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THE MAJOR CONSTRAINTS MILITATING AGAINST APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING SCHEMES IN THE INFORMAL SECTOR OF GHANA: THE CASE OF TAMALE METROPOLIS

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Abstract

This study surveyed the mode of training offered to apprentices; whether it was well structured or not. It further looked at challenges confronting apprentices during training. Tamale Metropolis was the study area with the target population stratified into their trade areas such as mechanics, welders, electricians, etc. A total of 200 apprentices were sampled using the simple random method. The results revealed that Apprentices had no prescribed training period within which the training competencies could be accomplished. In most cases apprentices were not able to meet the commitment fee; as a result the duration of apprenticeship is virtually mysterious. The long duration periods often result in trainee quitting the vocation prematurely, and at times land some of them in matrimonial state while under training. The study also revealed that Master Craftsmen had no structured training scheme to guide them in training their apprentices; no reference materials were used. Apparently, apprenticeship training remains an important, highly valued and a pathway to skills acquisition and employment. Unfortunately, apprenticeship schemes in Ghana are bedeviled with a range of challenges including indefinite training period, absence of reference manuals, lack of funding which normally results in poor completion rates.

Keywords: Apprenticeship training, Training Structure, Informal sector, Constraints, Ghana

INTRODUCTION

The importance of apprenticeship training in the informal sector of the economy of Ghana cannot be over stressed, yet it is not at pace with the dynamism at which apprenticeship training systems are changing. It is common knowledge that many countries have long put in place structures to improve apprenticeship training in the informal sector. (ILO, 2011) indicated that

informal apprenticeship is an important training system in many urban and rural informal economies. It is based on a training agreement between an apprentice and a master Craftsperson. Apprenticeship is the process of learning new and valuable skills from a seasoned professional; it is viewed as a way of bringing theoretical and practical knowledge together (Brockmann et al., 2010). Master craftsperson commits to training the apprentice in all the skills relevant to his or her trade over a period of time, thus between one and four years, while the apprentice commits to contributing productively to the work of the business. Training is integrated into the production process and apprentices learn by working alongside the experienced craftsperson (ILO, 2011). For the proceeds of the informal apprenticeship system to benefit the nation and the individual players, conscious effort must be made by all who holds a stake in order to address the perennial bottlenecks to the growth and development of the apprenticeship system in the country. Onasanya (1998) noted that apprenticeship is the right approach to teaching Skills however, it has its concomitant disadvantages, including lack of structured training. Lerman (2014) indicated that apprenticeship training is usually a profitable investment for firms as well as workers. Very often, firms can recoup all or most of their costs within the apprenticeship period. Onasanya (1998) further outlined that master craftsmen teach their apprentices based on whatever job is available, and so training activities are not planned as required. Informal apprenticeship is an important training system in many urban and rural economies which is based on a training agreement between an apprentice and a master craftsperson. Apprenticeship training is a process by which people become skilled workers, through a combination of formal learning and long-term on-the-job training.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Apprenticeship training is a programme of courses, work-based learning, and productive employment in which workers achieve occupational mastery and industry-recognized credentials (Lerman, 2014). The term apprenticeship is used today only for a very limited range of occupations and are certainly one of the most neglected areas of the training systems (Setiawati, and Riyanto, 2011). Hans (2001) has categorically stated that the need for skills training for the informal sector has hugely increased and that if the informal sector is to continue to absorb more people at a modest but reasonable return on their labour, it is absolutely crucial to increase the level of skills of the informal sector operators. Informal Apprenticeship Training is responsible for some 80-90% of all basic skills training in Ghana, compared to 5-10% from public training institutions and 10-15% from NGO for-profit and nonprofit providers (Palmer, 2009). Apprenticeships provide the technical skills needed for paid employment, it is unclear if apprentices receive the skills they need to be successful at self-employment. This is important

because many former apprentices become unemployed for various reasons (Johnson and Ferej 1997). Palmer (2009) indicated that some countries in Africa have the informal sector comprising a wide range of small enterprises, ranging from marginal petty trading activities, to fairly successful manufacturing and construction businesses. Ghana, Nigeria and Kenya are typical examples. (Lerman, 2014) pointed out that countries with robust apprenticeship systems are showing by example how education and training can lower youth unemployment and enhance the quality of jobs that do not require baccalaureate degrees. For the case of Norway, Askilden and Nilsen (2005) indicated that the number of apprenticeship contracts decreases with employment.

The works of (Aboagye and Samuel, 2014) in the case of Ghana revealed that the largest group of participants (67.8%) had been educated up to the Junior Secondary School level while 21.8% had no formal education or had education only up to Primary School. They further pointed out that only 4.0% had education up to Senior Secondary School level. The remaining 3.5% were Vocational or Technical Training School graduates. This implies that most of the apprentices entered the apprenticeship trade just after their Junior High School education or when they dropout.

