

**OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES OF THE TEXTILES COMPONENT  
OF SKILLS TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT PLACEMENT (STEP)  
PROGRAMME IN ASHANTI REGION – GHANA.**

KNUST

By

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work towards the M.A.(Art Education) and that, to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published by another person nor material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree of the University, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.

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## ABSTRACT

The Qualitative research method with questionnaire, Interview guide and Observation helped to examine the nature and scope of the textiles component of the national Skills Training and Employment Placement Programme in Ashanti Region, and to identify its economic and educational opportunities and challenges significance to Ghana as well as lessons that can inform the National Youth Employment Programme. The programme have been identified and analysed based on a population of 100 Youth who have either benefited or are benefiting from the STEP and ICCES centres in Ashanti Region using the Simple random sampling techniques. The study found that the provision of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Ghana is shared across several government departments. The Ministry of Education is the main provider of craft and technical training which is provided through the Technical Institutes within the Ghana Education Service system while Higher the National Diploma and Degree level provisions are offered at the tertiary level through the Polytechnics and Universities that operate under the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE).

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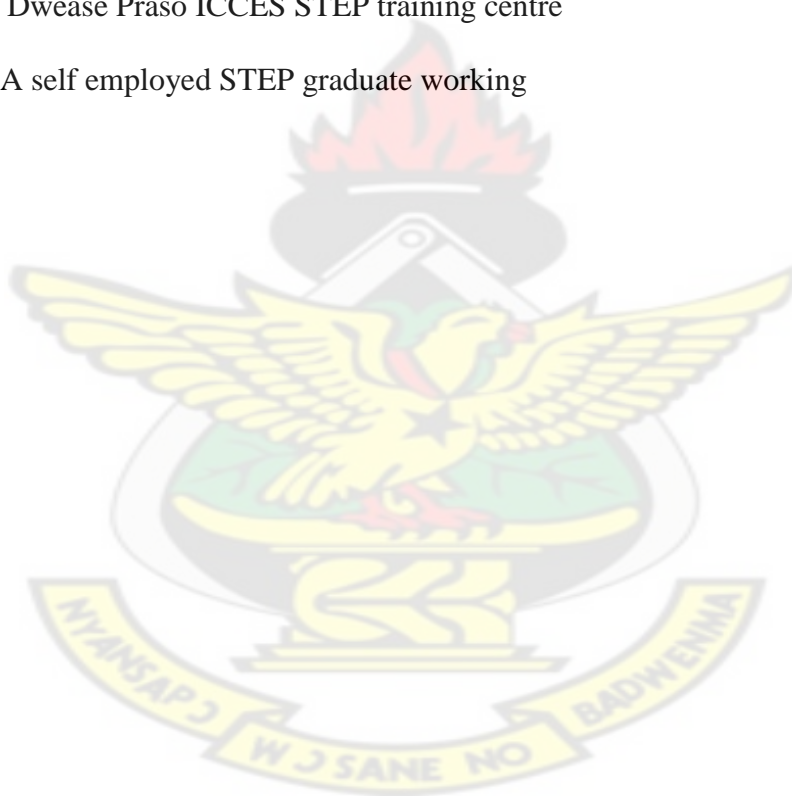
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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **1.0 Introduction**

This chapter captures the following: Background to the study, Statement of the problem, Hypothesis, Objectives, Importance of the study and the Organisation of the chapters.

### **1.1 Background to the study**

Skills Training and Employment Placement (STEP) is a programme which the Ministry of Manpower Development under the Kuffuor administration initiated and operated from 2001. Previous governments of Ghana had periodically reformed the education and training system in the country, emphasising on Technical and Vocational Education with the aim of making our educational system more relevant for the world of work, to boost the informal economy in order to minimize unemployment and poverty. Both private individuals and non-governmental organisations have also been playing complimentary roles in helping to provide skills training to the Ghanaian citizenry especially those in the informal sector. An aspect of the STEP programme which has made significant impact on the local economy is the textiles component of the programme.

### **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Ashanti Region of Ghana is one of the regions which has benefited from the Skills Training and Employment Placement programme especially in the training of youth for the textiles industry and employment placement. Though the Skills Training and Employment Programme has been running for some time now in the Ashanti Region, no significant effort has been made to study and bring into the domain of the general

public, the employment opportunities the programme offers for unemployed Ghanaians. It is also possible that the textiles component of the programme may have implications for Technical and Vocational Education in general. The idea is that little attention has been given to this aspect of skills training in order to bring to bear its educational values for the benefit of students of art education and research.

In spite of the contribution that the textiles component of the Skills Training Programme is making in the creation of jobs and employment placement in the informal economy, not much has been done to address the challenges the programme faces in order for it to be more beneficial to the informal sector of the economy. This study aims to appraise the opportunities and challenges encountered on the STEP Programme and its significance for improving Technical/Vocational education in Ghana.

### **1.3 Hypothesis**

The textiles component of the Skill Training and Employment Programme in Ashanti Region has economic and educational significance for Technical and Vocational Education in Ghana.

### **1.4 Objectives**

1. To examine the nature and scope of the textiles component of the Skill Training and Employment Programme in Ashanti Region.
2. To determine the economic and educational significance of the Skill Training and Employment Programme for Technical and Vocational Education in Ashanti Region.

3. To identify the opportunities and challenges of the programme and its implication for Vocational/Technical education in Ghana.

### 1.5 Delimitation

The study was limited to the 15 skills training centres where the Skills Training Employment Placement programme was organised in Ashanti Region.

### 1.6 Limitation

The researcher had difficulty accessing the relevant literature on the topic and also on the STEP programme in Ghana as much of the information on the programme was unavailable in the required format. The researcher also had a problem with the retrieval of questionnaire that were sent out to some places like the Ministries of Manpower, Youth and Employment since workers were busy and could not locate the first questionnaire given to them.

During the printing of the typed write up, the researcher had a problem with his computer and had some files corrupted hence records of some STEP activities were lost in the process. This delayed the whole research process.

### 1.7 Definition of terms

**Technical Education:** Education relating to technique or proficiency in practical skill.

**Pre-Vocational Skills:** Course of study for acquisition of basic skills in relevant vocations.

**Vocational Education:** Education in the vocations.

<b>Vocational Training:</b>	A form of training relating to a vocation or an occupation.
<b>Technical Training:</b>	A kind of training relating to technique or proficiency in a practical skill.
<b>Informal Apprenticeship:</b>	The position of an apprentice receiving training skill in an informal state. For instance it is a Skill learn unconsciously from our environment.
<b>Non-formal Training:</b>	Is a form of training acquired outside the purely formal setting.
<b>On-the-job Training:</b>	Is a form of training acquired as a result of engaging one in a normal working situation; using tools, materials and equipment that the trainee would use when fully trained.
<b>Trainer:</b>	This is the one who trains the trainee.
<b>Trainee:</b>	The one who receives training or skills from the trainer.

### 1.8 Abbreviations/Acronyms

<b>TVET:</b>	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
<b>UNESCO:</b>	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>ILO:</b>	International Labour Organisation
<b>GNA:</b>	Ghana News Agency
<b>ICCES:</b>	Integrated Community Centre for Employable Skills
<b>UN:</b>	United Nations
<b>SEDCL:</b>	Socio Economic Development Centre Limited
<b>MMYEP:</b>	Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment



<b>ATL:</b>	Akosombo Textiles Company Limited
<b>GTP:</b>	Ghana Textile Printing Company
<b>NCTE:</b>	National Council for Tertiary Education
<b>PSI:</b>	Presidential Special Initiative
<b>GES:</b>	Ghana Education Service
<b>VET:</b>	Vocational Education and Training
<b>CTE:</b>	Career and Technical Education
<b>STEP:</b>	Skills Training and Employment Placement.
<b>SOEs:</b>	State-owned Enterprises
<b>PPPI:</b>	Public-Private-Partnership Initiative
<b>NSS:</b>	National Service Scheme

### **1.9 Importance of the study**

The outcome of the study brings into notice of the Ghanaian citizenry the immense contribution that the Skills Training and Employment Placement Programme is making to the socio-economic growth of Ghana in general, and in the life of Ghanaians living in the Ashanti region in particular. It also creates awareness among students of Technical and Vocational education of the numerous opportunities the STEP programme has in terms of job placement and entrepreneurship.

The study also highlights the challenges facing the textiles component of STEP to guide decision making and policy formulation on the future of the programme and Technical/Vocational education in Ghana.

### **1.10 Arrangement of the rest of the text**

Chapter Two is the review of related literature on technical and vocational education. Chapter Three provides the methodology adopted for the research. Chapter Four captures the discussion, analysis and interpretation of the main findings while Chapter Five deals with summary, conclusion and recommendations.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

Literature on Technical/Vocational education and the Skills Training and Employment Placement Programme (STEP) in Ghana is generally scanty. In particular, there is paucity of relevant literature on Ghana's experience with youth employment to enable the research to satisfy the objectives identified for the thesis. The topics outlined in this chapter focus on education, school education, technical/vocational education, skills training and the STEP in Ghana.

#### **2.1 Education**

According to Farrant (1996, p.18), two ideas are implicit in the word education. One is that of "leading out into new knowledge and experience" and the other is that of "feeding and thereby growing and developing". Both ideas point to the fact that education is an essential process in human development. Annoh (1989:2) also defines education as "the process by which behaviour is changed and ideally improved through experience. Also, it is the process of modifying individuals and their physical, social, mental and emotional behaviour in specified desirable directions."

The meaning of education is given by Kemevor (2004:124) as the means by which men acquire the civilisation of the past, use them in the civilisation of the present and make the civilisation of the future." He explains education as a process of transmitting, preserving, developing and advancing culture which embraces all that contributes to the survival of man, such as art, craft, drama, dress, education, literature, music, politics, religion and technology.

Farrant (1996) states that education describes the total process of human learning by which knowledge is imparted, faculties trained and skills developed. Education is also a universal practice engaged in by societies at all stages of development. Schooling is only one form in which education is provided. Furthermore, Farrant recognizes three forms of education - formal, informal and non-formal. However, these form a continuum, each merging into the next, with no clear line of distinction between them.

### 2.1.1 Formal education

Annoh (1989) states that Formal or School Education takes place in schools and colleges where teaching and learning goes through planned and systematic instructions, teaching methods, specified rules and regulations, prescribed standard of qualified staff, and it lays emphasis on literacy, numeracy, evaluation procedures, among others. This is explained by Farrant as learning that is carried out in specially built institutions such as schools and colleges, where what is taught is carefully structured by means of syllabuses and time-tables and the teaching provided is carefully supervised by an external administrative body. Moreover, the achievements of those who learn in formal education are often recognised by the award of certificates.

The purpose of school education therefore is to help students to acquire certain attitudes, skills and knowledge which will enable them to live functionally with others, to understand their environment and solve problems, earn their living and contribute towards the development of the society. Emphasis is therefore placed on General Education, including the study of Business, Vocational/Technical skills, and Liberal Arts.

Business education in particular, exposes students to the economic and business world, office and business technology, and the world of work in general. It is associated with such subjects as accounting, costing, management, and business mathematics and office practice which provides the knowledge and skills needed for entrepreneurship and business practice.

### **2.1.2 Non-formal education**

Farrant (1996) explains that this form of education is any organised learning activity outside the structure of the formal education system that is consciously aimed at meeting specific learning needs of particular groups of children, youths or adults in the community. Non-formal education includes various kinds of educational activity such as agricultural extension, skill training, health and family planning, educational work amongst youth and women, and functional literacy. What is learned is structured, but not so obviously as in the case of formal education and there is more flexibility as to the places and methods of learning.

