

Knockoff: An Emerging Trend in The Ghanaian Fashion Industry: A Case of Greater Accra Metropolis

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ABSTRACT: *The goal of the study was to better understand the new fashion trend in Ghana, its difficulties, and the future of a few large-scale fashion industries there, particularly in the Greater Accra Metropolis, as well as the implications for fashion education. It also aimed to suggest potential solutions to the many problems that come with competition from foreign fashion industries. Industry associations and legal academic communities continue to dispute whether original fashion designs should be legally protected from copycats. There is disagreement even over the basic issue of whether a copycat's impacts on the profitability of an original design are good or bad. For this study, the researchers used both quantitative research strategy and a descriptive research design. 20 respondents were chosen at random by the researchers utilizing judgment and purposive selection methods. The respondents' quantitative data were gathered using a semi-structured questionnaire. Pie charts, bar charts, and the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) were used to examine the results of the questionnaires. The results showed that generating your design is expensive and time-consuming when you develop your own. Once more, the study showed that it was simpler to produce knockoffs than one's designs, which explains why fashion designers are more likely to imitate than to create original designs. Furthermore, it was discovered that counterfeit goods sell off more quickly than original designs. Based on the research's conclusions, the study recommended that fashion designers be given stronger intellectual property protection to deter copying of their labour-intensive creations, that industry stakeholders enforce intellectual property protection to stop piracy, and that legislators take into account how increased piracy protection will affect society as a whole, examining the socioeconomic aspects of the fashion business is necessary since stronger IP protection could result in a downward trend. The study's conclusions and suggestions would help to lessen the multiple difficulties foreign fashion businesses presented to Ghanaian fashion designers.*

KEYWORDS: knockoff, fashion designers, fashion industry, emerging trends, patents and copyrights

INTRODUCTION

Industry associations and legal academic communities continue to dispute whether original fashion designs should be legally protected from copycats. There is disagreement even over the basic issue of whether a copycat's impacts on the profitability of an original design are good or bad. However, formal techniques and marketing knowledge, which are highly pertinent to the issues discussed, have not yet been used in this discussion. Design piracy has attracted a lot of attention and lobbying attempts from the Ghanaian fashion industry due to its potential impact on the country's fashion industry as well as the widespread and inexpensive nature of copying. It has grown to be a crucial issue for decision-makers in public policy and the subject of ongoing discussion in academic legal literature (Barnett 2005; Cotropia & Gibson 2010; Hemphill & Suk 2009). As the usage of fast fashion imitation in designs has developed into a thriving sector in many nations, it has also attracted significant attention in the global fashion market (West 2011).

According to Marshall (2013) and Raustiala & Sprigman (2006), several facets of the discussion on design piracy are related to its repercussions at the industry level, such as the implications for industry innovation and the accessibility of fashion to mainstream customers. However, a crucial aspect of the discussion on which we are concentrating relates to the knockoff's potential impact on the market for the original design. Stakeholders in favour of limits on knockoffs point to the harm that substitution does to original designs, which reflects lost sales from customers who would have bought the original design but instead purchase the copycat (Lamb 2010). The role of acceleration, where the presence of a pirated design increases awareness of the design and may potentially have a positive impact on the growth of the original, is highlighted by opponents of knockoff restrictions (Givon, Mahajan & Muller 1995; Raustiala & Sprigman 2012). The purpose of the current study was to evaluate knockoff as a developing trend in the Ghanaian fashion industry based on the case-by-case presentation of the aforementioned difficulties.

Statement of the problem

One of the major obstacles facing fashion firms today that wish to grow and expand their business in international markets is product counterfeiting. The value of the worldwide counterfeit market was expected to be close to \$450 billion in 2019, and in 2020, the fashion industry will suffer yearly sales losses of \$28.3 billion. Large fashion brands face formidable obstacles. Selling authentic, high-quality goods is challenging when everyone wants to buy cheap imitations. (2022 World Fashion Exchange). A segment of New York's wealthy, according to a 2022 article by The Cut, prefers fake luxury bags over the real thing. Smaller businesses are at risk because they could lack the capacity to thwart counterfeits before they reach the grey market, especially those who sell their products online. Additionally, it can be quite challenging for consumers to determine whether a product is authentic once it has entered the market.

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Images of these copies are now far more likely to spread to a much wider audience through social media, when in the past there was little chance that they would reach the eyes of the general public, allowing the imitating item to earn recognition and even celebrity. Christopher Sprigman and Kal Raustiala (2015).