In modern economies apprenticeship is normally regulated by law. A standard format relieves firms of the burden of individually negotiating each contract and provides each party with a clear statement of rights and responsibilities with redress for failure to observe the apprenticeship contract (ILO, 2012). The dual-apprenticeship systems are nearly absent in Southern European countries as well as in the UK and Ireland. This account for the fact that many of these countries are grappled with high unemployment rates especially among the youth (European Commission, 2012). The German dual-apprenticeship system consists of corporate organization system, the state, unions and employers jointly deciding on the principles of apprenticeship. The dual system consists of school-based and firm-based training elements, therefore vocationalising the system with accumulation of occupation-specific knowledge and skills (Baldi, G. et al, 2014).

AIG (2013) noted that apprenticeship remains an important, highly valued and unique pathway to skilled employment. However apprenticeship pathways are bedeviled with a range of challenges including poor completion rates, national inconsistency, time-served rather than competency-based approaches to delivery, also there is restricted applicability in the emerging knowledge economy. Employer incentives and apprentice support are needed to increase apprentice recruitment. The employer frequently report high levels of skill shortages for technicians and trades people (AIG, 2013). In spite of apprenticeship role, little attention has been paid to this sector over the years. challenges faced by apprentices were marital problems,

lack of support, absence of training manuals, indefinite or too long a training period, etc. (Anokye and Afrane, 2014). Odora and Naong (2013) indicated that while most students were satisfied with the apprenticeship training they received, there was evidence to suggest that there were many problems in aligning the training with the needs of business and industry. The works of Franz and Zimmermann (2002) revealed that the average retention rate after apprenticeship training in Germany is relatively stable at around 65%. Clark and Fahr(2001) also noted that 30% of apprentices change occupation within one year after the end of apprenticeship training. Skill shortages exist when employers are unable to fill or have difficulty in filling vacancies for an occupation, or if there are specific skills needed in a particular occupation (AIG, 2013)

In developing countries today, majority of new jobs are being created in the so-called informal sector. Therefore concerted action is required to improve the incomes, productivity and working conditions of the very large and growing number of workers involved. Where institutional support exists and access to affordable credit is available, training can make a big difference (ILO'S, 1998-99). The Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) established an Industrial Training Fund (ITF) In recognition of the importance of apprenticeship system of labour supply, which led to the promulgation into law of a National Apprenticeship Scheme in 1982 (Agbo, 1990). The cost of training the informal sector apprentice linking it with the formal sector is quite expensive and therefore required cooperation from all those who have a stake in this effort (Berik et al., 2011). Studies had revealed that apprenticeship programs in the US are sponsored either jointly by unions and employers, or unilaterally by employers. The costs of administration of training are shared by employers and unions, generally through a training trust (ibid). (Bilginsoy, 2007) outlines ways by which apprentice can quit a programme or training with impunity. Apprentices also bear a portion of the training costs by working for training wages,In addition, apprentices may pay for tools, tuition, and books, either out of pocket or through a scholarship loan agreement, and may quit the program without penalty (Berik et al., (2011). This study revealed that most apprentices in the Tamale metropolis do not pay commitment fee on commencement, only a few do, and may be settled on completion. Basically this is due to lack of financial support. The situation is however different in the southern sector as Aboagy and Samuel (2014) put it in their works: As an entry requirement, apprentices are expected to pay a commitment fee to show their readiness to be trained. In addition to the money paid, 80.2% of the apprentices presented tool boxes for the specific trades they were learning whiles 6.9% of the apprentices backed their readiness, willingness and qualification to learn the trade with the endorsement and assurance from their parents to their respective masters. Also a total of 63.9% of the apprentices had a written apprenticeship contract. Lerman (2014) Contend that the contribution of apprentices to production is large enough to offset most costs to firms. More so,

in retaining most apprentices firms benefit substantially from low recruitment and training costs. However, most firms in advanced economies do not offer apprenticeships. Firms perceive weak returns because they fear trained apprentices will be hired away by other firms. Some estimates show firms recover only modest parts of their investment during the training period (lerman, 2014).

