WORKPLACE SAFETY AND ACCIDENTS AMONG
ARTISANS AT KOKOMPE - ACCRA, GHANA

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that, this thesis is the result of my own research work, carried out in the Department of Sociology, University of Ghana, under the supervision of Prof. K. Senah and Dr. Dan-Bright Dzorgbo. All references cited in this work have been duly acknowledged. However, all errors found in this work are solely mine.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my loving and hardworking mother, *Madam Cecilia Ama Safo* for the selfless devotion and care she has exhibited from my childhood. You are indeed a *Sweet Mother!!!* Truly, “ALL THAT I AM, AND ALL THAT I EVER HOPE TO BE, I OWE IT TO YOU MY ANGEL MOTHER”!!

I also dedicate this work to all single mothers in Ghana for their contribution towards the education and livelihood of their children.
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ABSTRACT

Workplace safety and health is a crucial concern for all—wage earners, employers/management and the society as a whole. This is because workplace injuries and accidents have many ramifications on the life of the individual worker as well as others in society. Consequently, countries, as diverse as they are, have put in place mechanisms to ensure the safety of workers through several administrative, policy and legal instruments. Indeed, today the safety and health of workers is considered a global human rights issue.

In spite of this, the informal sector that employed the majority of low skilled workers in developing economies is often neglected in most systematic studies. The informal sector has attracted less attention not only from government but also from academics, policy researchers and human rights advocacy groups. In the rare instances where studies are conducted, they tend to focus on productivity to the neglect of safety.

In Ghana where the informal sector of the economy has outgrown the formal sector, as a consequence of the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP) undertaken in the 1980s, and, the Highly Indebted but Poor Initiatives (HIPC) in the 2000s, have deregulated and liberalized the Ghanaian economy and resulted in shrinking the role of the state in job creation. Consequently, vehicle repairs and spare parts retail have become one of the common features of the informal economy since many middle-class workers rely on imported vehicles from Europe and the North America. In spite of the popularity of the vehicle repairs and spare parts business, the physical environment in which the artisans work, and their occupational health and safety (OHS) conditions are often absent from intellectual discourse regarding their business activities.
As such, this study explored artisans’ experiences with occupational hazards and the coping strategies within their work environment. The study utilised the qualitative in-depth interview and observational methods to understand the general level of safety among the artisans at Kokompe in Accra. The artisans selected for the study included auto-mechanics, auto-electricians, auto-welders, auto sprayers and auto-spare parts dealers made up of master artisans, apprentices and other workers. In all 58 artisans were selected through convenience and snowballing sampling techniques. In addition, six key informants from state inspection agencies and other departments concerned with Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) in Ghana were interviewed.

The study revealed that the general level of safety and working conditions among the artisans was poor as all processes—welding, spraying mechanical and other artisanal activities—were carried out at the same place often resulting in multiple exposures to different hazards and safety concerns. The predisposing factors leading to these were human, environmental and mechanical. However, most of the artisans attributed accidents and injuries to unforeseeable events or spiritual forces. Significantly, it was observed that the activities of the Department of Factories Inspectorate do not cover the operations of informal small-scale artisans. Among several recommendations, the study proposes the urgent need to incorporate basic occupational health and safety practices into the informal apprenticeship training sessions for the artisans. In addition, there is the urgent need to pass the National OHS Bill into law.
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ACRONYMS

AGI: Association of Ghana Industries

DFI: Department of Factories Inspectorates

ERP: Economic Recovery Program

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

HSC: Health and Safety Commission

HSE: Health and Safety Executive

ILO: International Labour Organization

NBSSI: National Board for Small and Medium Scale Enterprises

OHS: Occupational Health and Safety

PPE: Personal Protective Equipment

PNDC: Provisional National Defense Council

SAP: Structural Adjustment Program

UK: United Kingdom

USA: United State of America

WHO: World Health Organization
CHAPTER ONE

SAFETY AT THE WORKPLACE: A GLOBAL OVERVIEW

1.1.0. Background to the Study

...Safety and health of workers is a part and parcel of human security.....Safe Work is not only sound economic policy; it is a basic human right... (Kofi Annan, 2002).

The above statement, credited to Kofi Annan, former United Nations Secretary General, captures the importance of workplace safety and health in the life of human beings. It also captures the central theme of this thesis which is the importance of workplace safety in the life of humans. As observed by Kofi Annan, safety is a basic human need and a right since it creates the very foundation for human wellbeing and survival. Ideally, therefore, every human being should live the whole life-cycle of human existence—from infancy, adolescence, adulthood to old age, without suffering any preventable, human-induced accidents and injuries.

The importance of safety has been further magnified by Abraham Maslow, a famous American psychologist, in his Hierarachy of Needs theory. Maslow (1940 cited in Kaur, 2013) argues that human beings are motivated by a hierarchy of needs, namely, physiological, love, safety, self-esteem and self-actualization. According to him, the need for safety is one of the fundamental needs human beings must satisfy in order to survive. In Maslow’s view, if physiological needs are relatively satisfied, a set of needs emerge for self-protection against danger and threats to life. Besides the general relevance of human safety, workplace safety is also crucial to human survival since today human beings spend the greater part of their lives at the workplace. The workplace, therefore, needs to be made safe from injuries and accidents.

The issue of occupational injuries and accidents is not a new phenomenon to workplaces; the
issue can be traced to the Industrial Revolution (1750 to 1850) which brought about changes not only in manufacturing and technology but also in the social, economic and cultural conditions of the period and on labour relations. Most notably, average incomes and populations began to increase at unprecedented levels. In the two centuries following 1800, the world’s average per capita income increased over tenfold, while the world’s population increased over six fold (Waldron, 1989). In the words of Nobel laureate, Robert E. Lucas, Jnr., “For the first time in history, the living standards of the masses of ordinary people have begun to undergo sustained growth...Nothing remotely like this economic behavior has happened before” (2002:98). The Industrial Revolution also brought about innovations in production, transfer of knowledge and technology leading to the emergence of the capitalist economic systems of production. Industrialization has also led to the creation of factories and urbanization with its resultant division of labour and specialization at the workplace.

In spite of the positive contributions of the Industrial Revolution, there were problems associated with it. For instance, masses of people forced off their lands, moved to the cities in search of work and brought with it problems such as overcrowding, filth and unemployment. Another immediate effect of the industrial revolution was a tremendous increase in the number of occupational health and accidents due to the substantial evolution of industry (Muntz, 1990). The attendant corollary impact of this proliferation is the increase in occupational hazards.

Within the emergent capitalist economic system, the new entrepreneurial class profited greatly while the labouring majority worked long hours for low wages and under appalling conditions. Standard of living was poor for the bulk of the population who were at the bottom of the social ladder (Woodward, 1981). Chronic hunger and malnutrition were the lot of the majority of the working class. For example, until about 1750, in large part due to malnutrition, life expectancy in
France was about 35 years, and only slightly higher (between 45-50 years) in England (Fogel, 2004). Engels (1892), collaborator of Karl Marx, argued that industrial capitalism shaped the propertyless proletariat into machine slaves, made their work meaningless and forced them to seek gratification in pub and brothel.

History suggests that labour legislations did not follow closely on the heels of industrialization (Singleton, 1983). In fact, during and immediately after the Industrial Revolution, no laws existed to protect workers and so working in a factory proved to be very dangerous. The workplace was hot with steam engines contributing to the heat generation. Machinery was not always fenced off and workers were exposed to the naked moving parts of machines (Muntz, 1990). Children were often employed to move between dangerous machines as they were small enough to fit between tightly packed machinery (Singleton, 1983). Added to the dangers of the workplace was also the impact of the hours of work. It was quite common for workers to work twelve hours or more a day in the hot and physically exhausting work places. Exhaustion naturally led to the worker becoming sluggish, which in and out of itself contributed to making the workplace even more dangerous (Muntz, 1990).

The advent of the Industrial Revolution created a need for legislation designed to reduce the increasing risk of injury and ill-health resulting from the introduction of new machines and processes in the 19th century. Industrial safety philosophy developed because the hazardous work environment of early factories and other production and distribution sites produced a high rate of worker injuries and deaths (Singleton, 1983).

The aftermath of the Industrial Revolution provided the opportunity for legislations designed to reduce the increasing risk of workplace accident and injury. In the U.S.A, in the beginning, one
way to make management accept responsibility for preventing accidents was to pass Workers’ Compensation Law in 1850 (Singleton, 1983). This held the employer responsible for a share of the economic loss suffered by a worker in an accident. From this early beginnings grew what is today known as the Safety Movement (Accident Facts, 1991). As result, the working environment today is relatively safer. Governments have made laws that compel employers to look after the workforce and provide it with safety equipment but this has still not prevented accidents from occurring at the workplace (Muntz, 1990).

The continuous occurrence of accidents and injuries makes safety at the workplace an important concern for all wage earners, employers, management and the society/state as a whole. This is because accidents or workplace injuries affect not only the worker but also all social partners within the workplace, namely workers unions’ and their families; employers and their associations; and the state and its agencies (Walters, 2001). Safety at the workplace has many ramifications on the life of the individual worker because the worker is a social being and not a machine that could be used for production and dumped afterwards. In the pursuit of a livelihood, workers are exposed to varying risks and hazards, some of which are peculiar to their own occupation while others arise from workers’ themselves or from the carelessness of colleagues (Adamson, 2004).

Workplace accidents do not constitute a new risk to social security and well-being of workers. In fact, these accidents or injuries have been covered by several legal provisions in many countries throughout the world (Levenstein and Tuminaro, 1997). In the contemporary technobureaucratizing world, industrial accidents pose a special challenge to the safety of workers. As
noted by Kizer (1997), maintaining a safe and healthy working environment is not only an important human resource issue, it is the law in some developed countries. Whether they are entry level workers, seasoned veterans, supervisors or plant managers, workers need to understand health and safety risks, the steps necessary to minimize these risks, common safety standards, and compliance procedures. The cost of workplace accidents and injuries are costly to society as a whole.

Estimates from International Labour Organization (ILO) indicate that worldwide, 270 million workplace accidents occur annually leading to three or more days absence from work while some 2.2 million people are estimated to die each year from work-related diseases. Some estimated 321,000 people die each year from occupational accidents with 317 million non-fatal occupational accidents and 160 million non-fatal work-related diseases per year. In addition, 313 million accidents occur on the job annually, many of these resulting in extended absence from work (ILO, 2013). As detailed by Muchiri, about “1.1 million people die at work every year, 335,000 are caused by occupational accidents and the rest by work-related diseases; work is more dangerous than war, and fatal accidents are rapidly increasing in developing countries, especially Africa” (2005:45).

The human cost of this daily adversity is vast and the economic burden of poor occupational safety and health practices is estimated at 4 per cent of global Gross Domestic Product each year (ILO, 2014). In fact, accidents occurring in the informal sector form a significant proportion of the preventable accidents (Walters, 2001).
These figures are conservative and thus underestimate the true extent of the problem. It is widely accepted that work-related injuries and deaths are underreported (Mayhew, 1999). The safety and health conditions at work are very different between countries, economic sectors and social groups. Deaths and injuries take a particularly heavy toll on developing countries, where a large part of the population is engaged in hazardous activities such as agriculture, fishing and mining.

As a result of the high number of deaths in the workplace, the World Health Assembly endorsed the Global Strategy on Occupational Health and Safety, which implementation was left to the ILO (Lehtinen, 2000). In 1999, the ILO convened an international consultation on Safe work Programme in Geneva. The objectives of the programme were to develop preventive policies and programmes to protect workers in hazardous occupations and sectors to extend effective protection to vulnerable groups of workers falling outside the scope of traditional protective measures to make government, employers’ and workers’ organizations better equipped to address problems pertaining to workers’ well-being improve the quality of working life and to demonstrate and document the social and economic impact of improving workers’ protection in order to facilitate recognition of deficiencies by policymakers and decision makers (Lehtinen, 2000). It is clear that the protection of the workforce from hazards and diseases related to work activities is an imperative that underpins a healthy and vibrant economy of any country. It goes without saying therefore, that the task of ensuring that workplaces and workers are free from potential hazards and diseases must be of concern to all stakeholders and the public at large.

1.1.1. Informal Sector and Workplace Safety

The ‘formal’ and ‘informal’ dichotomy within general sociology and development studies have generated considerable debate comparable to the the micro—macro/rural—urban/tradition—
modernity dualism in sociological analysis. In discussing the concept of ‘informal sector’ or ‘informal economy’, different scholars have given different categorizations and classifications (Hart, 1973; de Soto, 1989; Ninsin, 1991).

For Hart (1973), the masses that were surplus to wage labour requirements in African cities were not ‘unemployed’ but rather positively employed, even if often for erratic and low returns. Harts proposed that these activities be contrasted with the ‘formal’ economy of government and organized capitalism as ‘informal income opportunities’. Moreover, Harts suggested that the aggregate intersectional relationship between the two sources of employment might be of some significance for models of economic development in the long run. In particular, the dynamism of the informal economy might be a crucial ingredient of economic transformation in some cases. It flows from this that the informal economy does not exist in any empirical sense: it is a way of contrasting some phenomenon with what we imagine constitutes the orthodox core of the economy (Hart, 1973).

However, for many informal workers working in the streets as a survival strategy, their occupations fit the profile of ‘informality’ put forward by de-Soto (1989) as referring to the performance of a useful function and providing necessary services, but contravening numerous official regulations in the process. In many cases, such street occupations are the most viable alternatives to parasitic occupations or destitution. Their negative features are reflections of much wider social malaises which cannot be resolved simply by regulating and persecuting the street occupations (de-Soto 1989).
On his part, Ninsin (1991) contends that the term informal sector does not refer to a range of vibrant and viable economic activities prevailing in the Ghanaian economy. Rather it refers to that array of precarious economic activities which have become the haven for people desperately seeking to eke out a living because they are unable to secure wage or salaried employment in the formal capitalist sector. Such banal attributes as evasion of enumeration, registration and payment of tax and illegal or underground operations are purely incidental to only some of such activities. The major attribute of such small income generating activities is that they are the direct off-shoot of the perverse capitalist economy prevailing in a poor developing country.

In this study, artisans at Kokompe are regarded as informal small-scale workers who are outside the formal economy. The small scale enterprises in the informal sector have featured prominently in research and discussions on economic development and labour markets over the past three decades, particularly in the context of developing countries. The contribution of the informal small scale enterprises to the output of national economies has remained significant, but more importantly, it is still growing and continues to employ a large section of the populace in most developing countries (Kannan and Papola, 2000). In most developing countries, informal small scale enterprises constitute an integral part of employment. According to International Labour Organization (2003) estimates, the informal sector accounted for between 30 to 50 percent of total employment in Latin America; between 50 to 70% in Asia; and between 60 to 80% in sub-Saharan Africa. Taking self-employment as a proxy for the informal sector, the ILO (2003) reported that its share of total employment globally increased from 26% in the 1980s to 32% in the 1990s, from 29% to 44% in Africa, and from 26% to 32% in Asia.
The prominence of small and medium scale enterprises in the informal sector has attracted the attention of policy makers from two perspectives: improving the performance of informal enterprises and devising measures to improve conditions for the sector’s work force (Kannan and Papola, 2000). The degree of informality in Ghana is high with about 70% of economic activity carried out in the informal economy where labour market regulations are often absent (GLSS VI, 2013).

In most countries, small-scale enterprises constitute a large majority of all enterprises and account for a considerable share of all employees (Hasle and Limborg, 2006). At the same time it has become clear that small-scale enterprises carry greater accident and injury risk than larger formal enterprises (Fabiano, Curro and Pastorino, 2004; Stevens, 1999). It is difficult and expensive for accident preventive efforts to reach all small-scale enterprises (Walters, 2001). This is because in small-scale enterprises, there are little investments in accident prevention programs as compared to the larger formal organizations. In addition, due to the argument that small-scale enterprises are in most cases unregistered and unregulated, accident prevention efforts do not reach all small-scale enterprises (Walters, 2001).

As work in the informal small-scale enterprises becomes increasingly important feature of many developed and developing economies, it is widely acknowledged that the level of work-related injuries, fatalities and ill health experienced in these workplaces would be high (Walters, 2004). This is due to the explanation that there are inadequate formal regulative measures of ensuring the safety of people employed in this sector. It is also recognized that health and safety management in small and medium enterprises face considerable challenges arising from the organization and culture of work in the sector as well as from under – regulation and low levels
of inspection and enforcement (Walters, 2000). The above clearly is the condition within which many small-scale artisanal workshops and workplaces in Ghana are situated.

A growing number of studies have focused on the ability of small-scale enterprises to assess and control risks (Champoux and Brun, 2003; Hasle and Limborg, 2006). In many small-scale enterprises especially, small-scale mechanic shops, the owner/worker is often also the manager and has to deal with a number of different administrative and management issues such as sales, planning, human resources, finance, accounting and billing. In addition to this, many owners and workers in the small-scale enterprises are involved in practical work as well. Due to their numerous tasks the owners/managers tend to carry out on-the-spot problem solving with little consideration for the long term effects of their decisions. It is evident that these limited resources make it difficult to apply more systematic approaches to health and safety, as found in larger enterprises (Hasle and Limborg, 2006). Health and safety legislation requirements are either unavailable or not generally followed, particularly regarding risk assessment and control. Meetings on safety measures are rarely held, and problems are dealt with on an ad hoc basis and nothing or little is written down (Walters, 2001).

These owners and workers are the key to understanding workplace accidents, injuries and risks control as well as the operation of the small-scale enterprises. This is because they are the dominant actors in relation to any changes made in terms of promoting occupational health and safety. The personal values and priorities of the owners and workers are determinants of the safety culture, social relations and the attitude of the enterprise regarding the work environment and safety (Antonsson, Birgersdotter and Bornberger-Dankvaardt, 2002; Eakin, 1992; Hasle, 2000; Stephens, Hickling, Gaskell, Burton, and Holland, 2004). In addition, there must be a system of providing adequate information on the cases of accidents and injuries at the workplace.
There are no comprehensive and reliable data available on Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) in Ghana at the moment. The dearth of credible OHS data detracts from planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of preventive interventions and effective utilization of scarce resources. The major problem is the under-reporting of accident cases by industry and informal small-scale enterprise owners and workers as a result of inadequate enforcement of statutory provisions or general ignorance of such provisions.

There is hardly any official statistics on the number of workplace deaths and injuries especially in the informal sector in Ghana. While it is easy to obtain statistics on workplace accidents and fatalities in factories (Clarke, 2005), it is difficult to obtain such figures in the informal sector particularly among small-scale mechanics (Dua-Adonteng, 2007). Even for the factories, figures presented are not very accurate considering the problem of under reporting and the lack of enforcing provisions in existing legislation (Clarke, 2005). In the informal small-scale enterprises, like artisans workplace accident reporting and enforcement is poor and there are no accurate data as a point of reference.