Given the foregoing, the researchers set out to look into the new fashion trend in Ghana, its problems, and the future of a few large-scale fashion industries there, with a focus on the Greater Accra Metropolis, as well as the implications for fashion education. They also wanted to suggest potential solutions to the many problems that fashion designers face from foreign fashion industries. Therefore, it is important to answer the following questions: What is the most recent fashion trend in Ghana? Other than creating their inventive designs, why do fashion designers create knockoffs? What are some potential remedies for imitations? To help offer potential methods to lessen the multiple difficulties that fashion designers in Ghana's Greater Accra Metropolis encounter as a result of overseas fashion industries, the current study set out to find answers to these important issues.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to direct the study:

1. What is/are the new trend(s) if any in the Ghanaian fashion industry?
2. Why do fashion designers produce knockoffs other than producing their imaginative designs?
3. What are the possible solutions for knockoffs?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Ghanaian Fashion Industry

The origins of Ghanaian fashion can be found in the pre-colonial period when the native Ghanaians dressed with animal and tree barks (Adu-Akwaboa, 1994). According to Turnings (2002), wax prints and "dress" were introduced by the colonial overlords during the colonial period, which is when Ghana's fashion industry is thought to have begun. Because of globalization, fashion has undergone a complete transformation nowadays.

In its broadest sense, the term "fashion" describes a certain style that becomes popular for a while. It can refer to a style of attire, cosmetics, or dress accessories that is in vogue and widely used at a certain time (Rouse, 1999; Drew, 1992), but most usually it refers to a design for a toy, home, car, or another object. A more academic definition of fashion (Pearsall, 2002) states that it encompasses all facets of clothes, textile materials, and their study. The aforementioned definitions make it very evident that fashion is a term used to describe both clothing and accessories for the human body, not just a style that is currently popular. Along with a study plan, it also comprises textiles in the form of furnishings for homes, offices, and factories constructed of cloth. The manufacture and marketing of apparel are also handled by the fashion industry. The fashion sector

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is very important to the socioeconomic growth of every country since it helps individuals make a living and fulfil their need for clothing.

Nawal's remark in Agoos Magazine (2002), however, emphasizes that fashion is dynamic in that it is not at all constrained. It frequently represents and expresses the creative mind. She gave the idea that anything is possible, anything comes and goes, and everything is supported and enhanced in the world of fashion. Nawal has a broad understanding of what fashion is meant to be—an art form that uses clothing to communicate a person's free will and that of his community, without necessarily separating the cultural value that is essential to the social structure of everything that needs to be maintained and strengthened.

To promote Ghanaian products, the government instituted National Friday Wear in 2004. Currently, Accra's most popular mall is filled with locally produced goods, making shopping there enjoyable as you stroll down Osu Oxford Street and take in the breathtaking view of African textiles. Typically, Ghanaians enjoy wearing their gorgeous clothes, especially those with designs incorporating native symbols like Adinkra, Akoben, Dwennimmen, Epa, and Gye Nyame. The Ghanaian people honour their ancestors, and wearing traditional clothing with printed symbols is a sign of their love and respect. Local textile manufacturers have posed a serious threat to state-owned textile businesses. Ghana places a high value on businesses that produce high-quality goods while undervaluing those that don't. Eventually, the fashion business became quite important in the growth of Ghana's economy. The massive importation of low-quality, lower-priced textiles into the market has caused a deterioration of the industry in Ghana that produces dresses made of textiles. This is done to upend the traditional hierarchy of local textiles and has an impact on the quality of the materials produced today.

Concept of Knockoff

An unlicensed copy of something, particularly a piece of apparel, that is meant to be sold for less money than the original is known as a knockoff. Regarding fashion, knockoffs are a difficult notion to understand. While knockoffs pose difficulties for designers, they are also vital to the broader spread and life cycle of trends. As trends grow, they may support the desire for the original creator and frequently increase industry sales as a whole. the year 2014 (Peggy Phillips Queensberry).

There are two other terms which are synonymous with knockoff;

Replicas (illegal knockoffs; merchandise made and distributed by thieves) are unquestionably unlawful. Replica apparel, accessories, and footwear are designed to trick the consumer into believing that the item being sold was made by a specific business or brand, when in fact it was not. Handbags made by Louis Vuitton are a prime example. They are not built of actual high quality, although being produced to resemble as similar to the originals as possible. **Copycat Designers** (possibly unlawful imitations, although not always against the law) Many designers are affected by the merchandise they see in publications, shops, and public places. Some designers deliberately replicate products they come across, whereas other designers may unintentionally

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mimic the ideas of other designers. It's conceivable for designers to steal an idea from another designer without intending harm.