Skills Insight (2001) explained skills gap as deficiencies of employees within a firm, Skills shortage is defined as a shortage of suitably skilled people available in the labour market. Bloom et al., (2014) delineate skill gaps to include basic skills (literacy, language, numeracy and computer skills), which provide the foundation for further learning, Intermediate skills (associate professional, apprenticeship, technician, or skilled craft or trade level), Mathematics and other sciences including IT and finally leadership and management skills. There is also evidence of a generic skills gap (including wider personality traits, e.g. motivation, attitude to learning, etc). Employers value these generic employability skills more than specific occupational skills (Junge *et al.,* 1984). Skilled workers for the informal sector of the economy have long been trained either within the informal and formal sector enterprises themselves or in formal vocational training institutions. Some of these training systems link directly with the informal labor force, while others serve as more circuitous routes to informal sector employment and self-employment (McLaughlin, 1989). Three distinct types of “exit” are present within apprenticeship; quitting due to dissatisfaction with the training program or occupation, quitting because sufficient skills have been acquired and additional skills do not justify the costs of additional training, and completion of apprenticeship and receiving journey worker certification (Bilginsoy, 2007). Previous studies clearly indicated that it will be more recommendable to actively involve the private sector in vocational training as many countries had witness success by this training systems, especially in Germany.

Improved technical skills and other skills gap are of prime importance for enhancing the productivity of informal sector activities as well as the quality of the goods and services they produce. This will strengthen the ability of the Informal Sector, giving it a competitive urge in the present situation of liberalisation and globalisation of the economy (Hans, 2001). Ghana is still making efforts to create a symbiosis between the informal sector apprenticeship training and the formal sector, however (Berik et al., 2011) outlined that registered apprenticeship in the United States combines on-the-job training (OJT) and in-class related theoretical instruction (RTI) to provide general skills in an occupation. The apprentice therefore receives certification that recognises him or her nationwide. There is a need to promote and celebrate the excellence of apprenticeships to create positive attitudes in young people and wider community(AIG, 2013). Owing to high unemployment rate among young people in South Africa, there is obviously a

need to focus vocational curricular attention on interfacing academic, apprenticeship and entrepreneurship training in the Further Education and Training (FET) phase, thus enabling young people to acquire the skills and competences needed for self-employment. (Odora and Naong 2013).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted to assess the state of apprenticeship training in Ghana, especially in the informal sector. It looked at the gaps and lapses that militate against the training programmes, and acquisition of skills. Evidently most apprentices on completion of the training programme were not able to establish themselves, irrespective of the fact that apprentices had supposedly acquired knowledge, skills, attitudes and personality traits during the training period, some even quit the apprenticeship training midway. The specific objectives of the study were therefore,

- To unearth the challenges facing apprentices in the informal sector
- To examine structures put in place by Master Craftsmen to ensure effective training of apprentices.
- To analyse the duration of the training session, support services for apprentices
- To find out whether apprentices made use of training/reference materials during training sessions to enhance skills acquisition.

RESEARCH METHODS

The Tamale Metropolis, which was the study area, is situated in the Northern part of Ghana and capital town of Northern Region. The (2010) population and Housing Census showed that the population of the metropolis now stands at 371,351 and a growth rate of 2.9. The population of the female citizens is 1,249,574 and that of males is 1,229,887. (GSS, 2011) The Metropolis is divided into sub-metros such as Tamale North, Tamale central and Tamale South. The Northern Zone constituted about 21 communities; the central zone was made up of 17 communities whilst the southern zone consisted of 16 communities. (TMA, 2003). The southern part of Tamale has the highest concentration of small-scale Manufacturing industries, usually referred to as “industrial Area’’.There is a cluster of manufacturing industries located at this area. The north and the central did record a good deal of small scale Industries especially, in the central part where the population is dense. The accessible population was about 2000. The researcher used the descriptive study to answer the research questions, consequently the case study approach was used in this study.

Population and Sampling

The population was first stratified into various trade areas as Mechanics, welders and fabricators, Electricians/Electronics, Blacksmith, etc. The simple random sampling was used and a simple calculation was put as follows: 1 in 10 with a total population of 2000 apprentices within the metropolis, therefore a sample of 200 was drawn from the three zones. The northern zone, central zone and southern zone represent 20%, 35% and 45% as per their respective proportions. This was done by multiplying the sample figure by their ratios. So the sample size for the north zone was 200 x 20% = 40, the central was 200 x 35% = 70 and that of the south was 200 x 45% = 90. In this method the sampling error is minimized and the sample possesses all the required characteristics of the population. The method of selection has been tabulated below in major trade areas.