However, the results of a 2005 survey on OHS conditions in Ghana are very revealing (Mock, Adjei, Acheampong, Deroo and Simpson, 2005). The survey, which covered 21,105 persons living in 431 urban and rural communities in the country found the annual occupational injury rates to be 11.5 per 1000 persons in urban areas and 44.9 per 1000 in the rural areas. Work-related injuries had higher mortality, longer disability and higher treatment cost than non-work-related injuries. In the urban areas the largest number of injuries (12.7%) involved drivers and traders (19.4%). Most injuries (71.6%) in the rural areas were suffered by farm workers.
Consequently, statistics available on the number of workplace deaths and injuries show that, the number of accidents and injuries made up of both fatal and non-fatal cases have been reported to the Department of Factories Inspectorate in Accra. The table below presents statistics on workplace accidents and fatalities in Ghanaian factories ranging from 2000 to 2012.

Table 1: Accidents Notified to the Department of Factories Inspectorate (2000 to 2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Accidents/Injuries Notified</th>
<th>No. of Fatal Cases</th>
<th>No. of Non-Fatal Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


A review of the figures presented above cannot be said to be very accurate considering the problem of underreporting and the lack of enforcement of provisions in the existing legislation. The situation is compounded by the absence of a central authority that would collate statistics for analysis and policy direction. Moreover, a critical analysis of the figures show decrease in the number of accidents and injuries notified as well as the number of fatal and non-fatal cases. There is the need, therefore, to examine why the decrease from 2004 to 2012. In addition, the figures do not say much about the situation of occupational accidents and injuries in the informal small-scale sector. In particular, artisans at Kokompe often toil for low wages, under poor and inhuman working conditions and in an unhealthy environment. Their prevailing physical condition is their only survival strategy, enabling them to earn their living regardless of their
working environment. It would, therefore, be relevant to understand how accidents and injuries cases (in terms of types, causes and rate) among the artisans and their attitude towards workplace safety, as well as, their approach to accidents and risk control. This is because the health and safety of all working persons must be safeguarded as required by ILO/WHO conventions on ‘Decent work—Safe work’.

1.2. Problem Statement

The safety, health and welfare of persons employed at workplaces in Ghana are guaranteed by Article 24(1) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana. By this Constitutional provision all persons working both in the formal and informal sectors, including self-employed persons such as artisans at Kokompe are to be protected by ensuring that they work under safe conditions devoid of any adverse health effects. It is the responsibility of the government to ensure that safety, health and wellbeing of workers are safeguarded as provided for under Article 36(10) of the Constitution. Article 23(1) provides, *inter alia that, “Every person has the right to work under satisfactory, safe and healthy conditions …”* while Article 36(10) states that “the state, shall safeguard the health, safety and welfare of all persons in employment, and shall establish for the full deployment of the creative potential of all Ghanaians (Constitution of the Republic Ghana, 1992).

In addition, the contribution of all persons to the development of Ghana requires that, their health and safety are secured especially those in the informal small-scale sector. This is because, as indicated earlier, Ghana has a large informal sector which constitutes 70% of its 7.7 million workforces (Clarke, 2012). It is not surprising that the informal small scale enterprises play diverse but important roles in the growth and development of the Ghanaian economy. The informal sector helps in the mobilization of capital and human resources which would otherwise
have been laid to waste (Fayorsey, 2011). For example, the importance of the Kokompe artisans cannot be overemphasized as they provide ready market for many middle class workers for vehicle repairs and spare parts retail.

However, the growth of small-scale enterprises in Ghana implies an increasing insecurity and vulnerability of workers to workplace accidents and injuries. This is due to the, large proportion of the population engaged in self-employment which makes it difficult to cover workers under formal schemes of safety inspection systems since they are not well organized. In Ghana, small scale mechanics, welders and sprayers considering the nature of their work, are vulnerable to occupational injuries and accidents. The problem of improving safety among these artisans is complicated by informal management structures, lack of regulation and inspection regimes, lack of organizational safety cultures and limited unionization, among others (Clarke, 2005).

Research efforts in relation to industry have been concentrated on areas such as the Ghanaian factory workers (Peil, 1972), the role of unionism (Damachi, 1974) as well industrial relations (Obeng-Fosu, 1991) to the near neglect of the physical environment in which work takes place and the dangers to which workers are exposed. As in many developing countries, the prevailing situation is that, government and policy makers focus largely on economic growth without paying attention to the quality of the work environment. The situation is exacerbated by the large number of people employed in the informal sector.

Again, the few studies that evaluate workplace safety and hazards do so by focusing on industries in the formal sector (Zungbey, 1994; Bedra, 2001; Appiah, 2007). A review of existing data on Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) research in Ghana showed inadequate research attention to occupational safety and health practices in the informal small scale sector especially
among artisans. However, some empirical findings have reported the prevalence of occupational health and safety hazards, risks and diseases in some formal and informal small-scale enterprises (Avotri and Walters, 1999; Amedofu, 2002; Danso, 2005; Agbenorku, Owusu, Nyador, and Agbenorku, 2010; Ackerson and Awuah, 2010). The findings suggest that risks, hazards and diseases are prevalent in the construction, mining, agricultural and other commercial sectors in the formal sectors. Critical analysis of these studies revealed that the informal small-scale enterprises in the automobile industry were largely neglected.

Consequently, studies that evaluate the informal small-scale enterprises in Ghana do so by examining the contribution of the sector to socio-economic development or in terms of skills training and job creation. For instance, Ahadzie (2005) examined the role of the informal sector in apprenticeship skills training. Also Adu-Gyamfi, Alexander and Willcox (2010) examined the Suame Magazine Industrial Development Organization (SMIDO) and its contribution to socio-economic development. However, such studies did not focus on the physical environment in which work takes place and the dangers and hazards to which workers are exposed.

In addition, few studies exist on OHS issues in the informal sector such OHS problems among mechanics at Odwana (Dua-Adonteng, 2007), OHS for informal market and street traders in Accra (Alfers, 2012), OHS among woodworkers in Kumasi (Kwankye, 2012) and OHS in Ghana’s Timber Industry (Dwomoh, Owusu and Addo, 2013) among others. It is clear that not much research has been conducted about OHS issues among small-scale artisans in the vehicle repairs and retail business in Ghana. Also, accidents and injuries in the mechanic work environment shops are not regularly reported. In addition, visits to these artisanal workshops reveals the poor conditions under which workers work without any personal protective equipment (PPEs) as well as the hazards and risks they are exposed to.
As a result of the few researches on occupational health and safety issues among artisans at Kokompe, not much is known about their general working conditions and the types and causes of hazards, accidents and injuries they experience and the perceived consequences on their daily activities. In addition, little is known about the attitude and behaviour of artisans’ towards workplace safety as well as the safety measures for accident reduction and prevention by the artisans and inspection agencies. In the light of this, the rationale for this study stems from the intellectual necessity to address some of the gaps in research on occupational health and safety among workers in the informal sector in general, and specifically, among artisans at Kokompe.

1.3. The Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to describe the state of OHS among small-scale artisans; to identify key OHS issues, injuries and accidents experienced by artisans; and to recommend directions for future OHS practices and research. More specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Describe the general working conditions of artisans at Kokompe;
2. Identify the types and predisposing factors of accidents, hazards and injuries in the study area as well as artisans’ levels of awareness of them;
3. Examine safety culture among the artisans in relation to their work behaviour;
4. Explore the perceived consequences and effects of injuries and accidents experienced by artisans;
5. Assess the safety measures put in place by artisans as well as the role of state inspection agencies in accident prevention.
1.4. Relevance of the Study

There are occupational hazards and safety problems in every enterprise, both formal and informal. Safety and health systems have to be provided for the welfare, safety and health of the worker. As a result of the drastic continued economic stagnation, in both developed and developing nations, there is an increase in informal work among all sectors of society. With the increasing social and economic contribution of the private sector, it is important to consider the hazards and injuries that occur in the sector as well as the basic conditions of work and livelihood of people working within the sector. This study highlights the issue of workplace safety in the informal small-scale sector among artisans at Kokompe.

According to the ILO/WHO conventions on Decent Work, the promotion of occupational health and safety to protect workers in particularly hazardous occupations, vulnerable groups (including informal sector workers, women and children), and in newly transferred technologies is a need and priority that must be identified by governmental and workers’ and employers’ organizations as well as industry.

By exposing the working environment and the predominant accidents suffered by artisans at Kokompe, this study potentially enriches the literature on several aspects of occupational health safety for industry and policies of government. In addition, there should be more concern for safety and workers welfare in the sector. This study provides a roadmap to securing the health and safety of Ghanaian workers in the informal small-scale enterprises.

Though occupational hazards, injuries and accidents have been gaining increasing coverage in the mass media, the type of hazards experienced and how workers cope with them are lacking. The absence of legal framework and institutions to monitor industrial accidents are not also
helping the need to place safety issues in the front banner of policy. As noted earlier, there is a plethora of legislative acts but there is little enforcement of these acts. By means of this scholarly enquiry, pragmatic recommendations and suggestions on improving the day-to-day operation of artisans are proffered with the hope that they will inform policy making as the perspectives of the artisans are the front and centre of this research.

1.5. Organization of Thesis

The thesis is organized into nine interrelated chapters. Chapter one sets the tone for the entire study by discussing the background of the issue of workplace health and safety at the global, historical and local level. It also addresses the question of what has motivated this study and also articulates the main and specific objectives.

The second chapter is devoted to the review of existing literature on workplace health and safety and describes the conceptual frameworks that guided the orientation of the study. In chapter three, the study focuses on Ghana’s Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) policy. Here some attention is paid to an overview of the history of OHS regulation and legislation in Ghana, review of some legal regimes (Factories and Labour Acts) in place for ensuring workplace safety. This chapter also examines the role of the Department of Factories Inspectorates and the challenges facing OHS enforcement and regulation in Ghana particularly in the informal sector.

Chapter four examines the political economy of informal small-scale enterprises. In this regard, the work locates artisanal workers in the transformation of the economy and emergence of Kokompe as vehicle repair and spare parts retail center through the importation of “home-used” cars.
Chapter five describes the methodological approaches that were used in the data collection process. It also describes the methodological difficulties and factors enhancing and constraining the data collection process. The chapter also provides a vivid description on the socio-demographic characteristics of the artisans. In chapter six the social organization of Kokompe, the study site was discussed in details, with some space devoted to specifying its historical origin, location, and infrastructure as well as social life.

Chapter seven examines accidents, safety and working conditions of artisans at Kokompe. This chapter discusses the nature and types of injuries and accidents they experience as well as the predisposing factors to these accidents and injuries.

In chapter eight, the focus was shifted to the safety Culture, work behaviour and attitude of the artisans in relation to workplace safety. The role of State Regulatory and Inspection agencies in accident reduction and prevention were also examined in this chapter.

Chapter nine provides the general summary and conclusion of the study by indicating all the major issues that have implications for policy on OHS as well as areas for future research.
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Introduction

The literature review for this study was based on the following thematic headings: the relevance of industrial sociology, what are workplace accidents, causes and cost of workplace accidents and safety, the problem of health and safety in informal small-scale enterprises and related work situation as well workplace safety cultures among others. The reviews relied heavily on secondary data by appraising, summarizing and bringing together existing literature and empirical studies on OHS in Ghana as well as those of regional and international importance.

2.1 Industrial Sociology and Workplace Safety

Very few industrial sociological works have been done in Africa especially on workplace safety in the informal sector. One can attribute this neglect to the fact that the emergence of industry (where many people work together) is a fairly recent phenomenon. Some sociologists are of the view that industrial sociology is of relevance only to industrial societies and since African societies are not typically industrialized, it is understandable that many sociologists do not see the relevance of industrial sociology to African societies (Ohene-Konadu, 2010).

It is, however, debatable that, industrial sociology only studies industrial societies. This is because, like any other discipline, it can have applications in industrial, as well as yet-to industrialized societies. Industrial sociology is concerned with work as a social activity. Hence, anywhere work takes place it should be of interest to industrial sociology. In this regard, mechanic shops and artisanal shops may not be formal or industrial organization, but once work takes place there and there are human beings involved, they are of interest to industrial
sociology. This is more so especially with regards to safety and health of workers and as result there is the need to study artisans involved in the small-scale informal sector. As a student of society, Industrial Sociology is relevant in the discourse of OHS issues in the small-scale informal sector since workers are human beings undertaking work activities. It is therefore important to examine what happens within these artisanal workshops in terms of occupational safety and accidents, injuries and hazards. In this way, Industrial Sociology as a branch of sociology which applies the principles and theories of sociology to the world of work not necessarily factory work but all kinds of work is relevant in the discourse of OHS in the informal sector.

Hoffman, Jacob and Landy (1995) argued that safety concerns are of paramount importance in production process in workplaces and as such merits industrial sociology’s concern with occupational health and safety. Industrial Sociology is therefore justified to be concerned with and study OHS issues in all organizations (formal or informal and large or small) in order to bring out problems encountered by workers. However, there is a debate as to whether informal small scale enterprises such as artisans at Kokompe are formal or informal organizations: formality and informality debate with different scholars giving different categorizations and classifications.

2.2 Small-Scale Enterprises: The Formality and Informality Debate

The discourse on the ‘formal’ and ‘informal’ dichotomy within general sociology and development studies has generated considerable debate comparable to the the micro—macro/rural—urban/tradition—modernity dualism problematic in sociological analysis. In discussing the concept of ‘informal sector’ or ‘informal economy’, different scholars have given different categorizations and classifications (Hart, 1973; de Soto, 1989; Ninsin, 1991). Hart
(1973) argues that the masses that are surplus to the requirements for wage labour in African cities are not ‘unemployed’, but rather are positively employed, even if often for erratic and low returns. He proposed that these activities be contrasted with the ‘formal’ economy of government and organized capitalism as ‘informal income opportunities’. Moreover, he suggested that the aggregate intersectional relationship between the two sources of employment might be of some significance for models of economic development in the long run. In particular, the informal economy might be a passive adjunct of growth originating elsewhere or its dynamism might be a crucial ingredient of economic transformation in some cases (Hart, 1973).

For many the term is a convenient name for an unambiguous empirical phenomenon. Others pay more attention to the logic of conceptual dualism, but vary greatly in their definition of essence. Thus the distinction is commonly taken to refer to size (large-scale /small-scale), productivity (high/low), visibility (enumerated/unremunerated), pattern of rewards(wages/self-employment), market conditions (monopoly/competition) and much more (Hart, 1973).

In tracing the origins and usage of the term informal economy, Hart (1973) explicitly derived his analysis from Weber’s theory of rationalization, which refers to the growing scope for bureaucratic organization and calculation of rewards in the history of Western economic institutions. Weber (1905 cited in Hart, 1973) believed that economic progress was inhibited by irregularity and unpredictability in social life and saw the rational/legal state as guarantor of an emergent corporate capitalism. This process was in part, one of increased formality in economic organization, as manifested in the planning of concrete enterprises and in an increasingly coherent body of economic theory. In this point of view there is a highly formalized part of all
Third World economies today, where states, owing their existence in large degree to international institutions and forces, seek with variable effectiveness to establish their writ over developing populations. Equally, much that goes on in these economies is only marginally the product of state regulation. This is a qualitative distinction, so that questions of size or productivity cannot be intrinsic to its definition. It flows from this that informality is in the eye of the beholder. The informal economy does not exist in any empirical sense: it is a way of contrasting some phenomenon with what we imagine constitutes the orthodox core of our economy (Hart, 1973).

Ninsin (1991) however argues that the term informal sector does not refer to a range of vibrant and viable economic activities prevailing in the Ghanaian economy. Rather it refers to that array of precarious economic activities which have become the haven for people seeking desperately to eke out a living because they are unable to secure wage or salaried employment in the formal capitalist sector. Such banal attributes as evasion of enumeration, registration and payment of tax; illegal or underground operations are purely incidental to only some of such activities: they are not the predominant characteristics. The major attribute of such small income generating activities is that they are the direct off-shoot of the perverse capitalist economy prevailing in a poor developing country. As Portes and Walton, (1981) affirm, the term informal sector refers to the structural features of a capitalist economy which is not just perverse but is trapped in an escalating crisis of accumulation.

Ninsin (1991), proposed a qualitative distinction between the informal sector in a developing country which is crowded by people forced by low income, unemployment and by desperate
poverty to engage in any kind of income-generating activity for subsistence and its counterpart in the developed countries where people who may want to escape the discipline and exploitation of capitalist industry. It is a significant contrast between unemployment and poverty on one hand and voluntary choice between self-employment and wage employment, on the other hand. In his view, therefore, the informal sector is neither a transitional feature of the economies of developing countries, nor is it a dynamic one. Rather, it is a symptom of a morbid economic system: escalating crises of the formal sector is a necessary condition for the expansion of the informal sector. Therefore, the informal sector is not a solution to the whole or part of the crises of the prevailing capitalist economy.

The organization of production prevailing in the informal sector is by no means totally traditional, nor is it entirely capitalist. It is an adulteration of some of the peripheral features of the capitalist system of organizing production. This is so because informal sector activities have to conform to the dominant principles of capitalist economic behaviours, especially at the market place. Accordingly, petty-commodity production system only attempts crudely to respond to the laws of accumulation rather than behave in accordance with them (Ninsin, 1991). In this process, the capitalist system of organizing production and methods of work become less relevant. The marginality of informal sector activities and the poverty of resources make this inevitable. It is this deviation from the key features of the capitalist system of production and distribution that distinguishes the informal sector from the formal capitalist sector of the economy (Ninsin, 1991).

However, scholars such Gugler (1997) have argued that the practice to distinguish between an ‘informal’ and a ‘formal’ sector in the urban labour-market is nothing less than to serve to direct
attention to a work-force that is typically under-enumerated, commonly characterized as unproductive, and all too often dismissed altogether as making little, if any, contribution to the urban economy. According to him, the analytical value of the simple dichotomy between ‘formal’ and ‘informal’ income-earning activities is, however problematic. This is because, early approaches, in particular statements by the International labour Office (1972), used multiple criteria to define the sectors. But the labour-market cannot be simply divided into two ideal types. If a multidimensional definition is not applied to one sector, the other becomes a quite heterogeneous residual category. More recently, the tendency has been to use a single variable to distinguish the two sectors. Thus, Portes (1994), while setting illegal activities aside, casts the argument in terms of an ‘informal economy’ of income-earning activities not regulated by the state.

As it is commonly used, the concept of the ‘informal sectors’ covers a great variety of activities. Any assessment of the prospects for the ‘informal sector’, and of policy options, has to be both specific and comprehensive, i.e. it has to focus on particular activities and engage in them, and it has to take full account of linkages, with the ‘formal sector’ in particular (Gibert and Gugler, 1992).

Hernando de Soto (1989) and his collaborators have developed a simple, clear concept of ‘informality’ to explain the socio-legal status of most street occupations, numerous other small enterprises, and self-help housing through squatting and illegal subdivision. Their concept of informality has no relation to the International Labour Office’s criterion definition for formal and informal sectors (ILO, 1972) an approach which presumes numerous intercorrelations which
have never been empirically demonstrated. In de Soto’s view, most people working in the street occupations are part of a grass-roots uprising against unjust and excessive regulations, starting their own businesses outside the framework of ‘formal law’.

