



Capturing the Fakery of Ghanaian Christian Religious Leaders through Visual Art on Social Media

Research overview

In contemporary Ghana, claims by charismatic Christian religious leaders of possessing supernatural powers, such as the ability to prophesize death or shapeshift, have come under increasing scrutiny on social media and are being called out as fake.

A recent study analyzed these accusations of fakery, citing the example of three current religious leaders.

It was found that the accusations are made largely via satirical visual representations, such as memes, cartoons, and photoshopped images, that channel existing public doubts and spark further critical discussion in the public domain.

Social media also allows for widespread sharing, which results in the creation of a strong counternarrative against these supposed narratives of truth by the religious leaders.

Why is it important?

For decades, charismatic Christian religious leaders in Ghana have gathered followers, money, and political clout by claiming to possess supernatural powers. While a portion of the population has always critiqued these outlandish claims, the claims have traditionally dominated narratives of truth.

Now, public attitude towards these religious leaders is changing and their credibility is reducing. Following this growing movement is key to understanding what the future holds for Christianity in Ghana.

Key takeaway



Ghanaian charismatic Christian religious leaders must soon realize that a growing portion of the population is becoming critical of claims made without proof and the tide of societal opinion is turning against them.

Link to the paper:

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13696815.2021.1950524>

Title of the paper: "The Fake is News": On Popular Visual Media, Fakery, and Legitimacy Contestations in Charismatic Christianity in Contemporary Ghana

Authors: Joseph Oduro-Frimpong

DOI: 10.1080/13696815.2021.1950524