Overview of Knockoffs in the Ghanaian Fashion Industry

Introduction: Ghana's fashion business is currently expanding and becoming more well-known on a domestic and international level. However, the prevalence of imitation goods has grown to be a significant worry, harming the standing and financial sustainability of Ghanaian fashion designers. The manufacturing and sale of knockoffs, which copy the styles of well-known international fashion labels, has increased in the Ghanaian fashion market. Both local designers and customers face considerable obstacles as a result of this occurrence. The purpose of this literature review is to examine the causes of Ghanaian fashion designers' production of knockoffs and to suggest potential remedies to address this problem. This review, which looks at previous studies and academic works, offers practical insights into the fundamental causes of counterfeit production in Ghana as well as solutions to the problem.

Reasons for Knockoff Production

1. Lack of emphasis on design training centred on creativity and innovation: There are several significant gaps in the teaching and learning of creativity in technical institutions, according to Adams Kemevor's (2018) research. Among these, the use of evidence-based critical thinking and problem-solving models is mainly replaced by the use of traditional lectures, handouts, and textbook techniques to educate and develop creativity in fashion. The study also identified a lackluster approach to creative education, notably a failure to apply analytical, conceptual, and synthetical skills to problem-solving. Therefore, it should be mentioned that the lack of fashion education and training programs in Ghana that promote creativity and innovation hinders students' ability to gain the essential design skills and information required to promote innovation within the fashion business. In Ghana, fashion education frequently makes use of traditional teaching techniques that prioritize memorization by rote and the imitation of already existing designs. The lack of emphasis on the creative process, ideation techniques, and critical analysis caused by the curriculum's neglect of design thinking limits students' capacity to develop original ideas and contribute creative solutions to business problems.

2. Market demand and Consumer behaviour towards styles worn by fashion influencers: According to research, many customers emphasize the styles of celebrities, fashion leaders, and influencers, making imitations of their looks a desirable choice. Designers are motivated to create knockoffs to satisfy market demand by celebrities' and prominent upper-class people's need for trendy and fashionable attire. Celebrities who are in style often have thousands of followers on social media, who replicate their fashion choices and demand that designers create similar items.

3. Global Fashion Influence: The influence of international fast fashion trends on the Ghanaian fashion industry is a significant factor in the prevalence of cheap clothing. These quick fashion companies, according to Sarpong, Howard, and Osei-Ntiri (2011), create trends that people all over the world avidly imitate. The imitation of rapid fashion trends by designers is a major

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factor in the manufacture of knockoffs. The production of knockoffs is a last resort for local designers to meet the demand for contemporary clothing at reasonable prices. The prevalence of knockoffs in Ghana is a result of the desire to imitate global fashion trends and offer affordable solutions. Consumers in Ghana frequently favour well-known multinational brands. Due to the high demand for designer goods, there is a market for imitations of these brands. Instead of spending time and money on original design innovation, local designers make knockoffs to fulfil market demand and consumer preferences.

4. **Lack of Intellectual Property Protection:** The weak intellectual property protection regime is a big contributor to the predominance of knockoffs in Ghanaian fashion. Designers can more easily develop fake fashion items without incurring legal repercussions due to lax copyright enforcement and a low understanding of intellectual property rights. (2014) Elavia The development and innovation of businesses are hampered by the lack of a strong legal framework for safeguarding innovative designs. In 2010, Jacobo To stay competitive, this is forcing them to produce knockoffs.

5. **Cost Constraint, need for quick profit maximization and competitive pressure:** Ghanaian fashion designers confront major difficulties due to a lack of money and financial resources. Extensive research, prototyping, and marketing are needed to create original designs, which can be expensive. A cheap way to sustain profitability and thrive in a cutthroat market is to use knockoffs. Because of the fierce competition in the fashion industry, designers are under pressure to increase their profits. With the help of knockoff manufacture, designers may swiftly and for a small portion of the original price duplicate well-liked designs, boosting profit margins. Designers are motivated to produce counterfeit goods to maximize their profits quickly in the competitive environment and profitability.

Mitigation Strategies for Knockoffs in the Ghanaian Fashion Industry

To effectively address the issue of knockoffs in the Ghanaian fashion sector, multiple players must be involved. This literature analysis investigates possible remedies to lessen the prevalence of knockoffs and promote an originality and innovative culture within the Ghanaian fashion sector.

1. Design Education to only imitate as a spark to Innovation:

Aspiring designers can build on a strong foundation to hone their technical abilities, aesthetic sense, and market knowledge with fashion design education that uses imitation as a catalyst for invention. Students can use imitation as a springboard to explore their artistic interpretations, which finally results in the creation of their own distinctive design identities. Fashion design education may effectively use imitation as a catalyst for creativity by highlighting the value of originality and offering mentorship and assistance. This will help to shape the industry's future with skilled and forward-thinking designers. Reducing the creation of knockoffs can be helped by educating and supporting Ghanaian fashion creators. Giving designers business education, resources, and mentorship opportunities can help them better comprehend intellectual property rights, encourage creativity, and create new business models. With this support, designers may efficiently produce and safeguard their works of art.

