



Influence of Human Factors on Performance of Micro and Small Garment Enterprises in Ghana

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Abstract

This study investigated how human factors affect the performance of micro and small garment enterprises in Ghana's Greater Accra region. The study was guided by human capital theory and resource-based view theory. A cross-sectional descriptive survey design was used to collect data from a varied population of garment entrepreneurs, association executives, and clients, with clustering, simple random, and purposive sampling approaches used. The study focuses on independent variables such as designers' expertise, attitude, and ability to manage their firms, with enterprise performance as the dependent variable. The data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics, as well as multiple linear regression, to determine variable correlations. The data show a large gender disparity among respondents, with females making up the majority of micro and small-scale textile industry owners. Moreover, a wide range of educational backgrounds were noted among respondents, with the majority holding diplomas. The study examined designers' attitudes and their impact on corporate performance, revealing different perspectives on entrepreneurial obstacles, market survival, client appeal, and business strategy. Despite varying perspectives, there is agreement on the significance of customer happiness and quality. A regression study shows a moderate association between human variables and enterprise success ($R = 0.551$, $p < 0.001$), with knowledge, aptitude, and enthusiasm showing substantial positive relationships. The study emphasizes the necessity of continual skill development and entrepreneurial education for designers to improve business performance. Overall, the findings indicate that designers in Ghana's micro and small garment-making firms are strongly committed to garment manufacturing, innovation, customer happiness, and quality, which has consequences for profitability and market success.

Keywords: *Garment enterprises, Human factors, Performance, Entrepreneurship, Ghana*

INTRODUCTION

Over the past thirty to forty years, fashion design training has rapidly risen and become established as one of the most popular careers worldwide. This growth has been largely driven by its fast-growing and thriving nature, as Reddy and Rajaram (2016) infer. The FDT curriculum is designed with relevant content that will prepare students for better output in their practice of fashion design but also for their employability. It is an undeniable fact that the effectiveness of any global programme lies in international standards implementation and enforcement; so is the case for FDT offered around the world. Fashion design training has played a key role in enhancing designers' productivity in the apparel industry (Hae-Joo, 2016). The fashion design training programme is comprehensive. It aims to develop students' practical and entrepreneurial skills. This helps graduates contribute to the social and economic



development of a country. For example, institutions and colleges in the United States focus more on job preparation and career development (Jacobs & Worth, 2019).

Human factors are crucial in clothing and fashion design. This is because they impact different design stages. Consumers and designers view fashion products differently. This is due to their experiences, cultures, aesthetics, material knowledge, and usage approaches. Designers' personal experiences can inspire creative ideas. The key human factors for small fashion designers are being proactive, spotting opportunities, and being creative. These are important behavioral traits. The main parts were new ideas, competitive plans, and employee strategies. In fashion design, people are very important. This affects the product design process a lot. Ganotakis (2012) says that garment companies can do better by using a mix of factors like technical training, experience, and management skills.

Studies show that human factors are key to fashion design success. Montagna (2015) and Hwang (2013) say the link between human factors and design is clear. People's views on human factors change over time. These factors are important for fashion designers in Portugal to do well. Adamtey (2015) says designers should consider the physical, mental, and social needs of customers when creating clothes. Adamtey (2015) indicated that choosing the right parts of clothing design is important. This includes shapes, textures of fabrics, and fasteners. Considering human factors helps designers make clothing that is more comfortable and safer to wear. This improves the performance of the business. New ideas in fashion design show the need to think about human factors. This boosts the performance of fashion design companies. Gbetodeme, Amankwa, and Dzegblor (2016) said basic design as a human factor has a positive impact on designers' performance. It can also be used to get an edge over competitors in Ghana's fashion industry. Human factors have a big effect on how businesses succeed (Raja, 2022). But in Ghana, this area has not yet been studied for micro- and small-garment businesses.