Using a simple means/ends criterion, de Soto divides economic activities into three basic groups: formal, where both means and ends are legal; informal, where ends are legal but means are nominally illegal, and illegitimate, where both ends and means are illegal and/or anti-social. Formal enterprises obey the spirit and letter of the law. Informal enterprises obey the spirit of natural law but not the letter of formal law; they perform useful functions and provide necessary services, but do not obey every official regulation applying to their activities. Illegitimate activities contravene the principles of natural law – they are anti-social and/or criminal, whether or not they are officially proscribed by formal law. The means/end criterion is reinforced by a second criterion, social utility that the people involved and the society as a whole are better off if the law on these activities is broken than if it is obeyed. Hence, ‘an activity is informal when it neither produces deterioration in the social situation nor an antisocial result when the law and the regulations applicable to it are disobeyed’ (Portes, 1994:46). This second criterion excludes such morally questionable economic activities as prostitution, child labour and begging from the category of informality.

In addition, Bromley (1997) argued that, de Soto “portrays informal activities as manifestation of the vitality and entrepreneurial dynamism of the poor. They break a few rules here and there, but only to support themselves and their dependants, to make a living, and to avoid crime or destitution. He argues that they contribute massively to the provision of services to the economy as a whole, and to capital investment in housing and commercial real estate. His writings tend to
focus on ‘informality’ by the poor, but the logic of his analysis suggest that rich and big business may break ‘formal’ laws just as much as the poor do” (Bromley, 1997:128).

Bromley (1997) has also proposed that we conceptualize a continuum of employment relationships ranging from career wage-work to career self-employment. Between these two types of career work he distinguishes four types of casual work that ranges from short-term wage-work, through disguised wage-work and dependent work, to precarious self-employment. These distinctions serve to make the point that most of those engaged in the least stable and least secure work, while seemingly self-employed, in fact enjoy little autonomy and have rather inflexible working regimes and conditions. ‘Disguised wage-work’ is paid according to output, like much wage-work- the difference is that it is conducted off-premises. And, ‘dependent workers’ have contractual obligations that substantially reduce their freedom of action: they have to pay credit, and to purchase or sell at disadvantageous prices.

For substantial numbers of urban poor, working in the street is a survival strategy. Their occupations fit de Soto’s profile of ‘informality- performing useful functions and providing necessary services, but contravening numerous official regulations in the process. In many cases, such street occupations are the most viable alternatives to parasitic or anti-social occupations, or to destitution. Their negative features are reflections of much wider social malaises which cannot be resolved simply by regulating and prosecuting the street occupations (Bromley, 1997).

The issue is that whether these artisans (mechanics, sprayers, auto electricians etc) constitute a formal or informal economy is a matter of debate. This is based on the fact that they have some
characteristics of the formal economy or sector namely the existence of formal documents of import duties they pay for the importation of their spare parts, the use of bank statements, travelling to other countries to bargain for their products among others. Some of them even operate their shops with letter heads and issues receipts to customers as well as operate bank accounts just as the formal organizations. The only difference is that there are no laid down regulations for starting working and closing as well as other formal structures for doing work. In this regard, these artisanal mechanics cannot totally be isolated as informal economy using the same criteria as the formal sector. Within the African context, sociologically they are “formal” in their own rights operating with their own established procedures that can achieve some level of formality.

Given the importance of these so called “informal small scale” artisans contribution to national output, it is of crucial significance that the productivity of its enterprises be high enough for this sector to compete with larger domestic and international enterprises, particularly in today’s context of globalization. Workers in the informal sector, whether wage earners or self employees, generally get low returns on their labour; they work in very poor physical environments; they are highly vulnerable to insecurity of employment and have no social protection against the common risks of work and life. Improving earnings, working conditions, employment security and social protection of these obviously becomes a concern both for the state and for society in any country where they make up the majority of the workforce (Kannan and Papola, 2000).
In this study artisans at Kokompe fall with the classification of informal small-scale enterprises. The result of the above debate is that OHS in both large and informal sectors have taken a global turn and hence there is the need to define occupational health, safety and accidents.

2.3 Globalization and Occupational Health and Safety

Globalization, which involves the increasing integration of national economies into a world market (Taqi, 1996) also involves major changes and redistribution of work and reorganization and relocation of enterprises (Rantanen, 2004) all of which can affect the health and safety of employees. Globalization leads to changes in production models, enterprise models and structure of enterprises and also changes in technology (UNRISD, 2004).

Changes in production models lead to changes in working environment for better or for worse (UNRISD, 2004). The stress on global competitive advantage may lead employers to view the prevention of occupational injuries and the protection of workers’ health as an unrelated to quality management but as a barrier to production, trade and commerce. This is further expressed by Goldstein, Holmer and Fingerhut (2001) who indicate that the global burden of occupational disease and work-related injury remain unacceptably high because the majority of the world’s workforce is still not served by occupational health services. According to Takala (2000), the global corporate policy is not favourable for financing health facilities and safety services in many developing countries due to other pressures in global competition. However, for others it is not acceptable for employers to derive competitive advantage through economies in the areas of health and safety and well-being of their employees (Stiglitz, 2001).

New work-related hazards and diseases have emerged in some countries as a result of globalization. In Vietnam, just like all other developing countries, for example, many new
chemical substances have been introduced in industries such as organic solvents in the footwear industry and pesticide for use in agriculture (Vu Nam, 2000). It is estimated that there are between 5000 and 10,000 commercial toxic chemicals of which between 150 and 200 are known as possible causes of cancer (Vu Nam, 2000).

Due to globalization and its resultant changes in the nature of work, people in developing countries have to deal with increasing work-related stress (WHO, 2007). In industrialized countries however, people are becoming familiar with what work-related stress is and how to manage it (WHO, 2006; WHO, 2008), a situation which may not yet be the case in developing countries. New estimates by the ILO (2005) suggest that the number of job-related accidents and illnesses, which annually claim more than two million lives, appears to be rising because of industrialization in some developing countries.

Globalization leads to subcontracting and flexibility, which may cause a further compromising of health and safety standards in many developing countries. Indeed, industrialization in developing countries, which is a product of globalization, is a much welcome phenomenon in principle but with its associated health related problems many will soon wish it away. Despite significant improvements in health and safety measures in many parts of the world over the past several decades, the global challenge of providing for worker health and safety is ever greater today (ILO, 2005).

The International Commission on Occupational Health (ICOH) in its centennial declaration in Milan stated that in spite of the impressive progress made in the improvement of health, safety and social conditions of work, in the industrialized countries, the need for occupational health and safety is as evident as it was 100 years ago. While the nature of the problems, hazards and
risks has changed, the traditional hazards and particularly the new problems of work life still need much expert knowledge, research, training and information in order to be controlled, managed and prevented (ICOH, 2006). This statement expresses the frustration faced by health and safety experts and other researchers engaged in finding an antidote to OHS-related problems in the developing world. This challenge has arisen perhaps because of the rapid industrialization and globalization taking place in the developing world. The globalization process has not succeeded in equalizing the condition of work, in fact, the opposite has occurred; the gaps are increasing (Stiglitz, 2001).

Poverty, inequality and under-development are closely associated with poor safety, health and social conditions of work, as they are also linked with illiteracy, lack of education, poor access to health services and low or non-existent social protection (ICOH, 2006). Thus, globalization and its associated changing nature of work have made the management of OHS more challenging than ever. The majority of the developing countries has very poor investment in research and still has many unsolved problems (WHO, 2007) particularly in the area of OHS and the changing nature of work.

This explains the dearth in generating proper data and evaluating the impact of the changes at work. The situation is quite disturbing in the face of WHO figures showing that about 75% of the world’s labour force (which counts about 2400 million people) live and work in developing countries (WHO, 1994). Developing countries like Ghana who are at the receiving end of industrialization especially in the mining and minerals sectors; classified as hazardous industries (Gyekye, 2003), therefore present an avenue for an exploratory study on OHS, quality of life and workers well-being in the informal small-scale private sector. To the extent that OHS has
become a global issue, there is the need to know how the international organizations such as ILO and WHO view it.

2.4 Occupational Health, Safety and Accidents

Health is a positive concept that includes social and personal resources as well as physical capabilities. It has been conceptualized as the ability to have and to reach goals, meet personal needs and cope with everyday life (Nutbeam, 1990). The WHO defines health as not just the absence of disease but as a state of complete physical, mental and social well being (WHO, 1986). A joint definition of occupational health endorsed by the ILO and WHO (as revised in 1994) states that:

> Occupational health should aim at: the promotion and maintenance of the highest degree of physical, mental and social well-being of workers in all occupations; the prevention amongst workers of departures from health caused by their working conditions; the protection of workers in their employment from risks resulting from factors adverse to health; the placing and maintenance of the workers in an occupational environment adapted to their physiological and psychological capabilities; and, to summarize: the adaptation of work to man and of each man to his job (WHO, 1994: 3).

This definition has shaped not only the concept but also the organisation and delivery of occupational health service in Africa (Warr, 1987). However, most approaches to workers’ health problems are enmeshed in the medical model that strictly limits its operations to medical service delivery to prevent accidents and diseases in formal and defined occupations, most of which fall into the category of wage employment. Thus, workers outside this category—for example, mechanics, carpenters, masons, peasants, etc—are not covered.

In Ghana, the majority of workers (about 70 percent) operate outside the formal sectors of the economy (Clarke, 2012) which provides a good example of why the limitation of the current definition and approach to occupational health and safety is problematic. The exclusion of
informal sector workers does not mean that these producers do not suffer ill health in their occupations. Peasants for instance are exposed to agro-chemicals which they use in order to raise productivity (Clark, 2012).

Thus, occupational health has gradually developed from a monodisciplinary risk-oriented activity, to a multidisciplinary and comprehensive approach that considers the individual’s physical, mental and social well-being, general health and personal development (WHO, 1994). The above understanding coupled with the fact that at the core of every business is man whose output is partially dependent on his state of health; an appreciation of the concept of occupational health and safety becomes imperative to the success of any organization (Amponsah-Tawiah and Dartey-Baah, 2011).

Occupational safety could be conceived as a safe workplace. A safe workplace is an environment where, to the highest degree, workers’ well-being- physical, mental and social- is promoted and maintained. All possible efforts are made to prevent workers’ injuries and accidents caused by the working conditions and to protect workers in their work from factors adverse to their safety and health (Adamson, 2004).

Occupational health and safety (OHS) is a multidisciplinary concept touching on issues relating to such disciplines as medicine, law, technology, economics and psychology (Leka, 2003). As a broad based concept, occupational health and safety encapsulates the mental, emotional and physical well-being of the worker in relation to the conduct of his work. This therefore makes it an important discipline contributing to the success of any organization.

However, considering the multiplicity of disciplines subsumed in it, it has been treated as a—throw-away subject with all the other disciplines such as law, economics, medicine,
technology, psychology among others feasting on it when hungry (Clarke, 2012). Thus, not only
do the various disciplines focus on aspects of the concept, but they also make reference to it only
during critical situations. For instance, the law discipline makes reference to the concept only
when employers are to pay compensations for health and safety failures (Amponsah-Tawiah and
Dartey-Baah, 2011).

Traditionally, the focus of OHS initiatives has been on chemical, biological and physical
exposures or hazards, diseases, disorders and injuries related to or affecting work, while
psychosocial risks at work are still largely neglected and their causes and consequences still
insufficiently understood especially as they pertain in the developing country context (WHO,
2007). However, health issues involving the physical space of work; types of occupation and
their effect on health; job stress, work schedules, and other psychosocial issues in the work
environment affecting work (Warr, 1987) are all being given some attention in recent OHS
initiatives particularly in developed countries. According to the WHO (1994), all workers have
the right to healthy and safe work and to a work environment that enables them to live a socially
and economically productive life. This statement puts the human life at the centre of all
productive activities, which must not be compromised at any cost in the event of workplace
accidents.

Workplace accident is an event that takes place without foresight or expectation and can result in
some personnel injury and damage to equipment or property. Hazards and disasters or accidents
occur in all aspects of life - at home, at work and elsewhere. A narrow definition of industrial
accidents conceives them as resulting from faulty equipments or the improper performance of an
individual, i.e. something arising directly out of a situation. Self-inflicted injured cannot be
regarded as an accident (Ghosh, 2000). The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents of the
United Kingdom defines workplace accident as any unforeseen, adverse event causing harm or having the potential to cause harm (Kiwekete, 2009). All these definitions are applicable to accidents in the informal small-scale private enterprises such artisanal at Kokompe. Since workplace accidents occur without expectation, there is the need to promote the health and safety of workers, hence the importance of OHS.

2.5 Importance of Occupational Health and Safety

It is in the interest of workers and their representatives to earn a living, and also to reach old age in healthy and safe conditions (WHO, 2007). These interests are not contradictory but complementary to company interests. Organizations have traditionally evaluated their health and safety in terms of the bottom line (Robin, 2003). However, with past research uncovering enormous financial and human costs associated with unhealthy organizations (Cooper, 1994), human resource professionals have begun to position healthy workplace programs and activities as a source of competitive advantage to curtail increasing health care costs; assist in the attraction, acquisition and retention of employees; better manage the employer-employee relationship; meet the needs of an increasingly diverse workforce, and boost employee morale (Fulmer, Gerhar and Scott, 2003).

The goal of many organizations has been to avoid being unhealthy as opposed to optimizing health. There is however, a growing recognition that financial health correlates with investments in employee well-being (Goetzel, Guindon, Turshen and Ozminskowski, 2001), a condition which is gradually putting health and safety issues at the front end of work, job and organizational design efforts. Indeed, the costs of unsafe, stressful and unhealthy workplaces are horrific in personal, economic, and social terms and therefore require immediate attention.
The past decade has witnessed an increasing number of publications addressing interventions aimed at preventing work-related illness and injury and employee health (Levitt, Parker and Samuelson, 1987; Miller, Hoskin and Yalung – Matthews, 1987 and Nui, 2002). The rising interest and investment in workplace health promotion raises no questions as a cost benefit analysis of the subject matter is more likely to go in its favour. The belief that manpower is expandable (Takala, 2000) and that organizations can afford to lose some of their personnel only to be replaced in no time appears to be a thing of the past. Organizations no longer can afford to lose experienced and committed employees through ill-health caused by unhealthy and unsafe working conditions as the cost of recruiting, selecting, developing, motivating and retaining new employees who take over from experienced employees lost through work related ill-health remains incalculable (Amponsah-Tawiah and Dartey-Baah, 2011). This point is also relevant for the operations of artisans in the vehicle repairs and spare parts retail business; since they are self-employed occupational hazards and risks they experience become a threat to the survival of their business.

Others have concentrated upon the wage and profit losses associated with workplace injuries, accidents and diseases. Levitt, Parker and Samuelson (1987) in their study of the US construction industry estimated that such costs added an extra 10 percent to the wages bill. Miller, Hoskin and Yalung – Matthews (1987) using a human capital approach estimated a wage loss component for the United states of 20 percent.

Furthermore, an enterprise’s failure to ensure workplace safety can increase its direct and indirect costs. In 2000, Amweelo conducted a study in Namibia where he identifies direct cost as expenses that consist of repairs to equipment, replacement for damaged material, payment of high insurance premiums, compensation to the injured worker and medical bills. The indirect
cost includes, low productivity due to lost time by workers and supervisors attending to an injured worker, loss of earnings to the injured worker, time and money spent on training replacement workers as well as the damage caused to the image of the company in the public. Again, poor working conditions can affect the performance of an industry by increasing its operational cost and lowering profitability. An enterprise with a bad record of occupational health and safety may create an image problem that could make it difficult to attract workers and customers alike (Nui, 2002).

OHS therefore remains an important consideration for all organizations, particularly organizations engaged in high risk operations like the mining, logging, garages and construction industries. Good OHS practices not only provide a safer working environment but also improve worker morale and productivity. By pursuing good OHS practices, businesses face fewer workplace injuries and benefit from higher employee retention rates and enhanced corporate image. This reduces the costs associated with production delays, recruiting new staff and replacing equipment and avoids the resulting uncertainty and workload pressure placed on co-workers. Businesses who strive to improve their OHS performance create safer workplaces, which benefit not only employers and employees but their families, their communities and their economies at large.

Considering that working adults spend at least a quarter to a third of their working life at work (Takala, 2000) and the fact that job satisfaction is estimated to account for a fifth to a quarter of the satisfaction in adults, OHS issues in organizations that include the emotional, physical, chemical and biological exposures of work should be of interest to all employers and all other social partners in the workplace especially in the informal small-scale sector.
National economies also enjoy the benefits of a thriving OHS policy as the benefits accrued to industries tend to trickle down in the form of taxation and a reduction on other social services (e.g., health care facilities, social support benefits). A high standard of OHS correlates positively with high GNP per capita (WHO, 1994). The countries investing most in occupational health and safety show the highest productivity and strongest economy, while the countries with the lowest investment have the lowest productivity and the weakest economies (WHO, 1994). Thus, active input in occupational health and safety is associated with positive development of the economy, while low investment in occupational health and safety is a disadvantage in the economic competition (Amponsah-Tawiah and Dartey-Baah, 2011).

Finally, in Ghana, the cost and effect of occupational accidents and hazards cannot be underestimated. The result from a study of a factory in Ghana indicates that the company spent more for compensating workers in the case of accidents and injuries sustained by workers at work, than the loss of man-days (Appiah, 2007). It was revealed that workplace accidents and injuries have consequences for all in the work setting, hence the need to provide safety measures at the workplace. It is however important to identify the predisposing factors leading to workplace accidents and injuries.

2.6 Causes of Occupational Injuries, Accidents and Hazards

A number of factors contribute to workplace accidents and injuries. According to Ghosh (2000), workplace accidents are mainly caused by (i) unsafe act or (ii) unsafe conditions or (iii) both. It is also estimated by Ghosh (2000) that 98% of workplace accidents are due to faulty inspection, poor discipline, and lack of concentration, unsafe practice and mental and physical unfitness for the job. Human factor has been identified as the main contributor of workplace accidents while only a minor proportion (10 percent) of workplace accidents is due to physical causes, such as
faulty equipment and bad working conditions (Ghosh, 2000). In the workplace accident literature, individual attributes that contribute to unsafe behaviour have most often been lumped under the heading ‘human error or human factor.’ Traditionally, when this term was used by engineers, it could be taken to mean “random variables with little or no hope of predictability (Hoffman and Landy 1995).

Human error was also noted by Ameweelo (2000) as the cause of many accidents. He noted that employees who worked under stress or who felt insecure about their jobs were prone to accidents more than those who did not have such mental conditions. Still on human error, Amedofu (2002) identification of ‘unsafe acts’, defined as behaviours and attitudes that cause accidents, also played a very significant role in contributing to the number of occupational accidents. Unsafe acts include the failure to secure equipment and use safe attire or personal protective equipment, indiscriminate littering of refuse, operating or working at dangerous speed levels, lifting improperly and assuming unsafe positioning while performing a task.