Trade Areas

MECHANICS: automobile, motorbike, vulcanizers, auto-body repair workers, refrigerator mechanics

WELDERS/ FABRICATORS: welders, black smith, lathe operators ,foundry workers, sheet metal workers

ELECTRICIANS/ ELECTRONICS: house wiring, motor, vehicles, radio , TV repairers

TAMALE METROPOLIS

Northern zone	Central zone	Southern zone
20/100x200=40	35/100x200=70	45/100x200=90

Mode of survey Administration

The instruments used were predominantly questionnaire and structured interview. The researcher also made use of unstructured interviews and observations. The questionnaires which consisted of both open-ended and closed-ended items were used as interview guide, and consisted of 26 items; labeled from A to Z, including the personal data. The data were analyzed using SPSS; all tables and figures were generated using excel and SPSS. Crosstabs of the various variables were made, comparing two variables to see whether there was significant difference or relationship between them.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data shows that only male participants attended to the questionnaire and interview sessions for the fact that females were not much involved in the manufacturing sector within the Tamale

metropolis (table 1). Two hundred questionnaire were administered but 197 were retrieved, representing a response rate of 98.5%. Level of Education of apprentices together with marital status were included in the nominal data. Cross tabulation was also carried out to measure the relationship or significant difference between certain variables. Clearly, the data indicated that majority of the participants were those with basic education and those without formal education, representing 41.6% and 40.1% respectively.

Table 1. Characteristics of the Apprentices

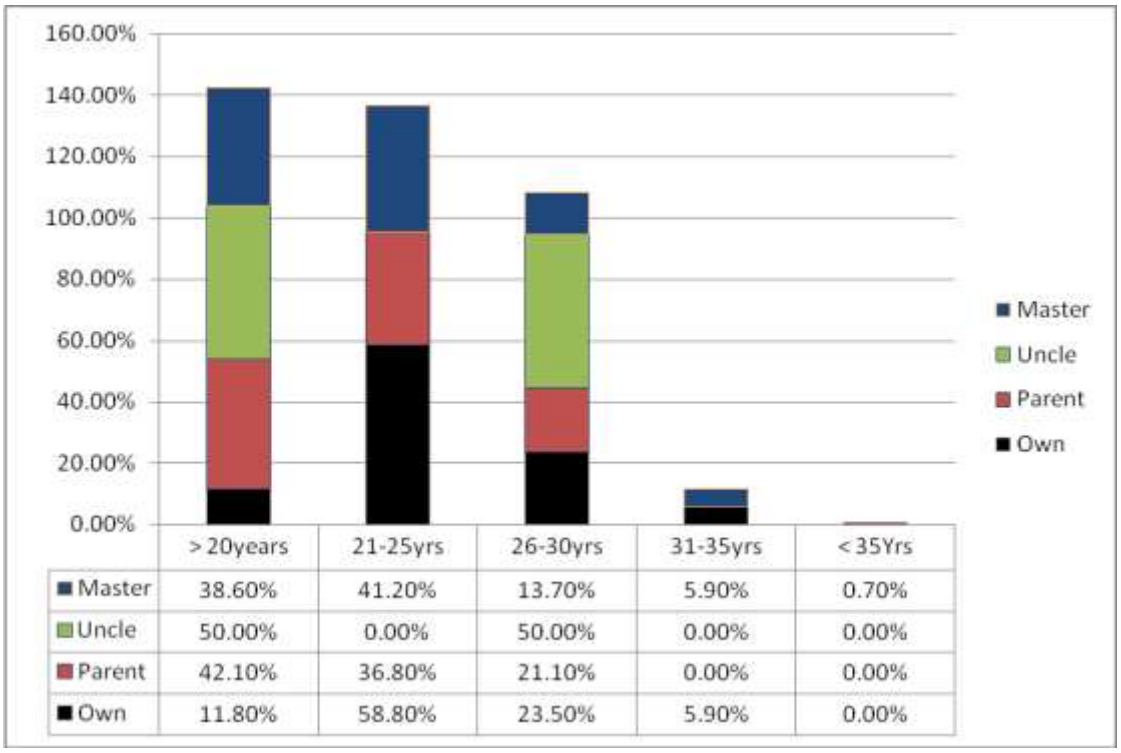
Characteristic	Count	Percent (%)
Gender		
Female	-	-
Male	197	100
Age		
≥ 20	71	36.0
21 – 25	84	42.0
26 – 35	31	15.7
31 – 35	10	5.1
36 and above	1	0.5
Total	**197**	**100**
Level of Education		
Basic	82	41.6
Secondary/technical	28	14.2
Tertiary	1	0.5
Drop out	7	3.6
Nil	79	40.1
Total	**197**	**100**
Marital status		
Married	67	34.0
Single	130	66.0
Divorced	-	-
Widowed	-	-
Total	**197**	**100**

Provision of Pocket Money/ Stipend

Lack of financial support is a major constraint confronting apprentices in the course of training (figure 1). As the result indicated, those aged 20 years and below, 50 out of 153, representing 38.6% agreed that it was the master craftsman who provided pocked money, and those

between 20 – 25, 63(41.2%) out of 153 also agreed that it was the master craftsman who provided pocket money. Those between 26-30 were 21(13.7%) out of 153 accepted the fact that it was the master craftsman who provided them with pocket money, and 9(5.9%) out of 153 of those from 31-35 years indicated that it was the master craftsman who provided them with pocket money. The rest of the options were self providing, attracting 17(8.9%) out of a grand total of 191. Generally it was the master craftsman who provided for the apprentices. The responses attracted a total of 153 out of a grand total of 191 respondents, representing 80.1%.

