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Digital social networks and the promotion of women's handicrafts in Algeria: evidence from women artisans in Bejaia

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Abstract:

This study investigates how social media platforms support the promotion of women's handicrafts in Béjaïa, Algeria. Based on data from 115 craftswomen, the findings show that these platforms enhance product visibility, customer outreach, and sales opportunities, particularly through visual content. The results also reveal that the effectiveness of social media use varies according to age, education, professional experience, and craft activity. While digitally oriented artisans benefit most from online exposure, challenges related to digital skills and e-commerce infrastructure continue to limit the full potential of these tools.

Keywords: Social networking platforms; women's handicrafts; promotion; know-how; Bejaia.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Since the advent of Web 2.0, digital technologies have profoundly reshaped the ways in which communication is conducted, information is disseminated and economic and cultural activities are promoted and enhanced. Digital social networks such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and WhatsApp have now become central components of contemporary social and commercial practices. They are no longer merely spaces for interaction and exchange, but have evolved into strategic instruments of communication, marketing, and promotion, enabling individuals, businesses, and small artisanal enterprises to reach broader audiences at relatively low cost. Through their interactive and participatory features, these platforms create new opportunities for visibility and foster the emergence of innovative forms of digital entrepreneurship (MAKHLOUF & LARADI, 2023).

Within this context, the craft sector emerges as one of the fields most significantly affected by the ongoing process of digital transformation. Handicrafts are not merely an economic activity; they also serve as a vehicle for collective memory, cultural identity, and the transmission of traditional skills and know-how across generations (DAHMANI , 2021). In Algeria, this sector holds a crucial position in local development dynamics as well as in the preservation of intangible cultural heritage. It encompasses a wide range of occupations rooted in creativity, manual work, and the intergenerational transfer of artisanal techniques. Women play a central role within this sector, particularly in activities such as sewing, embroidery, hairstyling, traditional pastry making, and the production of local handcrafted goods.

The wilaya of Bejaia is distinguished by the richness of its artisanal heritage and the diversity of activities carried out by women

artisans registered with the Chamber of Crafts and Trades. Nevertheless, despite the economic and cultural potential of this sector, these artisans continue to face a range of constraints related to product commercialization, limited access to markets, and the low visibility of their activities. In this regard, digital social networks emerge as an innovative alternative that helps overcome geographical barriers, foster new forms of communication with customers, and promote artisanal creations to a broader audience. Through the dissemination of photographs, videos, tutorials, and interactive posts, women artisans are able not only to enhance the visibility of their products, but also to narrate the history of their crafts and highlight the authenticity of their traditional know-how.

The use of digital social networks in the field of women's handicrafts raises several important issues. On the one hand, these platforms enhance the economic opportunities of women artisans, increase the visibility of their work, and facilitate their integration into the digital economy. On the other hand, they require technical skills, content creation abilities, and a level of digital proficiency that is not equally available to all artisans. Difficulties related to digital literacy, access to electronic payment tools, online competition, and content management remain significant barriers to effective participation in the digital environment.

It is within this perspective that the present study is situated, aiming to examine the role of digital social networks in enhancing the value of women's artisanal know-how within the CAM of the wilaya of Bejaia. More specifically, the research seeks to identify the most commonly used platforms by women artisans, the types of content they prioritize in promoting their products, the digital functionalities they employ to reach a wider customer base, as well as the main challenges they encounter in using social media. To achieve these objectives, a quantitative approach was adopted, based on a field survey conducted with a sample of 115 women artisans.

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Through this research, we aim to highlight the ways in which digital social networks contribute to the modernization of artisanal practices while simultaneously supporting the preservation and transmission of local cultural heritage. The study also seeks to emphasize the importance of digital support for women artisans in order to strengthen their integration into the digital economy and to promote the sustainable development of women's handicrafts in Algeria.

The problematic of study

With the rise of digital social networks, traditional modes of promoting and marketing artisanal products have undergone profound transformations. Digital platforms now offer women artisans new opportunities for visibility, interaction, and the dissemination of their know-how. However, despite these opportunities, women artisans continue to face several challenges related to digital skills, online competition, and access to modern marketing mechanisms.

In this context, a central question arises: What are the effects of the use of digital social networks on the transmission and enhancement of women's artisanal know-how within the Chamber of Crafts and Trades of the wilaya of Bejaia?

To deepen the analysis, the following secondary research questions have been formulated:

Question 1: Which digital platforms are most commonly used by women artisans of the CAM to promote their products to the public?

Question 2: What types of content do they share on digital social networks to showcase their crafts and enhance the value of their artisanal know-how?

Question 3: Which social media functionalities are employed by women artisans to reach a wider audience and expand their customer base beyond their local region?

Question 4: What are the main challenges faced by women artisans in using digital social networks?

Study hypotheses

To guide our investigation and seek potential answers to the research questions outlined above, we have developed four hypotheses, which are set out as follows:

Hypothesis 1: Women artisans affiliated with the Chamber of Crafts and Trades in Bejaia predominantly rely on platforms such as Facebook and Instagram to promote their products and enhance their public visibility.

Hypothesis 2: Women artisans employ a range of visual content formats including demonstration videos, tutorials, and authentic narratives aimed at capturing public attention and showcasing the distinctiveness of their artisanal expertise.

Hypothesis 3: Women artisans leverage various features provided by digital social networks to promote and enhance their craft-based skills. These features include targeted hashtags, live video streaming, influencer partnerships, and paid advertising.

Hypothesis 4: Women artisans face multiple constraints when using digital social networks. These challenges are primarily technical in nature, along with other types of limitations.

2. Research Methodology

The choice of methodological approach largely determines the scientific validity and the overall quality of the results obtained. In this study, a quantitative approach was adopted, as it was considered the most suitable for addressing the research problem.

The use of this data aims to confront the initially formulated hypotheses with empirical field realities, in order to assess their validity on the basis of reliable and verifiable evidence.

Within this framework, a field survey was conducted among women artisans who use digital social networks to enhance and promote their activities. Data collection took place between September and October 2025, in collaboration with the Chamber of Crafts and Trades (CAM) of the wilaya of Bejaia, which facilitated the organization and smooth implementation of the study. During this period, 150 questionnaires were distributed to women artisans engaged in various crafts, all actively using digital platforms for the promotion and visibility of their artisanal know-how.