2. **Strengthening Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Protection: Enforcement:** Strengthening the enforcement of intellectual property rights in Ghana is essential to addressing the issue of knockoffs. Increased fines for intellectual property infringement and tougher copyright regulations can be implemented to achieve this. Additionally, it is crucial to educate creators about their rights and the advantages of defending their unique designs. Designers can learn more about intellectual property rules and procedures by working with associations for the fashion industry and legal specialists. The enforcement of IPR rules and regulations in Ghana has to be improved. This can be accomplished by giving law enforcement organizations more funds and training, streamlining the legal system, and launching public awareness campaigns to teach customers and designers alike the value of protecting intellectual property rights.

3. **Collaboration and Industry Regulation:** Establishing rules and codes of conduct for the fashion business can be aided by cooperative efforts between fashion designers, industry associations, and governmental organizations. This may include policies on moral sources, copyright protection, and sanctions against making imitations. The industry may lessen the occurrence of fake goods by collaboratively supporting and upholding these standards.

4. **Establishing Design Incubators and Training Programs:** Ghanaian fashion designers will be given the information and skills needed to create original designs by the establishment of design incubators and training programs. These programs might concentrate on product development, market research, and design thinking. Designers will be more inspired to generate original ideas rather than copycat versions if creativity and innovation are encouraged.

5. **Consumer Education and Ethical Consumption:** Fighting the market for knockoffs requires educating customers about the drawbacks of doing so. Consumers can be made aware of the ethical repercussions of purchasing counterfeit goods, such as the effect on regional designers and the economy, through awareness campaigns. Supporting regional designers and genuine fashion products can change customer tastes by promoting ethical consumption and highlighting the importance of original creations.

6. **Consumer Education and Awareness:** It is essential to educate consumers about the negative effects of buying counterfeit goods. The negative effects of counterfeit goods on the local fashion industry, the economy, and the reputation of designers can be highlighted through educational initiatives. Consumers can be motivated to support regional designers and reduce the demand for knockoffs by highlighting the importance of authentic fashion and promoting ethical shopping practices. Encourage your customers to purchase genuine goods. International Fashion Exchange 2022.

7. **Promoting Local Designers and Supporting Innovation:** Combating knockoffs requires encouraging regional designers and fostering their innovative abilities. Platforms for showing and promoting the work of Ghanaian designers should be provided via government initiatives and industry groups. Collaborations between seasoned designers and up-and-coming talent can promote mentoring and knowledge sharing, resulting in cutting-edge design techniques. Access to inexpensive materials and production facilities can also aid in lowering production costs and encourage designers to produce unique ideas. Fashion designers could use NFT-based product passports to establish distinctive digital tokens connected to a particular product, according to the

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World Fashion Exchange 2022. It is difficult for counterfeiters to produce or market false versions of the goods since these tokens may be used to authenticate them. Apply holographic watermarks and labels once more. The presence of these labels on product packaging and tags can make it more challenging for counterfeiters to imitate the appearance of genuine goods. The World Fashion Exchange additionally advises trademarking significant terminology or design components to make it simpler to take legal action against individuals who attempt to imitate works. Your brand can be further protected by working with trusted manufacturers who will not share your design with others or fudge on materials requirements and specs. Again, an encouragement of consumers to buy authentic items—ideally directly from reputable manufacturers who won't disclose your design to others or fudge on materials requirements and standards—can help you secure your brand even more. Once more, customers are cautioned and encouraged to purchase genuine goods—ideally from you directly! And by "encourage," information, rewards, and other strategies made to pique clients' interest in making a direct purchase of your goods are meant. Additionally, the use of software tools that can assist you in identifying instances in which someone is utilizing your photographs or information online without your consent is described. As soon as the violators are seen, they should be reported. In the end, it is advised not to wait until your product has been stolen before it is defended. As soon as possible after completion, your patents, trademarks, and designs should be registered to ensure their protection when they are sold.