Figure 1. Age of apprentice and provision of pocket money/ Stipend



	>20years	21-25yrs	26-30yrs	31-35yrs	<35Yrs
Master	38.60%	41.20%	13.70%	5.90%	0.70%
Uncle	50.00%	0.00%	50.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Parent	42.10%	36.80%	21.10%	0.00%	0.00%
Own	11.80%	58.80%	23.50%	5.90%	0.00%

Marital Problems

The results on marital status of apprentices (table 2) had revealed that, those below 20 years, 21(31.3%) out of 67 were already married while on training. The age range of 21-25 years were precisely 14(20.9%) out of 67 who got married, and those between 26-30 years were 22(32.2%) out of 67 who were already married, while those who were 31-35 years were 10 respondents already in the marital status, representing 14.9%. In all about 1/3 of the apprentices were already in the marital status while learning the trade. For those who were still single while learning the trade were 130, representing 2/3 of the total sample.

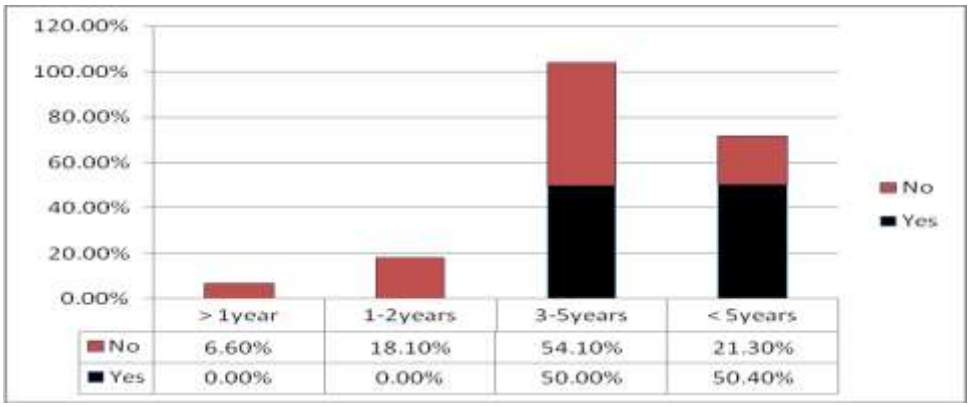
Table 2. Age of apprentice and Marital status (X^2= 50.664; P- value = 0.000)

Age	Married	Single	Total
≥ 20	21	50	71
	31.3%	38.5%	36.0%
21 – 25 year	14	70	84
	20.9%	53.8%	42.6%
26 – 30 years	31	9	31
	32.8%	6.9%	15.7%
31 – 35 years	10	0	10
	14.9%	0.0%	5.1%
35 years and over	0	1	1
	0.0%	0.8%	0.5%
Total	**67(34.0%)**	**130 (66.0%)**	**197(100%)**

Absence of Training Manuals

The study had revealed that trainees did not make any reference to training manuals during training sessions (figure 2). As the results revealed, those less than one (1) year in training admitted the absence of training manuals, making a total of 12(6.6%) out of 183. Those who were 1-2 years under training also responded negatively, and they were 33(18.1%) out of 183. Those between 3-5 years in training were 99 out of 183, representing 54.1% admitting the fact that they did not use training materials, and those over 5 years in training, were 39(21.3%), also responded negatively. These together make a total of 183 out of a grand total of 193, representing 94.8%. Those who refer to training manuals were 10 out of a grand total of 193 respondents, representing 5.2%. It is deduced from the discussion that age in training does not influence the use of manuals.

Figure 2. Level of Education and Reference to Training Manuals



The situation was no different when level of education was considered (table 3). For basic education, 78 out of 184, representing 42.4% did not refer to training manuals, and for the secondary/technical education, 20 out of 184, representing 10.9% admitted that they did not refer to any training manuals. There was no response for the tertiary option. For the drop outs all the 7(3.8%) out of 184 respondents did not refer to any training manuals. For those who had no formal education, 79(42.9%) out of 184 did not use training manuals. Altogether make a total of 184 out of a grand total of 194 respondents, representing 94.8%. The balance being those who had agreed that they used training manuals, and this is10, representing 5.2%. It was quite evident that most of the master craftsmen in their initial training did not use any manuals to enhance skills, and also most of them had no formal education. Therefore they could neither read nor write. More so, master craftsmen did not attend in-service or refresher courses to enhance and update their skills. Therefore the same mode of training was being imparted to the apprentices.