2.1 Data Collection Techniques

The selection of data collection techniques represents a fundamental step in any scientific research process. In this study, the questionnaire was chosen as the primary instrument for data collection, given its relevance to the research problem and the nature of the information sought.

The survey was conducted among 150 women artisans registered with the Chamber of Crafts and Trades of the wilaya of Bejaia. The decision to focus exclusively on a female sample is justified by the need to remain faithful to the object of the study and to ensure an accurate representation of the reality of women artisans within this institution.

Two modes of questionnaire administration were employed: firstly, face-to-face interviews, during which the questionnaire was administered orally by the researcher; and secondly, a self-administered format, completed independently by the respondents.

Data processing was carried out using SPSS software, which is

widely used for statistical analysis. This tool enabled the transformation of responses into usable quantitative data, particularly through the calculation of frequencies and percentages for each studied variable. Out of the 150 questionnaires distributed, 35 were excluded due to inconsistencies, incomplete responses, or non-exploitable data. The final analysis is therefore based on 115 valid questionnaires, providing a reliable empirical dataset for testing the research hypotheses.

2.2 Sampling and Study Sample

2.2.1 Study Population

In any field survey, defining the target population is a crucial step, as it establishes the framework within which the data required for analysis will be collected. In the present study, the research is based on a population of 3855 women artisans officially registered with the Chamber of Crafts and Trades of the wilaya of Bejaia. This target group constitutes the full set of potential respondents concerned by the investigation and serves as the reference base upon which the methodological approach was developed and the study sample was constructed.

2.2.2 Sampling Procedure and Sample Type

The construction of a sample from the target population requires the application of precise methodological principles in order to ensure the scientific validity of the findings and their potential for generalization. In this study, a probability sampling technique was adopted, as it was deemed the most appropriate for achieving the research objectives.

2.2.3 Type of Study Sample

In the context of this research, a stratified sampling design was adopted, a choice justified by the diversity and heterogeneity of the target population. Indeed, the population under study encompasses a

variety of artisanal occupations, each characterized by specific practices, particularly in terms of social media usage and the nature of content shared.

In order to ensure a balanced representation of all artisanal activities, the population was organized into eleven distinct strata: pottery, hairdressing, sewing, embroidery, cheese making, confectionery and chocolate making, jewelry making, traditional and modern cake production, pastry making, natural cosmetics production, and floristry.

3. Data analysis and interpretation of results

3.1 Presentation of the Sociodemographic Characteristics of the Sample

Table 1: Distribution of the Sample According to Age

Age Category	Frequency	Percentage
18-28 years	21	18,3 %
29-39 years	56	48,7%
40-50 years	25	21,7%
50 years and over	13	11,3%
Total	115	100%

Source: Field Survey Results

The results presented in this table make it possible to identify four age categories among the women artisans surveyed. The 29–39 age group is the most represented, accounting for nearly half of the sample (48.7%). This predominance suggests that this is a stage of professional stability, during which women artisans already possess sufficient experience to develop their activities or operate independently. This observation is consistent with the work of BERBAR and AKNINE, who note that women's integration into the artisanal sector in Algeria occurs gradually, particularly through

microcredit schemes and training programs, often following an initial phase of skill acquisition (BERBAR & AKNINE SOUIDI, 2017).

The 40-50 age group ranks second (21.7%). It corresponds to artisans with consolidated experience and professional maturity, often enabling them to also play a role in the transmission of know how.

Young artisans aged 18–28 represent 18.3% of the sample. Their presence reflects a generational renewal within the sector, marked by the entry of new practitioners, often with vocational or academic training.

Finally, women aged 50 and above account for 11.3% of the sample. Although fewer in number, they play a crucial role in the preservation and intergenerational transmission of artisanal skills, an aspect also highlighted by (DAHMANI , 2021) in his work on the valorization of artisanal heritage.

Table 2: Distribution of the Sample According to Educational Level

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage
Primary education	22	19, 1%
Middle education	28	24,3%
Secondary education	35	30,4%
University education	31	26,2%
Total	115	100%

Source: Field Survey Results

The results reveal a diversity of educational backgrounds among the women artisans surveyed. The most represented category is secondary education (30.4%), closely followed by university education (26.2%). This indicates that women's handicrafts attract not only individuals with technical or vocational training, but also university graduates who are able to leverage skills in management, entrepreneurship, digital communication, and marketing to develop

and enhance their artisanal activities. This trend is supported by the World Bank's We-Fi program (Banque mondiale , 2025), which demonstrates that artisans trained in digital tools and digital marketing are able to expand their customer base and increase their income.

The middle education level (24.3%) also represents a significant share, reflecting a gradual entry into the artisanal sector following intermediate schooling. Finally, primary education (19.1%) is the least represented category, suggesting that access to women's handicrafts is increasingly associated with a minimum level of formal education, and that younger generations of artisans generally possess a stronger educational foundation.

Table 3: Distribution of the Sample According to Type of Craft Activity

Craft Activity	Frequency	Percentage
Pottery	3	2,5%
Hairdressing	17	14,8 %
Sewing	13	11,3 %
Embroidery	16	13,9 %
Cheese making	10	8,7 %
Confectionery and chocolate making	8	7,0 %
Jewelry making	7	6,1 %
Traditional and modern cakes	12	10,4 %
Pastry making	12	10,4 %
Natural cosmetics production	9	7,8 %
Floristry	8	7,0 %
Total	115	100%

Source: Field Survey Results

The results presented in this table reveal a wide diversity of craft activities practiced by women artisans registered with the CAM

of Bejaia. The most represented occupations include hairdressing (14.8%), embroidery (13.9%), sewing (11.3%), as well as traditional and modern cake making and pastry production (10.4% each). The strong presence of professions related to aesthetics, textiles, and culinary arts confirms that women's handicrafts remain closely linked to skills traditionally transmitted within the family and cultural environment. As highlighted by (BERBAR & AKNINE SOUIDI, 2017), Algerian women artisans tend to engage primarily in activities that align with socially assigned female roles and that can often be performed at home, particularly sewing, embroidery, hairdressing, and culinary-related crafts.

