

Abstract

Contemporary art is always perceived as ambiguous, abstract and difficult to understand. Opinion sharing as a social interaction that encourages creation, expression and exchange of comments. The present study examined whether reading and writing opinions facilitated aesthetic experience of viewing abstract art and the mediation of ambiguity, knowledge and connectedness. Three contrast groups – control versus reading and writing opinions (C1), reading opinions versus writing opinions (C2), reading laymen opinions versus expert opinions (C3) – were analyzed between art-educated and non-art-educated participants. Results, consistent with previous studies, highlighted the importance of art expertise in enhancing aesthetic experience. Mediating effect of ambiguity was found in the art-educated participants while mediating effect of knowledge to bring an enhanced aesthetic experience found in both groups with and without art education. Despite insignificant mediating effect of connectedness, connectedness was positively associated to amplification of aesthetic experience. In real-life settings like museums, opinion sharing among viewers is paramount to provide a moderate amount of ambiguity and stimulate thoughts, so as to enhance aesthetic experience and make art more embraceable to everyone.

Keywords: Art appreciation, opinion sharing, aesthetic experience, contemporary art