8. The global fashion industry and the issue of knockoff

The demand for fake goods is enormous when the culture of enthusiastic consumption meets the global market, especially given that consumers value brand image over authenticity or quality. That's the driving force behind the billion-dollar market for fake designer items, but it doesn't explain why fake industrial goods are so in demand. That market is solely driven by pricing. The interaction of the two marketplaces results in a major issue. Even though most consumers have seen counterfeit handbags and watches, the market for fake luxury goods only makes up 4% of the global trade in illegally made counterfeit items. Aside from bogus medicine and baby formula, there are also fake aeroplane parts. It is impossible to quantify the scale of the counterfeit industry with any degree of accuracy, although the World Customs Organization believes it to be worth more than \$500 billion, or around 7% of global trade. According to estimates from other groups, 10% of global trade consists of counterfeit goods. Worldwide, 36% of all software licenses were obtained illegally. The counterfeit industry is twice as large as Wal-Mart, to put it in perspective with a legal company. False advertising has a high cost. It eliminates jobs at legal manufacturers, boosts child labour, stifles economic growth, and thrives in a violent and criminal atmosphere. Its current spread has been hastened by a few significant factors:

1. Digital music and cinema are more easily transmitted thanks to the internet. It is possible to send the product in batches, filter it, and then reassemble it to create a replica of the original.
2. After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, international banking laws were tightened, forcing counterfeiters to reinvest their proceeds in their business rather than in banks.

3. Because of globalization, counterfeiting is now a part of everyday commerce. Since phoney items transit around the globe via numerous middlemen, tracking them is more difficult.

One of the few nations today to enforce laws against anyone caught wearing or purchasing fraudulent goods in France. Patents and copyrights, two types of intellectual property legislation, are both broken by manufacturers of knockoffs. According to U.S. patent law, any manufactured good that embodies a novel, inventive concept is eligible for protection. A substantial advantage for counterfeiters after the patent expires is the inclusion of a comprehensive depiction of the invention in patent applications. Creative works are protected by copyrights, which have a predetermined expiration date. But one step towards getting a design on the market is not patenting it. Only 0.02% of all patented inventions, according to one creator, ever reach the market.

Two-thirds of all counterfeit items are produced in China, which accounts for three-quarters of global production when Hong Kong is included. Because of how advanced the Chinese system is, some cities are renowned for producing particular fakes, including those of electronics, golf clubs, and medications. All of these have significant effects on the producing nation, causing it to lose a significant amount of money over the term due to high production and operating costs.

METHODOLOGY

The quantitative approach was used in this study to identify the emerging trend(s) in the Ghanaian fashion industry, its problems, the future of a few large-scale Ghanaian fashion industries, with a focus on the Greater Accra Metropolis, and their implications for fashion education, as well as to suggest potential solutions to the many issues that foreign fashion industries present. A quantitative research methodology, according to Bryman (2012, p. 20), is a method of data collecting and analysis that emphasizes numbers and figures.

It might potentially ensure respondent anonymity, claim Creswell (2009; p. 4) and Bryman (2012, p. 408). A descriptive research design, which is used to explain the characteristics of a population and involves the researcher examining samples from that group, was found to be a more suitable research design for this study. Agordah, Adzahlie-Mensah, and Gyamfua-Abrefa (2017). The objective of this study's descriptive research design was to describe both the fashion industry trend and the components of knockoffs.

Population and sampling

The Greater Accra Metropolis was the study's target area, and twenty (20) registered fashion enterprises were examined. A minimum of 5% of a defined population was deemed to be a suitable sample size for establishing generalizations, and the sample size of 20 fashion enterprises represented approximately 75% of the overall population. This is congruent with the claim made by Krejcie and Morgan in 1970. Because respondents hold knowledge that is essential to this research process, deliberate and critical sampling strategies were used in this study. The researcher

Publication of the European Centre for Research Training and Development -UK was able to utilize her judgment and intuition to choose the respondents who were readily available and could supply the pertinent information required for the study thanks to the use of purposive and judgmental sample procedures. Because it enables the researcher to utilize her judgment in choosing the appropriate respondents, purposive sampling was employed (Saunders, Thornhill & Lewis, 2009).

Research Instruments

Quantitative information was gathered for the study using self-administered, semi-structured questionnaires. Semi-structured and self-administered questionnaires were used in the study, which is regarded as the most suitable instruments because they allowed the researcher to acquire extremely important data for the study (Saunders et al., 2009). To administer the questions, a 5-point Likert scale was used, with scales ranging from 1.0 to 5.0, with 1.0 representing "Strongly disagree," 1.50-2.49 representing "Disagree," 2.50-3.49 representing "Not sure," 3.50-4.49 representing "Agree," and 4.50-5.0 representing "Strongly Agree." The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0, Excel, and pie and bar charts were used to analyze the questionnaires.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Profile

Gender, age, married status, and greatest degree of education made up the demographic profile of study participants, which also included their marital status. The discussion of these subheadings follows.