According to Bishop (1986:99), non-formal education is organised education outside the formal educational system. It takes many forms: adult education, continuing education, on-the-job training, accelerated training, farmer or work training, functional literacy, extension services and second-chance schools. Non-Formal education in all forms is targeted at increasing opportunities for the labour force to gain skills that can be used to increase their productivity.

### 2.1.3 Informal Education

Farrant (1996) indicates that in informal education, there is no attempt at structuring it for much of the learning that goes on is almost unconscious, as with those things a child learns from his family, friends, experience and environment. It is more haphazard than the other forms of learning and not associated with the award of certificates but its effects tend to be more permanent. This is because unlike formal and non-formal education which are confined to learning experiences that are planned in specific contexts for a particular time, informal education pursues its own course at its own pace, by its own means throughout each person's life.

The informal system is the indigenous or traditional education which has no planned and systematic curriculum programmes. It is directed towards preparing the individual to be able to make proper personal and social adjustment to his or her immediate environment – home and society. The primary objective of traditional education is the transmission of cultural heritage, the provision of Vocational and Technical training to help the individual to earn a living.

It can be realised from the above that education in all forms has the task to provide personal development (including intellectual and spiritual growth) for the individual, vocational preparation in terms of necessary practical skills and character qualities; and social training in which young people are initiated into society at local and national levels.



## 2.2 Education as Training

Training is an aspect of education. Curzon (1996) explains that the division of teaching from training relates to the growth of socio-economic ideas which seek to position manual workers in a different educational category from those who work largely by exercising their intellectual skills. According to Curzon, training becomes involved with the “how” whilst teaching becomes the “why” of education. He further explains that the “how” concerns the acquisition of appropriate patterns of habits in limited situations while the “why” relates to development of the whole person. Curzon sees training as being largely a matter of “knowing how” rather than “knowing that” and of knack rather than of understanding.

Furthermore, Curzon (1996) declares that training lacks the wider cognitive implication of education. In this wise, teaching and training are perceived as two sides of the same coin (Farant, 1996) since both work towards a common goal such as providing understanding that can result in human growth; and both require a planned approach to the problems of the learner. In effect, Curzon says that training is an aspect of education that provides skills but the level of skills that is provided by education as a whole transcends that provided by training.

On access to formal training, Overwien (1997) suggests offering it at the workplace through mobile units or trucks equipped with complete workshops that regularly visit workplaces and provide instructions on problems at hand. Alternatively, an apprentice may also be released for a day once a week or for longer periods, from their on-the-job training to attend classes. Close collaboration with a training centre would be

essential for success in their arrangements. In order to acquire a broader array of skills, apprentices could sometimes “swap” roles within a pool of small enterprises.

The views of Overwien are reasonable and pertinent to this thesis as he not only encourages experts to visit workplaces to provide formal workshop training but also recommends that learners be released to attend classes to enhance their theoretical knowledge as well.

In relation to this goal, Singh (2000) outlines Non-formal training programmes that target the informal sector of a nation’s economy as including the following:

- Vocational training for those who are already working, in the framework of a trade boosting programme.
- Training for young people to facilitate access to formal vocational training. Improving the training abilities of entrepreneurs as masters.
- Training measures within community development schemes (Counselling, Women’s groups, Youth activities, etc.).

### **2.3 The Informal Training System in Ghana**

The Statesman (April 30, 2007) traces the origin of the informal sector in Ghana's economy to the very beginnings of colonial capitalism in the then Gold Coast. According to the paper, a dualistic economy with two distinct sub-economies emerged alongside each other in the colonial economy which included primary commodity production for export, investments in mining, transportation and related services, infrastructure and public works, and social development. This continued after independence to the time of Ghana’s adoption of the Structural Adjustment



Programme in the early 1980s and 1990s, with its attendant decline in the formal sector employment and expansion of the informal sector during the same period. According to the Statesman, the informal sector of the Ghanaian economy saw the predominant activities of food processing, textile and garments manufacturing, wood processing and metal works.

The paper says that women have dominated food processing while men constitute a clear majority in metal works and wood processing. Apprenticeship also constitutes the most common form of skill acquisition and employment in the urban informal manufacturing sub-sectors. However, labour standards in the informal sector do not generally conform to those that apply in the formal sector in the sense that workers in the informal sector lack social security, economic support and legal protection, whether rural or urban. The statesman (2007) concludes that the economic needs of the informal sector centres on training and education for skills development, basic tools, business premises, financial credit, and marketing opportunities.

The points raised in the statement above are relevant to the study because they explain the circumstances leading to the development and growth of the informal sector. The paper also mentions textiles and garment activities of the informal sector which contributed to sustaining the structural adjustment programme in Ghana. These also relate to the issues of interest to this study.

#### **2.4 Training for the Informal sector**

Singh (1998) points out that training for the informal sector should depart from the conventional formal training design in which training is planned and developed

externally and then transmitted to the participants. It should rather stem from the local strengths and long-established means of skills transmission. The transmission and acquisition of skills is often subject to the socio-cultural mechanism in the workplace, for instance between master and apprentices, and therefore outside interventions must be negotiated within the context.

In commenting about relevance of skills training programmes and the effective management of enterprises, Overwien (1997) says that apprenticeship can be extended by including a training component of specific training such as technical skills that could be provided at the work place or in a supporting centre. He opines further that, technical learning on the job and theoretical learning could be combined. Furthermore, Overwien argues that training should not be provided in isolation from the general socio-economic conditions of the region in question in order to ensure the relevance of skills learned.

It is important that the content of learning should have a strong practical and productive component, bridging theoretical and practical knowledge and allowing the participants not only to earn some money while completing their training but also to apply what they have learnt immediately. The training should combine technical and business management skills. This view is shared by this researcher in the sense that though school education ought to emphasise vocational and technical education it might as well fulfil the need to acquire managerial skills in order to sustain business growth.

On the same issue, the International Labour Organisation (1995: 2) found that the composition of the labour force in the informal sector are mainly urban laid-off employees and the unemployed, school dropouts, some surplus workers in partially suspended or under-running enterprises, the retired, rural migrant workers, and those who work individually or with partners on non-agricultural production in rural areas. In China for example, the ILO (p:9) points out that during the execution of its re-employment training programme, the nation set a 1-3-1 goal in which each laid-off employee in an enterprise re-employment centre was entitled to one occupational guidance interview free of charge, three briefings of employment information, and one training opportunity free or partially free of charge.

The ILO states that vocational training centres, technical training schools under labour and social security departments, and other training institutions, including those run by NGOs, the trade unions, the women's federations, and youth leagues, were the major institutions which organised these re-employment training workshops. This could be emulated by Ghana.

## **2.5 Informal Apprenticeship**

Overwien (1997) is of the view that in informal apprenticeship, the learning and the skills developed are very specific to the job, context and person in question and do not stem from a standardized curriculum like in the formal education. If the economic interest prevails, little is learnt. In turn, if the learning interest dominates, the master/entrepreneur is losing too much of her/his productive time. In addition to learning technical skills, learning related to socialization of the apprentices is a significant part of apprenticeship to acquire competence through informal apprenticeship than it would be possible through more formal educational schemes.

House and Paranathan (1994) also point out that informal apprenticeship can, in the ideal case, allow for flexible and dynamic skills transmission that is self-regulating and costs the government virtually nothing. Apprenticeship does not require much initial skills or experience from the apprentice, but willingness to undertake the training and an agreement with a willing master, who often is a relative.

The points raised by Overwien and House and Paranathan are pertinent to the study. Overwien's point on how apprenticeship could be adversely affected when the interest of the master sways extremely to financial gains rather than helping the learner to gain the needed skills is critical to the study which focuses on the benefits apprentices could also derive from such informal training to ensure sustainable livelihood for the youth.

On maintaining a link between the formal and informal system of training, Overwien (1997) recommends involving small enterprise owners in the formal training processes. This, he states, would help in designing a curriculum that links theory and practice and that is relevant in the context of the local labour market situation. This however, requires that the formal institutions are given more autonomy to deliver training that is responsive to local needs. This recommendation makes sense and relates to this study's objectives.

With regards to the training system for the informal sector in Ghana and its implications for employment opportunities, the Ghana News Agency (2006:4) observes that "Ghanaian governments have periodically reformed the education and training system in the country with the principal objective of making it more relevant for the world of work. There have also been several government-led vocational and

technical skills programmes: the three-year National Vocational Training Institutes (NVTIs), the Technical Institutes, the three-year Integrated Community Centres for Employable Skills (ICCES), and the intensive short duration Skills Training and Employment Placement (STEP) and donor-funded projects that seek to facilitate the transition from school to gainful work as well as to address the problem of under or unemployment in Ghana, particularly in the informal economy”.

This paper cites these as initiatives towards the provision of skills training, highlighting the public-private-partnership initiative (PPPI) to construct a Ghana Industrial Skills Development Centre (HISDC) in Tema in 2006, and the intention to move the vocational orientation out of the Junior High Schools into the Senior High Schools in 2007. Writing on the topic “Government Urged to Focus on Technical Education”, the Chronicle (November, 2008:4) cites the Director for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) of the Ghana Education Service (GES) as having stressed on the importance for leaders of the African continent to focus their educational priorities on TVET.

Quoting from the 2002 United Nations (UN) Bonn Declaration of International Experts on TVET, the Chronicle report is considered the key to effective development strategies, technical and vocational education must be employed as the master key that can alleviate poverty, promote peace, conserve the environment, improve the quality of life, and help achieve sustainable development. The paper explains that even though TVET is expensive to run unlike general grammar education, it is paramount for Ghanaians to take advantage of it to empower their livelihood and promote the economic development of the country.

This, according to the paper, emphasises the need for African leaders to give attention and resources to TVET in order to provide increased access to training the critical population of the youth, who have graduated from either Junior or Senior High School, and are left to fend for themselves. Further, the Chronicle (2008) article notes that technical education helps to teach and impart knowledge of a particular technique, such as building technology, machines and electrical technology, and argues that because Ghanaians do not recognise the importance of technical education, they express the misconception that technical schools are for school dropouts.

The concerns raised are in line with the UNESCO's argument that countries must give attention to Technical and Vocational Education, which is also the focus of this study. In a related publication on "Give Equal Attention to Vocational and Technical Education", Asamoah Duodu (2008) underscores the need for Vocational and Technical Training Institutions to be given equal attention to boost the interest of students. He notes that much more emphasis has been placed on university education which seems to project the view that "our system basically aims at seeing only those who end at the universities as worthy of being adequately rewarded." To reverse this trend, Asamoah Duodu opines that attention must be given to vocational and technical training institutions to enable the sector to contribute meaningfully towards national human resource development.

The author however, regrets that the negative perception about vocational and technical institution has led to more people entering the polytechnics, nurses and teacher training colleges, and the universities with fake WAEC results in an attempt to



get the respect and admiration of their peers and society. Thus, this mindset and stigma on TVET is experienced in the Secondary and Technical schools where science students are considered “clever” while those doing vocational subjects are considered not clever enough. Hammering on the equal importance of every field of study, Asamoah Duodu urges the public to discard the notion that only school drop-outs acquire vocational and technical training. To encourage the youth to be comfortable acquiring other working skills, he called for a change in the salary structure to bridge the gap between university graduates and non university skilled workers. This call for adjusting the salaries of skilled workers to the level of professionals in other fields is reasonable.

The Daily Graphic (June 2008) also cites the Director-General of the Ghana Education Service (GES) as stressing once again on the need for Ghanaians to discard the wrong perception of people about Vocational and Technical education students. The paper also quotes the Director- General of the Ghana Education Service (GES) to have added that “Technical and Vocational skills education play a very important role in our everyday lives, without which life would be very difficult as daily activities revolve around them” (Graphic, June 2008). The call for Ghanaians to discard negative perceptions about technical and vocational education is plausible and pertinent to this study.