The prominence of hairdressing and beauty-related services can also be explained by evolving consumption patterns and the growing demand for personal care and wellness services. These activities provide women artisans with relatively stable income opportunities and direct interaction with customers.

Sewing, embroidery, and traditional cake making also account for an important share of the sample. This reflects the persistence of craft practices deeply rooted in local cultural heritage and intergenerational knowledge transmission. According to (DAHMANI , 2021), traditional craftsmanship constitutes a fundamental component of Algeria's intangible cultural heritage, particularly in Kabylia, where women play a central role in preserving and passing down ancestral artisanal techniques.

Furthermore, the emergence of more modern and diversified activities such as natural cosmetics production (7.8%), confectionery and chocolate making (7.0%), floristry (7.0%), and jewelry-making (6.1%) indicates that women artisans are no longer confined to traditional crafts. They are gradually adapting to new market trends and evolving consumer expectations. This diversification reflects a broader process of modernization within women's handicrafts and an

increasing drive toward economic innovation.

Finally, the low representation of certain activities such as pottery (2.5%) may be attributed to several factors, including the physical demands of the craft, the cost of materials, competition from industrial products, and marketing difficulties. According to the report of the Algerian Ministry of Tourism and Handicrafts (2022), several traditional crafts are experiencing a gradual decline due to a lack of generational renewal and ongoing economic and technological transformations.

Table 4: Distribution of the Sample According to Professional Experience (Duration of Practice in the Activity)

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 1 year	14	12,2%
1 to 3 years	35	30,4%
4 to 6 years	46	40%
7 years and over	20	17,4%
Total	240	100%

Source: Field Survey Results

The distribution of women artisans according to their professional experience reveals a diversity of career trajectories. The majority of respondents have between 4 and 6 years of experience (40%), indicating a certain level of stability and well established expertise in their respective crafts. This group constitutes the core of the women's artisanal sector, comprising practitioners who are already well integrated and capable of transmitting their skills. This duration of experience often corresponds to a stage in which artisans begin to diversify their marketing channels, particularly through the use of social media. The work of (DEPRINCE & ARNONE , 2018) highlights that digital social networks represent an essential tool for

the internationalization of small enterprises, a finding that also applies to women artisans in Bejaia seeking to expand their customer base beyond local markets .

The category of artisans with 1 to 3 years of experience (30.4%) is also significant. It reflects a recent integration into the sector, characterized by a phase of development and professionalization.

Women artisans with 7 years or more of experience (17.4%) represent a smaller proportion but form a group of experts who play a key role in ensuring continuity and preserving traditional know-how.

Finally, those with less than one year of experience (12.2%) indicate the entry of new participants into the artisanal sector, reflecting both generational renewal and a growing interest in this field.

Table 5: Distribution of the Sample According to Geographical Location

Regions	Frequency	Percentage
Bejaia	33	28,7 %
Seddouk	14	12,1%
Semaoun	9	7,9%
El kseur	5	4,2%
Timezrit	6	5%
Benidjellil	7	6,3%
Aoukas	23	19,6%
Amizour	19	16,2%
Total	115	100%

Source: Field Survey Results

The results indicate that the participants come from various areas across the wilaya of Bejaia, reflecting a notable territorial diversity. The majority of women artisans (28.7%) are based in the

commune of Bejaia, which can be explained by the high concentration of artisanal activities in the provincial capital. Aokas ranks second with 19.6%, followed by Amizour (16.2%) and Seddouk (12.1%). These figures suggest that these localities host a relatively well-developed network of women's artisanal activities.

The remaining regions account for smaller proportions, including Semaoun (7.9%), Benidjellil (6.3%), Timezrit (5.0%), and finally ElKseur (4.2%). Although these shares are comparatively lower, they nevertheless highlight a wide geographical spread, thereby reinforcing the representativeness of the sample.

3.2 The Preferred Platforms Used by Women Artisans of the CAM to Promote Their Craft Activities

Table 6: Distribution of the Sample According to the Platforms Used to Promote Their Products

Platforms	Frequency	Percentage
Facebook	78	32,5%
Instagram	63	26,2%
WhatsApp	47	19,5%
Tik-tok	34	14,1%
Viber	39	16,2%
LinkedIn	19	7,9%
Twitter	32	13,3%

Source: Field Survey Results

The findings indicate that women artisans primarily rely on social media platforms to promote their activities. Facebook (32.5%) emerges as the most widely used platform, confirming its central role in enhancing visibility and disseminating artisanal products, thanks to its broad user base and sharing functionalities. Instagram (26.2%) also holds a significant position, particularly for the visual showcasing of

artisanal creations, which aligns well with the aesthetic nature of these crafts.

WhatsApp (19.5%) is mainly used as a direct communication tool and for customer retention, enabling personalized interaction with clients. The presence of TikTok (14.1%) and Twitter (13.3%) reflects a diversification of digital strategies: TikTok is leveraged to reach younger audiences through creative video content, while Twitter serves as a channel for rapidly sharing information and promotional updates.

Finally, Viber (16.2%) and LinkedIn (7.9%) illustrate more specialized uses: Viber facilitates community-based exchanges, whereas LinkedIn is used for professional visibility and networking purposes.

Table 7: Distribution of the Sample According to the Frequency of Publishing Content Related to Craft Activities

Frequency of Publishing	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	36	31,3%
Weekly	43	37,4%
Monthly	24	20,9%
Rarely	12	10,4%
Total	240	100%

Source: Field Survey Results

The findings reveal that the majority of women artisans publish content on a weekly basis (37.5%), reflecting a regular yet balanced communication strategy. This frequency enables them to maintain consistent visibility among their clientele while avoiding information overload.

A significant proportion of respondents publish on a daily basis (31.3%), which indicates a strong commitment to active presence and

continuous interaction with the public. These artisans adopt an intensive promotional approach, often considered essential for customer retention. Such practices are consistent with (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010), who emphasize the importance of regularity and interactivity in social media management to sustain user engagement.