Research on micro- and small-scale businesses has brought attention to challenges, attributing designers' poor performance to industry difficulties (Mark, 2021; Kassah, 2019). These challenges encompass deficiencies in fashion design training, such as the absence of contemporary fashion studios, ineffective teaching methodologies for practical courses, a shortage of qualified instructors, students' incapacity to apply skills for problem-solving, and the structural framework of fashion design training programs. Nevertheless, there remains a dearth of understanding regarding how fashion education impacts designers' performance in micro and small garment enterprises (MSGEs) (Mark, 2021; Kassah, 2019). This study endeavours to bridge this knowledge gap by examining the nexus between fashion design training, performance, and practices within MSGEs, aiming to offer crucial insights to stakeholders in fashion education (Ghana, Mark, 2021; Kassah, 2019). Consequently, the study delves into exploring the influence of human factors on the performance of micro and small garment enterprises in Greater Accra.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A cross-sectional descriptive survey design was chosen for its ability to gather a substantial amount of data at a single time point, enabling insights into people's perspectives on the issue at the time of the study (Creswell, 2014; Leavy, 2017). This design was deemed suitable due to the need to collect data from a large and diverse population within a short timeframe while



also being cost-effective. The study focused on independent variables such as designers' knowledge, attitude, and aptitude in managing their businesses, while enterprise performance served as the dependent variable, measured through indicators such as successful garment production, business growth, profitability, and customer satisfaction. Data for these variables were collected using a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" (Creswell, 2014).

The study was conducted in the Greater Accra region of Ghana, chosen for its cosmopolitan nature, representing various types and levels of fashion enterprises in the country. The target population comprised all micro- and small-scale garment enterprises in the Greater Accra Region, including registered members of the Ghana National Dressmakers and Tailors Association (GNDTA) with at least five years of experience, as well as association executives and clients from specific municipalities (Korley Klottey, Ga West, and Ga East).

Respondents were selected using clustering, simple random, and purposive sampling techniques to account for the large and scattered population (Kothari, 2014; Creswell, 2014). The sample size was determined using Slovin's formula, with a 10% addition to accommodate for attrition and unforeseen responses, resulting in a total of 314 respondents (Kothari, 2014). Primary data collection employed questionnaires and interview schedules, which underwent pre-testing to ensure validity and reliability. The reliability of the instrument was confirmed with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.763, meeting the required threshold (Perkin et al., 2016).

Quantitative data analysis was conducted using descriptive and inferential statistics in SPSS version 22.0, including multiple linear regression, to establish relationships between variables. Ethical approval was obtained from the Kenyatta University Ethical Review Committee and the Graduate School, with permission also granted from the Ghana Tertiary Education Commission and the Ghana National Dressmakers and Tailors Association prior to data collection.

RESULTS

Gender and Educational Level of Respondents

The data presented in Table 1 reveals a significant gender imbalance among respondents, with females comprising a substantial majority (74.2%) of the total sample, while male respondents comprised a minority (25.8%) of micro- and small-scale garment enterprise owners. This distribution highlights a pronounced gender gap in participation rates, suggesting a potentially higher representation of women within the garment industry in the Greater Accra region. These findings imply that the ownership of micro and small-scale garment enterprises in Ghana is predominantly female-led. Additionally, the data indicates a diverse range of educational backgrounds among respondents, spanning from diplomas to masters degrees. Specifically, a majority of micro and small garment enterprise owners reported having a diploma as their highest level of education, accounting for 66.4% of the sample. Furthermore, 17.3% of respondents held university qualifications (Masters or Bachelor's), indicating a substantial portion had higher education credentials. In contrast, 11.2% of respondents stated they had no formal education but acquired skills through apprenticeship training, while a smaller percentage (5.2%) held higher national diploma qualifications.



Table 1: Distribution of gender and educational level of respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	85	25.8
Female	245	74.2
Total	330	100.0
Education level	Frequency	Percent
No formal education	37	11.2
Diploma	219	66.4
Bachelor's Degree	57	17.3
Higher Diploma	17	5.2
Total	330	100.0

Source: Primary data (2023)

Influence of Human Factors on Performance of Micro and Small Garment Making enterprise in Ghana

The research aimed to examine how designers' attitudes impact enterprise performance. To achieve this, respondents were asked to rate their agreement on a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The results are presented in Table 2. Concerning perceptions of entrepreneurial challenges, a significant majority of respondents (68.2%) agreed, and 31.2% strongly agreed that being an entrepreneur in the fashion sector is challenging. The relatively low standard deviation (0.486) indicates a consistent consensus among respondents on this issue.