Touching on the usefulness of Technical and Vocational Education to all categories of learners on January 2009, Mr Kojo Mintah, the National Director of SOS Children's Villages in Ghana at the 20th anniversary and 15th graduation of the SOS Hermann Gmeiner Vocational Training Centre in Tema asserts that in spite of the numerous benefits that vocational training brings to the nation, Ghana has not taken this area of

education very serious, accounting for most Ghanaians considering it as a preserve for the unintelligent. Speaking on the theme “The role of vocational and technical education in Ghana's new reform”, the speaker said the subject for the celebration recognises the necessity for a reform in vocational training in Ghana to make it more relevant to the socio-economic circumstances of the country.

Furthermore, the Director expressed optimism that the new educational reform would change the negative perception of vocational and technical training as well as positioning the training centres as the human resources development institutions needed for the survival of the country. Also, he called on parents to create the enabling environment for their children to learn and develop through the provision of basic materials needed for practical training. The issues raised by both Mintah and Asamoah Doudu support the Ministry of Education’s reform document on Technical and Vocational Training. The researcher supports Mintah’s argument that the SOS Villages should be given due attention, perhaps, skills training in the production of textile products.

On training in the informal sector, the Ghana News Agency (July 28, 2008) opines that while both formal and non formal training typically imply the involvement of training experts to design training, set training goals, and decide on training methods, informal training is characterized by its lack of structure, the absence of underlined curriculum and the fact that no particular time is set aside for learning. The GNA points out the environment under which Technical and Vocational training in the informal sector could take place. However, the GNA does not explain to us what “structure” as used in the first paragraph refers to. In its document on training, the International Labour Office (1995, p.11) explains that the major distinction of



business start-up training from other forms of training is that its ultimate aim is to assist its participants start their own businesses, or to be self-employed. Thus, the participants will be exposed to every detail of the processes of business start up. While they are able to find themselves jobs, they can create jobs for other people too.

The International Labour Organisation (pp. 8-10) argues against training institutions' lack of focus in providing start up training for people in the informal sector. It declares that as the formal training institutes conduct diploma and certificate education, their training activities are centred on the requirements of the formal sector (in fact there is also deviation of focus in these training institutes). They usually enrol full-time students and trainees. It indicates that training in the informal sector is often "freewheeling" and often, one sees apprenticeship training and private vocational training centres as the major instruments of skills training in the informal sector. It is known that only a fraction of the number of workers in the informal sector goes through training in formal training institutes. The ILO is of the view that business start-up training has a direct effect on promoting employment in the informal sector, and enhancing the competence of workers in the informal sector.

At present, there are many laid-off employees starting up their own small businesses but the survival rate of these businesses is quite low. The problem is that a substantial proportion of informal businesses started by laid-off employees could not last for even three months mainly because these business owners did not have business skills and managerial capacity among other factors. Hence the start-up training programme has a promising future in that it will help potential business starters upgrade their business skills.

The ILO (p: 11) identifies the relevant courses necessary for such training courses as including basic economics, laws and regulations, enterprise registration and industrial and commercial administration formalities, enterprise management, financial management, marketing. The ILO recommends that these courses should also cover modules of production, marketing, management, operation, finance, loan application, taxation. In addition, there are also courses on doing market surveys, the preparation of business start-up plans and analysis. These courses are what trainees need to make their businesses survive. Training in the vocations is therefore critical to the survival of young people in formal educational programmes.

According to Wikipedia the Encyclopaedia (2009) Vocational education, also known as Vocational Education and Training (VET), and Career and Technical Education (CTE), is a means that prepares learners for jobs that are based in manual or practical activities which are traditionally non-academic and totally related to a specific trade, occupation or vocation. It also states that technical/vocational education is sometimes referred to as technical education, as the learner directly develops expertise in a particular group of techniques or technology. According to the Wikipedia, vocation and career are used interchangeably. Vocational education might be classified as teaching procedural knowledge in contrast with declarative knowledge, which might concentrate on theory and abstract conceptual knowledge, as is a characteristic of tertiary education.

Vocational education can be at the secondary or post-secondary level and can interact with the apprenticeship system. Increasingly, vocational education can be recognised in terms of recognition of prior learning and partial academic credit towards tertiary

education (e.g., at a university) as credit; however, it is rarely considered in its own form to fall under the traditional definition of a higher education. Reference is often made to Technical and Vocational education when discussing skills' training in general and training in textiles in particular.

The Ghana Ministry of Education's Policy and Strategic Plans for the Education Sector (2003) highlights Technical education, Vocational education and Vocational training. In its explanation of the three forms of education, it refers to Technical education as education and training aimed at preparing individuals for middle level positions as technicians, technologists and middle managers; and Vocational education as the preparation of skilled personnel for positions below technician level, with emphasis on skill acquisition. On the other hand, it defines Vocational training as one that aims at developing particular skills for employment in a particular occupation, involving little or no general education. In the context of this study, this information explains the different categories of training involved in Technical and Vocational education.

## **2.6 Technical/Vocational Education in Ghana**

Vocational/Technical education is presumed to be practical and technical which prepares learners to develop creative and manipulative skills needed to generate technology innovations. Vocational and Technical education is associated with subjects such as fashion, catering, leather works, textiles, visual arts, basketry, jewellery, science, woodwork, metal work, building and construction and electrical. According to Annoh (1989), Vocational/Technical education has the advantage of producing self-employable persons, reducing rural-urban migration, being more

practical oriented in approach, helps to produce needed labour force for industrial and technological development, and it leads to productivity and national development.

The New Encyclopaedia Britannica (2001) also says that vocational education is instruction intended to equip individuals for industrial or commercial occupation. It may formally be obtained either in Trade Schools, Technical/ High Schools, or on the job (p.414). It explains further that vocational education in schools is a relatively modern development and that until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, such education, except for the professions, was provided only by apprenticeship. This was partly as a result of the low social status accompanying such instruction as opposed to the classical curriculum which was considered “necessary for a gentleman” (p.441). The 19<sup>th</sup> century growth in industrialization also led to the introduction of vocational education in the elementary and secondary schools in most European countries, particularly Germany. Vocational education in the Visual Arts is a viable avenue for providing the skills needed to create youth employment in particular.

## **2.7 Indigenous Art Education in Ghana**

Edusei (1991:233) states that indigenous Art education is undertaken to transmit to the youth the artistic heritage accumulated over the years which form the basis for the production of the various artefacts. The transmission of this artistic knowledge is necessary for the perpetuation, and development of our Cultural heritage which relate to the Visual Arts. The training offers the youth avenue for vocational skills acquisition which makes them professionals in their various fields of specialisation such as carving, gold and silver smithing, blacksmithing, textiles production, leatherworks, bead making, basketry and pottery.

In terms of formal Art education, Edusei also explains that the scope of school visual art education covers drawing and painting, sculpture, pottery, textiles, graphic design, metals, basketry, calabash designing, embroidery, collage work and mosaic making. Furthermore, the introduction of the Junior Secondary school system where vocational skills form an important element in the programme at this level of Ghanaian education has opened the way for a number of Art activities to be taught. These include basketry, pottery, metal works, leather works, picture making, sculpture, textiles and bead making. These areas of study are continued in the Senior Secondary School programme.

At the University level, there are avenues for these Visual Art subject areas to be studied to the professional level. These include the history, philosophy, psychology and sociology of Art, together with the study of the methods and materials of production of the various branches of the Visual Art. However, Edusei (1991:245) raises the concern that “Sight must not be lost on the vocational nature of indigenous Visual Art education which is a source of acquisition of productive skills that make the learners employable and useful members of the society.” Instead of relating studies to the indigenous Visual Art forms with the view to influencing them positively in the improvement of the technologies they employ, Visual Arts education at the tertiary level has largely remained foreign and European in content and outlook.”

Edusei cites the example of the Textiles section of the College of Art at the University of Science and Technology, in Kumasi, which does not teach indigenous textiles weaving, dyeing and printing processes even though the indigenous textiles producing



centres are within 20 kilometres of the College. Instead, students study textiles as obtains in the big industrial centres yet most of the textiles graduates are not finding vacancies to fill in these textiles industries, and they cannot set up their own small scale indigenous textiles sheds because they have learnt nothing about them. He recommends arranging for textiles students of the College to acquire the skills of indigenous weaving, dyeing and the “Adinkra” pattern printing processes from local craftsmen. This will expand the limited job opportunities open to graduates in the University.

It is seen from the literature that there is an urgent need to re-organise courses in the tertiary level in line with indigenous arts practice that takes place in the local communities, to ensure a healthy interaction with indigenous Visual Arts education, for the mutual benefit of both systems. This is what this study seeks to understand as a factor in Technical/Vocational education in Ghana.

Commenting on Art Education in relation to Technical and Vocational Education in Ghana, UNESCO (2001) sees Visual Art as an integral part of the school curriculum from pre-primary through to pre-tertiary level for many years. UNESCO points out that before the major policy change and education reforms in Ghana in 1987, Visual Art was perceived as Art and Craft with the two dimensional works being classified as Art while the three dimensional works are said to be the Crafts. Art and Craft was also limited to drawing and painting, dyed and printed textiles and gourd work.

## **2.8 Educational Reform for Vocational Education in Ghana**

In the 1987 Educational reform programme, UNESCO (2001) reports that Visual Arts was introduced under the Vocational Education programme and since then, it has been given more attention than before. One reason is that Visual Arts is perceived as an important subject through which creativity can be fostered. The idea is that Ghana needs creative citizens to solve national problems. This is important for the country to rapidly open up opportunities for work. It has become equally important for individuals to learn trades and vocations so that they can seek employment as trained persons, or can otherwise set up their own businesses, earn an income, employ other persons and pay them wages and salaries.

It is the emphasis on the "spirit of enterprise" and "acquisition of vocational skills" in the educational reforms as measures for providing trained human resource for socio-economic development that underscores the importance of the "Pre-Vocational Skills" programme at the JHS level. It is envisaged that the subject will, among other things, provide pupils the opportunity to acquire skills that will serve as a foundation for advanced training in apprenticeship and in technical/ vocational institutes, and that will also serve as foundations for making appropriate choices of programme in senior high schools. The researcher shares the views of UNESCO and the argument that the Ghana Ministry of Education should promote Visual Art Education through Technical and Vocational training to foster economic success of the country. This is pertinent to this study and relates directly to the second objective set for the study.

## **2.9 Formal Vocational/Technical Education in Ghana**

Formal Vocational/Technical training in Ghana began with establishment of technical institutes that offered craft courses. In 1960, following the industrial development policy and rapid technological progress in a broad range of areas, technical education became a necessity for the country. This led to the establishment of Polytechnics and running of University courses directed towards developing the manpower supply needs of Ghana. In recognition of the gap a number of the technical institutes were established in Accra, Kumasi and Takoradi to train lower and middle-level skilled manpower.

## **2.10 The Trade schools**

In 1529, the Portuguese traders set up a school in the Elmina castle where real attempt was made to help their children and some African boys to learn how to read, write and work arithmetic in Portuguese (Annoh, 1989). The Dutch after driving out the Portuguese from the castle also opened a school there in 1644. They trained some people and even sent some of their children to Holland for further studies. One of them was Jacobus Capitein. In 1722, the Danes established a school in the Christiansborg castle in Accra. The British also set up a school at Cape Coast in 1751 after settling there. This school was later called the ‘Colonial school’ and was known to have produced the first generation of English educated Africans.

