

Research paper

Rejection Sensitivity and Performance Induced Anxiety as Factors Influencing Creative Advertising among Cooperate Fashion Designers

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ABSTRACT: Perceived rejection is important in both creative thought and social interaction. Threats to social relationships from significant people and others, particularly peers, can have a substantial impact on creativity. This study looks at rejection sensitivity and performance-induced anxiety in creative advertising among Uyo and Eket metropolitan fashion designers. One hundred and thirty-five (135) fashion designers were chosen using the purposive sample technique. Participants' ages ranged from 18 to 41 years, with a mean age of 37.26 years (SD=8.9). The Rejection Sensitivity Scale (RSS) was used to assess rejection sensitivity, the Performance Anxiety Inventory (PAI) was used to assess performance-induced anxiety, and the Creativity Style Questionnaire (CSQ) was used to assess creative advertising. The data was analyzed using a two-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and a cross-sectional survey design. The findings revealed that rejection sensitivity is a significant factor influencing creativity ($F(1, 132) = 33.41, P < 0.05$). The results also showed that performance anxiety has a substantial influence on innovative advertising ($F(1,132)=32.33, p < 0.05$). The interaction effect of rejection sensitivity and performance-induced anxiety on creative advertising was shown to be non-significant ($F(1,132) = 2.07, p > 0.05$). The study's findings and consequences were examined. The study emphasizes key mechanisms of innovative advertising.

Keywords: Rejection sensitivity, performance induced anxiety, creative, advertising, fashion designers

INTRODUCTION

In the idealized model of an efficiently competitive market mechanism, consumers are supposed to be well informed, educated, and guided gleefully in alluring terms of the tremendous benefits of purchasing a product and service. Manufacturers and organizations adopt employ creative advertising to influence consumer's choice of a brand or product.

According to Bhasin (2001), the goal of creative advertising is to effectively market a brand or product in a way that people will remember and be "attracted" to it. It entails producing and disseminating advertising that will interest the target audience (Gallant, 2022). Additionally, effective advertising engages customers on an emotional level and adds value to the product by providing

customers with accurate, interesting, and strategically placed information. According to Essien (2005), effective advertising alters consumers' perceptions in order to influence how they perceive and experience a brand and a product. Therefore, the ultimate objective of creative advertising is to alter consumers' perceptions of a brand by encouraging critical and unconventional thinking. The problem of creative advertising among fashion designers is never an easy one. Helson (1999), for instance, claimed that fashion designers themselves are unable to agree on a single style and instead subjectively choose what is considered to be standard. Helson also claimed that creativity is a very emotive topic in the industry. Designs that are inappropriate or boring will present

designers with significant obstacles to overcome. Similar to this, fashion shoppers now want and need access to trend information. Fashion designers are becoming more and more aware that their ability to predict trends and to be derivative as opposed to inventive has become a routine part of their work (Cater, 2002). Divergent and convergent thinking are both necessary for the development of unique or original ideas in creative advertising, as well as the adaptation of preexisting ideas. Divergent thinking is appealing and desired since it stimulates cognition and can provide novel ideas. However, as Cropley (2006) noted, this can be impacted by performance anxiety or rejection anxiety. Being focused with and sensitive to rejection is a key factor that relates to innovative advertising. According to Downey et al. (2004), sensitivity is the propensity to defensively or nervously anticipate, rapidly notice, and emotionally react to circumstances where rejection is possible. The cognitive domain (Knowledge of Self Capabilities) is activated first, leading to self-blame; this is followed by an affective reaction (the emotive domain, which includes feelings of Sadness, Anger, etc.); and finally, the behavioural component (withdrawal, aggression, or submission). In terms of self-fulfilling prophecy, these abnormal and improper reactions to (perceived) rejection could lead to genuine rejection of an individual by significant others. This sequence lends support to the rejection sensitivity model (Downey et al and Feldman, 1997), which proposes that prior rejection exposure, combined with biological vulnerability, leads individuals to prioritize the detection of rejection threats through activation of the defensive motivational system. Fear of rejection can be emotionally draining and lead to a reduction in creativity. Rejection sensitivity does not promote creativity, and people with high rejection sensitivity are acutely aware of social rejection signs and frequently behave incorrectly in response to perceived rejection. This restricts and contradicts creativity, which is based on confidence, generative ideas, and self-acceptance. Individuals with high rejection sensitivity are always anticipating rejection and, most likely, have a low threshold for distinguishing what are thought to be legitimate indicators of rejection. Fashion design is an appearance-based career and a physically demanding craft that requires constant self-consciousness. Designer sensitivity is also a personality processing system characterized by nervous concerns and expectancies of being rejected based on one's physical appearance, manner of speaking, comportment, and so on. According to research (Normansell and Wisco, 2017), people with high rejection sensitivity consciously pay attention to potential rejection in a biased manner (Normansell and Wisco, 2017), have schema-congruent information processing biases (Mor and Inbar, 2009), and have much more rumination and interpretation biases (Pearson et al., Watkins, and Mullen, 2011). These factors are incompatible with advertising creativity, which