Table 3. Level of Education and training manuals (χ^2 **= 40.505; P-value = 0.000**)

Education Level	**Yes**	**No**	**Total**
Basic	3	78	81
	30.0%	42.4%	41.8%
Secondary/Technical	6	20	26
	60.0%	10.9%	13.4%
Tertiary	1	0	1
	10.0%	0.0%	0.5)
Drop out	0	7	7
	0.0%	3.8 %	3.6%
Nil	0	79	79
	0.0%	42.9 %	40.7%
Total	**10 (5.2%)**	**184 (94.8%)**	**194 (100%)**

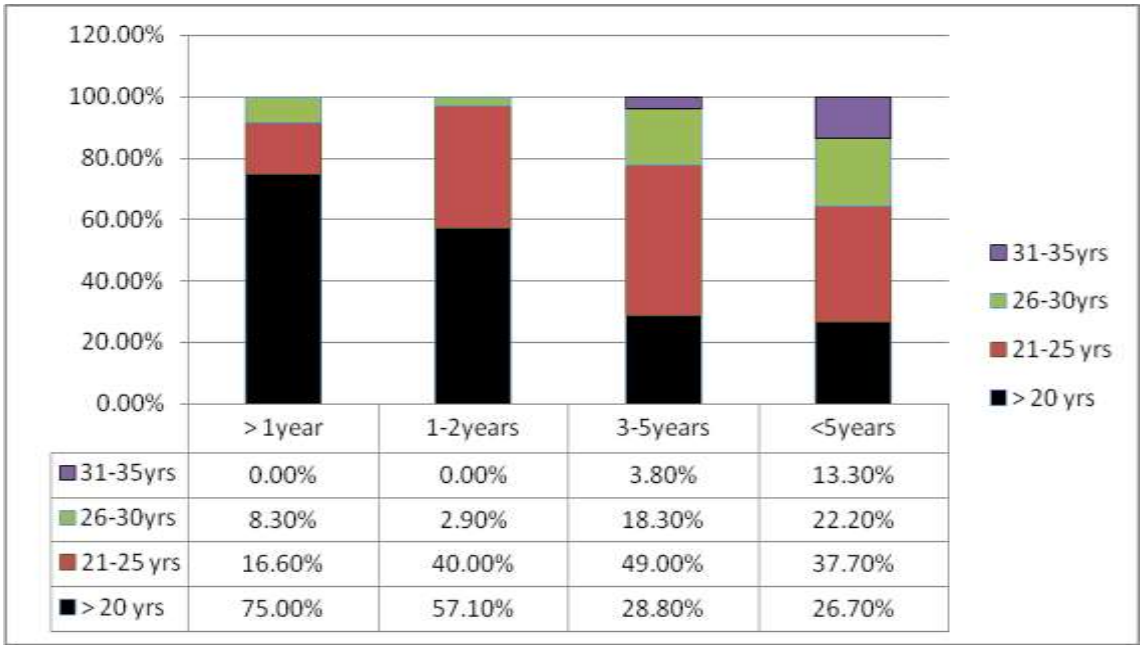
Indefinite Training Period for Apprentices

This study had revealed that there is no specified time frame within which the training programme could be accomplished (figure 3). All those who were over 5 years in apprenticeship and aged 20 years and below, were still under training and this represented 26.7% out of a total of 45 respondents. Those from 21-25 years were 17(37.7%) out of 45 who were still under training for over 5 years. And those who were aged 26 – 30 were 10(22.2%) out of 45, still undergoing training for over 5 years, while 6(13.3%) out of 45 of those between 31 and 35 years

of age were still undergoing training after 5 years. All those over 5 years under training were 45 out of 196 respondents, representing 23.0%.

The range between 3-5 years in apprenticeship was not different. Precisely 30 out of 104, representing 28.8% were still under training for the age range between 20 and below. Also 51(49.0%) out of 104 were still under training for the range 21-25 years of age, and 19 out of 104, representing 18.3% were still under training for the range between 26-30 years, while 4(3.8%) out of 104 were still under training for the age range between 31-35 years. Altogether make a total of 104 out of a grand total of 196, representing 53.1%.