McWilliam and Kwamena-Poh (1975) states that in Guggisberg’s period as governor of the Gold Coast, technical education at a lower level was greatly expanded by opening four government Trade Schools in 1922 at Yendi, Mampong, Kibi and Asuansi. The Yendi School was later moved to Tamale. The political administration



opened additional schools at Gambaga, Wa, Lawra and Salaga. In 1925, governor Guggisberg personally inspected the schools in the new Northern Territories of Ghana and was not happy with his observation. This made him appoint the Rev. A. H. Candler in 1926 as the head of the new Northern Territories Department of Education. According to McWilliam and Kwamena-Poh, he was made directly responsible to the governor and not to the Director of Education. He was assisted periodically by the Achimota staff including Fraiser himself. This paved way for Northern teachers to be trained at Achimota until a training college could be built at Tamale.

The rationale for the early establishment of trade schools includes the provision of education for the children of European merchants born with African women in slavery. This provision of education became necessary to the Europeans because they were morally obliged to educate the mulatto children (Edusei, 1991:45). Another reason as stated by Edusei was economic. He explains that the merchants found it expedient to train clerks and interpreters to assist them in their trading activities. This, the author believes, was where the name 'Trade School' culled from. McWilliam and Kwamena-Poh also have it that the schools were established to provide a means through which the missionaries could preach the gospel in order to spread the Christian faith. Their motive for opening schools was not to spread literacy or train their pupils to earn a living. McWilliam and Kwamena-Poh state further that Christianity and Schools came second to Commerce and exploitation, if the former were not neglected altogether. This rationale for establishing schools especially technical educational school, changed gradually as governments got involved in the control of educational system in Ghana.

The Trade Schools were organised within the walls of the various forts and castles and collectively they had certain characteristics: Few people were enrolled since most of the schools were established mainly for the mulatto children. In Cape Coast school which became the colonial school, enrolment at one time rose to two hundred more than the normal fifteen due to the fact that some children of some wealthy African traders were admitted (Edusei, 1991). Trade schools were initially opened for only boys. It was only in the Christiansborg School that girls were admitted. Chaplains of the various forts and castles were teachers. Funding for the schools was also from the merchants. Some governors however, began to take interest in the schools lately and hence supported the schools.

According to McWilliam and Kwamena-Poh (1975), Governor Major de Richelieu of the Christiansborg Castle for instance, gave financial support to the schools and even went further to participate in the teaching activity. The determination of Governor Major de Richelieu to permanently establish Christianity and Education in the country resulted to the bringing of the Basel missionaries into the educational sector of the country. This further resulted in the massive contribution of the missionaries towards educational growth of Ghana. According to Edusei (1991: 47), these interests of governments also enabled two young Asante princes Owusu Kwantabisa and Owusu Ansah being sent to England for further studies after their five years initial education at the Cape Coast Castle.

McWilliam and Kwamena-Poh declare that the missions' efforts in technical education were also for many years unique in Ghana. Industrial establishment opened in the Christiansborg, according to the authors, gave courses for joinery,

wheelwrights, carpenters, lock-smith, blacksmiths, shoemakers and book-binders. This did not only become self-supporting but by their steady output of craftsmanship caused a general improvement in standards of living and particularly in house building. This was totally lacking in the early trade schools established in the walls of castles and forts.

In 1909, the Accra Government Technical School was opened. The first of its kind, McWilliam and Kwamena-Poh (1975) states that it was later moved to Takoradi where new buildings were put up just before the Second World War and later became the country's first secondary/technical school. In that same year, the authors indicate that the then government entered into the field of teacher training as a result of recommendations made by a committee that was set up (p.50). Due to war, another committee set up in the period of 1937 to 1941 could not make any concrete recommendations in the area of developing technical education (McWilliam and Kwamena-Poh, 1991:73). These governments participated in education through laws or enactments which gave legal backing to their educational proposal, starting with the education ordinance of 1852.

#### **2.10.1 Historical Background of Polytechnic Education in Ghana**

Polytechnics are higher educational institutions responsible for training in scientific and technical subjects. Since 1992, when the Ghana government directed Polytechnics in Ghana to run tertiary programmes, significant gains have been made in the output of the Polytechnic graduate. The Polytechnics provide the bulk of people with technical education that is relevant, up-to-date in technology, and forward looking in

approach. As such polytechnic graduates play a significant role in the development of the nation.

According to Naana Amakie Boakye-Agyeman (2006), the Polytechnics in Ghana were first established as technical institutes that offered craft courses. In 1960, following the industrial development policy and rapid technological progress in a broad range of areas, technical education became a necessity for the country. Nsiah-Gyabaah (2005) also observes that since the technical institutions (polytechnics) were offering second-cycle craft courses while the universities were offering higher tertiary courses, there was a gap in the manpower supply needs of the country.

In recognition of this, a number of the technical institutes were established to train lower and middle-level skilled manpower to fill the gap. These technical institutes were established in Accra, Kumasi and Takoradi. According to Nsiah Gyabaah, in 1963, the technical institutes were re-designated as polytechnics to run non-tertiary programmes with the Tamale and Ho Technical Institutes being elevated to Polytechnic status in 1984 and 1986 respectively. The Cape Coast Polytechnic, which was planned as a polytechnic was opened in 1986. The author asserts further that in 1987, the Government of Ghana constituted a University Rationalisation Committee (URC) to develop proposals for reforming the management, academic structure and funding of tertiary education in Ghana.

Following the submission of the URC's report, the government issued a white paper in 1991 on the Reforms to the Tertiary Education System. The White Paper gave prominence to polytechnic education and in 1993, following the promulgation of the

Polytechnic Law, 1992 (PNDCL 321), the Polytechnics were upgraded to tertiary status. In line with government's policy of making the polytechnics regionally based institutions, the Sunyani, Koforidua, Wa and Bolgatanga Polytechnics were also established.

These progressive changes in technical education resulted in new developments whereby in 1994 the polytechnics commenced the running of HND programmes. Emphasising on the need for practical training in higher technical institutions, the White Paper specifically stated that the Polytechnics have a distinct and important role to play in middle-level manpower development and that programmes and courses were to be offered at the middle-level of technical training leading to the award of Higher National Diplomas but not departing from syllabi dedicated to practical training. It was assumed that the provision of such programmes will complete the cycle of technical education and provide a capacity for higher-level technician training and practical research (Ministry of Education, 1993).

### **2.11 Details of the Textiles Component of STEP Programme**

For the purpose of this study, the discussion focuses on tie-dye, batik, screen printing, weaving and dressmaking.

#### **2.11.1 Tie and Dye**

This is a resist technique of dyeing which involves folding, tying, sewing or knotting the fabric with raffia, twine nylon thread or any suitable material that is capable of resisting dye absorption before dyeing (Adu-Akwaboa, 1994). The process involves twisting, folding or crumpling the fabric, tying it and immersing it wholly or partially



in the dye solution for 15 to 30 minutes. Where more colours are required, the tying and dyeing process is repeated as many times as the number of dye colours but, starting with the lighter shades and ending with the darker colour.

During dyeing, the parts of fabric that are not tied or sewn absorb the dyes while the tied or sewn portions prevent dyes from penetrating the fabric. The two actions thus create varied designs in the fabric after untying it. The actual colour of the dye develops after dyeing when the fabric is allowed to lie in the open for oxidation to take place. This occurs when the dyed fabric is either spread out or immersed in a solution containing an oxidising agent such potassium dichromate or hydrogen peroxide where vat dyes are used. The whole process ends by washing, rinsing, drying and ironing the dyed fabric. This method can produce accidental colour and design effects which can be difficult to replicate. The technique is however, simple and cheaper to use in decorating textile materials.

#### 2.11.2 Batik

Sackey (2002) defines batik as a Javanese word that literally means “drawing or writing with wax”. In effect areas of fabric that are drawn or written with wax are not coloured. Herberholz and Herberholz (1998) also indicate that batik is a resist technique and describe the art as an ancient process of decorating fabric. In the application of molten wax by brush, Herberholz and Herberholz recommend the use of a natural brush and not synthetic one since it is likely for the synthetic brush to melt in hot wax.

According to Adu-Akwaboa (1994:170), the process of batik entails application of molten wax to localised areas of fabric with the help of a tool such as tjanting, brush, cushion foam or wooden blocks, and subsequently immersing the fabric in a dye solution for 15 to 30 minutes. In the course of dyeing, areas that are waxed resist dye absorption whilst unwaxed areas take up the colour dye. De-waxing, which involves removing the wax from the fabric is done by immersing it in hot water so that the wax melts and falls off the fabric. Unlike tie-and-dye technique of fabric decoration where accidental designs are produced, the batik method produces calculated or well defined designs. It also gives out a characteristic crackle effect which occurs as the hardened wax breaks off during the dyeing and rinsing process.

#### **2.11.3 Discharge Technique of decorative fabric**

Encarta (2003) explains that the discharge technique is used to remove colour from a dyed fabric in a desired pattern. This involves application of printing paste containing a bleaching agent to the fabric in the printing process. The fabric is then placed in a steam unit for a specified time. The steam facilitates the removal of colour from the fabric where the discharge agent was applied leaving lighter patterns in the dyed fabric. A non-dischargeable dye can also be mixed with discharge paste and used in the printing process to achieve a multicoloured design. The selection of discharge agent for discharge printing depends on the type of dye that was used in dyeing the base fabric. Different types of discharge agents are available for various dyestuffs.

Encarta points out further that mostly, fabrics dyed with reactive dyes are used where the discharge chemical has the power to ‘eat off’ or bleach the base colour shade. The ability of the chemical to discharge a particular colour also depends partially on



the chlorine content of the discharging agent and its discharging capacity of reactive dyes. Some discharge agents available on the Ghanaian market which are chlorine - based include Super Clean, de Javal and Power Zone. The method of applying discharge chemical can be done in many ways.

#### **2.11.4 Screen Printing**

Encarta (2003) states that Screen printing is a type of stencilling printing which allows the ink to pass through the parts of a nylon or silk screen that are not blocked by any impenetrable film. The method is generally referred to as silk-screen printing because of its silk-based stencils. Commercially, stencils for screen printing are mostly prepared by photo-mechanical means. In this process a fine synthetic fabric or metal mesh is stretched over a rectangular frame, and photopolymer coating applied to the entire surface of the mesh. Exposing the photopolymer through a positive film containing the design causes the coating to harden in the areas of the screen that is not intended to print. The unexposed areas of the screen are then washed out to create the open areas of the stencil. During printing, the screen is passed against the surface to be printed, and ink is forced through the open areas of the stencil by means of a rubber squeegee to transfer the design on the screen onto the fabric.

Adu-Akwaboa (1994) also explains that the screen printing method involves transferring designs onto fabric with the help of specially prepared screens. In principle screen may be prepared by lacquer or wax method where lacquer or wax is applied to the negative areas of the design on a screen that allows printing to be done. Developing screens by the photographic means consists of making a full colour design on a sheet of paper, separating colours to be used by tracing them one after the

other onto separate transparent papers, and inking each of the traced designs with black opaque ink. Wooden frame are then prepared, covered on one side fine organdie mesh that is stretched taut over it and held down with stapling pins.

Screen photo sensitive emulsion may be made with a mixture of P.V.A. potassium dichromate and pigment dye which is applied to seal all the holes in the mesh by means of a coating trough and drying the screen in the darkroom. Transferring the design onto the screen is done by exposing the inked design and the dried screen to light emanating from a developing table in the darkroom. After the required exposure time, the screen is removed, washed and dried ready for printing.