Those who publish on a monthly basis (20.8%) tend to favor a more occasional approach, likely linked to product availability or specific events. Finally, artisans who publish rarely (10.4%) represent a minority, which may reflect limited time, insufficient resources, or a lower prioritization of social media within their promotional strategies.

Table 8: Perception of the Impact of Social Media on the Visibility and Demand for Handicraft Products

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	85	73,9%
No	30	26,1%
Total	**115**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey Results

The data collected reveal that 73.9% of the women artisans consider the use of social media to be a decisive factor in enhancing both the visibility and the demand for their products. This majority reflects a widely shared belief that these platforms have become an essential lever for promotion and marketing within women's handicrafts. Through the features offered by platforms such as Facebook and Instagram, these artisans are able to expand their customer base and strengthen their presence in the market.

These findings are consistent with the work of (Ohiagu & Okorie, 2014), who emphasize that social media are not limited to a commercial function but also contribute to the transmission and

dissemination of intangible cultural heritage beyond geographical boundaries. In this regard, artisans who publish, share, or promote their creations online become actors in collective memory, contributing to the preservation and diffusion of traditional know-how. As highlighted by Dominick (2012) and (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010), users of these platforms are not merely passive observers; they also act as contributors and content creators through interactions such as likes, shares, and comments, thereby amplifying the reach of artisanal products and reinforcing both their cultural and economic visibility.

However, a significant minority of respondents (26.1%) believe that the impact of social media on their sales remains limited. This perception may be explained by restricted use of digital tools, a lack of digital communication skills, or a mismatch between the products offered and the expectations of online consumers.

3.3 Visual Content Shared by Women Artisans to Promote Their Crafts and Enhance Their Artisanal Know-How

Table 9: Distribution of the Sample According to the Preferred Content Formats Used in Publications

Content Formats	Frequency	Percentage
Photos	61	20,4%
Videos	95	31,8%
Texts	77	25,8%
Tutorials	66	22,1%

Source: Field Survey Results

The results indicate that videos are the most widely preferred and frequently used content format in publications (31.8%). This preference reflects a growing tendency among content creators to prioritize dynamic and engaging media capable of attracting audience attention and increasing interaction levels. Such findings are consistent with the work of (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010), who argue

that interactive visual content generates stronger user engagement across digital platforms.

Text-based content ranks second (25.8%), highlighting the continued importance of written communication in delivering clear, detailed, and informative messages. Tutorials also represent a considerable share (22.1%), suggesting a strong orientation toward educational and explanatory content designed to help users better understand products, services, or artisanal practices.

Photos, although still widely used (20.4%), appear less dominant compared to video-based content. This may be explained by the fact that static images, while effective for illustration and presentation, are generally perceived as less engaging than interactive or instructional formats.

Table10: Distribution of the Sample According to the Role Played by Visual Content in Enhancing Handicraft Products

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Better showcase the quality and details of products	67	11,8 %
Attract greater customer attention	88	15,4 %
Facilitate communication with customers	91	16,0 %
Increase demand and sales	101	17,7 %
Enable differentiation from other women artisans	59	10,4 %
Serve as an educational support tool	85	14,9 %
Create a relationship of trust	79	13,9 %

The findings reveal that visual content fulfills several complementary roles in enhancing the value of artisanal products. The most frequently cited function is the increase in demand and sales (17.7%), indicating that women artisans perceive visual content as a direct commercial lever capable of stimulating consumption.

Two other key dimensions follow closely: facilitating communication with customers (16.0%) and capturing their attention more effectively (15.4%). These results reflect both the relational and promotional functions of visual content, which not only attract public interest but also strengthen interaction and engagement. According to (Dominick, 2012), users become co-creators of content through actions such as likes, shares, and comments, thereby amplifying the reach and impact of artisanal products .

In addition, a significant proportion of respondents emphasize the pedagogical role of visual content (14.9%) as well as its ability to build trust (13.9%). These aspects highlight the added value of visual media in transmitting know-how and fostering long-term relationships with customers. In this regard, these findings are consistent with (Ohiagu & Okorie, 2014), who stress the capacity of social networks to transmit intangible cultural heritage and strengthen producer–consumer relationships .

Finally, differentiation from competitors (10.4%) and the detailed presentation of product quality (11.8%) further underline the importance of visual content in reinforcing the identity and authenticity of artisanal creations. As (DAHMANI , 2021) notes, such visibility contributes to showcasing the uniqueness and specificity of artisanal work, thereby enhancing its cultural and economic value.

Table11: Perception of Visual Content's Impact on Product Visibility

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	**107**	93,0%
No	**8**	7,0%
Total	**115**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey Results

The results show that an overwhelming majority of the surveyed women artisans (93%) believe that the visual content they share effectively contributes to increasing the visibility of their products among a broader audience. This finding highlights the strategic importance of visual media in promoting handicrafts, as they enable artisans to reach a wider audience and enhance the recognition of their creations. In the same vein, respondents also reported a noticeable rise in orders and in subscription requests to their official pages, suggesting a direct link between visual communication and audience engagement.

In contrast, a very small minority (7%) consider that such content has no significant impact on the visibility of their products. This marginal proportion suggests that, in most cases, visual content is perceived as an effective tool for communication and for enhancing the value of artisanal know-how.

Table12: Perception of Increased Demand and Sales Following the Online Sharing of Visual Content

Reponses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	99	86,1%
No	16	13,9%
Total	**115**	**100%**

The findings indicate that a large majority of the surveyed craftswomen (86.1%) reported a perceived increase in demand and/or sales following the dissemination of visual content online. This result highlights the effectiveness of visual media as a promotional tool, enhancing product visibility and generating greater customer interest, which in turn contributes to improved commercial performance.

In contrast, a small minority (13.9%) did not observe any significant impact. This relatively limited proportion suggests that, for most respondents, visual content serves as a strategic instrument for communication and business development.

However, based on the participants' responses, the lack of direct physical interaction with products represents one of the main limitations of social media platforms. The intangible nature of online presentation prevents customers fromhandling or physically assessing items, including their texture, finish, and overall quality, which may hinder purchasing decisions. Additionally, issues such as order cancellations were reported, leading to wasted time and, in some cases, extra costs for the craftswomen. These constraints help explain why a minority of respondents remain skeptical regarding the extent to which online visual content effectively increases demand or sales.

