This generational divergence in the emotional and social impact highlights that the same product can hold multiple, deeply personal meanings, functioning as both a statement of style and a subtle accent.

Limitations

While this study provides a robust and unique dual-perspective analysis, it is not without its limitations. The research is geographically confined to Nashik, a Tier 2 city, which may limit the generalizability of these findings to other urban or rural populations. Additionally, the quantitative survey methodology, while effective for identifying broad trends and perceptions, does not provide the rich, personal narratives that would emerge from a qualitative approach.

Recommendations for Future Research

1. **Mixed-Methods Research:** Investigate the personal motivations and emotional connections to imitation jewellery through a combination of quantitative surveys and in-depth qualitative interviews.
2. **Urban Tier Comparison:** Conduct a comparative study on consumer behavior and the social impact of imitation jewellery across different urban environments (e.g., Tier 1 and Tier 3 cities).



3. **Social Media's Influence:** Analyze the role of digital platforms and social media influencers in shaping the aspirational consumption of imitation jewellery.
4. **Economic Analysis:** Examine the market size, growth, and the entrepreneurial landscape of the imitation jewellery sector.

In conclusion, imitation jewellery is not a counterfeit of luxury, but rather a compelling redefinition of what luxury can be: a state of accessible aspiration, of widespread confidence, and of democratized beauty for all.

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