Weaving according to Wikipedia the free encyclopaedia, is the textile art in which two distinct sets of yarns or threads, called the warp and the filling or weft (older woof), are interlaced with each other to form a fabric or cloth. The warp threads run lengthways of the piece of cloth, and the weft runs across from side to side. See Fig. 1

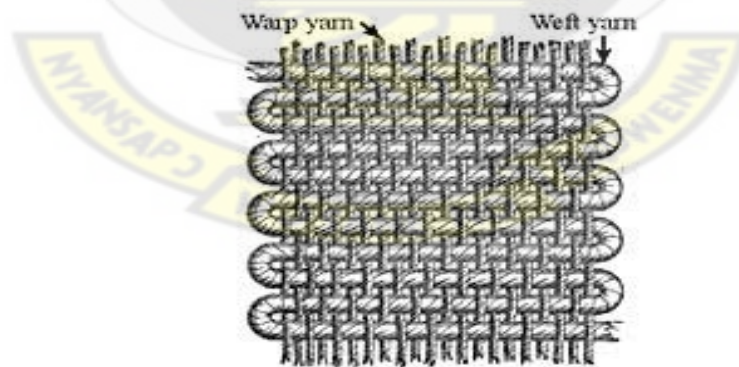


Fig.1. Warp and weft in plain weaving

Cloth is woven on a loom, a device for holding the warp threads in place while the filling threads are woven through them. Weft is an old English word meaning "that

which is woven". According to the Wikipedia, the manner in which the warp and filling threads interlace with each other is known as the "weave". The three basic weaves are plain weave, satin weave, and twill, and the majority of woven products are created with one of these weaves. Woven cloth can be plain (in one colour or a simple pattern), or it can be woven in decorative or artistic designs, including tapestries. Fabric in which the warp and/or weft is tie-dyed before weaving is called ikat. Wikipedia states that the ancient art of hand weaving, along with hand spinning, remains a popular craft.

It explains that the majority of commercial fabrics, in the West, are woven on computer-controlled Jacquard looms. In the past, simpler fabrics were woven on dobby looms and the Jacquard harness adaptation was reserved for more complex patterns. Some believe the efficiency of the Jacquard loom, and the Jacquard weaving process makes it more economical for mills to use them to weave all of their fabrics, regardless of the complexity of the design. Some of the designed woven fabrics include Kente, which is woven by the Asante and the Ewe people of Ghana. The Asante kente is typically woven in villages just outside Kumasi, around Bonwire and Ntonso. The Ewe variation of the Asante Kente, called Kete is woven in Volta Region around Kpetoe, Denu, Wheta and Agbozume.

*Kente* is an Asante ceremonial cloth that is hand-woven on a horizontal treadle loom. Strips measuring about 4 centimetres wide are sewn together into larger pieces of clothes. The cloth comes in various colours, sizes and designs and is worn on very important social and religious occasions. The term Kente has its roots in the word *kenten* which means "basket". The first kente weavers used raffia fibres to weave

cloths that looked like *kenten* and thus were referred to as *kenten ntoma*; meaning “basket cloth”. The original Asante name of the cloth was *nsaduasoo* or *nwontoma* meaning “a cloth hand woven” and is still used today by Asante weavers and elders. However, the term *kente* is the most popularly used today, in and outside Ghana. Many variations of narrow-strip cloths, similar to *kente* are woven by various ethnic groups in Ghana and elsewhere in Africa.

In commenting about funding for Skill Training and Employment Placement programmes, Angela Ofori-Atta stated in the Ghanaian Times (Wednesday March 31, 2004) that Government has released 5,000,000,000 to assist beneficiaries of the STEP to set up their own businesses. This was made public during a graduation ceremony for 20 youths who had completed a programme of training in the arts of batik, tie-and-dye and soap making. The STEP programme started in 2006 as one of the poverty relief initiatives undertaken by the Ghana government within the framework of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) scheme for debt relief.

Under STEP, unemployed youths were offered free of charge skills training and assistance with job placement or self-employment. According to the Ghanaian Times the money to fund the next phase of the STEP programme which was expected to follow the completion of the initial the compilation of a national register of unemployed people. The paper revealed that the enumeration exercise uncovered that over 80% of the unemployed young people who registered with STEP did not have the educational or vocational qualifications required for jobs in the formal sector. Dr. Ofori-Atta said that in the next phase of the STEP programme, the government would grant loans to suitably qualified young people with viable business projects. The

Deputy Minister said that any young person who wanted a loan from the fund would be required first to open a bank account. The bank would advance the beneficiary a loan in the form of a start-up business credit.

The Ghana News Agency (P. 2-3) also observed that another very different piece of policy architecture that has been constructed, at least on paper, in the first few months of 2006 is the Youth Employment Implementation Guidelines... to provide work for the million unemployed youth who registered optimistically in 2001. In due course, this highly political initiative led to two rounds of a programme originally termed the Skills Training and Employment Placement (STEP). Although the initiative was claimed to have succeeded in young people starting their own businesses and securing employment, it is probably telling that it was renamed the Skills Training and Entrepreneurship Programme, as it had signally failed to connect with job opportunities the very large number of young people who had originally registered for.

The Ghana News Agency (2005) reports that funding for the programme came from government with the release of ₵14.5 billion to train 27,000 people in 46 trades including Textiles production. In addition, ₵5 billion seed capital was also released to STEP under a micro-finance scheme to assist the trainees to establish their own small-scale enterprises. In 2005, the GNA reports that Chief Director of the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment said that the STEP programme was being reviewed is to place it under a more enhanced National Youth Employment Programme and Job Creation Programme which also has skills training and placement components. This was reported during the graduation of 100 of the second batch of



STEP trainees in computer hardware. These reports highlight the opportunities that the skills training and employment placement programme offers to its trainees.

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# KNUST





## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Overview**

This chapter focuses on the following: research design, library research, internet research, population, the sampling, sample, data collecting instruments, interview schedule, validation of instrument, administration of instruments, primary and secondary sources of data, data collecting procedure and data analysis plan.

#### **3.1 Research design**

The researcher employed qualitative research method to approach. The researcher used descriptive research method to describe the current status of the textiles component of Skills Training and Employment Placement (STEP) programme which has now been incorporated in to the National Youth Employment Programme (NYEP). It is also used to report on the opportunities and challenges facing the textiles component of the Skills Training and Employment Placement (STEP) programme.

#### **3.2 Population**

Population in research is regarded as a group or target group. According to Busha and Harter (1980), population is “...any set of persons or objects that possessed at least one common characteristics”. Fraenkel and Wallen (2000) explain population as a group to which the results of the study are intended to apply. An important step in research is the means of selecting the sample of individuals who will participate (be observed or questioned) in the process of the study. Therefore, 100 participants

of the STEP Programme who are engaged in the textiles components in Ashanti Region were targeted as the population for the study.

### **3.3 Sampling**

The simple random sampling method was used in sampling out the various subjects. These comprised members from the various STEP centres and include managers, trainers, trainees and the youth who have graduated from the Programme and are practicing the textile trade. The simple random sampling was used because it enabled the researcher to select a small proportion of the population for observation and analysis with each subject having equal chance of being selected (Best and Kahn, 1998). In this case, 10 trainers, 15 trainees, 20 of the youth who have graduated and are engaged in the textile business, and nine centre managers were selected for the study. These groups were chosen because they would provide relevant information about the usefulness and effectiveness of the STEP Programme from a managerial, trainee, trainer and on-the-job graduate points of view respectively.

### **3.4 Data Collection Instruments**

The major data collecting tools were interview, observation and the questionnaire.

#### **3.4.1 Interview**

Interview is an oral questionnaire which helps the researcher ask questions concerning any area of the following, facts, people's beliefs and perspective about the facts, feeling, motives, present and past behaviours, standards for behaviours and conscious reasons for actions or feelings (Silverman, 1993; cited Leedy, 2005).

The researcher found it necessary to collect data through interview because the interview schedule allows the researcher to collect data that are on the minds of the subjects through oral interaction and questioning. This allowed the subjects to respond by giving the needed information orally and face-to-face, and sometimes through the telephone (Best, 1998). In this case, personal interviews based on non-structured items were conducted with centre managers, trainers, trainees and self employed graduate of STEP to get a more in-depth insight into the issues of concern to the research.

#### **3.4.2 Observation**

According to Leedy (2005) and Best (1981), certain kinds of information can be acquired best by means of direct examination by the researcher. Observation as a research technique must be logical, directed towards specific purpose, carefully focused and recorded in detail. The observer must identify just what to look for and also be able to differentiate between the significant aspects of the condition and factors that have little or no significance to the investigation.

In some situations, the researcher gathered data by observing the subjects as they performed practical exercises in Tie-and-Dye and Batik. He adopted the observation technique because it enabled him to take note of certain details of events and behaviours of the subjects. This tool also made it possible for direct data to be collected in the form of photographs by means of a digital camera (Best 1998) to fill in gaps in the analysis of data gathered through interviews and questionnaires.

### 3.4.3 Questionnaire

Best and Kahn (1998) define questionnaire as a set of written questions designed to elicit information. This means that a questionnaire must contain a planned and organised series of questions that are sent to the population samples. The advantage of using the questionnaire, among others, is that it enables the researcher to source relevant information that cannot be obtained through direct personal conversation with the subjects. The researcher found it appropriate to use the questionnaire to solicit information from institutions, centre managers and trainers who were too busy to grant the researcher an interview audience.

The disadvantageous aspect of the questionnaire is that it can be abused in the sense that it can be poorly administered. To avoid this, however, the researcher administered the questionnaire personally with series of follow-up to collect the answered questionnaire for analysis.

Best and Kahn (1998) explain further the various forms of questionnaires to include the structured, non-structured, closed form and open form. The structured contains definite concrete and directed questions, whereas non-structured may consist of partially completed questions or statements. “Restricted” or closed form type of questionnaires are those that call for short check responses. The open form, unrestricted type or open-ended type of questionnaire calls for free response in the respondent’s own words.

In this study, four sets of questionnaire were used to collect data from four sources - the Ministry of Manpower Youth and Employment, the Regional Directors and Centre

Managers of Vocational Institutes or the Skills Training and Employment Placement (STEP) programme centres, Trainers and the trainees or students of Vocational Institutes. The questionnaire for the first group was to obtain data on population of beneficiaries of STEP for a year, funds, equipment, tools and materials and certification issues for the programme. The second group's questionnaire focused on the availability of funds, population, and availability of textbooks, libraries, tools equipment, materials and motivation. A third group which was made up of the Trainers was given questionnaire that was focused on availability textbooks, libraries, tools equipment and materials, motivation, time and the trainees interest in the teaching of the textiles. The final questionnaire was focused on trainees, self employed and unemployed STEP graduates and was open-ended based.

### **3.5 Administration of the Questionnaire**

Before the administration of the questionnaire, the researcher first sought the consent of the respondents by writing letters to the heads of institutions and individual business owners of some textiles set ups. This was to pave way for the researcher to get relevant information. So, the researcher administered the questionnaire personally by serving centre managers and heads of institution of STEP. He also made follow-ups to collect the answered questionnaires. All this was done in five weeks.

### **3.6 Data Analysis Plan**

Data collected were analysed and processed using Microsoft Word into individual reports that were put together for the report. Details and results are provided in Chapter Four.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF MAIN FINDINGS**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter provides detailed information on the Skills Training and Employment Placement (STEP) programme that was initiated by the Ministry of Employment and Youth as a stop gap for youth employment in Ghana.

#### **4.1 The Nature of the Skills Training Programme**

The STEP programme stepped up again in 2006 as one of the poverty relief initiatives undertaken by the Ghana government within the framework of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) scheme for debt relief. As the name implies, the Skills Training Programme basically involves the sharpening of one's skills or talents in a specific trade. This means that emphasis is placed on practical works or lessons.

In batik, tie and dye and weaving, for example, training involves the use of chemicals, fabric, and equipment such as bowls, squeegees, screens, cups, tables, ropes, yarns, looms and other substances such as wax and ink. The method of production is usually by manual means except in a few set ups where modern equipment is used. The use of the computer for design works, stamping, washing, drying, and mixing of chemicals is a common feature of Skills Training in Textiles. Plates 1 and 2 show pictures of some of the items at the tie and dye batik production unit of a STEP centre.