Figure 3. Age of Apprentice and Duration of Training



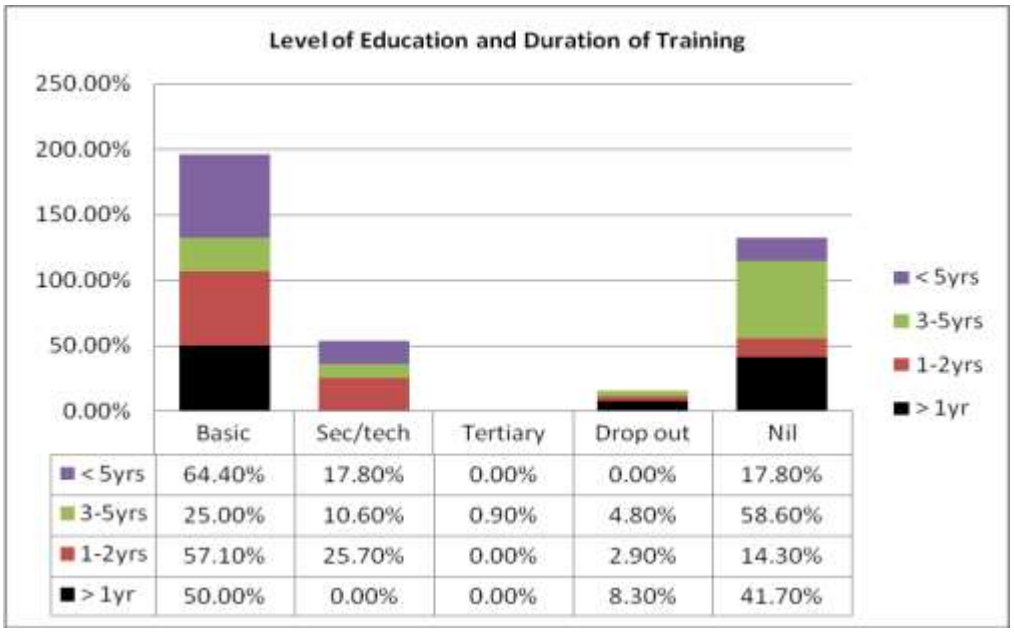
	> 1year	1-2years	3-5years	<5years
31-35yrs	0.00%	0.00%	3.80%	13.30%
26-30yrs	8.30%	2.90%	18.30%	22.20%
21-25 yrs	16.60%	40.00%	49.00%	37.70%
> 20 yrs	75.00%	57.10%	28.80%	26.70%

Level of education was measured against duration of training and the results revealed the following (figure 4). Those with basic education and over 5 years in apprenticeship were 29 out of 45, representing 64.4%, this group was still undergoing indefinite training period. Those with secondary/technical education were 8(17.8%) out of 45 respondents, and were still under training for over 5 years. Nothing was recorded under tertiary and the drop out options. Again, 8 out of 45, representing 17.8% were still under training for over 5 years. Altogether make a total of 45 out of a grand total of 196, representing 23.0%. Considering 3-5 years in apprenticeship, those with basic education were 26 out of 104, represented 25.0% were still under training. Those with sec/tech education who were still under training within 3-5 years apprenticeship were 11(10.6%) out of 104 respondents. Those with tertiary, only one was recorded out of 104, representing 0.9%. The drop outs registered 5(4.8%) out of 104, within 3-5 years duration who

were still under indefinite training period. Those who had no formal education and were still under indefinite training period were 61 out of 104, representing 58.6%. Altogether make a total of 104 out of a grand total of 196, representing 53.1%.

The results indicated that there was no prescribed training period within which the competencies could be imparted to the trainees (figure 4). Some of the apprentices were still under training after 3-5 year period. Likewise, some were over 5 years and were still following the training without knowing exactly when to complete the training programme. This situation compelled some apprentices to abandon the training midway, some even got married. The indefinite training period had also discouraged some of the youth going into the manufacturing sector.

Figure 4. Level of Education and Duration of Training



	Basic	Sec/tech	Tertiary	Drop out	Nil
< 5yrs	64.40%	17.80%	0.00%	0.00%	17.80%
3-5yrs	25.00%	10.60%	0.90%	4.80%	58.60%
1-2yrs	57.10%	25.70%	0.00%	2.90%	14.30%
> 1yr	50.00%	0.00%	0.00%	8.30%	41.70%

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The study had revealed that there was no structured training programme designed by master craftsmen for their apprentices in tamale metropolis, Ghana. In the first year training, 142 representing 72.1% were errand boys, while 45, representing 22.8% were watching / observing when activities were going on. It was obvious that master craftsmen had no demonstration component in their training programmes for apprentices; every bit of activity reflected on-the-job training. Level of education of apprentices was no different since those who were serving as errand boys in the first year were 142(72.1%), and 45 (22.8%) were watching and observing. The relationship between the boss and the apprentice included two forms of transactions;

provision of training services by the master craftsman for the apprentices; the other being the provision of labour services by the apprentice for the master craftsman.