Table13: Distribution of respondents according to the most engaging visual content.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Photos	40	34,8 %
Videos	45	39,1 %
Tutorials	14	12,2 %
Visual texts / infographics	7	6,1 %
Others (stories, reels, animations, creative edits)	9	7,8 %
Total	115	100 %

The results reveal that videos represent the most engaging form of visual content for customers (39.1%), closely followed by photographs (34.8%). These two formats clearly dominate, confirming that dynamic and visually appealing media are the most effective in generating user interaction, including comments, shares, and likes.

Tutorials occupy a moderate position (12.2%), reflecting customers' interest in explanatory content that highlights and enhances artisanal know-how. Visual texts and infographics account for a smaller share (6.1%), while the « Other » category (7.8%) including stories, reels, animations, and creative edits remains limited. Nevertheless, these formats illustrate the diversity of digital practices and underscore the growing importance of innovative content types in capturing and sustaining audience attention.

3.4 Social networking platform features used by craftswomen to reach a wider audience and expand their customer base beyond their region

Table14: Distribution of women craftswomen according to the digital practices adopted on social networking platforms

Responses	Frequency/percentage			
Live video streaming	Yes		No	
	17	14,8%	98	85,2%
Use of hashtags in posts	26	22,6%	89	77,4%
Use of paid advertising on social media platforms	12	10,4%	103	89,6%
Collaboration with influencers or fellow artisans on social media	40	34,8%	75	65,2%

Source: Field Survey Results

The table highlights the digital practices that women artisans adopt or neglect when using social networking platforms. First, live video streaming appears to be the least commonly used feature: only 14.8% of respondents engage in live sessions, compared to 85.2% who do not. This reluctance to broadcast in real time may reflect fear of making mistakes, limited self-confidence, or insufficient technical skills. Yet, live streaming is widely recognized as a powerful tool for fostering closeness with customers and encouraging immediate interaction. As (Miller , 2020) notes, live videos enhance authenticity and trust by enabling direct and spontaneous engagement with audiences.

Hashtag usage is slightly more widespread, with 22.6% of artisans incorporating them into their posts. However, the vast majority (77.4%) do not use hashtags, which significantly restricts the reach and visibility of their content. Hashtags are essential for connecting with thematic communities and expanding audiences beyond regular customers. Their limited adoption suggests that many artisans have not yet fully mastered the platform-specific conventions of digital discoverability. In this regard, (Zappavigna, 2015) argues that hashtags function as discursive markers that enhance content visibility and social indexing. Their underuse therefore reflects a gap in digital marketing and optimization skills.

Paid advertising on social media is even less common, with only 10.4% of respondents reporting its use, compared to 89.6% who do not invest in it. This indicates both financial constraints and a lack of familiarity with advertising tools. Sponsored campaigns can effectively target specific customer segments, but they require both financial resources and a structured marketing strategy, which many artisans may lack. According to (Statista, 2023), advertisements on platforms such as Facebook and Instagram can generate a significant return on investment for small businesses, although they depend on well-designed and strategic planning .

Finally, collaboration with influencers or fellow artisans is reported by 34.8% of respondents, making it the most frequently adopted strategy among those examined. This willingness to engage in cooperative practices reflects a clear intention to increase visibility through partnerships. Such collaborations enable the pooling of audiences and help strengthen credibility; however, their use remains limited to about one-third of the artisans, suggesting that many have not yet adopted this approach or lack sufficiently developed professional networks. As (Freberg, 2019) highlights, influencer marketing has become a key lever for small businesses, as it combines perceived authenticity with extended audience reach.

Overall, the interpretation of the table indicates that artisans tend to favor more accessible and low-cost practices, such as collaboration, while remaining less engaged with more technical or financially demanding tools like live streaming, hashtags, or paid advertising. This pattern points to a need for targeted support and training to help them better understand how these strategies can be adapted to their activities and contribute to expanding their market reach.

3.5 Difficulties faced by women artisans in using social networking platforms

Table15: Difficulties encountered by women artisans in the use of social networking platforms

Réponses	Effectifs	Pourcentage
Limited mastery of social media platforms	60	17,9%
Lack of digital skills	73	21,7%
Difficulty in creating engaging content	45	13,4%
Limited access to payment and delivery tools	38	11,3%

Risks related to digital security, fear of making mistakes, and exposure	30	8,9%
Difficulty accessing digital markets	50	14,9%
Low visibility in a highly competitive environment	40	11,9%

Source: Field Survey Results

The results highlight several major challenges faced by women artisans in their use of social networking platforms. The most frequently reported difficulty is the lack of digital skills (21.7%), followed by limited mastery of social media platforms (17.9%). Together, these findings point to a clear gap in training and digital support.

In practical terms, many artisans are able to use smartphones for basic functions, but struggle to fully exploit the advanced features offered by platforms such as Instagram or Facebook. These include setting up online shops, interpreting audience analytics, or scheduling posts. This skills gap significantly restricts their ability to turn social media into effective marketing and sales tools. This observation is consistent with the findings of (PNUD, 2024), which emphasize the importance of strengthening digital competencies to enhance the competitiveness of women artisans. Similarly, the World Bank We-Fi report (Banque mondiale , 2025) shows that digital training programs can help artisans expand their customer base and increase their income.

The difficulty in producing attractive content (13.4%) represents another significant barrier. Even when they manage to publish posts, many artisans struggle with designing visually engaging material. A product photo taken without proper staging, lighting, or composition tends to generate limited interaction, while the absence of visual storytelling further reduces the impact of their online presence. This highlights the importance of creativity and familiarity with digital

aesthetic codes in capturing customer attention. As (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010) argue, the effectiveness of social networking platforms largely depends on the ability to create creative and interactive content that encourages user engagement.

Limited access to payment and delivery systems (11.3%) constitutes a structural constraint. While artisans may successfully attract interest online, converting this interest into actual sales remains difficult due to the lack of reliable electronic payment solutions and accessible delivery services. For instance, a customer who is attracted to a handcrafted piece of jewelry may abandon the purchase if payment is only possible in cash or if delivery options are inconvenient or unavailable.