Apart from human factors, unsafe conditions caused by mechanical and physical conditions can cause accidents. According to Dessler, (1991) unsafe conditions are one main cause of workplace accidents and they include such things as improperly guarded and defective equipment, hazardous arrangement of procedure in, on, or around machines or equipment, unsafe storage, congestion, overloading improper illumination–glare, insufficient light, improper ventilation-sufficient air change, impure air source.

Furthermore, unsafe acts are behaviour and undesirable attitudes that can result in accidents. These include failing to secure equipment, failing to use safe attire or personal protective equipment, throwing materials, operating or working at unsafe speed, using unsafe equipments,
unsafe procedures in loading, taking unsafe positions under suspended loads, lifting improperly etc. Unsafe acts such as these can short-circuit even the best attempts on our part to minimize unsafe conditions (Dessler, 1991).

As a result, over the years, attempts have been made by various groups to classify workplace injuries according to whether they were caused by an unsafe physical condition or by an unsafe personal act. Some of the earlier studies purportedly showed that 85 to 90 percent all injuries were caused by human error and only 10 to 15 percent by hazardous conditions (Beach, 1985). If one did not study the matter further, one might jump to the conclusion that management could obtain the greatest gain from the dollars it spends on accidents prevention by devoting efforts to employee education and ignoring the engineering aspect of safety. But such is not the case. More recent analyses of accident statistics reveal that the vast majority of these accidents are due to a combination of unsafe physical conditions and personal acts. Basically if the hazard were not present in the first place, an injury could not occur (Beach, 1985). A sound workplace-safety program must emphasize the engineering aspects of safety (hazard elimination) as well as employee education and training; showing people how to work safely in the presence of certain hazards (Beach, 1985).

Apart from unsafe conditions and acts, there are three more work-related factors that contribute to workplace accidents namely: the job itself, the work schedule and the psychological climate of the workplace. Also work schedules affect accident rates, since accidents increases late in the day. This is due partly to fatigue and partly to the fact that accidents occur often during night shifts (Dessler, 1991). Finally, it is argued that the psychological climate of the workplace also affects the accident rate. Temporary stress factors such as high workplace temperature, poor illumination and a congested workplace are also related to high accidents rates (Dessler, 1991).
Also, Ghosh (2000) observed that workers who work under stress or who feel that their jobs are threatened or insecure seem to experience more accidents than those who do not. According to Beach (1985), sometimes, the physical or mental condition of the person involved may contribute to the accident. Thus, a worker may be emotionally upset, inattentive, or fearful. Or he may be extremely fatigued or suffer some physical defects that make an accident more likely. Accidents and injuries experienced by workers are in most cases the result of hazards they are exposed to in their workplaces. It is therefore relevant to identify the source of these hazards at the workplace.

One main workplace hazard associated with artisanal (mechanic) work is ergonomic hazards. It relates to human factors associated with physical and mental demands of a particular job. Mechanics experience ergonomic hazards due to the nature of their job. The mechanics squat for long periods of time, especially when working on parts of motors with relative small size (Ghebreyohannes, 2005).

Also, mechanics easily get fatigued when they work from uncomfortable or awkward positions. The lifting and lowering of heavy objects like bags of tools, metal bearings, machine blocks, rim tyres, axles of vehicles, etc, all have serious implications for the health of mechanics. This is because when the task is performed wrongly, a lot of strain or pressure can be placed on the back of the mechanic and this can cause injury to his or her intervertebral discs and back muscles (Theuri, 2012; Katula, 2013).

Mechanics are also confronted with mechanical hazards in the course of their work. Accidents are common among mechanics for several reasons. These include boredom or monotony of certain tasks such as fixing bearings, checking of alignment, balancing, filing for smooth edge,
etc. The monotony and boredom associated with these tasks can engender carelessness among mechanics, and this can lead to accidents. Accidents at mechanics shops can lead to fatality or permanent disabilities. The cost of accidents in terms of economic loss or human suffering can be enormous (Ghebreyohannes, 2005). A considerable proportion of accidents may also cause anguish to the family of the victim and may disrupt a stable family structure. Colleague workers of an accident victim may also not be spared the anguish and trauma his or her family may experience (Theuri, 2012; Okuga, Mayega and Bazeyo, 2012).

Environmental hazards cannot be divorced from workplace hazards. What is usually detrimental to the environment is consequently detrimental to health of workers. This age old adage, ‘you cannot make omelette with broken eggs’, perfectly describes the work of mechanics. That is, mechanical activities come with some negative consequences. One of such consequences is environmental challenges. The main problem is the spillage of poisonous substances onto the land and in nearby drains. This behaviour interferes with the activities of micro and macro organisms, thereby promoting soil infertility and poor water quality. Fundamentally, the process of polluting the land and water bodies by mechanics disturbs the fragile tropical eco-system, and this has serious health implications for the mechanics themselves and the population at large (Katula, 2013).

Similar findings were made in Ghana by Amedofu (2002). In his study, it was found that, work sites were often kept in an untidy and unsafe condition. They noted that tools, raw materials, scrap and empty containers were scattered over the shop floor. The workers were reported to work from awkward positions, for example, bending, squatting and lying underneath vehicles for repairs. Amedofu (2002) also reported that the biggest burden of occupational injuries among
informal sector workers in urban area were in the categories of crafts and related trade workers, accounting for 27.6% of all urban occupational injuries, and elementary occupations (26.9%).

The biggest burden of occupational injury in the rural area occurred in elementary occupations, accounting for 74.9% of all rural occupational injuries (Amedofu, 2002). The research further demonstrated that in the urban area, the highest rates of injury were recorded by carpenters and motor vehicle drivers. In the rural area, the highest rates were captured by carpenters, street vendors and farmers. It is noted that occupational health hazards are common under the informal sector employment due to the structure and organization of the informal sector. It is therefore important to examine the health implications of the hazards workers are exposed to in their daily activities (Amedofu, 2002).

2.7 Health Implications of Workplace Hazards.

Health problems reported in the literature in the formal sector appear to be similar to those that occur in the informal sector. The common causes of health problems include poor housekeeping, poor lighting, long working hours that lead to fatigue among workers, poor workplace design, ignorance of risks posed by chemicals and increased practice of self-medication (Holkeri, 2001).

Furthermore, poor accommodation has also been identified as contributing factor to the poor health of mechanics. Due to overcrowding, the mechanics and their families were exposed to airborne diseases such as upper respiratory tract infection, pneumonia, tuberculosis and skin infections such as scabies, which is spread through body contact (Ghebreyohannes, 2005).

Mechanics, especially those who work on body parts of vehicles, generate a lot of dust and toxic waste into the atmosphere. The dust which comes out as a by-product of materials that are taken through processes of grinding and smoothening is a source of health hazard for the mechanics.
and residents of nearby communities. This is because the dust, involuntarily inhaled can have serious implications for the respiratory and pulmonary functions of the body. The polluted air also affects vegetation by blocking plant pulse and reducing light penetration and photosynthesis (Theuri, 2012).

Informal sector workers are also exposed to common chemicals that have serious implications for their health. Especially, when production takes place at home, family members and workers are potentially exposed to harmful chemicals. For example, loss of eyesight has been reported in homes where jewellery is produced when splashes of acid solutions, gold dusts and powered chemicals make contact with the eye (Holkeri, 2001). This has been corroborated by a study in Kenya where chemicals used by home based jewellery workers (e.g. boric, sulphuric, nitric acid, cyanide and caustic soda) led to eye and respiratory disorders (Theuri, 2012). With an indication of the types and causes of hazards accidents and injuries workers in general are exposed to in their work as well as their health problems, there is the need to discuss hazards, accidents and injuries in informal small-scale enterprises.

2.8 Hazards, Injuries and Accidents in Informal Small-Scale Enterprises

A number of researches have studied the special nature and culture of informal small-scale enterprises (Eakin, 1992; Hasle, 2000; Walters, 2001; and Robin, 2003). Some of these do not put special emphasis on occupational health and safety but rather they make important contribution to the understanding of the reaction, motivation and resources of informal small-scale enterprises (Hasle and Limborg, 2006). In most of the studies on the nature and operations of informal small scale enterprises, the owner is emphasised as the dominant actor in relation to any changes made in them (Hasle and Limborg, 2006). Other studies document how the personal
values and priorities of the owner are determinants of the culture, social relations and the attitude of the enterprise (Hasle, 2000; Walters, 2001; Eakin, 1992).

Based on the above references, one main characteristic feature of informal small-scale enterprises is the owner-manager/sole proprietor. In many cases he/she is the key person and his or her opinions and values constitute the approach of the enterprise to occupational health and safety (Hasle, 2000; Antonsson et al., 2002; Walters, 2001; Mayhew, 1997). Many of these owners consider health and safety to be the responsibility of the employees and thereby blame them for accidents and injuries (Eakin, 1992). The effect of this is to avoid questioning the firm’s owner/manager and organization of work. Many SMEs’ owners/managers are isolated, overworked, do not use services offered by the OHS sector associations and generally do not belong to business groups (Hasle, 2000). They also appear to be poorly informed and do not realize the extent of their health and safety problems (Walters, 2001). At the same time, many owners consider regulation and demands to improve health and safety standards as financial burden which is too heavy and not realistic for a small enterprise. In combination with the fact that accidents are a rare experience within the individual workplace, this attitude forms an ad hoc approach to health and safety as problems to be solved (Hasle, 2000).

Consequently, most informal small-scale enterprises can be described as organizations which have to fight for survival with the owners as the responsible persons who, like an octopus, has to handle many different issues at the same time, and consequently, health and safety issues are not always high on the agenda. It is this position as both owner, manager and in some cases worker, held by one person who has to handle all management issues including safety, which is the key to the understanding the nature of many small enterprises. The owner-manager gets a large part of his or her identity from the enterprise and his or her own beliefs and cultural values are the
guidelines for the development of the business. His/her management is often a patriarchal one, which may be ego-centric and action-oriented, but which also means that he/she assumes a certain responsibility for the employees (Hasle and Limborg, 2006).

Suspicion towards state regulation and enforcement agencies is another important characteristic of these enterprises. It is, therefore, crucial to recognize the position of the owner/master in order to develop an approach which can foster successful hazard and accident preventive strategies. Similarly, many studies show that informal small-scale enterprises have problems with fulfilling legal requirements for the control of occupational health and safety. The fact of limited resources is often mentioned in this context (Mayhew, 2000; Hasle, 2000; Walters, 2000; Antonsson et al., 2001).

Another important point is that the cost of implementing control measures according to the legal requirement is relatively higher in informal small-scale enterprises than in larger ones (Fabiano et al., 2004). This point, however, may not be the case in many Ghanaian informal small-scale enterprises since the legal requirement are totally absent or does not exist. Most countries have basic requirements that employers must meet as regards the organization of health and safety measures. Among others, it is normally the requirement to establish a management system which includes a health and safety committee, election of safety representatives and periodic risk assessment (Walters, 2000). Informal small-scale enterprises generally have difficulties in fulfilling these requirements (Hasle, 2000). These enterprises have several problems in their operations as a result of the features identified above.

Many researchers claim that informal small-scale enterprises have special problems with the work environment. The risk is higher, and the ability to control risk is lower (Hasle and Limborg,
2006). This is particularly true in the case of Ghana where many of these informal small-scale mechanic shops operate in poor working environment such as in uncompleted building, under high tension electricity cables and along narrow streets among others (Clarke, 2005). Research carried out in recent years seems to give a firm base to the conclusions that risk is higher in informal small-scale enterprises but the ability to control risk is lower, although it does not have to cover all risks and types of industries (Hasle and Limborg, 2006).

Types of injuries and their frequency of occurrence appear to be associated with the size of establishments. Historically, small companies appear to have had higher injury rates than larger firms. For example, in the year 1982, establishments employing between 100 and 247 workers recorded an injury incidence rate of about 10.7 while companies employing between 250 and 499 workers had a rate of about 9.9 injuries per 100 full time workers (Fabiano et al., 2004). However, establishment employing more than 2,500 workers had a rate of only 5.5 per 100 full time workers. The reason for this disparity is because small establishments, unlike their larger counterparts, are less safety conscious and do not properly trains their workers to pre-empt accidents (Hasle and Limborg, 2006). The pressing problems of production, sales and finance take precedence over occupational health and safety issues in smaller firms (Beach, 1985).

There is also strong evidence for high accident risk in informal small-scale enterprises and this is especially for fatal and other serious accidents (Fabiano et al., 2004; Stevens, 1999). There are other studies indicating that exposure to physical and chemical hazards are larger in informal small-scale enterprises. The literature has only to a limited extent revealed the reasons for the higher risk. It is almost taken for granted that the informal small-scale enterprises have difficulties in controlling risk due to human and economic resources. There might be other reasons such as the organization of work and the technology, but these issues are only discussed
in a few studies (Mayhew, 1997). With regards to the psychological work environment, there are indications that the situation is quite the opposite. Informal small-scale enterprises may have a better psychological work environment which may be ascribed to the close social relations (Limborg, 2003). Although informal small-scale enterprises are a significant economic driving force, most of the studies show that it is extremely difficult to manage occupational health and safety (OHS), and that accidents occur more frequently than in other size categories. The nature of the OHS problems in small firms and the factors explaining the higher risk level are numerous.

Firstly, most employers or owners of informal small-scale enterprises tend to underestimate and even trivialize risk; they believe risk is an inherent part of the work activity and do not believe their workers are in any significant danger. Stevens (1999) have pointed out significant disagreement between owners and workers regarding risk evaluation. Some owners believe their OHS system is adequate simply because problems rarely occur. Others tend to ascribe OHS problems to external factors such as inflation, taxes, regulations, minimum wages and workforce quality. They appear less aware of internal factors over which they have control, including the organization of work. Time constraints tend to be significant in these enterprises, roles are not always clear, tasks are not defined and training is summary at best if not completely absent (Fabiano et al., 2004; Stevens, 1999). As a result, they do not attach much importance to control and prevention of workplace safety. Those that have had bad experience tend to take OHS more seriously, but they do not have a systematic approach and thus their choice of problems to be solved is arbitrary and based on the occurrence of accidents (Limborg, 2003).

Secondly, informal small-scale enterprises are more fragile financially, which makes OHS investment less attractive because the financial benefits of prevention are not obvious in the short
term. The owners-managers tend to be personally responsible for virtually all management functions in their firm without any management training, even though it is impossible to have expertise in all relevant areas of work. It is clear that the economic restrictions in informal small-scale firms, combined with frequent variations in tasks, mean that it can be more difficult for them to select preventive measures than would be the case. Accordingly, these firms tend to use less elaborate and less effective control methods, focusing on individual behaviour and individual protection which in some cases is even absent (Eakin, 1992).

Thirdly, the workforce is an important factor. Antonsson et al., (2002) recognize there may be significant differences among informal small-scale enterprises in terms of general operation and OHS management. Generally speaking, the larger the workforce, the more stable and specialized the employees’ job will be. In these enterprises, the technical control mechanisms are less elaborate and exposure to risk is greater. However, significant variations in tasks can mean shorter exposure to risk, which can actually reduce the risk level compared with a larger firm where the employees spend more time doing the same job. As workforce size increases, the owner manager is more likely to obtain assistance with managing tasks, and may employ specialists in certain areas of production. Their employees are generally younger, less educated and less experienced than their counterparts in large corporations, and this may enhance the risk of workplace accidents and injuries.

Fourthly, due to lack of knowledge and information, employees may not necessarily be aware of the risk they face, they may not know how to protect themselves and tend to manifest risk acceptance. Champoux and Brun (2003) believe that in sectors such as construction and small manufacturing enterprises in the informal sector where the procedural and technical risk is inherently high, organizational problems actually enhance the risk and hazards.
Finally, the common factors that undermine workplace safety in informal small-scale enterprises are low levels of capital, use of rudimentary tools and techniques and the propensity to innovate or take short-cuts in production (Hasle and Limborg, 2006). While innovation may be necessary for the survival of any establishment, it can be hazardous to workers when it is not properly thought through before being implemented. Other factors that undermine workplace safety in informal small-scale enterprises include poor working conditions and poor legal regimes to regulate health, safety and labour issues. In spite of the heterogeneity of informal sector workers, a common pattern of occupational health problems that has been reported from around the world include but not limited to musculoskeletal disorders (shoulder pains, backaches, numbness of hands and feet and rheumatism/arthritis); eye strain and injury, skin irritation and respiratory disorders (Eakin, 1992). With the above risks and injuries identified in informal small-scale enterprises, it is prudent to know the situation in the Ghanaian context, once the study is located in Ghana.

2.9 OHS Issues and Concerns: The Ghanaian Context

As indicated earlier, not many studies have been done on the issue of OHS in the informal small-scale sector in Ghana. This is because in most cases management and workers of organizations are unwilling to permit studies on their OHS practices for fear that they would be exposed for failing to devise, implement and enforce the appropriate mechanisms and legislations.

However, a study conducted by EMPRETEC Ghana Foundation (with support from the International Labour Organization (ILO) among smaller enterprises on the state of jobs in Ghana between late 2000 and early 2001 has established that safety, health management and job security measures are inadequate. The study showed that injuries were most common in small enterprises and that owners of enterprises suffered less injury than their employees. The study
further revealed that unsafe working conditions were rife and people were not aware of safety regulations and legislations and some who knew these just refused to comply. The study also stated that EMPRETEC has embarked on a course with the assistance of the ILO to educate and train owners and employees of enterprises on how to improve working conditions through better observation of safety and health regulations, using management techniques (Appiah, 2007).

Other empirical findings reported the prevalence of these occupational health and safety hazards, risks and diseases in Ghana (Avotri and Walters, 1999; Amedofu, 2002; Danso, 2005; Agbenorku et al. 2010; Ackerson and Awuah, 2010). The findings suggest that these OHS risks, hazards and diseases are prevalent in the construction, mining, agricultural and other commercial sectors. Critical observations from the literature showed that the informal small-sized enterprises are neglected in research endeavours.

Clark (2005) buttressed these problem scenarios by indicating that poor OHS infrastructure and funding, insufficient number of qualified occupational health and safety practitioners and the general lack of adequate information are among the main drawbacks to effective OHS practices. Kheni, Dainty, and Gibb (2008) in their survey on health and safety practices among informal small-scale construction revealed some OHS problems. The main problems identified by Kheni et al. (2008) included lack of skilled human resources, inadequate government support for regulatory institutions and inefficient institutional frameworks responsible for health and safety standards. Additionally, insufficient OHS education has been one of the challenges to occupational health and safety practices (Ghana Health Service Report, 2007).