necessitates critical thinking and expertise. As a result of the distorting effect of rejection consciousness and the evocation of social stress, advertising inventiveness is reduced.

In a similar vein, Terada and Kawamoto's (2017) research found that rejection sensitivity was inversely correlated with cognitive functioning, which includes non-verbal intelligence and logical reasoning, two crucial components of creative advertising. Performance-induced anxiety is a significant factor that is connected to innovative advertising. Performance-induced anxiety is the inability to complete a task without becoming agitated. It results from the combination of terrified cognition, physiological arousal, and behavioural reactions to an imagined threat.

According to Studer (2011), performance anxiety is characterized by symptoms that occur before, during, or after a performance or presentation. These symptoms include behavioural, cognitive, and physiological ones. Individuals who associate with art and perform on stage have high levels of anxiety, which is one important aspect that profoundly affects musical self-consciousness (Reinartz and Saffert, 2013). Advertising creativity requires actors to perform non-anonymously in front of a crowd. This has a significant impact on the actors since performing in front of a crowd might result in insightful or well-considered critique that directly affects the actor's self-image. Our protective motivational systems contain a distinctive and cohesive cognitive-affective framework that gives rise to induced fear. Although creative advertising is a type of convergent thinking, this may not be related to it. According to Simonton (2007), this can lead to an uncontrollable emphasis on threat and danger and have a detrimental effect on performance. In the social sphere, the idea of fashion designing is identical with a performance, and the social interaction paradigm is characterized by shyness and stage fright. These elements can lead to social anxiety and the avoidance of social interaction. Although there are many factors that affect creativity in advertising, the focus of this study is to precisely examine how performance-induced anxiety and rejection sensitivity affect creative advertising among this understudied but important workforce population.

Thus, it is hypothesizing:

- (1) Fashion designers high in rejection sensitivity will be low in creative advertising.
- (2) Fashion designers high in performance induced anxiety will be low in creative advertising.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Design

The research design adopted was a descriptive cross sectional design.

Participants

Participants in the study comprised males and females fashion designers in Uyo and Eket metropolis. The participants were selected using purposive sampling technique. Using probability sampling technique, 12 designer outfits were selected among fashion designer outfits in Uyo and Eket. The fashion designers outfit includes: Eyo Fashion Designer; Davecha Fashion House, ULBERTINI Concepts, Verge Fashion Academy, Achiled Sewing Technology and Miragood Concepts (Uyo), while in Eket metropolis, BLAGOFU. K. Fashion World, Peggy's Needle, ANNICREATIONS Fashion Home, Talino Stylez, Noralyn Fashion and EMFRIE Fashion Design were selected. A total of 75 fashion designers, constituting 55.5% were selected from Uyo, while 60 (44.44%) fashion designers, were selected from Eket. Participants were between the ages of 18-41 years, with the mean age of 37.26 years (SD=8.91). By gender, 40(29.6%) were males, while 95(70.4%) were females. Majority of the participants 89 (65.93%) were single, 46 (34.07%) were married. The participants represented a range of educational status of high educational attainment (HND, B.Sc, M.Sc) 32 (23.7%) and low educational attainment (FSLC, SSCE, NCE, OND, 103 (76.3%). All the participants were literate and were able to communicate in English and the participants in the study were not limited by ethnicity or religion.

