

Abstract

In sub-Saharan Africa, the past two decades have witnessed a phenomenal increase in the use of mobile phones which has attracted diverse research. This paper explores mobile phone use and livelihood activities in some urban and rural areas of Ghana. Qualitative data were extracted from a larger study that covered 24 sites ranging from urban to remote rural locations in Ghana, Malawi and South Africa. The Sustainable Livelihood Framework provided guidance for the study. The main findings of the study indicate that mobile phones provide direct phone-related employment and indirectly enable some others to secure jobs through contact with friends/relations and also facilitate marketing of farm produce in terms of reduction in transaction cost, access to ready market and contacts for better prices for produce. Additionally, phone use enhances job organization through communication between apprentices and their bosses and also facilitates the migration process of some irregular migrants. As a livelihood capital, mobile phone has the potential to reduce vulnerability and improve upon people's livelihood outcomes. There is therefore the need to make mobile phones more affordable, expand mobile phone network coverage and improve upon service quality to facilitate livelihood activities, particularly in rural areas of the country.

Keywords

Mobile phone use, Livelihood activities, Rural and urban areas, Ghana