Regarding market survival, while a considerable portion (47%) agreed and 27.3% strongly agreed that they can thrive in a competitive and volatile fashion market, the higher standard deviation (0.783) suggests more variability in responses. This indicates differing viewpoints among designers regarding their ability to navigate challenging market conditions.

Regarding customer attraction and retention, responses varied. While 31.5% agreed and 20.3% strongly agreed that attracting and retaining customers is manageable, a notable portion (10%) strongly disagreed. The higher standard deviation (1.256) suggests significant dispersion in opinions on this topic. In terms of cash flow management, the majority (47.9%) agreed, and 33.3% strongly agreed that managing cash flow is challenging, with a moderate standard deviation (0.981). This indicates some variability in perceptions but an overall consensus on the challenges associated with financial management.

Concerning outsourcing production, a significant majority (53.6%) agreed, and 37.3% strongly agreed that outsourcing production is very challenging, with a relatively low standard deviation (0.694), indicating consistency in responses. Regarding the ease of starting a small-



scale fashion business, responses were mixed, with 15.2% strongly disagreeing and 30.9% disagreeing. The higher standard deviation (1.351) suggests more variability in opinions on this matter. Regarding business strategy and management, while a significant portion (29.1%) agreed and 19.7% strongly agreed that business strategy and management are straightforward, a considerable number (22.4%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. The moderate standard deviation (1.215) indicates some dispersion in responses.

Overall, respondents expressed satisfaction with their businesses, with the majority (70%) agreeing and 34.8% strongly agreeing that their business is unique and attractive. The standard deviation (0.488) suggests a consistent level of agreement among respondents.

However, a substantial proportion disagreed or strongly disagreed that engaging in the fashion design business is a waste of time (39.1% disagreed, 39.7% strongly disagreed), while a small minority agreed (2.4%). The higher standard deviation (1.278) implies more variability in opinions on this statement. While there is general consensus on some aspects, such as entrepreneurial challenges, cash flow management, and the uniqueness of businesses, opinions vary more widely on topics like market survival, customer attraction, and the ease of starting a business.

Table 2: Micro and Small Garment Enterprise Owners' Responses on Designers' Attitude and Aptitude on Performance.

Statement	SD		D		NS		A		SA		Mean	Std. Dev.
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
To be entrepreneur in fashion sector is not easy	0	0	1	0.3	1	0.3	225	68.2	105	31.2	4.30	0.486
I can survive saturated and fashion volatile market	0	0	9	2.7	76	23.0	155	47.0	90	27.3	3.99	0.783
It is easy to attract and maintain customers.	33	10.0	104	31.5	72	21.8	67	20.3	54	16.4	3.02	1.256
Managing cash flow is not easy	1	0.3	43	13.0	18	5.5	158	47.9	110	33.3	4.02	0.981
	1	0.3	7	2.1	20	6.1	177	53.6	123	37.3	4.26	0.694



Outsourcing production is very difficult.												
To start up a small-scale fashion business is easy.	50	15.2	102	30.9	51	15.5	70	21.2	57	17,3	2.95	1.351
Business strategy and management of the label is easy to do	23	7.0	72	21.8	74	22.4	96	29.1	65	19.7	3.33	1.215
My business is unique and attractive	0	0	1	0.3	5	1.5	231	70.0	93	28.2	4.26	0.488
I get real satisfaction when running my business.	2	0.6	4	1.2	10	3.0	199	60.3	115	34.8	4.28	0.635

Source: Primary data (2023)

Designer's Attitude towards Garment Designing (Part b)

The researchers aimed to explore how designers' attitudes influence performance, as depicted in Table 3. A substantial majority of respondents (67.3%) agreed, and 32.1% strongly agreed that they harbour a deep passion for the garment production industry. The relatively low standard deviation (0.468) indicates a consistent level of passion among designers. Regarding ease in garment construction, the majority (71.8%) agreed, and 25.8% strongly agreed that they can effortlessly construct all garments. This suggests a high level of confidence in garment construction skills, with a relatively low standard deviation (0.505) reflecting consistency in responses.