Plate 1: showing fabrics for batik, tie and dye production.



Plate 2: Self employed graduand posing with tools and chemicals for batik, tie and dye production.

In 2005, the GNA also reports that the STEP programme was reviewed and placed under a more enhanced National Youth Employment Programme and Job Creation Programme which also had skills training and placement components. This was reported during the graduation of 100 of the second batch of STEP trainees in computer hardware. These reports highlight the opportunities that the skills training and employment placement programme offers to its trainees.

#### **4.2 Aims and objectives for the STEP Programme**

Field data collected through interviews indicate that the main aims and objectives of the Skill Training and Employment Placement Programme were to create jobs for the unemployed youth and also to alleviate poverty among the Ghanaian Youth by providing them with the necessary skills to improve their economic lives. Under STEP, unemployed youths were offered skills training and assistance with job placement or self employment free of charge.



### 4.3 The Scope of the Skills Training Programme

The Skills Training Programme, in a broader sense, is an aspect of the Technical / Vocational training which is a field of discipline on its own and equips trainees in specific courses. Some of the Technical Courses include Construction, Carpentry, Mansonry, Welding and Electornics. Other courses that are often associated with Vocational training include Textiles, Basketry and Soap making, among others. In the area of Textiles, which is the focus of this thesis, trainees are trained to acquire skills in Batik, Weaving, Screen printing and Tie and Dye as shown in plates 3 and 4 below



Plate 3: Trainees dyeing some tied fabrics



Plate 4: Researcher demonstrating some stamping skills in batik making.

### 4.4 Funding for STEP

According to the authorities of the STEP Programme, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and the Government of Ghana are the main funding agencies for the Programme. UNESCO particularly has been playing a major role in sponsoring such training programmes.

The Ghanaian Times (2004) also reports that the money to fund the next phase of the STEP programme was expected to follow the completion of the initial compilation of

a national register of unemployed people which uncovered that over 80% of the unemployed youth who registered with STEP did not have the educational or vocational qualifications required for jobs in the formal sector.

The Ghana News Agency (2005) reports that funding for the programme came from government with the release of ₵14.5 billion to train 27,000 people in 46 trades including Textiles production. In addition, ₵5 billion seed capital was also released to STEP under a micro-finance scheme to assist the trainees to establish their own small-scale enterprises.

#### **4.5 Centres for STEP Programme in Ashanti Region**

The idea of starting the STEP Programme in Ashanti Region was necessitated by most of the Youth migrating to the urban areas in search for jobs. In 2001 the Government took census of the unemployed Youth in order to find a solution to their employment problem. This led to the selection of 15 training centres in the Ashanti Region where STEP programme was run. Table 1 shows details of those centres. Three of these centres have stopped training the youth in textiles because the level of participation or patronage has gone down. The courses run in these centres are as follows:

- Textiles
- Masonry
- Carpentry
- Pomade and Powder making
- Electrical Installation
- Joinery and Building draughtmanship.

The Textiles component offers skills in the following major areas:

- Tie and Dye
- Batik
- Screen printing
- Dressmaking
- Weaving
- Bleach decoration of fabric.

#### **4.6 Education of Trainers**

The STEP trainers were found to have practical experience in their respective fields and they hold qualifications that range from the Advanced Certificate in Textiles of the City and Guilds to degree in Textiles. This implies that the trainees have qualified instructors who have the requisite knowledge and skills to equip them with what they need to learn.

#### **4.7 STEP Training Centres in Ashanti Region**

The study found that the first of the STEP training centres in Ashanti Region was established in 1986 at Tetrefu in the Bosomtwi-Atwima-Kwanwoma district. This implies that this centre has been training people in textiles for 23 years as at the time of this report. The latest centre was also established in 2007 at Nobewam in the Ejisu district. In other words, this centre has also been training people in textiles for two years now. Table 1 shows the number and location of STEP centres in Ashanti Region and the respective Textiles areas they offer the trainees.

Table1: STEP Centres which offer Textiles in Ashanti Region

No.	Name of Centre	District	Centre Manager	Year Established	Courses Offered
1	Tetrefu ICCES	Bosomtwi-Atwima-Kwanwoma	Daniel Amoh	1986	Batik, Tie & Dye
2	Twedie ICCES	Bosomtwi Atwima	Agyemang Y. Richard	1997	Batik, Tie & Dye
3	Konkoma ICCES	Bosomtwi Atwima Kwanwuman	George Appiah Anin	1997	Batik, Tie & Dye
4	Nerebehi ICCES	Atwima Nwabiagya	R.Y. Baah	1993	Batik, Tie & Dye
5	Otaakrom ICCES	Atwima Mponua	Osei Tutu Ababio	2000	Batik, Tie & Dye
6	Baworo ICCES	Ejisu-Juaben	Paul Darko	1997	Batik, Tie & Dye
7	Amoawi ICCES	Offinso	Addai Alexander	2004	Batik, Tie & Dye
8	Kumasi Production Unit	Kumasi Metro. Assembly	Lucy A. Gyawu	2002	Batik, Tie & Dye
9	Afoako ICCES	Amansie Central	Pinto Edmund	2004	Batik, Tie & Dye
10	Nobewam ICCES	Ejisu District	James Obeng K.	2007	Batik, Tie & Dye
11	Abosamso ICCES	Amansie East	Bernard Tabi A.	2003	Batik, Tie & Dye
12	Ofoase-Kokoben ICCES	Amansie East	Josephine N. Boham	2001	Batik, Tie & Dye
13	Akutuase	Asante-Akim North	Charles O.F. Ababio	2002	Batik, Tie & Dye
14	Dwease Praaso	Asante-Akim North	Andrews Gakpetor	1997	Batik, Tie & Dye
15	NSS Kumasi	Ashanti Region	Kwasi Quainoo	2006	Batik, Tie & Dye

Source: Fieldwork

Generally, each Centre is expected to enrol 20 youth (See Appendix A) for the STEP programme for each training session in a year. It was learned that the training centre at the Baworo ICCES and NSS Kumasi for instance enrolls 20 people each year to be trained in both textiles and soap making with most of them specialising in Tie and Dye, Batik, and Printing. The intake is in accordance with the policies of the Skills Training Programme.

Looking at the overall implied number of textiles graduates the 15 centres have produced since their establishment in the Ashanti Region, it is surprising that only a small number of these trainee Textiles entrepreneurs can be located operating small-scale businesses. It can be deduced that if certain control measures are not put in place, the youth in Ashanti Region and Ghana in general will lose interest in the Textiles skill training programme as a whole.

#### **4.8 Entry Requirements for STEP Training**

The entry requirements for the centres' trainees are the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) and the Senior Secondary School Certificate of Education (SSSCE). This suggests that the trainees have some basic education to enable them understand the curriculum offered by STEP as well as the attitude and inclination for knowledge and skills acquisition. This also implies that they have the discipline for someone to be trained in textiles in order for them to establish themselves in the world of work. However, graduates from these centres are not many on the job market perhaps due to the turbulent nature of the market conditions, or their inability to diligently apply the knowledge and skills acquired on the programme to produce high quality goods that can sell and keep them in business.



#### **4.9 Organisation and management of the STEP Programme**

Data obtained from the study reveals that there is no set committee or planning body that oversees the general planning of the STEP Programme in the region. In the Ashanti Region, the Regional Director of the National Service Scheme (NSS) is the only person who directs affairs of the STEP Programme while the ICCES has an Executive Management Board constituted by the Regional Coordinator and the centre managers at the regional level.

It was realised from the study that after doing the necessary planning and budgeting, the trainers of the STEP centres then apply for funds from the centre managers by submitting their budgets to their applications. The centre managers would also complete an MOU form which is forwarded to the Regional Coordinator for funds to be released for the various centres in instalments, according to the training needs for a particular training session. Appendix A shows a copy of a letter that was forwarded by the Regional Coordinator of the National Service Scheme with the training budget attached.

The funds, when received by the centre managers, are further disbursed to the trainers according to their budgetary allocations. When the funds are released to them they go on to purchase the necessary items and store them pending the training period. This implies that the programme at the regional level lacks a proper management board to see to the planning and effective handling of issues concerning STEP programme in Ashanti Region. One would not be surprised if this is a contributory factor of the closure of NSS Skills Training Centre.



Evaluation of NSS skills trainees is done by asking the trainees to produce some works independently which are duly inspected and approved or disapproved by the centre manager. The national board of the NSS also sends delegates from Accra to inspect the works and then give final approval before recommending the award of certificates. This is done before graduation of trainees. In the case of the ICCES however, the trainees are made to take external examinations. This takes the form of practical examination as well as theoretical examination which include NVTI, Trade Testing, and City and Guild Examinations.

With the practical examinations regarding the training provided by the NSS, the trainees are required to produce works in their various fields as maybe directed by the examining body. This is almost a formal system of training that is quite different from the STEP scheme which has no formal examination certification component.

After the trainees have successfully completed a three month training session and have passed the examination, they are awarded certificates. This, according to the research findings, is to show that the trainees are qualified to start their own businesses. Another reason why certificates are awarded is to enable the graduands to access start-up capital from the government. The various measures put in place by the authorities of the ICCES and other institutions where the STEP programme is run means that they are serious about equipping Ghanaian youth with employable skills and also expanding their knowledge base as far as technical and vocation education is concerned.

However, the only lapse in the management system of the programme is the lack of an executive body at the Regional level to assist the Regional directors in decision making. This implies that lack of effective planning for the programme at the regional level is partially a contributory factor to the collapse of some STEP centres.

#### **4.10 Availability of logistics for training**

Field data also indicate that all the Centres are often provided with the needed logistics for the various training sessions. For instance all the trainers interviewed admitted that they are usually supplied with sufficient materials. Even in times when they run out of training materials they are resourced by the centre to enable them to get the programme moving. However, in some instances where the disbursement of funds to the centre manager delays, they source for money somewhere to pre-finance the training whiles waiting for the government's reimbursement. This means that the centre managers themselves view the training programmes as useful.

For this reason the centre managers go the extra mile to ensure that they do not fail in planning any skills training session for the youth. What was lacking however, in most of the training centres were art exhibition centres, or markets where trainees could sell some of their products to serve as motivation for them and also expose them to the public who have no idea of what transpires at the training centres. Some finished products of a STEP graduate are shown in Plate 5



Plate 5: Some finished products of a STEP graduate

#### 4.11 The prevailing situation at the Centres

During the study, it was realised that there were 15 Skills Training Centres for STEP Programme as shown in Table 1 (page 53), but only 13 of these centres are still providing skills training in textiles but not as effective as it used to be some years ago. At the time of the research, it was realised that two of the centres have virtually closed down the textiles section of the programme. The centres are Dwease, Praso and NSS Kumasi Metropolitan. According to the centre managers, the reason for the collapse of these centres was low patronage. Because they had only 10 people showing interest in the training, it was not cost effective as the cost of training for these 10 people could equally be used to train 20 people.

Another factor they complained about was the fact that most of the trainees who had started their businesses could not make it in the local textiles business. The prevailing economic conditions and cheap Chinese imports have made it difficult for the trainees to enjoy a good market, a situation which has demoralised many of them into inaction.

It is possible that these are factors which have prevented potential trainees from registering for subsequent skills training.

Of the remaining 13 operational centres that were contacted for the study, 10 of the centre managers reported that they normally do not get any feedback from their trainees who graduate from the textiles training programmes. Three of the centre managers said they often monitor their graduates and for that matter get to know how they are applying the training they received. This is a good sign for ensuring that the trainees make use of their training but it is not enough to prevent many from giving up and thereby facing the possibility of losing their acquired skills after some time.