Security related digital risks, as well as fear of making mistakes or exposing oneself online (8.9%), also act as significant barriers to engagement. Some artisans hesitate to publish content regularly due to concerns about hacking, data theft, or negative feedback. This apprehension sometimes leads them to avoid showing their faces or workshops, which ultimately reduces the sense of closeness and trust that customers typically seek in online interactions. This finding aligns with (Livingstone, 2018), who notes that women are particularly vulnerable to online harassment and privacy breaches, which can significantly constrain their digital participation.

Finally, limited access to digital markets (14.9%) and low visibility in a highly competitive environment (11.9%) reflect the challenges of operating within a saturated online space. Large brands and well-established artisans benefit from greater exposure due to substantial marketing budgets, making it more difficult for small-scale craftswomen to stand out. As a result, individual artisanal posts can easily be lost among vast volumes of content, thereby limiting their reach to wider audiences.

Table16: Distribution of the sample according to age and social networking platforms used

Age / Platforms	Facebook (78)	Instagram (63)	WhatsApp (47)	TikTok (34)	Viber (39)	LinkedIn (19)	Twitter (32)	Total par âge
18-28 years **(21)**	14 (18%)	12 (19%)	9 (19%)	7 (21%)	7 (18%)	3 (16%)	6 (19%)	21 (100%)
29-39 years **(56)**	38 (49%)	31 (49%)	23 (49%)	17 (50%)	19 (49%)	9 (47%)	16 (50%)	56 (100%)
40-50 years **(25)**	17 (22%)	13 (21%)	10 (21%)	7 (21%)	9 (23%)	5 (26%)	8 (25%)	25 (100%)
50 years and over **(13)**	9 (11%)	7 (11%)	5 (11%)	3 (8%)	4 (10%)	2 (11%)	2 (6%)	13 (100%)
Total **(115)**	78 (100%)	63 (100%)	47 (100%)	34 (100%)	39 (100%)	19 (100%)	32 (100%)	115 (100%)

Source: Field Survey Results

Table 16, which cross tabulates the age of CAM craftswomen in Bejaia with the digital platforms they use, reveals a clear generational pattern reflecting the ongoing transformation of women's artisanal activity in the digital era.

Adult artisans aged 29-39, who represent nearly half of the sample (48.7%), account for approximately 49-50% of usage across all platforms, with a strong preference for Facebook and WhatsApp. These tools enable them to maintain close relationships with customers, manage orders efficiently, and strengthen client loyalty. This age group is typically in a phase of professional consolidation, where the main objective is to stabilize their activity and develop a more sustainable commercial strategy.

In contrast, younger artisans aged 18-28 (18.3% of the sample) show a stronger presence on Instagram (19%) and TikTok (21%). This orientation is not incidental, as these platforms prioritize visual and interactive content that is particularly well suited to creative crafts

such as tailoring, baking, or hairstyling. Their use of these networks reflects a clear intention to expand beyond local markets and align with contemporary consumption trends, where visual appeal and rapid content dissemination are key drivers of engagement.

More experienced artisans aged 40-50 and those over 50, representing 21.7% and 11.3% of the sample respectively, continue to favor Facebook (22% and 11%) and Viber (23% and 10%). These platforms are perceived as more accessible and better aligned with users who are less familiar with newer digital environments. Their practices indicate a gradual adaptation to digital tools, while still relying on more traditional channels that support a familiar and stable mode of knowledge transmission.

Overall, this cross-analysis demonstrates that age significantly shapes digital strategy: younger artisans innovate through visual and interactive content that broadens their customer base and modernizes the image of craftsmanship, whereas older artisans prioritize proximity and customer loyalty. These differences directly influence visibility, knowledge transmission, and the long-term sustainability of women's artisanal heritage in the Wilaya of Bejaia.

Table17: Distribution of the sample according to educational level and type of content

Level / Formats	Photos (61)	Videos (95)	Texts (77)	Tutorials (66)	Total per Level
Primary (22 – 19,1%)	12 (19,7%)	18 (18,9%)	15 (19,5%)	13 (19,7%)	22 (100%)
Middle school (28 – 24,3%)	15 (24,5%)	23 (24,2%)	19 (24,7%)	16 (24,2%)	28 (100%)
Secondary (35 – 30,4%)	19 (31,1%)	29 (30,5%)	23 (29,9%)	20 (30,3%)	35 (100%)
University level (31 – 26,2%)	15 (24,7%)	25 (26,3%)	20 (25,9%)	17 (25,8%)	31 (100%)
Total (115)	61 (100%)	95 (100%)	77 (100%)	66 (100%)	115 (100%)

Source: Field Survey Results

The cross-tabulation between educational level and type of content shared highlights a strong relationship between women artisans' educational capital and their digital practices on social networking platforms. The findings suggest that the higher the level of education, the more diversified and sophisticated the content formats used, as well as a greater ability to mobilize advanced communication tools to enhance the visibility of artisanal products.

Artisans with a primary education level, representing 19.1% of the sample, mainly rely on photographs (19.7%) and simple textual posts (19.5%), while their use of videos and tutorials remains relatively limited. This pattern can be explained by their lower level of digital proficiency and limited familiarity with digital communication techniques. Photographs appear to be the most straightforward and accessible way to showcase artisanal products without requiring advanced technical skills.

Artisans with a middle school education (24.3%) display more diversified digital practices, with a relatively balanced distribution across different content formats: videos (24.2%), tutorials (24.2%), textual posts (24.7%), and photos (24.5%). This group appears to be in a transitional stage of digital adoption. Rather than limiting themselves to simple product presentation, these artisans increasingly engage in explanatory and interactive content creation in order to improve communication with customers and enhance the attractiveness of their products.

Women artisans with a secondary education level represent the largest share of the sample (30.4%) and emerge as the most active across all content formats, particularly videos (30.5%) and tutorials (30.3%). This finding suggests that secondary education constitutes a key threshold in the acquisition of digital skills necessary for the effective promotion of artisanal products. Producing videos and

tutorials requires not only technical abilities related to editing and content publishing, but also communication skills that allow artisans to explain production processes and highlight their craftsmanship. Their strong presence in these formats reflects a higher level of adaptation to the demands of digital marketing and social media engagement.