Despite the timely delivery of garments, respondents generally concurred on their ability to promptly fulfil customers' orders, with 60.9% agreeing and 34.5% strongly agreeing that they consistently deliver orders swiftly. The moderate standard deviation (0.607) suggests some variability in responses. When it comes to introducing new designs to the market, a significant majority of respondents (47.9%) agreed, and 44.8% strongly agreed that they actively



innovate, though the higher standard deviation (0.627) suggests some variability in perceptions.

Regarding customer loyalty, a substantial majority (54.2%) agreed, and 42.1% strongly agreed that most customers have made repeat purchases, indicating strong customer loyalty. The moderate standard deviation (0.563) suggests consistency in responses. In terms of marketing strategies, a significant portion (42.1%) agreed, and 37.0% strongly agreed that they utilise social media platforms, though the higher standard deviation (1.010) implies variability in marketing approaches. Once again, with respect to prioritising customer satisfaction, the majority (51.2%) agreed, and 47.6% strongly agreed that customer satisfaction is paramount, indicating a strong commitment to meeting customer needs. The standard deviation (0.567) suggests consistent focus among designers. Respondents generally concurred on specialisation, with 62.7% agreeing and 32.7% strongly agreeing that they specialise in specific garment types. The moderate standard deviation (0.613) indicates some variability in specialisation preferences. Additionally, a majority (62.1%) agreed, and 32.7% strongly agreed that they actively guide customers in design selection, reflecting a customer-centric approach. The standard deviation (0.561) suggests consistency in customer interaction strategies.

Furthermore, respondents generally agreed on prioritising quality, with 54.8% agreeing and 43.0% strongly agreeing that they consistently produce high-quality garments. The standard deviation (0.581) indicates consistency in quality standards among designers. Overall, the findings underscore a strong commitment to garment production, innovation, customer satisfaction, and quality among designers in micro and small garment-making enterprises in Ghana, implying that while marketing strategies may vary, introducing new designs to the market can enhance profitability.

Table 3: MSGE Responses on Designer's Attitude towards Enterprise Performance

Statement	SD		D		NS		A		SA		Mean	Std. Dev.
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
I am passionate about garment production industry	0	0	0	0	2	0.6	222	67.3	106	32.1	4.32	0.468
Can construct all garments with ease	1	0.3	0	0	7	2.1	237	71.8	85	25.8	4.23	0.505
I always take the	2	0.6	1	0.3	12	3.6	201	60.9	114	34.5	4.28	0.607



shortest time to deliver customers' orders												
Can try out new designs in the market.	0	0	1	0.3	23	7.0	158	47.9	148	44.8	4.37	0.627
Most of my customers have bought in my shop more than thrice.	1	0.3	1	0.3	10	3.0	179	54.2	139	42.1	4.39	0.563
I market my designs through social media plat forms	2	0.6	43	13.0	24	7.3	139	42.1	122	37.0	4.02	1.010
Customer satisfaction is my priority.	0	0	4	1.2	0	0	169	51.2	157	47.6	4.45	0.567
I specialize in specific types of garments	1	0.3	5	1.5	9	2.7	207	62.7	108	32.7	4.26	0.613
Guide customers on settling on designs and are always positive about it.	0	0	1	0.3	16	4.8	205	62.1	108	32.7	4.27	0.561
Always strive to	1	0.3	2	0.6	4	1.2	181	54.8	142	43.0	4.40	0.581



produce quality garments.												
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Source: Primary data (2023)

Hypothesis testing (Ho1)