In the second year of training those who watched and observed were 136, representing 72.0% while those who try their hands on smaller tasks were 47, representing 24.9%. With level of education, those who watch/ observe were 136 (72.0%) while those who try their hands on smaller tasks were 47, representing 24.9% respondents. In terms of source of acquisition of skills all the age groups who learn from the master craftsmen were 175, representing 89.3%, only 12 learn from all personnel, representing 6.1%. Likewise, level of education, 175 (89.3%) acquired their skills from the master craftsmen, and only 12 acquired from fellow apprentices, representing 6.1%. Master craftsmen had not prescribed a definite period within which the training competencies could be accomplished. So 45 of the respondents, representing 23.0% were still under training for over 5-year period. And 104 of them, representing 53.0% were still under training between 3 and 5 years.

With the level of education of informal apprentices, the results reveal that most of the apprentices were either basic education products or were lacking formal education, representing 41.6% and 40.1% respectively. Implying those who entered into apprenticeship were predominantly those who terminated their education at the basic level, followed by those who had no formal education at all. It stands to reason that two major factors account for the absence of training or reference materials during training session; the low education level of master craftsmen, representing 66.8% (Munkaila, 2015) as well as low education level of apprentices, and the absence of interfacing the informal sector with formal education as in a dual system. The dual system consists of school-based and firm-based training elements (Baldi, G. et al 2014). In terms of marital status, the study revealed that about 1/3 of the apprentices got married while in training, and thereby shouldering a responsibility which puts extra strain on the little resource they acquired. Those who were still single were 67, representing 34.0% out of 196 respondents. Considering age of apprentice and who provides pocket money, the study revealed that it was the master craftsmen who provides pocket money for apprentices, 153 of them representing 80.1% attested to this fact. And 19 of them representing 9.9% said it was the parent who provides pocket money, while 17 (8.9%) admitted that it was self-provided.

The study had also revealed that apprentices do not use any training manuals, this was confirmed by 183 of them, representing 94.8%. Only 10 agreed that they used training manuals, representing 5.2%. For level of education, 184 (94.8%) said they did not use training manuals, and only 10 (5.2%) agreed they refer to manuals. Precisely speaking, there is no relationship between level of education and use of training manuals neither there is relationship between level of apprenticeship and use of training manuals. There was no prescribed period of training

for apprentices; this means that until all the various competencies associated with the trade had been acquired. So 45 (23.0%) were still under training for over 5-year period. And 104(53.1%) were still under training between 3-5 years period. Generally apprentices work under indefinite period of training, and always express doubt as to when to end the training programme. This situation eventually landed some of the trainees on matrimonial state.

CONCLUSIONS

The study had unearthed the fact that there was no structured training scheme for apprentices who were undergoing training in the informal sector. Some of the apprentices had been with their “masters” for over 5 years and still not had an idea as to when to be passed out by their “masters”. Some were still watching and observing after two years apprenticeship instead of hands on the job. It was quite evident that no training manuals were used for references in order to grasp the full concepts of certain complex situations. It was obvious that majority of these people had no support in terms of who provides for their financial needs. Some of them eventually abandoned the training midway, and some developed lackadaisical attitude to the training activities. It is also worth noting that due to very long durations some of the apprentices became fathers while on the training, hence saddling them with extra Burden in their condition. Generally speaking, it is the master craftsman who provides pocket money for apprentices, and surely this will not be able to meet even half of the financial needs of the apprentice. Most apprentices in the Tamale metropolis do not pay commitment fee on commencement, only a few do, or may be settled on completion. Basically this is due to lack of funding. The situation is however different in the southern sector as Aboagy and Samuel (2014) stressed that apprentices are expected to pay a commitment fee to show their readiness to be trained, they also present toolkit for the specific trades they were learning.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the conclusions reached, the following recommendations are made for master craftsmen, policy makers as well as players in the sector. Master craftsmen should repackage their training in a more organized way for apprentices in terms of what to learn, based on the year group. also there is restricted applicability in the emerging knowledge economy. They need to organise the activities on knowledge based, attitude based and skills based, thus running errand and identification, observation, and hands on the job. Also, use of training manuals and reference materials should be encouraged. This assists in analysing situations that the apprentice is likely to grapple with. It is recommended that the issue of duration of apprenticeship should not be left to chance; it must be within timeframe, usually three years,

reasonable enough to keep them active and enthusiastic until the training period is over. Training should be time bound alongside with spelt out competencies.

LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

The study however did not specifically look at policy frame work governing apprenticeship training in Ghana. Extensive literature together with observations and interaction with apprentices, master craftsmen and other stakeholders revealed that Ghana has not yet developed a robust apprenticeship system. It is therefore recommended that future studies on apprenticeship training scheme be focused on policy framework, since this is likely to ensure a robust and fruitful training system for the benefit of apprentices, master craftsmen and the nation at large.

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