University-educated artisans, who account for 26.2% of the sample, also stand out for their strong use of videos (26.3%) and explanatory texts (25.9%). Their higher educational background enables them to produce more structured and pedagogically oriented content, with a clear focus on digital marketing and commercial communication. Unlike less educated artisans, they go beyond simple product presentation by also explaining production methods, functional uses, as well as the cultural and heritage value embedded in their crafts. This ability to design more elaborate content reflects a stronger command of digital communication strategies and a more effective approach to the economic valorisation of artisanal products.

Overall, the results of this table clearly demonstrate a direct relationship between educational level and the ability of artisans to effectively leverage social networking platforms for the promotion of their craft activities. As educational attainment increases, the content shared becomes more diversified, interactive, and sophisticated, particularly through videos and tutorials. Educational capital therefore appears to be a key determinant of women artisans' digital integration, as it facilitates the acquisition of technical, communicative, and entrepreneurial skills essential for promoting artisanal know-how in the digital space. In contrast, less educated artisans tend to rely on simpler and less interactive formats, which may limit their visibility, competitiveness, and capacity to adapt to the evolving demands of the digital market.

Table 18: Cross-tabulation between professional experience and posting frequency

Professional experience / Posting frequency	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Rarely	Total
less 1 year (14)	2 (14,3%)	4 (28,6%)	5 (35,7%)	3 (21,4%)	14 (100%)
1 to 3 years (35)	9 (25,7%)	15 (42,9%)	8 (22,8%)	3 (8,6%)	35 (100%)
4 to 6 years (46)	18 (39,1%)	19 (41,3%)	7 (15,2%)	2 (4,4%)	46 (100%)
7 years and over (20)	7 (35%)	5 (25%)	4 (20%)	4 (20%)	20 (100%)
Total (115)	**36 (31,3%)**	**43 (37,4%)**	**24 (20,9%)**	**12 (10,4%)**	**115 (100%)**

Source: Field Survey Results

The cross-tabulation between professional experience and the frequency of posting content related to artisanal activities highlights a significant relationship between years of practice and the intensity of women artisans' digital engagement. The findings indicate that as professional experience increases, artisans tend to adopt more regular posting habits on social networking platforms, reflecting a stronger integration of digital tools into their promotional and commercial strategies.

with less than one year of experience, representing 12.2% of the sample, mainly publish on a monthly (35.7%) or weekly (28.6%) basis, while only 14.3% post daily. This relatively low frequency can be attributed to limited professional experience, a still-developing customer base, and insufficient mastery of digital tools and online communication techniques. At this early stage, beginners are often more focused on learning their craft and stabilizing their economic activity than on maintaining a consistent online presence.

Women artisans with 1 to 3 years of experience (30.4% of the sample) display a more regular digital activity, particularly through weekly (42.9%) and daily (25.7%) postings. This group appears to be

in a gradual phase of integrating social networking platforms into their commercial and promotional practices. After a few years of experience, artisans begin to recognize the importance of online visibility for the growth of their activities and customer retention. Consequently, they make greater use of social media to showcase their products, interact with clients, and strengthen their presence in the digital marketplace.

Artisans with 4 to 6 years of experience represent the largest share of the sample (40%) and emerge as the most digitally active group. Indeed, 41.3% of them post weekly and 39.1% post daily, while infrequent posting is minimal (4.4%). This high level of activity suggests that these artisans combine solid craft experience with a more advanced understanding of digital communication strategies. Over time, they develop entrepreneurial competencies that enable them to grasp the importance of consistent posting in attracting customers and enhancing product visibility. As a result, videos, frequent updates, and audience interaction become key tools in their digital marketing practices.

Artisans with 7 years of experience and above (17.4%) present a more heterogeneous pattern of digital activity. Although a significant share of them post on a daily basis (35%), others continue to publish either infrequently (20%) or on a monthly basis (20%). This variation can be explained by the fact that the most experienced artisans often already benefit from a loyal customer base and therefore rely more heavily on traditional marketing channels such as word of mouth, craft fairs, and local social networks. In addition, some may face difficulties in adapting to technological change and evolving digital practices. Nevertheless, those who maintain a high posting frequency demonstrate a clear ability to adjust to market transformations and the demands of digital commerce.

Overall, the table clearly reveals a relationship between professional experience and posting frequency on social networking platforms. Artisans with intermediate and advanced levels of experience appear to be the most consistent in their online content production, reflecting a stronger understanding of digital marketing dynamics and the online valorization of artisanal goods. In contrast, beginners and some very experienced artisans show less intensive digital engagement, either due to limited technical skills or a continued preference for traditional forms of commercialization. These findings confirm that professional experience plays an important role in the digital integration of women artisans and in the development of modern strategies for promoting artisanal products.

Table19: Perceived impact of social media on product visibility and demand by craft activity

Artisanal activity / Perceived effect	Yes	No	Total
Pottery (3)	1 (33,3%)	2 (66,7%)	3 (100%)
Hairdressing (17)	15 (88,2%)	2 (11,8%)	17 (100%)
Tailoring (13)	10 (76,9%)	3 (23,1%)	13 (100%)
Embroidery (16)	12 (75%)	4 (25%)	16 (100%)
Cheese making (10)	7 (70%)	3 (30%)	10 (100%)
Confectionery and chocolate making (8)	6 (75%)	2 (25%)	8 (100%)
Jewelry making (7)	6 (85,7%)	1 (14,3%)	7 (100%)
Traditional / modern cakes (12)	10 (83,3%)	2 (16,7%)	12 (100%)
Pastry (12)	9 (75%)	3 (25%)	12 (100%)
Natural cosmetic product manufacturing (9)	7 (77,8%)	2 (22,2%)	9 (100%)
Floristry (8)	2 (25%)	6 (75%)	8 (100%)
Total (115)	**85 (73,9%)**	**30 (26,1%)**	**115 (100%)**

Source: Field Survey Results

This cross-tabulation between artisanal activity and perceptions of the impact of social networking platforms on product visibility and demand shows that a broadly positive view of social media (73.9%) is shared across all craft sectors. This suggests that the influence of digital platforms varies depending on the nature of the activity itself.

