

Understanding the Relationship between Students' learning Styles and Their Learning Expectation in the Student Coordinated Fashion Show

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The Apparel, Merchandising, and Design Association (AMDA) is a Registered Student Organization at a Midwestern university. The organization is open to all students at the university; however, membership is primarily composed of students in the Apparel Merchandising and Design major. The majority of the AMDA club's efforts and financial resources are dedicated to an annual fashion show. The AMDA fashion show is a unique event because it is student directed and coordinated. As such, it is the premier opportunity for students in AMDA to cultivate and enhance skills in leadership and professional practice that will better prepare students for their future careers. The fashion show is run by a board that consists of a show director, design coordinator, marketing and promotion coordinator, and modeling coordinator. These board members develop a theme for the show and recruit additional students to assist with planning and producing the show. Board members also promote the fashion show throughout the campus and the surrounding community. Although participation in the fashion show provides unique experience to students, studies investigating how student-coordinated fashion shows are related to student learning outcomes have not been identified. As a result, the purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between students' self-directed learning skills (SDL) and students' expectation of learning by participation in the fashion show (ELP).

An online survey distributed to all apparel merchandising and design majors was employed to collect data to measure students' SDL (Williamson, 2007) and ELP (Rocconi, 2011). Students were asked whether or not they would participate in the fashion show. A total of 31 useable questionnaires were collected. Factor analysis was used for evaluating both the independent variable (SDL) and the dependent variable (ELP). Data were reduced using principal component analysis with varimax rotation. Factor analysis revealed 5 factors in SDL, 1 factor in ELP. A series of linear regression analyses were used to examine the relationship between SDL and ELP. Also, independent sample t-tests were used to compare two groups (participate or not).

Among 31 students, 21 students will participate in the fashion show while 10 students will not. Results of t-tests indicated that these two groups have similar learning skills. However, students' group who would participate regarded that participation in the fashion show would be educationally beneficial ($t = 2.57$, $p = .00$). In addition, the findings from linear regressions indicated that students who have higher attributes in monitoring their learning activities ($b = .37$) and lower attributes in adopting various learning activities ($b = -.54$) have higher ELP ($F = 3.12$, $p = .03$, $R^2 = .38$).

This study explored students' perceived learning experiences through planning, producing, and executing the annual fashion show. Identifying specific ways in which students benefit from self-directed learning opportunities such as the fashion show will help faculty advisors to further develop student leadership skills.