#### **4.12.0 Opportunities in the Skills Training and Employment Placement Programme**

##### **4.12.1 Start up Loan**

Several experts have commented on the vast financial opportunities available for learners under the STEP programme. The Ghanaian Times (Wednesday March 31, 2004:2) reports the release of five billion cedis (¢5b) to help beneficiaries of skills training”. In commenting about funding for STEP programmes, Ofori-Atta (Ghanaian Times, Wednesday March 31, 2004) reports that the Ghana Government released this amount of money to assist beneficiaries of STEP to set up their own businesses. This was made public during a graduation ceremony for 20 youths who had completed a programme of training in the arts of batik, tie and dye, and soap making.

For the next phase, Ofori-Atta reports that in the next phase of the STEP programme, the government would grant loans to suitably qualified young people with viable

business projects. For this, young persons who wanted loans from this fund was required to open a bank account so that loans granted as start-up business credit would be deposited and monitored.

#### **4.12.2 Youth employment strategy**

The Ghana News Agency (2006, p. 2) also describes STEP as a very different piece of policy architecture that has been constructed, known at the inception as the Youth Employment Implementation Guidelines to provide work for the million unemployed youth who registered optimistically in 2001. In due course, this highly political initiative led to two rounds of a programme originally termed the Skills Training and Employment Placement (STEP). Although the initiative was claimed to have succeeded in young people starting their own businesses and securing employment, it was reportedly renamed Skills Training and Entrepreneurship Programme because it failed to connect with job opportunities that young people who had originally registered for.

#### **4.12.3 STEP as industrial linkage**

STEP was also intended to improve linkages within the overall training sector, and to extend relevant opportunities for the nation's young people to gain employable skills. The emphasis was on providing opportunities for out of school children and dropouts. Plate 6 depicts children and some dropouts demonstrating skills they have acquired through STEP programme at the Dwease-Praso ICCES.





Plate 6: Trainees folding and performing screen printing at Dwease Praso ICCES STEP training centre.

#### 4.12.4 Market trends of the textiles business

Though the STEP Programme itself offers training opportunities for the acquisition of employable skills, it is sad to note that there are limited business opportunities. For instance, it was found out from the field study that out of the 25 youth who graduate from the Skills Training Programme from a particular Centre annually, only two (8%) of the graduands had employment with institutions. Also, of the 25 graduands, only 5 (20%) are engaged in their own textile businesses but on a small scale. Unfortunately, these categories of graduands are not able to produce quality products to compete with the high quality imported textile products. Since these young entrepreneurs cannot produce in large quantities to benefit from the advantages of economies of scale, the unit cost of their products is often high.

Another factor that affects the business of these young entrepreneurs is that both the production and overhead cost are factored in and distributed over the quantity produced. The implication of this is that the high cost of the locally produced textile product with its relative low quality often scares potential customers who shift to patronising more of the cheaper imported textiles products. This means that the



market share for these local textile entrepreneurs is very small, hence limiting their business opportunities for sustainability or expansion. This also discourages prospective business institutions and individuals who have financial resources to offer loan facilities to the textile graduands.

It was also found out from the few graduands who run their own textile businesses that most of them are unable to break even let alone making profits. Their situation worsens when those who access loan are unable to pay back whatever loan facility they may have accessed. They asserted further that in such situations their immediate families often assist them in paying back the loan. The few graduands who still run their textile businesses complained that the high cost of raw materials such as cotton, dyes and other chemicals such as Sodium hydroxide (Caustic Soda) among others are the contributing factors for the decline of their businesses. This situation confirms the report of Quarkey (2005) who observed that the Textiles business is declining and the situation continues to worsen.

#### **4.13.0 Challenges of STEP Programme in Ghana**

##### **4.13.1 Fragmented skills training**

Commenting on the challenges facing technical and vocational training in Ghana, the Ghana News Agency (2006) observed that the ambitious plans for implementing this new curricular approach and for embedding it in a new Ghana TVET Qualification Authority, along with an Industrial Training Advisory function and a Training Quality Assurance system were ambitious and not easy to implement. GNA's view was that the existing skills provision was fragmented, and the largest segments of skills training are located outside the public domain in the private training centres (both for-

profit and non-profit), and in the enormous traditional apprenticeship system, which operates across the country, and in rural and urban areas.

#### 4.13.2 **Finance and minor scale**

GNA also cites the challenges of financing, quality, access, and coordination as the new system comes on stream, noting the temptation for the Ghana Government to formalise what has been informal, and to taking over what had lain beyond the reach of public responsibility. STEP as an avenue for reducing poverty needed to be a wide-scale and continuous opportunity to provide relevant productive skills' yet the economic imperative called for the production of a highly skilled workforce to support industrialisation and make the country more competitive. This dilemma was very obviously a bane of the STEP programme which only sought to provide skills that were needed for survival on a minor scale. Ghana News Agency (p.3-5) also cites the Government's plan to pay the beneficiaries of all STEP modules money to cover the purchase of inputs as well as a monthly stipend.

#### 4.13.3 **Low education of trainees**

Another problem lay with the low education of STEP trainees who had to fill form on which credit application and disbursement forms in order to access funding posed much difficulty for sustaining the training.

#### 4.13.4 **Semblance to indigenous crafts**

Another issue was that the skills identified for STEP were the same indigenous artistic skills which are either neglected or almost lost (President's Education Reform Committee, 2004). This did not make the STEP programme very appealing to the

youth. It can perhaps be argued that because of the low quality of training involved in STEP, the equipment installed were not the modern types, and hence, the skills taught lacked any relationship with industry.

Because Vocational/Technical skills are largely neglected in Ghana, some families consider it demeaning to have their own children pursue technical or vocational education. This perception has unfortunately impacted so negatively on this type of lowest-cost public provision of employable skills for poor young people in the Ashanti Region to the extent that the Integrated Community Centres for Employable Skills (ICCES) has been the most neglected, followed by the National Vocational Training Institutes (NVTIs) and many of the Technical Institutes that were established purposely for this service.

#### **4.13.5 Limited scale of operations**

STEP as a donor funded programme was not large-scale but available to only a minority of the estimated annual basic education graduates of which 150,000 are assured to be from Junior High Schools and have no opportunity to enter either formal education or training, with about 150,000 of them entering the informal economy, while many take up traditional apprenticeships. The minor scaling up of skills training (particularly through STEP) also gave rise to concerns about programme quality and outcomes, and who is getting access to this training.

#### **4.13.6 Trainer expectations**

Commenting on trainers' expectations of learners, Mauro, Gerard and Parodi, (1999) point out that the requirement to produce a product or provide a service while learning

the skills that are necessary to complete the task is the formative cornerstone of the informal apprenticeships. Further, Overwien (1997), Mauro, Gerard and Parodi, (1999) point out that regardless of its many advantages, the informal apprenticeship has several limitations such as:

- i) As traditional apprenticeships are based on the technologies and ideas of the previous generations, the quality of the training is just as good as the skills of the master and her or his willingness and ability to pass on the knowledge and skills that are learnt and these result in low quality products. The apprenticeship schemes often lack exposure to modern training systems and technologies as well as the innovative aspect of learning. The range of skills may easily tend to be narrow, limited to a particular product or phase in production; these skills may easily become useless in the fast changing labour markets.

The writers seem to be concerned about the mode of transmission of skills and knowledge to learners, and the lack of creativity in the production of products. Easton, Gushee & Liebert (1997) also recognise some challenges in skills training in the informal training programme as follows:

- ii) The measures to support and develop the informal apprenticeship must start from its weaknesses: in the informal apprenticeship the learner is limited to the knowledge and experience of the 'master', whether it is the owner of the firm or an employee. The limits of learning by imitation and trial and error could be lifted by combining formal forms of instructions and informal training by offering well – integrated training with a strong element of theoretical about the field concerned.

The strategy to minimize the mismatch between an overly academic focus and a production focuses training by combining elements of formal academic education and practical on-the job training has been successful in countries like Germany. However, it remains unclear how this could be implemented in the informal settings in less developed countries. The skills possessed by the new entrants entering the informal sector training as well as the need of the various sub sectors vary a lot. This makes it difficult to plan coherent training that would combine the academic and practical stream.

The above observation by Easton, and Gushee (1997) are relevant and pertinent to the study. What this means is that STEP trainees will have difficulty surviving the harsh economic conditions with competition from imported goods on the Ghanaian market.

#### **4.14 Impressions about Technical/Vocational Training**

People interviewed on field expressed varied impressions about the STEP Programme. Whiles some people of the elite class generally think that technical and vocational training is an area for school drop outs and those who are not intelligent enough to pursue other fields of study, others also view Technical and Vocational Training as an important discipline to satisfy the needs of skilful and talented people who may be solely interested in disciplines that offer practical experience.

Those who think negatively about people who pursue Technical and Vocational course fail to reckon the fact that ‘intelligence’ cannot be defined based on a particular discipline. They also fail to understand that the development of any nation is partly dependent on highly talented and skilful people. Furthermore, they fail to

understand that the reasons or causes for a person dropping out of school are varied and may not necessarily be linked with intelligence per se.

Seven of the nine centre managers (representing 77% of the total) who were interviewed were optimistic that the Skills Training in Textiles is still useful and it can improve the economic situation of the trainees. The only challenge most of the people they train face is competition from foreign markets.

Of the 100 trainees sampled, 80 (representing 80 % of the total) were interviewed. All the 80 respondents who were interviewed said that they find the skills training in Textiles to be useful to them because they earn a living out of it. The only demotivating factor is that most of them are unable to source loans to expand their business.

#### **4.15 Start up Capital**

Information collected from the field indicate some of the trainees who graduate from the various Skill training centres in Ashanti Region obtained start-up capital from the Government. The criterion for accessing funds is that the trainees must form cooperative groups. For instance, in 2006 the first batch of qualified trainees in Ashanti Region were given a start up capital ranging from 100 Ghana cedis to 500 Ghana cedis.

According to the trainees, some of them could not access funds from the Government even though they applied for financial assistance. However, some of these categories of trainees who could not access funds from the Government were still able to



mobilise start up funds for themselves. Some of the trainees who benefited from the funds admitted that though they were able to start the textile business particularly Batik, Tie and Dye and Screen printing, yet they could not manage the business effectively. This implies that most of the trainees who are presently out of business probably lack managerial skills.

It was found out that most of the affected trainees whose businesses collapsed are the JSS and SSS holders. A few others who are able to survive in the business hold higher qualifications. This is sufficient evidence to support the researcher's assumptions that most of the trainees have limited knowledge and expertise in managing the textile business.

Another factor that contributes to the failure of some of the trainees to set up vibrant textiles businesses is partly due to the lack of interest in the textile business even though they went in for the Skills training in that field. For instance, it was found that the monies given to some of the trainees as start up capital were diverted and invested in different trades other than the original objective for which the fund was given.

It can be deduced from the field report above that though most of the trainees are interested in starting their businesses and therefore enrol on the Skills training programme they have hidden agenda. One may not be far from the truth to assume that most of the trainees are only interested in the set up capital. They have no interest of making use of the skills let alone investing in it.

#### **4.16 Socio Economic Significance of STEP**

Some trainees who have graduated and are self employed have also raised State-owned Enterprises (SOEs) efficiently. They have therefore enabled these SOEs to improve their performance and make profits. Rural migrants have also been provided with jobs, resulting in the provision of certain valuable products, such as house hold services, fast delivery and shopping facilities that are very convenient to community residents. This business has its unique advantages. Self employed skills trainees are small-scale and flexible, they are quick in response to market demand, provide cheap goods and satisfactory services to society. Plate 7 shows a STEP graduate who is self employed working.



Plate 7: A Self employed STEP graduate working

#### **4.17 Teachers and Motivation**

Teachers or Trainers hold qualifications such as HND and the Advanced Certificate in Textiles of the City and Guilds. Due to the practical oriented nature of the whole

programme, it implies that teaching and learning of the theory components of Textiles were not effectively handled.

