

Study: Owning luxury goods makes consumers less attractive as potential friends to other people

4 September 2019, by Tony Trueman

	Louis Vuitton owners	Counterfeit Louis Vuitton owners	Zara owners
Narcissism (scale 0-1)	0.73	0.63	0.32
Materialism (scale 1-5)	3.50	3.49	2.88
Affiliation (scale 1-7)	4.97	4.73	5.81
Status deception (scale 1-9)	4.24	5.33	3.36

Consumers who own luxury goods like Louis Vuitton wallets are judged as narcissistic and materialistic as those who buy counterfeit versions of the same brand, research shows.

Owning [luxury goods](#) makes consumers less attractive as potential friends to other people, the "unexpected" research finding shows, the British Academy of Management's annual conference in Birmingham heard today [Thursday 5 September].

Researchers asked 168 men and women university students to rate a fictional person from a description of their life, which included the information that they had bought either a Louis Vuitton [luxury](#) wallet, a counterfeit version of this, or a cheaper Zara wallet.

They found that those owning the counterfeit wallet were judged more materialistic and deceptive, and less desirable as friends or marriage partners. But they were surprised to find that luxury brand owners were relatively unpopular too.

The researchers, Professor George Baltas, Ms Vassia Kontopoulou, and Professor Flora Kokkinaki, of Athens University of Economics and Business, where the research was carried out, found that:

- the students gave those with the Louis Vuitton wallet a score of 0.7 for how narcissistic they were, compared with 0.6 for those with the counterfeit version
- and a lower score of 0.3 for those with the Zara wallet (on a scale of zero to one).
- they gave those with the Louis Vuitton wallet or a counterfeit version an almost equal score of around 3.5 for how materialistic they were, compared with 2.9 for those with the Zara wallet (on a scale of one to five).
- the students gave those with the Louis Vuitton wallet a score of 5 for their desirability as friends, compared with 5.8 for those with the Zara wallet and 4.7 for those with the counterfeit version of the Louis Vuitton (on a scale of one to seven).
- they gave those with the Louis Vuitton wallet a score of 4.2 for how deceptive they were, compared with 3.4 for those with the [Zara wallet](#) and 5.3 for those with the counterfeit version of the Louis Vuitton (on a scale of one to nine)

Provided by British Academy of Management

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