

SHORT-TERM IMPACT OF INSTAGRAM COMMERCE ON THE LIVELIHOODS OF ARTISANS AT THE ACCRA ARTS CENTRE

Authors

Ayeyi Ohene-Adu
Prof Gordon Adomdza (Ashesi University)
Dr. Zanetor-Agyeman-Rawlings (Ghana Parliament)

Affiliations

Ashesi University
Ashesi University
Parliament of Ghana

OBJECTIVE

Assess the viability of Instagram commerce as a sustainable livelihood avenue for Ghanaian artisans by examining its influence on brand awareness through the analysis of key variables, including follower count, posting frequency, and the artisan's network size on Instagram.

INTRODUCTION

Ghanaian artisans, facing eviction from the Accra Arts Centre due to urban development, are exploring Instagram commerce for survival. This study focuses on the immediate impact of Instagram on their brand awareness and potential sales, addressing a gap in research on social media commerce in regions with high mobile usage but limited internet access. Through the analysis of factors such as posting frequency and followers, the research sheds light on how Instagram can empower artisans in vulnerable communities, fostering sustainable livelihoods amidst displacement.

WHY INSTAGRAM?

Instagram's visual-centric platform, combined with integrated e-commerce features and social networking capabilities, aligning with Ghana's high mobile adoption rates (43.88 million) and increasing internet penetration (23.05 million) [2], makes it an ideal platform for artisans to showcase their crafts.

METHODOLOGY

Used mixed-methods and comparative approach:

Quantitative: Instagram Analytics to test hypotheses regarding Instagram usage (e.g., posting frequency, follower count)

Qualitative: Semi-structured interviews; Observation

Sampling: Stratified Sampling for Accra Arts Centre artisans and Purposive Sampling for other African artisans.

Sample Size: 40 participants (after data clean-up)

ANALYSIS

- **Regression Analysis:** Multiple linear regression modelled relationships between followers and posting frequency, as well as the number of people followed for Art Centre and African artisans. Linear regression assessed the strength and direction

- **Equation:** $\text{Followers} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Frequency} + \beta_2 \text{Following} + \epsilon$

HYPOTHESIS

- **Null Hypothesis (Ho):** Assumes no significant relationship between followers, posting frequency, and the number of people followed.
- **Alternative Hypothesis (Ha):** Posits a significant relationship between followers, posting frequency, and the number of people followed.

RESULTS

Follower Dynamics:

- Positive correlation between post frequency and follower count for both Art Centre Artisans ($\beta = 33.67$) and Artisans across Africa ($\beta = 16.74$).
- Art Centre Artisans show a negative correlation between followers and people followed ($\beta = -1.09$), while Artisans across Africa exhibit a positive correlation ($\beta = 0.199$).

Thematic Analysis and Observation:

- The model explains 24.59% of follower variability for Art Centre Artisans and 30.13% for Artisans across Africa.
- Limited Instagram use by artisans due to platform preference, data issues, and time constraints.
- Motivation for usage is linked to follower increase.
- Artisans predominantly post during training sessions.

CONCLUSION

To unlock Instagram's full potential as a path to a sustainable livelihood, artisans can:

- **Diversify their content** - Use branded imagery, reels, highlights and videos alongside product photos to engage followers
- **Post consistently:** Aim for 2-3 posts per week to maintain brand presence and reach new audiences
- **Engage their network and following:** Follow competitors, potential customers and like, comment and participate in conversations to build relationships and boost visibility.
- **Further Research:** Conduct long-term studies and track sales data and other livelihood indicators and explore additional variables.

Related Literature:

[1] Serrat, O 2017, *The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach*, Springer.

[2] Meltwater 2023, *Digital 2023 Ghana*.

[3] Kim, RY 2020, 'The Value of Followers on Social Media', *IEEE Engineering Management Review*, vol. 48, no. 2, pp. 173-183.

[4] Rodriguez, M, Peterson, RM & Krishnan, V 2012, 'Social Media's Influence on Business-to-Business Sales Performance', *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, vol. 32, no. 3, pp. 365-378.

[5] Dessart, L, Veloutsou, C & Morgan-Thomas, A 2015a, 'Consumer Engagement in Online Brand communities: a Social Media Perspective', *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, vol. 24, no. 1, pp. 28-42.