The study found that the trainers at the Centres are motivated in various ways by the trainees, Centre managers and benevolent persons in the community where the training takes place. For instance, incentives such as free lunch is also provided to them by the Centre managers, gifts in kind in the form of food stuffs are also presented to the trainers by the trainees. All the trainers when interviewed responded that the time for meaningful work is adequate. This indicates that teachers are content with the time given on the time table in the vocational institutes.

#### **4.18 Extra Curricular Activities (Visits and Sight Seeing)**

Visits and sightseeing at educational sites are vital elements of the textiles syllabus because it gives students a fair idea of what goes on in their community, the factories and in the industries. Visits to these sites serve as motivation for trainees or students and even for the teachers. In the study it was realised that in the Vocational Institutions (for instance ICCES where STEP programme takes place), 80% of trainers said they had never gone on excursion to any of the textiles factories for field experience even though a few had done that privately. This suggests that some of the heads of schools do not allow trainees who are getting training in Vocational Skills to go on educational trips to have first hand information of what happen outside the school.

#### **4.19 Implications for Art Education**

Art Education is the process of learning about the one's environment through the senses of touch, feel, sight, smell and taste. In other words it trains one's cognitive talents to enable them appreciate the art forms and help them to make reasoned judgements about them. Skills training in textiles have positive implications for art education because it provides trainees the opportunity to learn about the various art forms, the principles of design such as balance, contrast and rhythm. It also gives the trainees exposure in the proper use of the elements of design such as lines, dots and space in order to come out with their own designs in fabric and garments.

Art education students in KNUST and UEW are also offered the opportunity to have a place for their teaching practice while students who graduate from the local Polytechnics and Universities can also serve as teachers and National Service personnel at these centres.

#### **4.20 Summary**

Information obtained from most of the STEP centres in Ashanti Region indicate that art exhibitions and excursions which were requirements of the textiles syllabus were not normally undertaken. It is therefore deduced that trainees do not get enough motivation in these directions. Although vocational institutions are known and it was also witnessed in their field that they have on their timetables enough time for adequate teaching and learning of textiles, there is yet, the need to engage the trainees in activities like exhibitions and excursions to broaden their knowledge. Most trainers do their best to teach both theory and practical aspects in the textiles programme.

Despite the numerous challenges, STEP can be said to be a very good youth programme. Programmes like this helps to raise the image of State-owned Enterprises (SOEs) that are run efficiently. STEP is a good example to other SOEs towards improving their performance in order to make profits. Such programmes also check rural migration by providing jobs to the youth, resulting in the provision of certain valuable products, such as house hold services, fast delivery and shopping facilities that are very convenient to community residents. STEP programme and others like it bring about companies that are small-scale, flexible, quick in response to market demand, provide cheap goods and satisfactory services to society.





## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Summary**

The study provides information on education in general and technical/vocational education in particular with reference to the Skills Training and Employment Programme of the Ministry of Employment of Ghana. The study focuses mainly on the history and management of Skills Training in Ghana, Technical/Vocational Education in Ghana, Visual Art Education, Importance of Technical /Vocational education, the type of training given to the Youth, Informal apprenticeship training, Non-formal training, Skills Training and Employment Placement, and the opportunities and challenges of the Programme under discussion.

The study found out that people with higher qualification such as HND, RSA or its equivalent who have also had the Skills training in Textiles do well and is able to compete with others.

#### **5.2 Conclusion**

From the sources cited in this thesis, it can be concluded that the success of the Textiles component of the Skills training programme depends partly on how the government creates enabling marketing environment for the textile industry. The academic level of most of the trainees is either JSS or SSS. Appendices B and C show copies of the enrolment forms. This also contributes to the reasons why the trainees are not able to manage their textile businesses effectively. Their low level of education may also result in their inability to critically analyse market trends in order to beat competition.



It can also be deduced that because most people who are engaged in the Technical and Vocation Training are believed to have low level of education but this has nothing to do with their intelligence as claimed by other people. This is so because, the study reveals that some of the people engaged in Technical and Vocational Training hold higher qualifications such as HND and First Degree. It is therefore important to give the chance to people who we are sure show interest in a particular vocational training. This will help prevent misuse of funds.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

In order to improve on the current situation in Skills training in Textiles and other successful programmes aimed at creating job opportunities for the Youth of Ghana, and to make the entire textile industry lucrative and be able to stand foreign competition, the researcher would like to make the following recommendations:

1. Though the in-take of trainees who hold lower qualifications is important, more of the Youth who hold higher qualifications in business should be encouraged to take the training. Whiles those with lower qualification may be engaged in the textile business on a small scale, their counterparts with higher qualifications should be involved in big-time business in the textile industry both at the local and the international level.
2. Provision should be made to periodically organise refresher courses for those who have passed through the training and are into the textile business to boost their business skills. This will serve as a follow-up on them to encourage or strengthen them in areas that they may find themselves wanting. This will also create a platform for these people to share their experiences in the business with new trainees and for further directives.

3 It appears during the research that most of graduates who are into the textile business do not understand properly the economics of the business, and they perhaps, lack rich marketing abilities that they can apply to succeed in getting a good share of the market. It is therefore recommended that courses that will equip trainees with the afore mentioned skills should be added to other skills training programme courses that will be organised in future.



## Appendix A

Covering letter on estimated budget for 2005 skills training under STEP programme  
submitted for funds

1st June, 2005

**THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
N. S. S  
ACCRA**

**ATTENTION: MS EMMA HAMMOND**

Dear Sir,

**SUBMISSION OF ESTIMATES ON SKILLS TRAINING 2005**

The Ashanti Regional National Service Secretariat is playing a crucial and pivotal role in the government's Skills Training and Employment Placement (STEP) Programme.

It will be recalled that last year, the Regional Secretariat, acting in concert with N. S. S headquarters and the Ministry of manpower and employment, recruited and trained Twenty (20) unemployed and underemployed youth in Kumasi in Batik Tie and Dye, Pomade and Soap making.

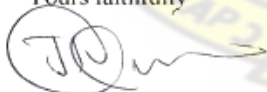
Following last year's success story, a large number of applicants have expressed interest and desire to undergo training this year. Twenty (20) of them have consequently been selected to undergo this year's training.

Furthermore, the curriculum (Skills/Course Content) which hitherto comprised of Batik Tie and Dye, Soap and Pomade making has been diversified and expanded to include fruit processing.

I forward herewith, for your attention and consideration, Estimates on this year's training programme.

Your prompt action on the issue is kindly solicited to enable us commence the training

Yours faithfully



.....  
**KWESI QUAINOO  
(REGIONAL CO-ORDINATOR, NSS, ASH)**

## Estimated budget

### ESTIMATE FOR SKILLS TRAINING 2005 ASHANTI REGION

Number of Expected Trainees	-	Twenty (20)
Duration of Training	-	Three Months
Course Content	-	Batik Tie & Dye Pomade & Soap Making Fruit Processing

#### BATIK TIE & DYE

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>	<u>UNIT PRICE</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
		¢	¢
Wax	3 Blks	85,000.00	250,000.00
Gloves	5 Pairs	40,000.00	200,000.00
Nylon Thread	1	20,000.00	20,000.00

#### FABRIC

Mercerized Cotton	30 Yards	15,000.00	450,000.00
Sheda	30 Yards	12,000.00	360,000.00

#### DYES

Red	1 Kilo	350,000.00	350,000.00
Blue Black	1 Kilo	300,000.00	300,000.00
Yellow	1 Kilo	300,000.00	300,000.00
Green	1 Kilo	300,000.00	300,000.00
Blue	1 Kilo	300,000.00	300,000.00
Orange	1 Kilo	400,000.00	400,000.00
Purple	1 Kilo	300,000.00	300,000.00

#### CHEMICALS

Hydro Sulphite	One Drum	900,000.00	900,000.00
Caustic Soda	One Drum	300,000.00	300,000.00
Flakes	1Pound	40,000.00	40,000.00
Cylinder & Burner	1	480,000.00	480,000.00
Wax Melting Pan	1	200,000.00	200,000.00
Aluminum Bowl (For Boiling Water)	1	200,000.00	200,000.00

<b>TOTAL</b>			<b><u>5,655,000.00</u></b>
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### POMADE AND SOAP MAKING

		€	€
Paraffin Wax	6 Gallons	100,000.00	600,000.00
Caustic Soda	3 Bags	300,000.00	900,000.00
Palm Oil	12 Gallons	40,000.00	480,000.00
Palm Kernel Oil	13 Gallons	40,000.00	520,000.00
Frytol	10 Gallons	45,000.00	450,000.00
Perfume/Lavender	2 Bottles	25,000.00	50,000.00
Camphor	4 Bags	5,000.00	20,000.00
Allowance for Resource Person			1,000,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>4,020,000.00</b>

### FRUIT PROCESSING

Fruits	500,000.00
Chemicals and Equipments	2,500,000.00
Allowance for Resource Persons	2,000,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,000,000.00</b>

	€
	5,655,000.00
	4,020,000.00
	5,000,000.00
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>14, 675,000.00</b>

## Appendix B

### Uncompleted enrolment form

#### MINISTRY OF MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT SKILLS TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT PLACEMENT (STEP) PROGRAMME

##### SECTION A

PERSONAL DETAILS AND COURSE SELECTED

NO. ....

To be completed by candidate in Block Capitals

PHOTO

1. Surname: .....
2. First Name: .....
3. Sex: .....
4. Religion: .....
5. Date of Birth: .....
6. Place of Birth: .....
7. Hometown: .....
8. Nationality: .....
9. Address at which you may be reached: .....

##### 10. PREVIOUS EDUCATION

Name of School Middle School/JSS/SSS/Attended	Date Attended		Certificate Obtained
	From	To	

11. Write any trade you like to Study: .....
12. Employment (if any) since leaving School:  
Name and address of Employer: .....  
Duration: ..... Position: .....

##### SECTION B

DECLARATION BY APPLICANT

13. I, ..... declare that the information given above is to the best of my knowledge and belief to be correct.

Date: .....

Signature of Applicant

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Name of Head Institution

Course Approved: .....

Signature and Stamp of Head Technical/Vocational Institute

Date



## Appendix C

Completed enrolment form with trainee having SSCE qualification under STEP programme.

### Y OF MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYM S TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT PLACEMENT (STEP) PROGRAMM

DETAILS AND COURSE SELECTED

No. ....

to be completed by candidate in Block Capitals.

1. Surname: .....
2. First Name: .....
3. Sex: FEMALE
4. Religion: CHRISTIANITY
5. Date of Birth: 15th JULY 1981
6. Place of Birth: NAVRONGO
7. Home Town: NAVRONGO
8. Nationality: GHANAIAN
9. Address at which you may be reached: P.O. BOX 1907, KUMASI

#### 10. PREVIOUS EDUCATION

Name of School: Middle School/JSS/SSS Attended	Date Attended		Certificate Obtained
	From	To	
<u>Mrs ASANTENIAA GIRLS SECONDARY SCHOOL</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>SS.C.E</u>

11. Write any trade you like to study: TIE AND DIE SEWING MAKING
12. Employment (if any) since leaving School.  
Name and address of Employer: .....  
Duration: ..... Position: .....

#### SECTION B

##### DECLARATION BY APPLICANT

13. I, VICTORIA WEGBA WEOBONG, declare that the information given above is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, correct.

Signature of Applicant: [Signature] Date: 19TH APRIL 2004

#### FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Name of Head of Institution

Course Approved: SHIR TEX DYK & SEW MAKING

REGIONAL CO-ORDINATOR (ACT)

Signature and Stamp of Head of Technical/Vocational Institute

19TH APRIL 2004  
Date

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