Women working in hairdressing (88.2%), jewelry making

(85.7%), and traditional and modern cake production (83.3%) report the strongest perception of positive effects. These activities are highly dependent on visual appeal, which makes them particularly suitable for dissemination on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok. Photos and videos effectively highlight aesthetic details, transformations, and creative processes, thereby attracting a larger customer base.

Similarly, artisans involved in tailoring (76.9%), embroidery (75%), pastry-making (75%), and natural cosmetic production (77.8%) also report a strong positive perception of social media's impact. These activities frequently use digital platforms to showcase production stages, present new items, and manage customized orders. In this context, social networks become a key tool for promoting artisanal expertise and strengthening customer loyalty.

Women artisans engaged in cheese production (70%) and confectionery/chocolate making (75%) also report a positive impact of social networking platforms, although to a slightly lesser extent. In these food-related activities, digital platforms are mainly used for product presentation, order management, and communication with customers. However, certain constraints such as product perishability, delivery challenges, and geographical limitations may reduce the effectiveness of digital marketing compared to other sectors that are more easily commercialized online.

By contrast, some activities such as pottery and floristry show lower levels of perceived benefit. Only 33.3% of potters and 25% of florists believe that social media significantly improves the visibility and demand for their products. This may be explained by several factors, including reliance on local markets, difficulties in transporting fragile goods, and limited digital proficiency in certain traditional crafts. In addition, artisans in these fields may continue to prioritize

conventional marketing channels such as local markets, craft fairs, and word-of-mouth communication.

Overall, the table demonstrates that the perceived effectiveness of social networking platforms varies according to the type of artisanal activity. Sectors characterized by strong visual appeal, creativity, and product personalization tend to benefit more from social media exposure, whereas more traditional activities or those dependent on physical proximity gain comparatively less advantage from these digital tools. These findings confirm that social networking platforms represent an important lever for visibility, commercialization, and economic valorization for women artisans, but their impact remains closely linked to the specific characteristics of each craft activity.

Table 20: Distribution of the sample according to educational level and difficulties encountered in the use of social networking platforms

Educational level / Difficulties encountered	Limited mastery of platforms	Lack of digital skills	Difficulty creating engaging content	Limited access to payment and delivery tools	Digital security risks and fear of exposure
Primary (22 – 19,1%)	16 (72,7%)	18 (81,8%)	9 (40,9%)	11 (50%)	8 (36,4%)
Middle school (28 – 24,3%)	18 (64,3%)	20 (71,4%)	12 (42,9%)	10 (35,7%)	7 (25%)
Secondary (35 – 30,4%)	17 (48,6%)	21 (60%)	15 (42,9%)	11 (31,4%)	8 (22,9%)
University level (31 – 26,2%)	9 (30%)	14 (46,7%)	9 (30%)	6 (20%)	7 7 (23,3%)

Source: Field Survey Results

The cross-tabulation between educational level and difficulties encountered in the use of social networking platforms (SNS) clearly highlights a close relationship between women artisans' educational capital and their ability to master digital tools. The results show that artisans with lower levels of education face greater technical and

communicative challenges when using social media, whereas more educated artisans appear better equipped to meet the demands of digital marketing and online communication.

In this regard, artisans with a primary level of education emerge as the most affected group. Indeed, 81.8% of them report a lack of digital skills, while 72.7% indicate limited mastery of social media platforms. These findings reflect a low level of familiarity with digital tools as well as difficulties in understanding how social networking platforms function. In addition, half of this group (50%) experiences constraints related to payment and delivery systems, which further limits their ability to develop online commercial activities.

During the fieldwork, it was also observed that several of these artisans rely on external assistance from family members such as daughters, relatives, neighbors, or acquaintances to help them publish content, respond to customers, or manage their social media pages. This dependence indicates that their use of SNS is often indirect and mediated by their social environment due to insufficient digital proficiency. This situation can be interpreted through Pierre Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital, which suggests that educational attainment strongly influences access to the skills and resources necessary for social and economic integration. In the digital context, women with lower educational capital tend to encounter more obstacles in appropriating and effectively using modern technologies (Bourdieu, 1979).

The findings reveal a clear relationship between educational attainment and digital proficiency among women artisans. Those with lower levels of education experience greater difficulties in using social media platforms and developing the digital skills required for online promotion. In contrast, artisans with secondary and university education demonstrate a stronger ability to manage digital tools, create

engaging content, and interact effectively with customers. Higher educational attainment therefore appears to facilitate the adoption of digital communication and marketing practices, reducing barriers to online engagement and enhancing the effective use of social networking platforms for business development.

In addition, difficulties related to the creation of engaging content remain relatively widespread across all categories, particularly among artisans with middle and secondary education levels (42.9%). This indicates that even when digital tools are relatively well mastered, challenges may persist in the creative and marketing dimensions of digital communication. Producing attractive content requires additional competencies in photography, video editing, visual marketing, and audience engagement.

Overall, the table clearly demonstrates that educational level is a key determinant of women artisans' digital integration. The higher the educational capital, the greater the ability to adapt to digital tools and the lower the level of difficulties encountered in using social networking platforms. Conversely, less educated artisans remain more exposed to technical, communicative, and organizational obstacles, which limits their capacity to fully exploit the opportunities offered by digital marketing and social media for the promotion of their artisanal activities.

4. CONCLUSION

This research confirms that social media has become a significant driver of both the economic development and cultural sustainability of women's handicrafts in Bejaia. By facilitating market access, customer interaction, and product promotion, digital platforms offer new opportunities for artisans to strengthen their entrepreneurial activities. At the same time, they contribute to the transmission and preservation of traditional know-how. Nevertheless, the benefits of digitalization remain uneven due to limitations in digital competencies

and supporting infrastructures. Addressing these constraints through training initiatives and institutional support is essential to ensure that women artisans can fully leverage digital technologies and enhance their long-term competitiveness in an increasingly connected economy.

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