INSTRUMENTS

The instruments used for data collection in this study included: Rejection Sensitivity Questionnaire (RSQ) Downey and Feldman, (2013), Performance Anxiety Inventory (Audrey-Kristel Barbeau, 2011) and creative style questionnaire – Revised (CSQ-R) Kumar and Holman, 1989).

Rejection Sensitivity Questionnaire (RSQ) is an 18-item questionnaire, scored on a 6-point Likert type scoring format. The response pattern range from 1 = very unconcerned -6=very likely items on the scale include: "How concerned or anxious would you be on the person you want to dance with?" Downey and Feldman (2013) obtained a Cronbach Alpha's of 0.88.

However, to guarantee the validity and reliability of all the instruments used in this present study, the researchers conducted a pilot study comprising 30 fashion designers (10 males and 20 females). The age ranged from 23-51 years, mean age 34-52 (SD=9.32). The participants were drawn from fashion designer outfits outside the ones for main study (Excellence Fashion/Designs, Down Designers and Blessed Designers) all in Uyo. The Data gathered were analyzed, and reliability and validity were carried out for each of the scales. (Using SPSS Version 20.0). The internal consistency estimate for rejection sensitivity full scale

was 0.74. The outcome of the reliability study was encouraging with a relatively high internal consistency reliability estimate.

Performance Anxiety Inventory, PAI, (Audrey-Kristel,2011), is a 62-item scale designed to measure anxiety experienced by individuals during a performance. The scale is constructed in a 5 response scaling point. The scale contains key factors that measure individual's situational, cognitive, affective, behavioural and semantic manifestations of anxiety. Audrey-Kristel,(2011) obtained cronbach alphas of 0.87. in a pilot study described earlier under RSQ, the internal consistency reliability of the performance anxiety inventory, PAI, was 0.67.

Creativity style questionnaire, revised is a 78 – item scale developed by Kumal and Hoyman (1997). The scale is designed to measure individual's creativity. Items on the scale include "I often let my mind wander to come up with new ideas", "I typically create new ideas by combining existing ideas". Kumal and Holman (1997) established a cronbach alpha's of 0.71 in a pilot study described earlier under RSQ, the internal consistency reliability of the creativity style Questionnaire – Revised was 0.69.

Data analysis

A 2-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of an unequal sample sizes was employed for data analyses.

RESULTS

Result in (Table 1) shows that participants (Fashion Designers) high in rejection sensitivity had a mean scores of 51.42 (SD=11.32), while the designers low in rejection sensitivity had a mean score of 39.23 (SD=7.24) on creative advertising.

The overall mean scores of designers on rejection sensitivity was 45.32 (SD = 9.24) on creative advertising. Furthermore, participants high on performance induced anxiety had a mean scores of 54.67 (SD=10.35), while designers low on performance induced anxiety had a mean score of 48.34 (SD = 8.36). The overall mean score of designers on performance induced anxiety was 51.55 (SD=10.37) on creative advertising.

Table 2 indicates that rejection sensitivity exerted a significant effect on creative advertising, ($f(1,132) = 32.33, p < 0.05$). This result confirm the first hypothesis which postulates that rejection sensitivity will significantly influence creative advertising fashion designers high in rejection sensitivity exhibited less creativity in advertising compared to designers who were low in rejection sensitivity. Similarly, performance induced anxiety exerted a significant effect on creative advertising, $F(1,132) = 33.41, p < 0.01$). This confirmed the second hypothesis which predicted a significant influence of

Table 1: Means (\pm) showing influence of rejection sensitivity and performance induced anxiety on creative advertising.

Rejection Sensitivity	Mean	B	Std. Deviation
High	51.42	92	11.32
Low	39.23	43	7.74
Total	45.32	135	9.24
Performance Induced Anxiety	Mean	B	Std. Deviation
High	54.67	77	10.35
Low	48.34	58	8.36
Total	51.55	135	10.37

Table 2: A 2 x 2 ANOVA summary table of rejection sensitivity and performance induced anxiety on creative advertising.