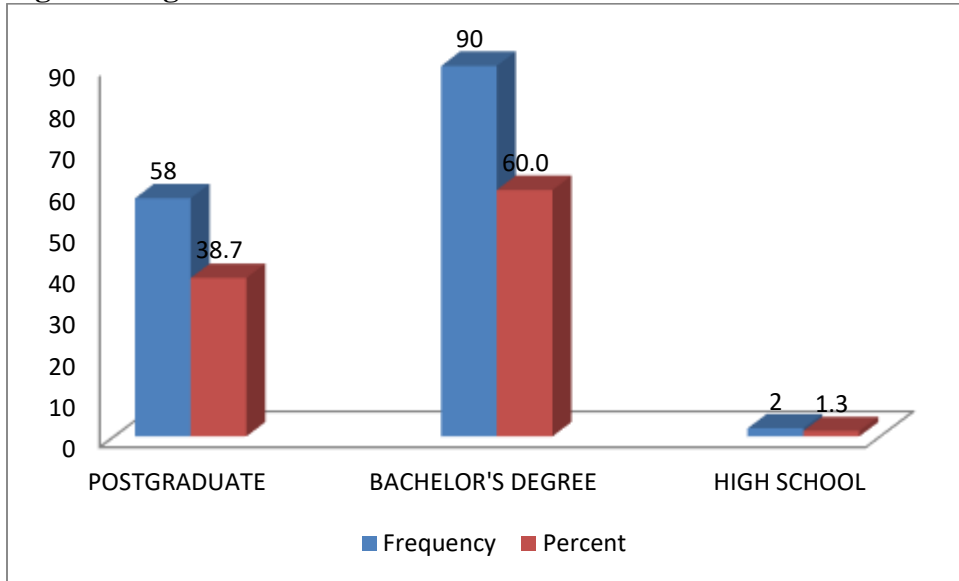
Table 1 Sex Distribution of Respondents

SEX	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
FEMALE	14	70
MALE	6	30
TOTAL	20	100

Source-Field survey, 2023

Table 1 shows that 14 respondents (70%) are women and 6 responders (30%) are men. The generally held belief that women are more interested in fashion trends than men is supported by this.

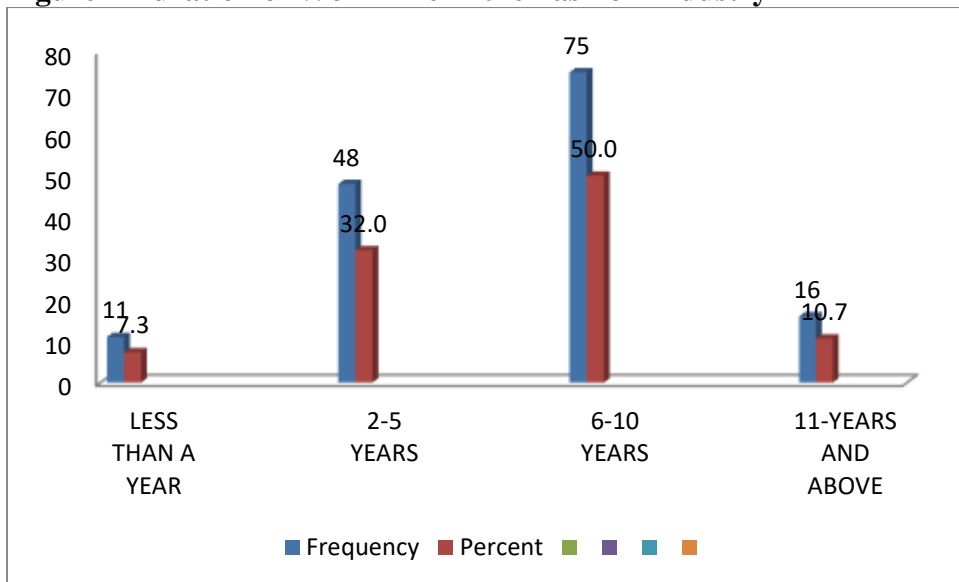
Figure 1 Highest Level of Education



Source: Survey Data, 2023

The greatest level of education acquired by respondents to the study is shown in the figure above. 60% of the respondents had a bachelor's degree, followed by 38.7% who had a postgraduate degree, and the other 1.3% were high school diploma holders. This analysis shows that the fashion sector hires highly qualified and degree-holding graduates.