Another key OHS issue is the employees’ incessant exposure to occupational health and safety hazards, risks and diseases. Researchers have also reported some OHS risks, hazards and
diseases in Ghana. Fire outbreaks in both private and public institutions have dramatically increased without major interventions. For example, Ghana's biggest market (Kumasi Central Market) was gutted by fire which was estimated to have destroyed over 400 market stalls, as well as a significant amount of goods and cash and not mentioning the state agencies such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Land Commission which were burnt into ashes with devastating effects. The Factories, Offices, and Shop Act 1970, (Act 328) establishes that there shall be an appropriate means of fighting fire in every factory, office and shop in Ghana (Alfers, 2012). This explains why the few OHS policies, status and regulations do not work.

A study by Avotri and Walters (1999) showed that sanitation problems which are aggravated by the lack of accessible running water, as well as inadequate toilet facilities have the highest tendency of causing malaria and diarrhoea, musculo-skeletal pain, dehydration, and headaches. As a commercial and rapidly growing economy, noise-induced hearing loss is identified as one of the most prevalent occupational health and safety risk and hazards in the construction industries with damaging effects on construction workers health (Amedofu, 2002).

In the year 2000 for instance, it was reported that the construction industry recorded 902 accident cases comprising 56 fatal accidents and 846 non-fatal accidents in Ghana (Danso, 2005). A study by Agbenorku et al. (2010) found that workers were exposed to high levels of injuries, diseases and risk especially in the mining and printing industries. The Labour Department Report (2000) indicated that OHS risk, hazards and accidents in the construction and mining sites are fatal. In the same light, Ackerson and Awuah (2010) reported that, farmers are also exposed to occupational and water-related health risks, hazards and diseases including schistosomiasis, cholera, nematode infections, malaria, headaches, dermatological conditions, visual, cardiac, and other respiratory problems.
Dwomoh, Owusu and Addo (2013), studied OHS in Ghana’s timber industry and showed that occupational hazards, injuries and accidents exists among lumber and logs workers. Their findings concluded that enterprises in the timber industry need to pay much attention to their health and safety needs. A study by Kwankye (2012) on woodworkers in the Kumasi Metropolis indicated that unavailability and low usage of personal protective equipment (PPE) increase the risk of getting involved in accidents.

Monney et al. (2014) studied occupational health and safety practices among vehicle mechanics in Mampong Municipal area in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The result of their study indicated that 78% of the artisans lacked training in fire safety and besides firefighting equipment were non-existent in the workshops visited. In addition, 64% of the artisans had sustained various work-related physical injuries. Due to the physical exertion required by their work, most artisans experienced musculoskeletal disorders. Use of PPE was low (27%) and the main reasons for non-use of PPE was because they felt uncomfortable, PPE are not important for their jobs as well as the cost of procuring them.

Besides the above empirical studies on OHS in the informal small-sized enterprises, other publications exist. For example, Clarke (2012), accessing occupational health and safety services in the agricultural and informal sectors in Ghana indicated that the majority of Ghana’s legal provisions on OHS are limited in scope as vast majority of industries, including agriculture and most of the informal sectors are not specifically covered.

Amponsah-Tawiah and Dartey-Baah (2011) examined occupational health and safety issues in Ghana and found that the lack of a comprehensive OHS policy, poor infrastructure and funding, insufficient number of qualified occupational health and safety practitioners, and the general lack
of adequate information are among the main drawbacks to the provision of occupational health and services. Puplampu and Quartey (2012) found little attention given to OHS practices and problems in Ghana.

It is, therefore, evident that while occupational health and safety research attempts have been made, little attention has been given to small and medium scale enterprises in the informal sectors. However, even though some empirical studies exist on OHS issues in the informal sector, very few studies have been done among artisans in the vehicle repairs and spare parts retail enterprise with only few exceptional studies (see Dua-Adonteng, 2007; Monney et al., 2014).

2.10.0 Conceptual Framework

The core orientation of this study is to examine workplace safety and accidents in small enterprises. In this regard it is crucial to understand the conceptual framework within which this study is located. The main framework that guided this study is Bittle’s 3Es of Accident Prevention (Engineering, Education and Enforcement). This is because any attempt to understand the workplace safety and accidents must take in to consideration the social organization of the workplace, how workers are socialized in the use of safe procedures and how safety mechanisms are enforced.

Besides the 3Es framework, the researcher also reviewed three other theories, which were used to explain other aspects of workplace safety and accidents among artisans at Kokompe. These are the self-defensive attribution theory, the theory of safety culture and theories that explain the occurrence of workplace accidents. This is because; where one framework could not explain the
dynamics of safety and accidents among the artisans other theories did so. First the 3Es of Accident Prevention framework as discussed below.

2.10.1 Bittel’s 3Es of Accident Prevention Framework

In understanding the attitude and behaviour of artisans towards occupation health and safety in their workshop and measures they put in place for accident reduction and prevention, Bittle’s (1985) framework for accident prevention was used. According to Bittel (1985), accident reduction and prevention depend on the three E’s—Engineering, Education and Enforcement; jobs should be engineered for safety; employees should be educated in safe procedures and safety rules should be enforced.

Firstly, engineering a job for safety is very crucial in ensuring safety and health at the workplace. This is because where the work and its environment are not well structured, the chances are that, accidents and injuries are more likely to occur. In many workplaces, a major occupational health and safety concerns the nature in which the work environment and conditions are structured and organized. In many instances, the manner in which the job and its environment and conditions are engineered and organized among workers in the informal sector is a leading cause of the numerous preventable occupational injuries and accidents.

According to Theuri (2012), a characteristic feature of informal small scale enterprises include a poor work environment, unplanned and poorly constructed premises with very unsatisfactory health, safety and welfare facilities as well as practically non-existent occupational health services. This situation burdens the productivity, impairs health and general wellbeing, and is detrimental to the quality of life of informal sector workers. The relevance of the engineering
aspect of the 3Es would be evident in the chapter on social structure of the study area and chapter seven and eight as to how the place is structure for safety

Secondly, education is another key element in occupational health and safety promotions and accident reduction at the workplace. A job or workplace well engineered for safety and health is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for ensuring safety and health at the workplace. In many instances, workers in both the formal and informal small-scale sector are not well educated on the need to use personal protective equipment as well as follow established and laid down procedures for work. Educating workers on safety mechanisms and procedures is the responsibility of the entire social partners at the workplace namely employers, workers and their unions and state agencies. Artisans’ knowledge on safety mechanisms and procedures is not only low but also such preventive measures do not exist at the first place. This would be explained in the findings.

Thirdly, enforcement is another key aspect of accident prevention and reduction in Bittel’s framework since safety rules and mechanisms should be enforced to ensure workplace safety. Enforcement of safety rules and regulation is the responsibility of workers, employers/management and state regulatory and inspection agencies. Workers at their own levels with the help of their unions have a responsibility in ensuring that safety rules are enforced. Management/ employers through function supervisors also ensure that workers follow established procedures and mechanisms at the workplace. State regulatory and enforcement agencies are also expected to inspect and check for safety practices and conformity to safety procedures at the workplace. The enforcement of basic OHS regulations is low or totally absent among the artisans at Kokompe. In summary, taking the 3Es-Engineering, Education and Enforcement together as a framework for understanding attitude and behavior of the artisans
towards OHS in general and accident prevention in particular, the condition at Kokompe is problematic. In effect, the 3Es are mutually interrelated to bring about workplace safety or otherwise. This is because; a well engineered workplace must have mechanisms of educating workers in safe procedures of work as well as enforcing safety rules. Apart from the 3Es framework, other theories as identified below also helped in understanding OHS issues among the artisans.

2.11.0 Review of other Theories

Three other theories were used to explain workplace safety and accidents among the artisans at Kokompe beyong the 3Es framework of accident reduction.

2.11.1 The Self-defensive Attribution Theory

Self-defensive attribution theory basically argues that people generally make causal attributions for their own and other peoples’ behaviour to facilitate understanding and to shape future behaviour. The theory assesses the co-variation between cause and effect variable (Heider, 1958; Kelly, 1973). Workplace attribution analyses have been used to predict behaviour in hazardous work environments (Furnham, 1998) and have served as explanatory frameworks for management’s decision to reprimand or terminate workers for workplace accidents. Additionally, the theory provided models for the analysis of behavior in the face of danger as well as models for ergonomic perception of workplace (Gyekye and Salminen, 2006).

The work environment therefore seems to be an appropriate domain to examine causal attribution biases and distortions that are associated with accident occurrences. According to the social psychological literature, there is a tendency by people to bias perceptions of causality to satisfy the perceiver’s personal motivations (Gyekye and Salminen, 2006). An example of such
attributional distortion occurs when people use self-protective mechanisms to project blame for personal inadequacies and failures onto external circumstances. This has been labeled the self-defensive Attribution (Shaver, 1970; Walster, 1966).

The self-defensive attribution theory originated from a study by Walster (1966) with the assumption that the participants in an accident process tend to explain the accident occurrence in a way that minimizes their personal responsibility. It is often described as a notion of self-protective attribution distortion by which people deny or minimize the implication of their responsibility in failure events (Gyekye and Salminen, 2006) in order to protect their self esteem. Shaver (1970) coined the term “defensive attribution” to suggest how people are motivated to bias and distort causality and responsibility assignment in order to minimize their own responsibility for negative incidents.

The defensive attribution theory has received support from empirical research in the work environment (Gyekye, 2001; Gyekye, and Salminen, 2004; Gyekye, and Salminen, 2006). These studies have indicated that both victims and supervisors tend to attribute workplace accident occurrence to causal factors in a way that diminished their own responsibility. In their study using the defensive attribution theory, Hasle et al., (2009), argue that in spite of workers providing detailed explanations of the causes of workplace accidents, with many contributing factors, most of them ended up attributing the accidents to unforeseeable circumstances—that is bad luck. Applying the defensive attribution theory to this work helped to understand what the respondents consider as the causes of the workplace injuries and accidents within their workplace.
In Ghana, not many studies have looked at defensive attribution in informal small-scale enterprises such as artisans at Kokompe where formal structures and hierarchies are quite different from larger enterprises. By applying this theory, the study tries to understand what artisans consider as the factors responsible for the accidents and injuries they experience and their attribution patterns.

2.11.2 Theories on Occurrence of Workplace Accidents

Workers differ in respect of the number of accidents they are involved in. Four theories therefore have been advanced to account for individual differences in susceptibility to accident (Dessler, 1991). These are the Theory of Chance, Unequal Differences in Susceptibility, Increased Susceptibility and Decreased Susceptibility.

The Theory of Chance: According to this theory, all persons are equally able to suffer accident and it is simply a matter of luck that it happens. One person is just as likely as any other person to have a moment of carelessness resulting in an accident (Dessler, 1991).

Unequal Differences in Susceptibility: This theory seeks to explain the distribution of accidents in terms of unequal liabilities. It `holds that some individuals are more likely to be involved in accidents that others (Dessler, 1991).

Increased Susceptibility: This theory argues that at the beginning of a given job, all persons are equally susceptible to accidents. The first accident that happen is purely determined by chance. However, those who suffer them are thereby predisposed to have more accidents. It is suggested
that an accident may make an individual more apprehensive and nervous and less sure of himself so that his later actions are not accurately controlled (Dessler, 1991).

Decreased Susceptibility: This theory argues that particularly in certain hazardous occupations, it is sometimes said that the best way to avoid future accidents is to have one. This is based on the old notion that ‘a burnt child never plays with fire’ (Dessler, 1991).

2.11.3 The Theory of Safety Culture

In order to understand the issue of workplace safety among artisans in the informal small-scale enterprises, there is the need to explore the theory of safety culture. In addition, attitude and behaviour towards workplace safety can be linked to people’s culture; that is their shared beliefs, customs, arts and knowledge. There is, therefore, the need to discuss how the concept of culture can be applied to provide greater understanding of safety culture and as a means by which to approach safety in the workplace.

In spite of the lack of consensus on definitions and models of safety culture, there is some agreement that a strong safety culture is an organizational or workplace culture that places high priority on safety-related beliefs, values and attitudes (Cooper, 2000; Guldenmund, 2000). If organizational culture is merely the culture held by members of an organization, then given the relationship between that and safety culture, it can be said that safety culture also has theoretical ties to more traditional concepts of culture (Edwards, Davey and Armstrong, 2013). Applying traditional conceptions of culture to safety culture, Edwards et al. (2013) identify three conceptualizations of culture regarding the nature of culture in safety culture, namely the normative, anthropological and pragmatist conceptualizations.
The normative conception of culture holds that culture is the knowledge of the best that has been said and thought. In this conceptualization, culture is seen as a substance which can and ought to be possessed by an individual, resulting in the person being ‘cultured’ (Edwards et al., 2013). The normative conception of culture implies that safety culture leads specifically to safety as the over-riding priority, rather than merely determining the level of commitment to safety. This view was highlighted by Cooper (2000:43), who stated that for some authors, “Only an organization which has an over-riding commitment to safety can be said to have a safety culture”. When utilizing a normative –like conceptualization of culture in the application of safety culture, safety professionals are first faced with the task of evaluating the presence and strength of safety culture within an organization. It is for this reason that the normative conceptualization of culture in discussing safety culture has focused on organizational policies, procedures and structures (Edwards et al., 2013). The normative conceptualization of safety culture is predominately about the systems and structures of an organization. Furthermore, the normative conceptualization of safety culture can be applied to understanding safety culture among artisans in the informal small-scale sector since changeable factors such as organizational policies, procedures and structures do not exist if they are not totally absent. As such, it is important to explore alternative conceptualizations of culture, which emphasize developing an understanding of the effect of culture on safety, to help highlight potential strategies to reduce workplace accidents and injuries.

By the anthropological conceptualization, culture is dominant in social anthropology, cultural psychology and organizational culture literature. Edwards et al., (2013: 183) stated that most literature reviews of safety culture conclude that it is “a set of safety related attitudes, values or assumptions that are shared between the members of an organization.” Interestingly this
definition is a perfect example of an anthropological conceptualization of safety culture. The anthropological conceptualization differs from the normative conceptualization in that, rather than focus on the presence and absence of specific organizational practices, policies and structures, it emphasizes exploring the shared values, beliefs and assumptions of members of an organization.

The final conceptualization provided by Guldenmund (2000) was the pragmatic. The pragmatic conceptualization of safety culture, based strongly upon practice theory, holds that culture is essentially about practices and the norms of a group. When applying the pragmatic conceptualization of culture which views culture in terms of shared practices, safety culture can be interpreted as merely representing safe behaviour and safety outcomes. This conceptualization of culture was elaborated by Cooper (2000), who suggested that many authors focus on behaviour as the key component of culture, yet that the concept of “the-way-we-do-things-around-here” suggest an evaluation of this way being the correct way, thus not ignoring the importance of values and attitudes.

Whilst each conceptualization has a number of strengths, no single conceptualization appear capable of truly understanding, explaining and shaping safety outcomes. It is therefore beneficial to synthesize the approaches of each conceptualization into a single overarching entity. A synthesized conceptualization of safety culture ensures that the weakness of each approach complements each other.

In order to examine safety culture (attitude and behaviour towards workplace safety) among the artisans, this study also adopted the synthesized conceptualization of safety culture in terms of changeable factors such as organizational policies, procedures and structures (Normative
culture), behavioural practices and norms (pragmatic culture) and beliefs, values, attitudes, assumptions and expectations (anthropological culture). The study sought artisans’ views on policies and structures they (especially owners or masters) have put in place to reduce accidents and improve workplace safety. This was to examine the existence or otherwise of any established policies and structures among these artisans for their safety at work.

In conclusion, this chapter reviewed existing literature on OHS in general terms as well as within the Ghanaian context and the theoretical orientation of the study. Though there are a lot of empirical studies on OHS issues in both the formal and informal sector, the situation in Ghana is different: there is a dearth of literature with little empirical studies on informal small-scale enterprises especially artisans in the vehicle repair and spare parts retail business. The next chapter discusses Ghana’s occupational safety and health policy in terms of measures put in place to protect the working population especially workers in the informal small-scale sector.
CHAPTER THREE

GHANA’S OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY (OHS) POLICY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of Ghana’s OHS policy as well as the systems in place to promote workplace safety. The chapter begins by giving an overview of the history of workplace safety and health regulation and legislation in Ghana. This historical overview is important for understanding workplace safety and health measures that were developed. There is also the need to understand what have been done in the past in order to appreciate present efforts to reduce workplace accidents and injuries. Consequently, this chapter presents a brief historical overview of industrial safety regulations and legislations in Britain and in Ghana since Ghana drives most of her laws from Britain: her former colony. Furthermore, this chapter examines workplace safety legislation and regulation in Ghana by focusing on the legal regimes (Factories Act, Labour Act and Women’s Compensation Act) in place for ensuring workplace safety. Finally, the chapter examined the role of the Department of Factory Inspectorate as well as the challenges facing OHS in Ghana especially in the informal sector.

Though Ghana is among the 184 member countries of the International Labour Organization (ILO) which requires, (as per the ILO Convention number 155, 1981) that member countries formulate, implement and periodically review the policy on OHS and work environment, Ghana has not yet ratified this Convention. However, the labour Act 2003 (Act 651 Part XIV, Sections 118 – 120) articulates the roles and responsibilities of employers and employees regarding OHS, but is not specific about reporting accidents and occupational illnesses. For instance, it is not clear or does not specify what occupational illness is, who is responsible for ensuring that
industries in Ghana implement corrective measures among others.

3.1.0 Industrial Safety Legislations and Regulations in Ghana

Ghana’s occupational safety, health and employee’s welfare legislation started with the Factories Ordinance of 1950 which was subsequently replaced twenty years later by the Factories, Offices and Shops Act, 1970 (FOSA) (ACT 328). The FOSA has not seen any significant change ever since its promulgation about forty years ago. The non-enforcement of the FOSA has contributed to government’s inability to recognise the worldwide rapid changes in OHS legislation that takes into cognisance current technological advancement and the challenges of Globalization.

In Ghana, the first safety legislation was enacted in 1965 with the passage of the Industrial Relations Act, (Act 299, 1965). This was followed by the Factories Act (328) in 1970. In 1987, the Workmen’s Compensation Law (PNDC L 187) was also passed to enable workers receive compensation for injuries sustained on the job. In 2003, the Labour Act of 1965 was amended and replaced with Industrial Relation Act of 2003 (Act 651). Section 118 of the Labour Act of 2003 provides a guideline on general health and safety conditions.

In Ghana, two main employee safety legislations in place for promoting OHS are the Factories, Offices and Shops Act of 1970 (Act 328), and the Labour Act of 2003 (Act 651). These two Acts are primarily responsible for protecting the employee from any hazards at the workplace. The enforcement of these acts is the sole responsibility of the Department of Factories Inspectorate of the Ministry of Manpower and Labour.
3.1.1 Factories, Offices and Shop Act of 1970 (Act 328)

The Factories, Offices and Shops Act 1970 (Act 328) provides for the registration of factories, offices, shops and other place, and matters connected therewith. The Factories Act is divided into 11 (eleven) parts, and made up of 88 (eighty-eight) sections. The parts that are crucial for regulating employee safety include: Part 4: Notification of Accidents; Part 5: Health and Safety; Part 6: Safety; Part 7: Dangerous conditions and practices; Part 9: Offices and Legal Proceedings.