To explore how human factors affect the performance of micro and small garment enterprises in Ghana, Hypothesis 1 (Ho1) posits that these human factors do not significantly influence enterprise performance (refer to Table 4). The analysis employs a linear regression model to investigate the relationship between various human factors. The regression model exhibits a moderate level of explanatory power, as evidenced by an R-square value of 0.304. This suggests that approximately 30.4% of the variance in enterprise performance can be elucidated by the human factors examined in the model, including knowledge, aptitude, and attitude or passion. The adjusted R-square value, which considers the number of predictors in the model, stands at 0.297. However, it was essential to determine the statistical significance of these findings, which was accomplished through the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) as presented in Table 5.

Table 4: Model Summary of Human Factors on Enterprise Performance

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.551 ^a	.304	.297	.655

Predictors (Constant), Knowledge, Attitude, Aptitude

ANOVA Table on Human Factors on Enterprise Performance

The ANOVA table indicates that the regression model is statistically significant ($F = 47.149$, $p < .001$), signifying that the predictors collectively exert a substantial influence on enterprise performance (refer to Table 5). The regression model accounts for a significant portion of the variance in performance, as evidenced by the sum of squares for regression (60.764). Conversely, the residual sum of squares (139.187) reflects the variance that remains unexplained.

Table 5: ANOVA Table on Human Factors on Enterprise Performance

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	60.764	3	20.255	47.149	.000 ^b
	Residual	139.187	324	.430		
	Total	199.951	327			

a. Dependent Variable: Enterprise performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Knowledge, Aptitude, Attitude / Passion

Source: Primary data (2023)



Regression Coefficients of Human Factor on Enterprise Performance

The coefficients table offers insights into the magnitude and direction of the connections between each predictor variable and enterprise performance (refer to Table 6). Among the human factors scrutinised, knowledge, aptitude, and passion exhibit notable positive correlations with enterprise performance, as evidenced by their respective beta coefficients (0.134, 0.235, and 0.374). The positive coefficients for these variables imply that increased levels of passion for the garment production industry, proficiency in constructing all garments with ease, and the capacity to experiment with new designs are linked to enhanced enterprise performance.

Table 6: Regression Coefficients of Human Factor on Enterprise Performance

		Coefficients ^a				
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	-.562	.409		-1.374	.170
	Knowledge	.224	.088	.134	2.553	.011
	Aptitude	.364	.080	.235	4.528	.000
	Attitude / Passion	.466	.060	.374	7.751	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Enterprise performance

Source: Primary data (2023)

Null Hypothesis

The investigation scrutinised null hypothesis one (Ho1), positing that there is no significant impact of human factors on enterprise performance, to assess the influence of human factors on micro and small enterprises in Ghana. The study unveiled a moderate relationship between knowledge, attitude, and aptitude and enterprise performance, with an observed correlation of $R = .551$, $p < .001$. The beta coefficient values for knowledge, aptitude, and passion were found to be 0.134, 0.235, and 0.374, respectively, indicating a notable positive association between these variables and enterprise performance. Particularly, passion exhibited a higher positive coefficient of 0.374, suggesting that variations in this variable strongly affect the performance of micro and small garment enterprises in Ghana. This finding corroborates the research conducted by Loureiro et al. (2017), which concluded that a fervent passion for fashion design fosters skill development conducive to enterprise growth. For instance, Loureiro et al. (2017) elucidate that a passion for design empowers fashion designers to effortlessly conceive and fabricate innovative and imaginative garments, experiment with novel designs, and effectively market them through social media platforms, thereby attracting consumers to their products. Moreover, this passion for design enables the creation and dissemination of inspiring clothing designs through fashion magazines and personal networks.

Qualitative Result Findings



This section provides insights derived from qualitative interviews conducted with association executives and customers within the fashion industry. Qualitative data were gathered from 15 customers of Micro and Small Garment Making Designers and 9 Association Executives.

Association Executive Responses:

This subsection explores the qualitative evaluations offered by association executives regarding the competencies of micro and small enterprise (MSE) fashion designers within their association. The findings, depicted in Figure 1, are summarised as follows:

Low: 22.2% of association executives rated the human factors affecting performance as low, highlighting concerns about creativity and knowledge deficiencies among MSE fashion designers.