Figure 2 Duration of Work Life in the Fashion Industry



Source: Survey Data, 2023

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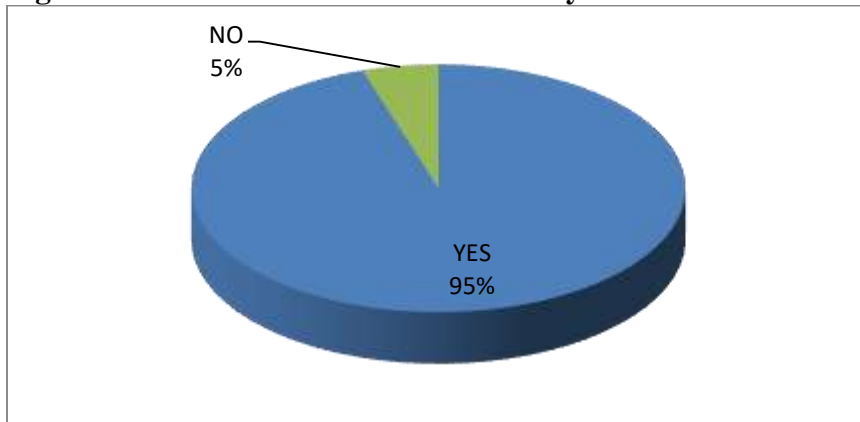
The duration of respondents' employment with each financial institution was inquired about. The results shown in the above graph revealed that the majority of respondents have worked for between six and ten years, or 50%, followed by two to five years, or 32%, while 10.7% have worked for over eleven years, and the remaining 7.3% have worked for less than a year.

Analysis of Research Objectives

The focus of this analysis's part is the study's intended research goals. an examination of the many inquiries made in the hunt for the solutions to the research questions under each of the study goals.

Knockoff is an emerging trend(s) in the Ghanaian fashion industry

Figure 3. Knockoff in the fashion industry



Source-Field survey, 2023

The results showed that more than 95% of respondents, as opposed to the 5% who gave negative answers, said they were aware of knockoffs.

Table 2 Victim of Knockoff

	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Yes	17	85
No	3	15
TOTAL	20	100

Source: Field Data, 2023

The question of whether respondents have experienced knockoff was posed. According to the responses, 17 respondents, or 85%, believed they had been the victims of knockoffs, while the other 3 respondents disagreed. Usually, knockoff fashion designs are of lower quality than

Publication of the European Centre for Research Training and Development -UK authentic fashion designs. Those who defend fashion copiers claim that they produce affordable knockoffs of high-end garments or red carpet and runway styles for common consumers who cannot buy them.

Table 3. Copied some Design Work

	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Yes	13	65
No	7	35
TOTAL	20	100

Source: Field Data, 2023

The researcher believes that when the copy is not a literal copy but instead involves paraphrasing, deletions, marginal notes, and other techniques, it may have a positive cost of expression. Of the respondents, thirteen (13) said they had ever copied some designers' work before, accounting for 65% of the total responses. The remaining (7) respondents said "No." As a result, the copier can have independent fixed expenses. This serves as only a minimal deterrent for copiers in the field of fashion design. The cost of copying technology has decreased while its speed and precision have significantly risen thanks to modern technology. In this scenario, the cost of the copier will still be much lower because neither the designer's time nor research will be used, nor will focus groups be used to gauge its viability. Additionally, the copier saves money by avoiding the deadweight cost of unpopular designs. Thus, the copier can continue to benefit from free fashion design. There will be a period when the original publisher won't face competition because copying takes time.

Table 4. Knockoff has affected the fashion industry

	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Yes	18	90
No	2	10
TOTAL	20	100

Source: Field Data, 2023

If knockoffs have an impact on the fashion business, respondents were questioned. Designers in the fashion industry must battle two fierce foes: knockoffs and counterfeits. According to 18

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respondents, the firm has been severely harmed, with copycat responses accounting for 90% of the total responses. A knockoff, on the other hand, is a near replica of the original design that mimics its features but is not offered as an attempt to pass for the real thing. Knockoffs are so prevalent in part because they can seriously impair designers' creative and financial prospects by removing the motivation to produce unique designs. The industry has not been impacted by knockoffs, as indicated by the remaining 2 respondents' "No" responses.

What accounts for knockoffs in the fashion industry?

Trends are important to the fashion industry. A craze or transient style that moves with the seasons is referred to as a "trend" in the world of fashion. A trend could only last a few weeks or it might persist for several years. a desire to be "in style." captures an important component of social life, one that is pushed and pulled toward the new by innovation and the continuity with others. Most creative sectors use trends, which are frequently connected to fashion. Bringing a concept from a sketch to the manufacturing room can take high-end fashion designers up to twenty-four months. It could take another four months for a high-end design to have its retail store debut after it makes its runway debut. A fashion design season typically lasts between three and six months and can cost millions of dollars. Contrarily, producers and copycat designers who claim to be "inspired" by expensive designs can launch their goods in as little as four to six weeks.