Part 4 of the Act – (Notification of Accidents: Section 10 (1)) states that where an accident in any factory, office or shop; (a) causes the death of a person employed therein; or (b) disables any such person for more than three days from earning wages at work at which he was employed, the occupier shall forthwith send written notice of the accident, in the prescribed form and containing the prescribed particulars, to the Chief Inspector or the Inspector for the district.

Part 5, of the Factories Act discusses and specifies employee’s health and welfare. Among other things, the Act specifies that state of cleanliness is supposed to be maintained in a factory. Also facilities such as washing, lighting, and drainage of floors, sanitary convenience, drinking water, and accommodation for clothing, sitting facilities, removal of dust or tunes must be adequately provided. The Act further states that, other facilities should be provided such as protective clothing and appliance, reduction of noise and vibration, prohibition of lifting excessive weights, first aid facilities.
Part 6 of the act specifies employee safety including steps that must be put in place to ensure safety provisions in case of fire, safe means of access and safe place of employment, fencing of dangerous machinery, among others. Part 7, discusses the dangerous conditions and practices that workers used to be protected against. A review of the Factories Act indicates that, it is outdated and limited in coverage, catering for factories, offices, shops, ports and construction sites in the formal sector. The vast majority of industries, including agriculture and most of the informal sector are therefore not specifically covered (Clarke, 2005) and this is due to the fact that at the time of enacting the act, these sectors were mostly in the formal sector.

In addition, provisions in the Act are also very limited in scope providing inadequately for prevention. Preventive strategies like risk assessments, medical surveillance and control of hazards are not catered for in the Act. Also missing in the Factories Offices and Shops Act are standards against which services will be measured. The lack of uniform standards against which organizations could be evaluated has resulted in factory inspectors assuming a lot of discretionary powers and falling to the temptation of abuse of power (Amposah-Tawiah and Darney-Baah, 2011).

3.1.2 Industrial Relation Act of 2003 (Labour Act, 651)

Another important Act which provides some form of safety legislation in Ghana is the Labour Act of 2003 also known as Act 657. Part XV of the Labour Act 651, covers Occupational Safety, Health and Environment. This is based on the tenets of ILO Conventions Nos. 155 and 161 which the country has not yet ratified. This part has sections on general health and safety conditions (118), Exposure to imminent hazards (119), Employer to report occupational accidents and diseases (120).
Section 118 on General health and safety conditions states among other things the duty of the employer to ensure the safety of all persons employed at the workplace. It also indicates the responsibility on the part of the employer to provide the necessary information, instructions, training and supervision regarding health and safety at work. Additionally, the employer must provide adequate safety appliances, suitable fire-fighting equipment, and personal protective equipment and instructs the workers in the use of the appliance or equipment.

Section 119 which focus on exposure to imminent hazards and the role of the employee in reporting health and safety hazards to the immediate supervisor. This section also prohibits the employer from dismissing or terminating the employment of a worker who refuses to work in hazardous work situation.

Section 120: (which deals with the need for an employer to report occupational accidents and diseases) indicates that, an employer is required to report as soon as practicable and, not later than seven days from the date of occurrence to the appropriate government agency, occupational accidents and diseases which occur in the workplace.

By Section 121, the Minister may by legislative instrument make Regulations providing for specific measures to be taken by employers to safeguard the health and safety of workers employed by them.

In Ghana, the specific standard legislations as described above in the case of the factories and labour act have the following characteristics:

- The legislation addresses only certain aspects of industrial health and safety issues
- Duties are cast with respect to reducing specific hazards or to require the provision of precise standards which deliver minimal protection to persons at work
Each piece of legislation is limited in its application to a particular industry (e.g. the construction safety Act to the construction industry, the Mines Inspection Act to the Mines etc.) Furthermore, workers such as artisans in the informal small-scale enterprises are excluded since inspection and regulations in such workplaces and shops are ignored.

Based on the above characteristics, the protection provided lags behind the risks to workers’ health and safety, arising from the ever-increasing development and introduction of new industrial process and technology. This type of legislation has inherent flaws hence the need for the performance standard (general duties) type of legislation. Apart from the Factories and Labour Acts, the Workmens’ Compensation Law (PNDCL 187) enables workers to receive compensation for injuries sustained on the job.

### 3.1.3 Workmens’ Compensation Law (PNDC L187)

Compensations as defined by the Workmen’s Compensation Law bears no relation to the level of risk to which workers are exposed, especially informal small and medium scale workers. Even though the laws do not define funding mechanisms for OHS that should be applied both by government and the private sector, funding for OHS activities has largely been derived from the Consolidated Fund. This has occasioned inadequacies and delays in the release of funds. OHS programmes are therefore grossly underfunded, a reflection of the low priority accorded to it by the government. The National Health Insurance Scheme explicitly excludes OHS-related requirements such as rehabilitation and provision of prosthesis (Clarke, 2005).

The Workmens’ Compensation Law of 1987 provides for the payment of cash compensation by an employer to an employee in the event of injury resulting from accident on the job and in the event of death, payable to dependants through the courts. The question is: what amount of money can compensate for the loss of a limb or at worst a loved one? Compensations as prescribed by
the Workmen’s Compensation Law bear no relation to the level of risk to which workers are exposed. In fact, the prosecution and court processes associated with compensation cases are laborious and time-consuming for the small amounts (100 Ghana cedis per injury) prescribed by the laws (Amposah-Tawiah and Dartey-Baah, 2011).

In addition, a review of the Workmen’s Compensation Law of 1987 shows that, strategies for the prevention of occupational accidents are presently separated from the compensation system. This dual preventive and compensation payment systems has resulted in the reporting of more accident occurrences to the authority dealing with compensation payments without a corresponding report to the preventive authority. The objective of the reporting to the preventive authority is to enable the investigation of occurrences with the view to determining the contributory factors, making and implementing the recommendations that prevents a recurrence.

In Ghana; the Department of Factories Inspectorate is the statutory agency responsible for enforcing industrial safety regulations.

3.2 The Role of the Department of Factories Inspectorate (DFI) in Safety Enforcement

The responsibility for enforcing occupational health and safety laws in the country is at the moment fragmented. The three main ministries with occupational health and safety responsibility in the country are Employment and Labour Relations; Mines and Energy and Health. Other ministries and agencies also have responsibility for aspects of occupational safety and health. This has resulted in the fragmentation of enforcement efforts, overlapping areas of responsibility, differences in approach, inconsistencies between the existing laws and the absence of an overall strategy and cooperation.

The other agency which is strictly not a health and safety agency but by its function has a responsibility to enter premises either to inspect or monitor health and safety-related activities is the Environmental Protection Agency which derives its powers from the EPA Act 490 of 1990. Though the two other agencies apart from the Factory Inspectorate Directorate have a significant role to play in the enforcement of health and safety laws, the Factory Inspectorate is the main agency that is supposed to oversee occupational health and safety-related matters in both the formal and informal sectors of the economy.

In addition, the name ‘Factory Inspectors’ seems to limit their activities to only factories, offices and shops. Further, there appears to be a serious conflict between the other agencies without any clear lines of approach to occupational health and safety issues. The Department of Factories Inspectorate was established to carry out the provisions of the Factories Act of 1970, Act 328. According to the section 74(i) of the Factories Act, “the Minister may appoint a chief inspector and such other inspectors and officers as he thinks necessary to carry out the provision of this act.” (3) Every Inspector shall be given a certificate of his appointment issued by the minister and when visiting any premises to which this Act applies shall, if so required, produce the certificate to the occupier or other persons. In this light, the main role of the Department of
Factories Inspectorate (DFI) is to keep a register of all factories and to enter any factory to inspect facilities put in place to ensure the health, welfare and safety of people employed in the factory. The DFI has the backing of the Act to prosecute any employer who contravenes any section of the Factories Act.

According to section 75(1), an inspector shall for the implementation of this Act, have power:

- To enter, inspect and examine, by day or night, a factory shop or office and every part thereof, when he has reasonable cause to believe that any person employed therein is in danger and in which he has reasonable cause to believe that explosive or highly inflammable materials are stored or used.
- To take with him a police officer if he has reasonable cause to expect obstruction in the execution of his duty.
- To require the production of the registers certificates notices and documents kept in pursuance of this Act and to inspect, examine and copy any of them.
- To make or cause to be made such examination and inquiry as may be necessary to ascertain whether the provisions of this Act and of the enactment in force relating to public health are complied with in respect of a factory office or shop and any persons employed therein.
- To require any person whom he finds in a factory, office or shop to give such information as it is in his power to give as to who is the occupier of the factory, office or shop.

Traditionally, employee safety inspection mainly focused on compliance with legislation and was reactive rather than proactive, thereby focusing more on effects and outcome such as illness and injuries. In modern times however, workplace inspection has gone beyond the traditional domain to include areas previously not covered by legislation such as work related psychological problem and stress, moral harassment and violence at work (Muchiri, 2005).

3.3 Challenges Faced by Safety Inspection Systems in Ghana

In Ghana, the name ‘factory inspectors’ seem to limit their activities and functions to only factories, offices and shops. Several other workplaces in the informal small-scale sector such as wayside artisans, building construction workers, among others, are neglected by the inspectors.
For instance in Ghana, the Factories, Offices and Shop Act (Act 328) which provides for the registration of factories offices, shops and other places of work seems to concentrate only on industries to the neglect of shops and other workplaces in the informal sector. Also, the Department of Factories Inspectorate which was established to carry out the provisions of the Factories Act of 1970 (Act 328) which provides for the registration of factories, offices, shops and other places of work appears to be concentrating only on inspecting factories and industries in the formal sector. This has left the small and medium-scale enterprises within the informal sector outside any inspections and enforcement of safety regulations.

It must be noted that, at the time the Act (Factories Act) was passed, the politico-economic philosophy favoured enterprises in the formal sector. In Ghana today, safety inspectors are faced with challenges from new technologies in workplace hazards both in the formal and the vast informal economy that is generally unregulated and largely covered by inspection services. In Ghana, just like any other African countries, the Factories and Other Places of Work Act make the employer responsible for ensuring that the work environment is safe and without risks to employees’ health. In the traditional inspection approach, the occupier of the factory primarily waits for the government inspectors to inspect and point out the contraventions against the law; sometimes this may require that the occupier is taken to court before any tangible improvements are made. If no inspectors show up, the workplace safety improvements implemented by the employer are usually very basic, if any (Makhonge, 2005).

In addition, it has been observed in many developing countries that the inspection agencies or authorities are poorly equipped, with many lacking the adequate human resources to carry out
monitoring inspections effectively. They also lack both the necessary equipment to assist them in conducting inspections using an evidence-based approach and the necessary professional skills development to enable the inspectors to carry out their duties competently in the continuously changing work environment (Katula, 2013). The above description can be vividly applied to the situation in Ghana.

Makhonge (2005) has argued that, the reactive approach to factory inspection system has proven ineffective over time. Hence the need for change, for the following reasons:

- The industrial activity has expanded over time, but the number of inspectors needed to conduct regularly inspections of every site has remained low. These findings by Makhonge of Kenya are also very true of the Ghanaian Factories Inspectorate Directorate.
- It is recognized that the clients require approximately trained officers who are competent in identifying hazards and offering practicable solutions.
- Many clients are increasingly challenging the inspectors to support their opinions with scientific data. The officers in the field lack the necessary equipment to deal with this challenge.

3.4 Management of OHS in Ghana: Challenges

The management of OHS in Ghana currently is not co-ordinated; a number of ministries oversee various statutes, which have been introduced in complete disregard of existing ones. The ministries of Employment and Labour Relations, Health, Mines, Energy and Petroleum share responsibility for the regulation and promotion of OHS. The Ministry of Roads and Transport and the Environmental Protection Agency of the Ministry of Environment, Science and Innovations are also responsible for some aspects of OHS in Ghana.

Tettey (2003) has argued that, the independent evolution of these different statutes has resulted in fragmentation, overlapping areas of jurisdiction and inconsistencies in the various laws on
OHS operating in the country. These have in most cases led to a misunderstanding between the various enforcement agencies, which have to deal with various inspectors from the different enforcement agencies that may call within a short time span. Tettey (2003) also found that in Ghana, the most prevalent occupational hazards and risks among the artisans are of an organizational, hygienic or ergonomic nature, indicating that many hazards could be avoided by behavioural change as well as putting in place proper structures, policies and the inculcating in the workers the need to adopt safety procedures when working.

In addition, the provisions are very limited in scope, providing very inadequately for prevention. Preventive strategies like risk assessments, medical surveillance and control of hazards are not catered for. There is an overlap of some of the functions mandated by these pieces of legislation for different ministries. For example, both the EPA Act and Factories Act mandate entry into factory premises by inspectors from the EPA and Factories Inspectorate, respectively. There is also some disagreement between the Factories’ and Mines’ Inspectorates regarding the inspection of explosives’ stores, which both organizations have a mandate for (Clarke, 2005).

The institutional analysis carried out in Ghana by Alfers (2012) revealed that official OHS institutions, which operate largely at national level, are limited in scope and are severely under-resourced. Although Ghana’s latest labour legislation – the Labour Act of 2003 – includes some groups of informal workers in its Occupational Health and Safety clauses, it is clear that national OHS institutions, as they exist at present can do little in terms of implementing these commitments. The Labour Act of 2003 includes protection for temporary and casual labour, and is meant to apply to all workers and all employers in Ghana irrespective of their status as
formal/informal workers. However, piece-workers, part-time workers, apprentices and people who work less than an average of 24 hours a week are explicitly excluded from the protection of the Act (Alfers, 2012).

Moreover, Alfers (2012) also found that, a major deficiency in the present OHS management system is the lack of a national policy on OHS defining the responsibility of the stakeholder partners–government, employers/owners and employees–as well as the operational jurisdiction of the enforcement agencies. This has also resulted in inadequate coverage of all economic activities by the existing statutes. Additionally, existing statutes do not provide solutions to emerging hazards such as ergonomic problems and they do not require proactive management of hazards at the workplaces. This is revealing because, comparing the situation in Ghana with that of developing countries like Uganda, Kenya and Zambia which have adopted national policies on OHS, Ghana is lacking behind. For instance, according to Abongomera (2006), in Uganda, the Department of Occupational Safety and Health makes random visits to workplaces in Kampala city and occasionally moves to up country towns. According to him these visits are not only limited to formal workplaces but also informal small-scale enterprises such as maize milling and carpentry shops. In addition, according to Theuri (2012), in Kenya, the Department of Occupational Safety and Health Services (DOSHS) is in the ministry of Labour that is responsible for promoting safety, health and welfare at work in all workplaces in all sectors including the formal and informal sectors.

According to him, the department enforces two Acts of parliament, namely the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 2007 (OSHA) and the Work Injury Benefit Act of 2007 (WIBA). The Occupational Safety and Health act of 2007 applies to all workplaces where any person is at work...
whether temporarily or permanently, including small-scale enterprises and the informal sector. The Act of 2007 repealed the Factories and other Places of Work Act, (cap 514 laws of Kenya) which applied to factories and a few other specified workplaces. The Work Injuries Benefit Act of 2007 also repealed the Workman’s Compensation Act, cap 236 laws of Kenya and provides compensation to workers for work-related injuries and diseases contracted in the course of their work. The government of Kenya has also developed a national policy for occupational safety and health in all sectors including the formal and informal workplaces. The situation in Kenya is in sharp contrast with what is happening in Ghana with regards to the operations of OHS.

In spite of the numerous investments that the country attracts with its accompanying OHS related issues, governments of Ghana, past and present, have not shown any political will, commitment and support for bold occupational health and safety policies. This is evident in the fact that out of over 70 conventions/recommendations of the ILO that are OHS related, only ten have been ratified by the Government of Ghana (i.e., Conventions 45, 81, 89, 90, 103, 115, 119, 120, 147 & 148). The four core conventions on occupational health and safety (i.e., Conventions 155, 161, 170 and 174) have all not been ratified (Amposah-Tawiah and Dartey-Baah, 2011). A draft occupational services policy jointly developed by the Ministries of Manpower Youth & Employment, Health and Lands, Forestry & Mines as far back as the year 2000 is yet to be adopted.

3.5 Legislation Reviews and the Draft National OHS Policy

It can therefore be said that Ghana has no national policy on occupational health and safety services for its working population. As far back as June 2000, a policy document titled “Development of Legislation and Policy on OHS for all Sectors of the Ghanaian Economy,” was
drafted by the then government, but to date the country is still talking about it. In 1999, the then Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and with financial support from Britain’s Department for International Development, set up a Committee to develop proposals on OHS policy and legislation for all sector of the Ghanaian economy. The Committee’s mandate was to:

- Review prevailing local legislation to determine deficiencies and over lapses
- Make recommendations for a National Policy on OHS
- Propose general provisions to be included in legislations covering all sectors of economic activity taking cognizance of the needs of women in employment, child workers and interplay between human health and general environment.

The committee was made up of government representatives, as well as representatives from employers’ association (the Ghana Employers Association), the Mines Department, the Ghana Chamber of Mines, the Trades Union Congress (TUC), and some of the country’s safety and health experts working in industry as safety managers and consultants. The Committee also had a consultant from South Africa to assist it in its work. The report of the Committee was submitted to the then Minister of Employment and Social Welfare in July 2000. However, budgetary constraints made its joint consideration by the various stakeholder partners impossible (Tettey, 2003).

As result of the inability of stakeholders to jointly consider the 1999 Committee’s report which was submitted to the ministry in June 2000, the Ministry of Manpower Development and Employment (as it was then known) organized another Stakeholders’ Workshop in July 2002, the aim was to give stakeholders the opportunity to provide inputs for the formulation of a National Policy and Legislation on Occupational Safety and Health. This activity was in accordance with the provisions of ILO Convention No. 155, which was being considered for ratification by the
government then. As a basis for discussion, this Workshop, which was organized in collaboration with the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung used the Report of a Committee set up by the then Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare in 1999 to provide proposals for a review of the existing occupational health and safety laws.

A review of the current draft policy revealed that, workshop participants were mainly drawn from the three main stakeholders–government, organized labour and employers’ association – and there was also participant from retired OHS specialists, as well as safety managers from industry. The Parliamentary Sub-Committee on Employment, Social Welfare and State Enterprises was well represented. At the end of this workshop, participants concluded that:

- The current fragmented legislation on OHS should be unified into a single coherent body of legislation in order to provide for the effective protection of workers in Ghana
- A National Commission on Occupational Safety and Health (NACOSH) should be established to administer matters relating to OHS
- NACOSH should be sited at the then Ministry of Manpower Development and Employment; should be given adequate authority and should be well funded so as to be able to perform its role effectively
- The existing institutions dealing with OHS matters should maintain their separate identities under NACOSH
- The new legislation should provide protection for women, young workers (workers under the age of 18 years) and physically challenged persons, and it should cover all sectors of the economy (both formal and informal).