Average: 44.4% perceived human factors as average, acknowledging areas for enhancement while also recognising the existing skill level and qualifications of certain designers.

Very Good: 33.3% of executives regarded human factors affecting performance as very good, underscoring the high skill level and qualifications of designers with advanced education in fashion.

DISCUSSION

The attributes of human factors, such as knowledge, aptitude, and passion, exhibit significant positive correlations with enterprise performance. This finding aligns with the research of Ganotakis (2012), suggesting that the performance of garment industry enterprises can be enhanced by leveraging human factors such as technical education, experience, and managerial skills. Despite the challenges faced by entrepreneurs in the volatile and competitive fashion market of Ghana, the study reveals that retaining customers is relatively easy. However, managing cash flow poses difficulties for Micro and Small Garment Enterprises (MSGEs) in Ghana, likely due to high competition from larger apparel companies, necessitating entrepreneurs to undertake considerable risks to thrive in the sector. Furthermore, the predominance of informal fashion design training in Ghana may underscore a lack of entrepreneurial skills education, including business planning, management, and cash flow management. Nevertheless, the ease of customer retention may stem from the focus of micro and small garment enterprises on serving a niche market segment with tailored designs, effectively meeting customer needs, and thereby enhancing performance.

Additionally, outsourcing proves challenging for micro and small garment enterprises, prompting them to adopt in-house design and production practices. While this may not yield significant income initially, it enhances performance by enabling the creation of customised garments that cater to customer preferences. Moreover, the ease of starting a small business in Ghana, coupled with the manageable scope of MSGEs, suggests that engagement in small fashion businesses is not futile. The passion exhibited by designers significantly contributes to the performance of MSGEs in Ghana, driving timely order delivery, ease of garment construction, innovation in design, customer guidance, and a focus on quality. This aligns with the assertions of Adamtey (2015), who suggests that designers, driven by passion, aim to fulfil users' social, psychological, and physical needs through the incorporation of human factors.



Furthermore, specialisation in various garment types enhances quality and output, with designers deriving satisfaction from developing new designs that meet customer needs. Prioritizing customer satisfaction leads to high levels of customer loyalty. Moreover, the use of social media for marketing purposes proves effective for micro and small garment enterprises, enabling wider reach and cost-effective promotion strategies, thus positively impacting the performance of such enterprises.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the impact of human factors on the success of micro- and small-garment firms in Greater Accra, Ghana. The study established the influence of the designers' attitude and passion on micro and small garment enterprises performance. The study investigated designers' attitudes and their impact on organisational performance. The findings revealed that respondents had varying perspectives on entrepreneurial hurdles, market survival, client attractiveness, cash flow management, outsourcing production, launching a fashion business, and business strategy. Despite various perspectives on these issues, there was agreement on the significance of customer happiness and a dedication to quality. Furthermore, the examination of designers' attitudes found a great passion for the garment manufacturing sector, as well as confidence in garment construction skills, fast order fulfilment, inventiveness in introducing new designs, and a focus on customer happiness and quality. These elements were proven to have a beneficial impact on enterprise performance. The regression analysis found statistical support for the link between human variables and enterprise success, with knowledge, aptitude, and enthusiasm all showing substantial positive connections. These findings are consistent with previous research, emphasising the importance of passion and expertise in promoting business growth and innovation in the garment industry.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

Based on the study's findings, it is recommended that government agencies responsible for promoting small businesses and entrepreneurship prioritise activities that promote ongoing skill development and entrepreneurial education among fashion designers. Given the significant positive correlations between knowledge, aptitude, and passion and enterprise performance, investing in programmes that provide training and support in areas such as business management, financial literacy, and market strategy can help fashion designers navigate challenges more effectively and capitalise on growth opportunities. By providing fashion designers with the required skills and information, stakeholders can create a more resilient and competitive garment industry ecosystem in the region.

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