SOV	Sum	df	Ms	f-ratio	Sig
Rejection sensitivity (A)	4190.42	1	4190.42	32.33	<.05
Performance induced anxiety (B)	842.21	1	842.21	33.41	<.05
Rejection sensitivity & Performance induced anxiety (A&B)	231.16	1	231.16	2.07	>.05
Error	24659.9	132	129.64		

performance induced anxiety on creative advertising among fashion designers. The result indicates that designers high in performed induced anxiety exhibited less creativity in advertising when compared to the designers who were low in performance induced anxiety. However, the result show a non-significant interaction effect of rejection sensitivity vs performance induced anxiety on creative advertising, $F(1,132) = 2.07, p > 0.05$. This indicates that rejection sensitivity and performance induced anxiety did not jointly exert an influence on the creative advertising of fashion designers.

DISCUSSION

The aim of the study was to investigate how performance-induced anxiety and rejection sensitivity affect fashion designers' ability to come up with creative advertisements. The initial hypothesis, which suggested that rejection sensitivity among fashion designers would have a substantial impact, was confirmed. The study's conclusions showed that designers with high levels of rejection sensitivity showed less innovation in advertising than designers with low levels of rejection sensitivity. The outcome was in line with the findings of Normansell and Wisco (2017) study, which showed that people with high rejection sensitivity pay biased attention to potential rejection cues and this, affects their competency.

The findings of Pearson et al. (2011), which demonstrated that people with high rejection sensitivity have information biases based on schema congruence, do not congruent with or are incompatible with creative thinking and competency required for advertising, also support the study's findings. The study's findings also concur with those of Terada and Kawamoto (2017), who

found that rejection sensitivity was inversely correlated with cognitive functioning, including logical reasoning and non-verbal intelligence, both of which are necessary requirements for innovative advertising. However, the study findings contradicted Reinartz and Saffert, (2012) findings that rejection may activate a psychological process that boosts, rather than stifles, performance on creative tasks. The second hypothesis, which anticipated that performance-induced anxiety would have a major influence on creative advertising, was similarly confirmed. The findings suggested that designers with high levels of performance-induced anxiety displayed a poor level of originality in advertising. This finding is similar with prior research by Van Heesch (1995), who showed that 59% of performers in front of an audience suffered from crippling performance anxiety (serious enough to influence performance quality) in a study with 155 participants in the Netherlands. Furthermore, the findings revealed that performance-induced anxiety was a role in reduced levels of advertising inventiveness among fashion designers in Uyo and Eket city. Miller' and Chesky' (2004) discovered that 81.3% of 71 college students in the act of performing feel performance-induced anxiety in a comparable study. These high in performance generated anxiety fashion designers face anxiety before to an act when they become the centre of attention. Similarly, the results of this study support Kenny (2011), who identified 22 causes of performance-related anxiety in 357 professional orchestral musicians. These include pressure from oneself, not knowing how to deal with physical excitement, inadequate preparation for the performance, a tendency to be anxious in general, not just during the performance, health problems, and negative thoughts (worrying about the performance, insufficient support from people close to one, excessive

physical excitement before or during the performance, lack of confidence in oneself as a recruiter or musician, trying to play repertoire that is too difficult, concern about reliability of memory, poor performance experience, concern about audience reaction/fear of negative evaluation, pressure from conductor or section leader, pressure from/or competition with peers, other designers, generally low self-esteem, no idea how to deal with negative thoughts/fear of performing, technical deficiencies leading to insecurity, general lack of self-confidence, general level of self-consciousness, negative performance feedback and pressure from parents. These are antithetical to quality creative advertising.

Conclusion

In this study, we attempted to address two important aspects of creative advertising: rejection sensitivity and performance anxiety. According to the findings of the study, these two variables had a substantial impact on innovative advertising. As a result, fashion designers who wish to be creative should lower their fear factor. It is critical that fashion designers do not feel rejected or fearful, as this might make them appear unattractive or make a mockery of their couture. Fashion designers should practice anxiety management techniques before performing on stage in order to reduce performance anxiety. Fear of rejection, along with a negative self-evaluation, can lead to a sense of worthlessness. Performance will eventually suffer as a result.

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