It is, however, instructive to note that, 12 years after this workshop, the outcomes and findings have still not been implemented in spite of the fact that Ghana’s OHS legislation and policy remain fragmented and uncoordinated leading to poor regulation. On this basis, one can argue that government officials are more interested and comfortable with meetings and committee where stakeholders are assembled to discuss issues affecting various aspects of the society. However, in many cases, the recommendations and findings of such meetings and committees
are not implemented. In addition, donor agencies and development partners are quick to come to
the aid of government institutions and agencies without finding out whether previous
recommendations have been implemented. This attitude by Ghana governments (past and
present) as well as development partners is not the best for the protection of the country’s most
valuable asset or resource which is its workforce.

A critical review of the current draft national OHS policy shows that the basis of the policy is the
elimination or minimisation of hazards and reduction of risk factors for effective information
systems, systems for consultation through the tri- and bi- social dialogue at the state and
enterprise levels respectively, training of workers, the functions and responsibilities of agencies
responsible for workplace inspection and occupational health services.

Furthermore, the scope of the drafted policy includes all employees, all economic activities,
designers, manufacturers, importers and suppliers of industrial machinery, equipment and
substances.

In addition, all social partners within the workplace have some roles and responsibilities.
Government’s roles include law and policy formulation, establishment of authority and
development & review of implementation program.

In addition, the draft policy has proposed institutional framework, for effective implementation:

- National OHS Authority – implementation of integrated S & H policy
- Make human resources available across all sectors Leadership –
- National Tripartite Advisory Board
- Overall Responsibility – Minister
- CEO -Responsible for OHS Mgt.—Specific Functions—Inspectorate, Research, Standards, Compensation etc
Finally, the proposed policy is supposed to be reviewed and revised once in five years or earlier if circumstances warrant an earlier revision. It is observed that the current draft policy does not include the new oil and gas sector of the Ghanaian economy. This is due to the fact that, at the time of drafting this policy in 2000 and 2002, Ghana had not yet discovered oil in commercial quantities; it was however in 2006 that this happened. There is therefore the need to reconsider these lapses.

3.6 OHS Issues in the Informal Sector

Although the Government of Ghana has instituted measures to promote and guarantee workers’ rights, benefits accrued have so far been limited to formal sector workers. Most workers operating in the informal sector do not enjoy their full rights. They are either ignorant about the law or are unable to secure the needed support to seek justice. They are largely unorganized and lack collective voice to make their concerns heard (Osei-Boateng and Ampratwum, 2011). Employment relationship among wage workers in the informal sector is largely not documented; making enforcement difficult. Employment contracts are established verbally with family and friends witnessing agreements.

OHS services provided in the informal sector in comparison with those prescribed by the ILO Convention No. 161 on Occupational Health Services are very limited, providing basic curative care and first aid. Primary medical care is, therefore, the norm. Comprehensive occupational health preventive activities are grossly lacking except in one multinational company (involved in plantation agriculture) where some provisions exist for medical surveillance, risk assessment, worker education and HIV/AIDS prevention programs (Clarke, 2005).
The key staff represented in the country’s occupational health services is the typical health care workers found in health institutions (i.e., doctors, nurses, and paramedics). Seriously lacking in the country are professionals specifically trained in the area of occupational health. Records from the Ghana Health Service (GHS) indicate that there are only four occupational health physicians, one occupational health nurse and 34 trained factory inspectors (GHS, 2007). The situation is further compounded by the absence of institutions that offer the requisite training programmes in the area. The School of Public Health at the University of Ghana, which was established in 1994 with the mission to train public health practitioners who will be leaders and change agents for health development in Ghana in particular and in the wider African context is still struggling to institute an occupational health programme. Capacity building, a prerequisite for obtaining the right caliber of staff to man occupational health services, remains a major challenge in Ghana (Clarke, 2005).

The above description of the state of occupational health services in Ghana reflects the safety culture of the nation; — ‘All die be die’ to wit every death is ordained. Thus, in a poverty stricken country like Ghana, people are prepared to sacrifice their lives to earn a living. Considering the large investment inflows into the country in the area of mining and construction (two hazardous industries) should raise concern for researchers and policy makers in the country (Amponsah-Tawiah and Dartey-Baah, 2011).

Despite initial problems, several steps have been taken to protect employees’ health and safety at both the national and industrial levels. However, there is still little attention to occupational
health and safety (here after OHS) issues, as this is shown by several occupational health and safety hazards, risk and diseases in the country (Puplampu and Quartey, 2012).

It is therefore not surprising that, multidisciplinary OHS teams are also lacking. The key staff rendering OHS in the health facilities is the health care workers found typically in those institutions, i.e. doctors, nurses and paramedical staff. In the light of the above, it is estimated that the proportion of workers who receive comprehensive OHS in the informal sector is likely to be constituted by not more than between 1 and 2% of workers. One may therefore conclude that although there are some OHS being provided in the informal and agricultural sectors, the scope of functions are very limited with by far only a small minority having access to comprehensive services.

It is also important to note that the majority of informal sector workers are self-employed. It is unclear how labour regulations relate to self-employed workers. They have full control over their working hours and income. It is in this wisdom that the Pension Act (Act 766) provides for self-employed persons on voluntary basis. This stands to reason that self-employed persons cannot be forced to declare their incomes for social security contribution. Even in the areas of taxation, it has become practically impossible to determine the turn-over of self-employed persons for that purpose. Many of these workers do not keep records of purchases and sales and make law enforcement difficult.

In conclusion this chapter has examined Ghana’s OHS policy. In doing this, it has revealed that the current OHS laws are outmoded, fragmented in operation, limited in scope and coverage, has not kept pace with international development, has areas of inconsistency and its definitions do
not address occupational diseases. The implementing bodies have limited capacity to execute national safety and health policy and no single institution has full capacity to assume oversight responsibility over OHS. In addition, there are overlapping areas of responsibility, absence of coordination and differences in approach. Currently, no ministry or institution has either the responsibility or capacity to develop and implement national health and safety policy. The next chapter will examine the political economy of small-scale informal enterprises in Ghana particularly artisans in the automobile industry.
CHAPTER FOUR

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF INFORMAL SMALL-SCALE ENTERPRISES

4.0 Introduction

The main focus of this chapter is to locate Kokompe artisanal centre in the transformation of the Ghanaian economy. This is because in Ghana, the relevance of the informal small-scale enterprises cannot be ignored in the face of shrinking public sector employment. Since small-scale informal enterprises operate within a socio-economic and political environment, their activities need to be examined in terms of the political and economic structural changes that have occurred over the past 50 years. In this regard, one can then appreciate the issues of occupational health and safety among artisans at Kokompe.

To do this, the chapter examines the Ghanaian economy between 1957 and 1966 when the importation of new cars was common. The chapter also considers the economic transformation that affected State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) and private sector industries between 1966 and 1983 and the emergence of Kokompe and spare parts trade around the 1970s. The chapter finally discusses major forms of informal activities in urban Ghana with some categorizations.

4.1 The Ghanaian Economy: 1957-1966

The origin of the informal sector in Ghana’s economy can be traced back to the very beginnings of colonial capitalism. Even at such an early stage an essential feature of labour in the informal sector was its heterogeneous character that provided for varieties of peasant proprietors and agricultural labourers, distribution agents, buyers, transport owners and employees, porters, repairers (Ninsin, 1991; Adu-Amankwah, 1999).
With the attainment of independence, Ghana's drive to modernize its economy was through state-led industrialization underpinned by import substitution and high levels of reliance on administrative controls instead of allowing market forces to determine incentives and resource allocation. These strategies were adopted based on the assumption that rapid economic development was feasible provided the state assumed the entrepreneurial function (Boapeah, 1994). In pursuing this policy, Ghana did not process enough primary products for export and had hardly started export promotion and diversification. Much foreign exchange was spent on the importation of inputs for consumer goods without any attempt to find any local substitutes. Despite the attention given to import substitution industries, the prices of their products were comparatively very high. The country soon found itself in foreign exchange crisis, which led to the under-utilization of plant capacity (Boapeah, 1994).

According to Tabatabai (1986), at independence, Ghana was one of the most prosperous countries in sub-Saharan Africa with the highest per capita income (400 US dollars) and very low inflation. Agriculture in 1957 was the major source of income and wealth, contributing about half of GDP and supporting a much larger proportion of the population than it does today. Cocoa provided about three fifths of total export earnings. The foreign reserve situation was very healthy as a result of booming cocoa export and an abundant supply of labor, which included migrants from neighboring countries (Tabatabai, 1986). From 1950-1960, GDP grew annually by 4.1 percent and agricultural output by 4.3 percent. During 1955-60 the economy in general, and agriculture in particular, enjoyed even higher annual growth rates: GDP grew by 5.1 percent, agricultural output by 5.7 percent and cocoa output by 9 percent. High growth in the output of the major export crop, cocoa, provided the basis for rising investment via increased foreign
exchange availability. With export earnings rising at 3.2 percent per annum during the nineteen-fifties, both imports and gross domestic investment grew at 8.9 percent per annum during the decade (Issahaku, 1999). Certain warning signs however, emerged in the nineteen-sixties. Even though industrial output rose at 6.7 percent per annum, during the decade, cocoa output declined at an average annual rate of 0.2 percent per annum, leading to a decline in gross domestic investment of 3.2 percent per annum. Imports also fell by 1.6 percent per annum (Tabatabai, 1986). The first origins of economic difficulties were evident from this period.

Ghana's post-independence economic strategy emphasized rapid industrialization by state-owned enterprises (SOEs) as an attempt to diversify its export base in order to reduce the overdependence on few primary export commodities and thereby contain the perils of monoculture (Ewusi, 1987). This period also witnessed the importation of new cars such as Renault, British Bedford trucks and Jeeps to the country with multinational companies opening branches in Accra. Industrialization strategy opted for self-reliance and established import-substitution industries behind highly protective trade and non-trade barriers.

### 4.2 The Economic Transformations of 1966-1983 and the Automobile Industry

Further economic deterioration occurred from 1966 to 1973 when real GDP fell by 1.3 percent per annum, industrial output by 7 per cent, exports by 6.4 per cent and inflation rose from about 6 percent to 50 percent overall in the following decade. During the period of 1973-83 annual inflation rates of 53.2 percent for food prices and 46.5 percent for non-food prices were registered. In 1970-81, cereal output fell by 2.3 percent per annum and that of starchy staples by 3.7 percent. The decline in agricultural output was the result of policy choices based on incorrect signals in both factor and produce markets, resulting in domestic distortions inimical to growth,
equity and poverty alleviation. The production base of the economy was generally eroded as a result of emigration of skilled labor; lack of private capital formation as a result of widespread dissavings; and deterioration of the national infrastructure (Ewusi, 1987).

Consequently, production, savings and investment declined. At the same time, import volumes and retailing activities increased substantially, leading to widespread hoarding and profiteering locally known as "Kalabule". External factors worsened the economic situation (Ewusi, 1987). The collapse of primary commodity prices for cocoa, coffee and timber in particular, sharp rises in world interest rates and the oil price stocks played a part in the nation's economic decline (Issahaku, 1999). The 1966 coup d'e-tat led to change of economic policies and transformation in different sectors of the economy including the motor industry. This economic transformation affected SOEs and private sector industries leading to the collapse of the motor industry (Ewusi, 1987).

In the 1970s, trade restrictions by government restricted the importation of goods. This brought about negative effect on larger enterprises that relied on imports. The difficulties in procuring new vehicles into the country consequently led to the importation of “used” cars, resulting in the emergence of Kokompe and spare part dealing around 1970s. As a result of the economic difficulties, many vehicle owners who could not maintain their vehicles chose to sell them off at give-away prices (ISSER, 1975; Anonymous, Centre for Policy Analysis, 2008; Central Bureau of Statistics, 1996). Some of these abandoned vehicles were cannibalized and their parts sold to other vehicle owners. The origin of Kokompe may be traced to this situation. It is, therefore, not surprising to see 1950 or 1960 British Bedford trucks, Jeeps and Morris Mini Minor and German
Volkswagen salon cars still on the streets of Ghana. Over time, Kokompe grew and created opportunities for smaller businesses to develop spare parts retail points. Kokompe and Kumasi Suame Magazine became the only places in Ghana where old vehicles could be reliably repaired during this period. Here, repair works cost less because labour (often apprentices) was cheap. However, the quality of work was good because some of the workers were former employees of the large vehicle importing firms such as U.A.C, John Holt Batholomew, Africa Motors, and Renaults etc (ISSER, 1975; Anonymous, Centre for Policy Analysis, 2008).

In 1983 with the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) Economic Recovery Program (ERP) and trade liberalization induced by the IMF and World Bank, trade barriers were removed allowing legal importation of used or new spare parts and vehicles. This benefited larger firms, but did not decrease the number of small scale artisans and spare part dealers in Kokompe. The reason was that most middle and low income workers who could not buy new cars from the larger firms patronized used vehicles and garages at Suame and Kokompe. This resulted in rapid expansion of imported vehicles and spares part dealership and the extension of Kokompe into Abbosey Okai spare parts dealers etc (Anonymous, Centre for Policy Analysis, 2008; Central Bureau of Statistics, 1996).

At the end of the SAP/ERPs, successive governments have all pursued economic policies that consider the private sector as the engine of growth. For instance, during the era of the New Patriotic Party government (2001- 2009), the popular cliché was that government would create the enabling policy environment to promote the private sector in a ‘golden age of business’. Currently the National Democratic Congress government (2009 to date) has introduced another version of private sector involvement christened ‘the Public-Private-Partnership’ (PPP) as a way
of encouraging private sector participation in the Ghanaian economy. As a result in the reduction in public sector employment, some retrenched workers relocated to the small-scale informal sector where they started their own businesses. One area within the small-scale sector where these workers can be found is the spare part dealers and artisans. Today, Kokompe is estimated to be accommodating approximately 100,000 people working in various informal enterprises and considered as the last stop for vehicle repairs and spare parts retail business. Though the above discussion focused on Kokompe as an example of informal small scale enterprise, there is the need to examine how the informal sector in general developed in Ghana. In addition, it is important to examine the major forms of activities in the urban informal sector, where Kokompe can be located.

4.3 Development of the Informal Sector in Ghana

In the contemporary economy, small-scale enterprises in the informal sector have gained much prominence in developing countries. Their prominence came into the limelight in the late 1970s and early 1980s due to the economic recession which led to the decline of industrial growth and employment in many developing countries especially in Africa (Osei-Boateng and Ampratwum, 2011). Governments of such countries adopted a new policy approach towards the Small Scale Industries (SSIs) because of their promise to adapt flexibly to the unprecedented foreign exchange constraints. They were seen as providing a viable alternative to the large scale industries which were so dependent on foreign exchange. The contribution of MSEs to the national economy is potentially very large and is seen in the contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Basu, Blavy and Yulek, 2004).
Throughout the decades, the informal sector has actually grown in the rural and urban areas of Ghana. Ghana’s informal sector is said to employ about 80 per cent of the total labour force (Clarke, 2012). The large scale retrenchment of public sector workers as overriding consequence of Structural Adjustment in Ghana in the mid-1980s, coupled with government’s inability to provide employment for the emerging labour force has created a large pool of unemployed persons who have naturally gravitated towards the informal sector. Adu-Amankwah (1998) argues that, the size of the informal sector employment in the 1980s was twice that of the formal sector. However, by the 1990s, informal sector employment had increased by five and half times that of the formal sector (ibid).

The informal sector in Ghana is made up of micro and small-scale enterprises. It consists of producers, wholesalers, retailers and consumers. There are also intermediary service providers along the value chain such as suppliers of raw materials to manufacturers on contractual basis. Informal sector workers are largely self-employed persons such as farmers, traders, food processors, artisans and craft-workers to mention but a few. The sector consists of varied activities. In rural Ghana, informal sector work mainly involves agriculture (75%), fishing and fish processing, agro-based processing. In contrast, more urban workers (43%) are engaged in non-agricultural activities (GSS, 2013).

Informal sector workers escapes the regulation of government and as consequence suffer neglect of policy makers. Often times, informal sector workers are victims of policy interventions (e.g. city decongestion) initiated by local governments- District, Municipal and Metropolitan assemblies- as mostly seen in Accra and Kumasi metropolis. Their escape has also culminated in
evasion of their civil responsibilities such as tax payment and other responsibilities associated with their work. For instance, many employers in the informal sector do not honour labour obligations set out in the Labour Act (Osei-Boateng and Ampratwum, 2011).

4.4 Categorizations of the Informal Sector Small-Scale Enterprises

Since the use of the concept, ‘informal sector,’ in Hart’s (1973) seminar work on urban informal sector in Ghana, it has not lent itself to a comprehensive and a universally accepted definition. A number of attempts made by different researchers and national authorities (i.e. governments) to define the concept have resulted in diverse definitions. Gockel (1998:12) state that, ‘attempts to measure the shadow economy (i.e. informal sector) first faced the problem of defining it’. There are varied definitions of the concept in the existing literature. Some definitions given in the literature are presented as follows:

(a) “All economic activities that contribute to the officially calculated gross national product but currently unregistered” (Bromley, 1997:98).

(b) “Market-based production of goods and services, whether legal or illegal, that escapes detection in the official estimates of the gross domestic product” (Gugler, 1997:54).

(c) “Unregulated economic enterprises or activities” (Hart, 1973:15).

Farrell, Roman, and Matthew (2000:34) stated that “currently there are two approaches to defining informal sector activity: the definitional and behavioural”. According to the definitional approach, ‘Informal sector is economic activity unrecorded in the official statistics such as the Gross Domestic Product and /or the national income accounts’. Behavioral approach, on the other hand, maintains that ‘informal sector is based on whether or not activity complies with the established judicial, regulatory, and institutional framework” (2000:34).
Furthermore, the concept of small scale enterprises relates, generally, to small manufacturing activities including primary products processing, handicrafts, and construction and repair services. In Ghana, two major definitions may be used to describe small scale industry: one based on capital requirements and the other based on employment size. The National Board for Small Scale Industries (NBSSI) defines small-scale industry as one whose capital requirements for plant and equipment do not exceed the cedi equivalent of 100,000 United States dollars (Osei-Boateng and Ampratwum, 2011).

The Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) defines small-scale industry as one which does not employ more than 29 persons (Boapeah, 1994:10). Firms employing 30 or more persons are normally included in the enforcement of employment and minimum wage legislations in Ghana and are thus regarded as formal. On the other hand, those employing less than 30 persons are described, generally, as informal since they are not normally registered (Boapeah, 1994).

