Flow, life satisfaction, personal expressiveness and passion associated with fashion student designer's design process

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Introduction. Creative design process requires multiple steps; problem identification, conceptual design, prototyping, and solution (Parsons & Campbell, 2004). Previous researchers have studied and developed a framework for the fashion design process stages (Parsons & Campbell, 2004) however, few analyzed how cognitive-affective states accompanying activities influences design process. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to find how fashion designers' personal experience and psychological process influence their design process. Especially, this study is to seek how flow, life satisfaction, personal expressiveness, and passion influence student designers' design process. We hypothesized that there will be significant differences in student designers' perceptions and design processes depending on their level of flow, life satisfaction, personal expressiveness and passion.

Methods. The survey was distributed to fashion design students enrolled in upper level design studio classes in a large public university in mid-west, United States. A total of 95 participants completed the surveys. The following instruments were measured: (1) *fashion designers' creative design process questionnaire*-developed by one of the researchers; (2) *Personally Expressive Activities Questionnaire* (PEAQ) measuring hedonic enjoyment, happiness, flow, skills and challenges (Waterman et al., 2003); (3) passion scale measuring harmonious and obsessive passion (Vallerand et al, 2003); (4) *satisfaction with life scale* measuring student designers' life satisfaction (Diener et al., 1985) on a 7-point scales. We employed One Way ANOVA to determine whether there are any statistical significant mean differences in importance of knowledge and skills required for fashion designers, iterative design process, mental state and optimal experience, effort and challenge involved, and passion during design process between the means of two groups of high and low score groups for flow, life satisfaction, and personal expressiveness. The sample was divided into high and low groups for flow, life satisfaction, and personal expressiveness based on median score of each measure.

Results. .One way ANOVA revealed that high flow group placed significantly higher importance on sketching (Mean_high flow=6.09 vs. low flow=5.30, $p<.001$), design research (Mean_high flow=6.20 vs. low flow=.5.70, $p<.05$), time management (Mean_high flow=6.82 vs. low flow=6.51, $p<.05$), material selection(Mean_high flow=6.42 vs. low flow=6.28, $p<.05$), and designing(Mean_high flow=6.69 vs. low flow=6.39, $p<.05$) compared to low flow group. No significant differences were found between high and low life satisfaction groups. High personal expressiveness (PE) group placed significantly higher importance on design concept (Mean_high PE=6.73 vs.low PE=6.19, $p<.05$), patternmaking(Mean_high PE=6.60 vs. low PE=5.93, $p<.05$), material selection (Mean_high PE=6.63 vs.low PE=6.29, $p<.05$), creativity(Mean_high PE=6.53 vs. low PE=6.00, $p<.05$), inspiration

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(Mean_high PE=6.30 vs. low PE=5.70, *p<.05),* sketching process (Mean_high PE=6.15 vs. low PE=5.33, *p<.001)*, and design research(Mean_high PE=6.25 vs. low PE=5.71, *p<.05)* compared to low score PE group. Regarding effort and challenge during design process, high flow group invest significantly more effort when they engage in design (Mean_high flow=6.39 vs. low flow=5.71, *p<.001*) and feel significantly challenged during design process (Mean_high flow=6.18 vs. low flow=5.54, *p<.05*) compared to low score groups. However, high personal expressiveness group made significantly more effort (Mean_high PE=6.43 vs. low PE=5.74, *p<.05*) but there was no differences between two groups in terms of feeling challenged during design process. For passion, both high flow and high life satisfaction groups had significantly positive emotions (Mean_high flow=6.11 vs. low flow=5.70, *p<.05;* Mean_high LS=6.11 vs. low LS=5.70, *p<.005)*, harmonious passion (Mean_high flow=5.24 vs. low flow=4.19, *p<.001;* Mean_high LS=5.24 vs. low LS=4.19, *p<.001)* during design process compared to low flow and low life satisfaction groups. On the other hand, high personal expressiveness groups had significantly positive emotions (harmonious) (Mean_high PE=6.19 vs. low PE=4.61, *p<.001)* and negative emotions (obsessive passion) (Mean_high PE=5.68 vs. low PE=4.02, *p<.001)* during design process compared to low score group. Regarding mental state and optimal experience while engaging design process, none of the difference occurred between high and low flow as well as high and low life satisfaction groups. However, it was found that high personal expressiveness group place significantly higher importance on feeling of joy through creating something new (Mean_high PE=6.80 vs. low PE=6.08, *p<.001)*, joy of finding fresh ideas (Mean_high PE=6.66 vs. low PE=6.16, *p<.05)*, and designing something new (Mean_high PE=6.55 vs. low PE=5.96, *p<.001)* compared to low score group.

Conclusions. By finding how fashion student designers' personal experience and psychological process of creating fashion project influence their design process, this study will help educators to develop design curriculums that will increase learning outcome of current fashion design students and guide them to be better prepared for the fashion industry.

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