The capacity of copycat designers to study and replicate designs has only been amplified by technology. High-end clothing from runway events is routinely made available online within twenty-four hours today. "High-end designs are photographed and displayed on websites like style.com. These images, which include close-up photos of a design's details and accessories and editorial evaluations of the design, enable other designers to study the designs in detail from a variety of perspectives. Without even going to the runway presentations, the copycat companies may then instruct manufacturers on which design to take off the catwalk for mass manufacturing.

Why do fashion designers produce knockoffs other than producing their imaginative designs?

The descriptive statistic in the table below shows respondents' opinions regarding the reasons why fashion designers create knockoffs in addition to their original, inventive designs. Using a five (5) point Likert scale, the range is 1.0-1.49 for "Strongly disagree," 1.50-2.49 for "Disagree," 2.50-3.49 for "Not sure," 3.50-4.49 for "Agree," and 4.50-5.0 for "Strongly Agree." This has been stated chronologically above; according to the scale, the respondents agreed with the variables whose means were close to 3.0.

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics of fashion designers on Knockoff

	N	Mean	ST. Dev.
1. Producing my design is time-consuming	20	4.34	0.76
2. It is expensive producing my design	20	4.21	0.86
3. It is easier to produce knockoffs as compared to my design	20	4.05	0.96
4. Knockoff products sell more than one's design	20	4.03	0.68

Source: Filed Survey, 2023

The responses are shown in the table above by whether respondents agree or disagree with the claim that designers generate knockoffs rather than their original works. However, a mean value of (mean=4.34, SD=0.76) was observed for the statement "producing my design is time-consuming," showing that respondents generally agreed that it is really time-consuming. Additionally, the claim that "it is expensive producing my design" has a mean score of (mean=4.21; SD=0.86) indicating that most respondents believed that because producing their designs is expensive, they copy instead. Additionally, the response to the statement "It is easier producing knockoffs as compared to my design" received a score of (mean=4.05; SD=0.96), indicating that the respondents firmly agreed with the statement. This is the obvious justification for why fashion designers frequently imitate other creators. If copycat products sell more than one's design, was queried of responders once more. The response had a mean score of 4.03 and a standard deviation of 0.68, which indicates that the majority of respondents felt that imitation goods sold better than their creations.

Possible solutions for knockoffs

What in your opinion is the best solution to knockoff in the fashion industry?

The Need for Intellectual Property in Fashion

As was already mentioned, the fashion industry is a sizable and lucrative one, and in the digital era, the threat of knockoffs poses a particularly difficult problem for both established and up-and-coming designers. This prompts the unavoidable query: Should a designer take action to safeguard her creations, and what choices does she have concerning intellectual property protection?

The ideal course of action in practice would be to advocate for more robust intellectual property rights that counteract the harm caused by "close copying" while yet allowing for free association and the capacity for designers to share ideas and improve. The prohibition of close copies while

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maintaining flocking and differentiation in all of its various manifestations as inspiration, tribute,
referring, and quoting is our particular aim.

The overarching rule is to prevent the hypertrophy or tangle of rights that various, excessive rights holders threaten. Intellectual property rights are required to shield designers from the copycat industry in all of its guises, yet copyright law by itself only provides a meager amount of defence for fashion designers. Therefore, designers must take into account various legal defence strategies.

CONCLUSIONS

The fake and counterfeit goods market This viewpoint disregards the fact that the counterfeit sector reflects current socioeconomic patterns in our culture and does not serve to harm the fashion industry. Fashion designers cannot avoid an early identification, classifying fashion as the work of artisans, even though all facets of the fashion industry imply that fashion is a type of art.

Designers historically did not have access to intellectual property protections due to the designation of fashion products as artisanal. Fashion designers are still plagued by the artisan stigma despite the recent recognition of fashion as an art form, which prevents them from obtaining the full range of intellectual property (IP) protections available to other artistic fields. Without protection, the imitation market is booming. In conclusion, all three study goals were met, and respondents provided a variety of justifications for copying designs rather than coming up with their own, among other things.

Recommendations

The next move in this discussion of piracy needs to take into account several different points of view. Legislators should acknowledge that while better IP protection for fashion designers is necessary to deter unauthorized use of their labour-intensive creations, piracy is not a barrier to the creation of innovative and original designs. It might not be thought that low IP protection, which allows for the existence of piracy, has negative effects on the fashion industry because it allows for the creation of knockoffs and counterfeit goods. Legislators must take into account how increasing pirate protection will affect society as a whole because the fashion industry emulates the ideas and social values of the time. Examining the socioeconomic aspects of the fashion sector in particular since a downward spiral caused by increasing IP protection could exacerbate social class differences and the economic slump. As a result, fashion is distinct from other creative industries and might not be able to be seen via the conventional lens of IP application.

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