According to Dinye (1991), small-scale industries are defined as manufacturing units employing not more than 30 persons. For the purpose of differentiating small-scale industries from the other small-scale non-farm economic activities, the emphasis is placed on the manufacturing aspect. Manufacturing means producing or making physical items. This means that pure service activities such as government services, retail trade, banking, recreation and insurance services are not included. However, repair services are included in the manufacturing enterprises because they have something to do with formally manufactured goods.

From the above discussions, it is realized that various organizations have different parameters for defining micro, small and medium scale enterprises. For the purpose of this work an operational
definition is required. The most commonly used criterion identified from the various definitions is the number of employees of the enterprise. As contained in its Industrial Statistics, the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) considers firms with less than 30 employees as Small-Scale Enterprises (Kayanula and Quartey, 2000) and (Boapeah, 1994). In this study the concept informal small-scale enterprise was used to describe Kokompe artisan enterprise.

4.5.0 Major Forms of Informal Sector Activities in Ghana

Data for the discussion on the form and nature of informal sector in Ghana is drawn largely from literature documented by Adu-Amankwah (1999) in his analysis of a Ghana Trade Union Congress (GTUC) leadership group survey in 1995. The informal sector in Ghana can be categorized under two (2) broad sectors namely rural and urban informal sectors. However, since Kokompe is found in an urban setting, the discussions focus on the urban informal sector.

4.5.1 Urban informal workers

The urban informal sector in Ghana, as elsewhere in Africa (ILO, 1972; Adu-Amankwa, 1999), is remarkable for its heterogeneity and variety. As indicated earlier a study of the urban informal economy in Ghana by Hart in the 1970s was the turning point for studies on informal economies in developed and developing economies around the world. Studies on the urban informal sector in Ghana (ILO, 1972; Adu-Amankwa, 1999) reveal a wide range of operations in the urban informal sector that can be grouped under (i) Services (ii) Construction and (iii) Manufacturing.

(i) Service: This sub-sector involves:

- Urban food traders and processors: food sellers in the market, itinerant wholesalers and retailers, bakers, caterers and cooked-food sellers. These workers are mostly women,
predominantly illiterate or semi-illiterate. They acquire their knowledge and skills largely from family. They are also low-income earners and have no social security protection;

- Health and sanitation workers - chemical sellers, drugstore operators, funeral undertakers, night soil carriers, refuse collectors, traditional/herbal healers, attendants in private maternity homes, and traditional birth attendants;

- Domestic workers, who are also predominantly women and have limited social protection and job security;

- Repairers of watches, refrigeration equipment, radios, mechanical or electrical/electronic equipment, mostly young male workers and have either received some basic education or are drop-outs, but among whom are to be found skilled workers whose skills are largely acquired through years of apprenticeship;

- Garages - auto mechanics, sprayers, welders, vulcanizers, auto electricians, many of whom received some basic formal education alongside many drop-outs, and acquired their skills through years of apprenticeship;

- Graphic designers, mostly males, about two to six workers in each unit who acquired their skills through limited vocational training and apprenticeship;

- Audio-visual workers - photographers, cinema/video operators, performers, musicians, film-makers - are skilled workers who have received basic formal education but limited formal vocational training and apprenticeship - who are mostly male but among whom the number of females is increasing;

- Hairdressers and barbers/private security men who are aged workers with very low educational standards, ill-equipped, lack job security and opportunities for career advancement, and without any social security protection.
(ii) Construction: workers—made up of masons, carpenters, steel benders, small-scale plumbers, house-wiring electricians, and carpenters who are mostly young males, and are mostly school drop-outs. Electricians often have some basic training, while all the other groups go through years of apprenticeship.

(iii) Manufacturing: In this sub-sector of the informal sector, the predominant activities cover food processing, textile and garments, wood processing and metal works. Women dominate food processing while men constitute a clear majority in metal works and wood processing. Apprenticeship is the most common form of skill acquisition and employment in urban informal manufacturing units (ILO, 1972; Adu-Amankwa, 1999)

4.6 Characteristics of Urban Informal Economy in Ghana

The urban informal sector especially is associated with certain characteristics that have been grouped into four main categories according to the existing literature as highlighted by Ofori (2009) in his work on taxation and the informal economy in Ghana.

These include the following:

(i) Employment Characteristics such as absence of official protection and recognition, predominance of self-employment work, non coverage of minimum wage legislations and social security, absence of trade union organization, low income and wages and little or no job security.

(ii) Enterprise Characteristics: such as individual or family ownership, ease of entry, reliance on locally available resources, labour intensive and adopted technology
(iii) Habitat Characteristics such as unauthorized use of vacant public or private land resulting in environmental disaster such as “Sodom and Gomorrah” in Accra.

(iv) Credit Characteristics such as easy accessibility and availability being very small and for short terms. Compared to the formal sector procedures in granting credit – such as creditworthiness assessment, on the contrary, in the informal sector credit is usually granted to people known to the operators hence no need to critically assess the individuals being granted credit (Barwa, 1995; Ofori, 2009).

Workers in the informal sector, whether wage earners or self-employed, generally get low returns on their labour; they work in very poor physical environments; they are highly vulnerable to insecurity of employment and have no social protection against the common risks of work and life. Improving earnings, working conditions, employment security and social protection of these workers obviously becomes a concern both for the State and for society in any country where they make up the majority of the workforce. Besides, there are several poor working conditions and challenges facing workers in the informal small-scale sector.

4.7 Working Conditions and Challenges of Informal Sector Workers in Ghana

In Ghana, about seventy percent of the working population is employed by the informal sector (Clarke, 2012). Informal small-scale enterprises play a key role in the rural economy in Ghana, generating income for upkeep of families and financing the education of most of the leaders and workers of our country. Yet the informal small-scale industries sub sector in Ghana is saddled with a lot of problems. Most of these businesses hardly grow to become medium and large scale businesses. These informal small-scale enterprises which are the mainstay of most urban dwellers face stiff competition from medium and large scale industries in the formal sector in
marketing their products, bearing in mind the economies of scale and superior technology most of these large scale enterprises benefit from (Adu-Amankwah, 1999).

According to (UNCTAD, 2011), informal small Scale enterprises in least developing countries face the following problems; unfriendly legal and regulatory environment; ineffective Business development services; inadequate access to finance; inadequate public-private sector dialogue; competition brought about by trade liberalization; constraints on women to develop their entrepreneurial potentials.

Kayanula and Quartey, (2000) listed the following as constraints to the development of informal small-scale enterprises in Ghana and Malawi:

i. Access to inputs, their availability or cost is an important problem.

ii. Access to finance remained a dominant constraint to small scale enterprises in Ghana (Ibid, 2000).

iii. They have difficulty with gaining access to appropriate technology and information on available techniques.

iv. Distribution channels, which are not efficient and are often dominated by larger firms, pose important limitations to market access for these enterprises.

v. Trade liberalization has made them face greater external competition and the need to expand market share.

vi. The problem of regulatory constraints was also cited with issues of high cost of business registration and long bureaucratic administrative constraints.

vii. They have inadequate Entrepreneurial & Business Management Skills.
This chapter generally examined the socio-economic environment within which small-scale enterprises such as artisanal shops developed. The chapter further gave a brief historical discourse on the economic situations from 1957 to 1966 and from 1966 to 1983 and how this affected the motor industry and the subsequent development of second-hand car importation and Kokompe. As a result, the private sector becomes the ‘engine of growth’ for the economy. The chapter finally examined the development and role of the small-scale sector in the Ghanaian economy as well as the major types of urban informal workers, the working conditions among informal sector workers and the challenges and constraints they encounter. This chapter was relevant in this work because, although it was unrelated to the main thrust of this thesis (workplace safety and accidents); it provides an insight for understanding how small-scale enterprises such as artisanal work become relevant in the Ghanaian economy as we match towards economic liberalization. The next chapter would focus on how the data for this study was gathered and would be christened “Entering the Field”.
CHAPTER FIVE

ENTERING THE FIELD/METHODOLOGY

5.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the techniques and procedures employed by the researcher to collect the data for this study. It also describes the methodological difficulties and factors which enhanced or constrained the data collection process as well as the ethical issues encountered during the field study. Adopting a descriptive and narrative approach, the researcher infused methodological issues in a story-telling mode by providing insight into the tools used, how the respondents were selected, and the limitations of the study, difficulties encountered in the field and how they were resolved.

5.1 Research Design

The orientation of this study and the character of the study site as well as the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents called for qualitative approaches in data collection. The choice of this approach was justified on the premise that it enables a closer contact between the researcher and the participant being studied. In this case, studying OHS practices among mechanics and other artisans meant that, the researcher needed to get closer to them in their daily activities and at their work place, in order to get more insight into their operations. In addition, using qualitative approach would also mean that, the data collection process would deal with smaller number of respondents in an attempt to get more information from them instead of adopting quantitative approaches which might require dealing with larger number of respondents. In any case, the smaller the number of respondents in qualitative approach, the better the intensity of interaction the researcher is likely to have with the respondents. By this
method, the whole issue of OHS could be understood within the socio-cultural context of the artisans and other stakeholders. This method was also the most appropriate for a study which required “detailed, thick description, inquiry in-depth, direct quotations capturing people’s personal perspectives and experiences” (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2000:504). This approach is expected to help address the objectives of the research.

Against this background, the methodological approach to data gathering for this study involved in-depth interviews using semi-structured interview guide, direct observation of artisans, and key informant interviews with some officials of state regulatory agencies and some experts on OHS practice in Ghana.

5.2 Choice of Kokompe as the Study Area

An important step in the research design process is to find people or places to study and to gain access to and establish rapport with participants so that they will provide good data (Creswell, 2007). The researcher needed to identify a group or an individual or individuals representative of a group to study, preferably one to which the inquirer is a “stranger” (Agar, 1986).

This study was carried out at Kokompe artisanal centre, an area noted for vehicle repairs and spare parts retail in Accra, the capital city of Ghana. (A detailed description of Kokompe artisanal centre is given in chapter six). Kokompe has gained prominence in recent times in terms of the number of young people it employs and the large number of low and middle-income earners who visit this place either for vehicle repairs or for the purchase of spare parts. As a result, it was crucial for the researcher to examine and investigate the social structure of this centre and what goes on in terms of safety, accidents and hazards.
The choice of Kokompe was purposive: first, it is an urban slum community concentrated with high population of urban youths making a living out of artisanal works and with very few social amenities, poor infrastructural planning and prone to occupational hazards, risks and accidents. As a result, they fall within a high risk group with low education, income, social status and minimal support from state regulatory and inspection agencies. Second, the area has a combination of all artisans namely; spare part dealers, mechanics, welders, sprayers and electricians, all working at the same place. This area is unlike the traditional road corner mechanic shops where these cluster of artisans some times operate separately.

An additional attribute for choosing Kokompe was that it was considered one of the well-patronized artisanal centres in Ghana besides the Suame Magazine in Kumasi and the Abbosey Okai spare part centre in Accra. The popularity of Kokompe (in terms of spare parts retail and vehicle repair) has resulted in the proliferation of the name ‘Kokompe’ in other parts of the country. For instance there is Kokompe in Takoradi, Koforidua, Tema, Sunyani, Cape Coast and other big towns.

It was therefore deemed prudent that Kokompe would offer the researcher the opportunity to get sufficient research participants and a variety of cases to observe for the study. Therefore availability of participants and cases to be studied made the study area the prime choice for the study. Aside the availability of research participants to offer information, diverse cases to be studied in the area gave the researcher the opportunity to observe in a natural setting the environment in which the mechanics and other artisans work.
5.3 Field Entry and Pilot Study

The data gathering process began in January 2013, with the identification and establishment of rapport with as many potential respondents (artisans) as possible. Some of these artisans were suggested to me through informal discussion with my mechanic at Dansoman. My mechanic knew some of these artisans from where he usually bought spare parts. When I discussed with him my intention and interest to conduct a study at Kokompe, he gladly agreed to lead me to the place to discuss the issue with some of the mechanics there. The first persons to be contacted were a master/owner welder and a master/owner mechanic operating in the area. After explaining what I intended to do in the area, they led me to the Chairman of the Spare Parts Dealers’ Association and later he decided to lead me to the caretaker in charge of the area. Having introduced myself as a PhD student and a lecturer at the Sociology Department, University of Ghana and explained the nature of my study, I was asked to pay an amount of 50 Ghana cedis. This money was to be used for buying battery for the megaphone that was used to announce my presence and the nature of my study. I was asked to pay an additional 50 Ghana cedis for administrative expenses to be incurred for the announcement to be made.

Finally, in gaining access to research site and establishing rapport with the artisans, I had undertaken two pilot trips to the study area to understand what goes on there. In each of these pilot trips, I also sought permission from the various association leaders through the caretaker.

During my contact with all these persons, I made it clear to them that I was at Kokompe to study their occupational health and safety problems and how they went about dealing with them. This ‘declaration of intent’ was especially necessary to assure the artisans and their leaders that I was not interested in knowing how much they made as income to report them to the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA) task force for payment of taxes to the assembly. This was based
on earlier rumour that had circulated that the AMA task force was sending people to the area to identify those who were not paying tax to the assembly. However, information generated from discussions with these contact artisans significantly influenced the selection procedure and the type of questions posed during the subsequent in-depth interviews and types of direct observations made.

In order to pretest the interview guide for the in-depth interviews, I decided to undertake a pilot study with some street corner mechanics at the Christian Village near Legon. The choice of this place was based on the fact that, I was a former client to the mechanics in this area. The pretest was useful since it helped me to review some of the questions and added some more questions. Furthermore, the observations made during the pilot study also influenced the type of questions posed during the main in-depth interviews at Kokompe.

5.4 Target Population

Studies of OHS among artisans in the small-scale informal sector can be conducted with several categories of respondents depending on the demands of the research. This is due to the wide, holistic and complex nature of OHS issues especially among small-scale artisans. Since the issue of OHS among small-scale informal workers gained public concern and attention (due to reported fire outbreaks at Kokompe and Suame), the population of interest to the social researcher has become limitless. The definition of the unit of analysis for any research on OHS issues must, however, be determined by the objectives the study is to achieve. In terms of the population size, Kokompe was estimated to harbour around 500 people. This figure is however a ‘guesstimate’ since the artisans at Kokompe could not provide data on the actual population size. Furthermore, checks at the Accra Metropolitant Assembly (AMA) as well as the Registrar-General’s Office only gave an estimated population of between 500 and 1,000 people. As a result
of the difficulty in getting the actual population size, it was problematic for the researcher to get the composition of the artisans for easy sampling. In other words, the absence of an accurate sampling frame did not allow the selection of artisans. As a result, the researcher purposively selected artisans who were willing to be part of the study. In doing this consideration was however given to all the different categories of artisans identified at the study site.

The target population for this study therefore was all the artisans operating at Kokompe. This included spare part dealers, welders, sprayers, mechanics, electricians, food vendors among others. In addition to these artisans, the study targeted all institutions and advocacy groups who are one way or the involved in OHS issues either as regulatory or support agencies. Since the main reason for this work was to have an in-depth knowledge about OHS problems and concerns of artisans, it was imperative that artisans and informants that would help facilitate a deeper understanding of the issues were identified and selected.

5.5 Study Population

Although the target population for this study was all the artisans operating at Kokompe (including spare part dealers, welders, sprayers, mechanics, electricians, food vendors among others), the researcher selected artisans who have direct OHS problems and issues. For instance, though food vendors constitute an integral part of Kokompe providing an important service to the artisans in the form of food, they do have serious safety and accident issues like the main artisans at the place. In other words, it may be stated that, the food vendors are performing staff functions (support) while the main artisans perform line functions (the core functions) of Kokompe. This informed the selection of five main categories of artisans namely; auto mechanics, auto welders, auto sprayers, auto spare part dealers and auto electricians. These five categories of artisans constitute the core business of Kokompe and they keep the place alive and
In all 58 artisans comprising 15 auto mechanics, 12 auto welders, 15 auto sprayers, 10 auto spare part dealers and six auto electricians were selected.

In addition six officials from state regulatory and advocacy agencies on OHS were selected. These included the Director of the Department of Factories Inspectorate (DFI) in Accra; the DFI is by law mandated to inspect all working environment. Two officials of the Ghana Trades Union Congress (the informal economy and the OHS desk officers), the informal desk officer of the National Board for Small-Scale Industries (NBSSI), the head of the Ghana Health Service’s Occupational and Environmental Health Unit and the Executive Director of the Bureau of Public Safety. The officials were key informants who provided important information on the role of their agencies on OHS issues as well as their views on the problems of OHS in the informal sector and the ways forward.

The respondents selected for the study were all individuals who have something to do with OHS issues in one way or the other. While some categories of respondents such as the artisans have been directly involved in work processes at Kokompe, the rest comprising the key informants (officials of state agencies) have no direct association with the artisans. The former category, by virtue of their direct involvement in work at Kokompe, had very rudimentary knowledge on OHS issues in the area. On the other hand, the latter categories, although not directly involved in the work process in the area, were capable of assessing OHS issues and problems in the area and therefore were resourceful for the study.
5.6 Selection Procedure

In view of the qualitative nature of this study as well as the quest to highlight OHS problems and concerns of artisans in the informal automobile repair and parts retail business, sampling of respondents for the study was done to ensure that all respondents who mattered were represented in the study sample. In selecting the study area as well as the various artisans, purposive sampling method was therefore employed.

These categories of respondents and informants selected and interviewed were able to provide the necessary data required for the attainment of the objectives of the study. This was because they were either directly or indirectly affected by the issues and problems of OHS among artisans at Kokompe. In addition, these respondents were considered relevant for study since they were in one way or the other affected by the phenomenon under investigation; for they would be in a better position to provide insightful information about the phenomenon under study.

In selecting the artisans, purposeful sampling method (Creswell, 2007) was used to divide the population into homogenous units in order to put similar individuals in one group. This was to illustrate subgroups and facilitate comparisons. Thus, the study area was first divided or mapped into two main clusters; namely the zone occupied by the spare part dealers on one hand and the zone for the other four groups of artisans (sprayers, welders, mechanics and electricians). Convenient sampling procedure was used to select ten spare part dealers who were willing to join in the study. This number was justified on the grounds that spare part dealers do not normally suffer a lot of accidents and injuries in their operations. Thus, saturation was reached after seven interviews. By this time the researcher had identified the major OHS issues
confronting them in their work and there was no need to include more of them.

For the other artisans (sprayers, welders, mechanics and electricians), because they occupied the same area carrying out their activities at the same place, the researcher mapped the area into four clusters of artisanal workshops. In each of these mapped artisanal workshops, the researcher selected each category of willing artisans using convenient sampling procedure.

In selecting the individual artisans from the four artisanal workshops, at least a master/owner, a senior apprentice, a worker and apprentices were selected. This was done to ensure that in each workshop, apart from involving all the categories of artisans, the various levels of workers (masters/owners, senior apprentice, worker and apprentice) were covered. This ensured equal representation of the views of all the artisans.

In each case, those who were willing to be part of the study were selected and interviewed. The convenient sampling technique was used because of the unwillingness of the artisans to take part in the interviews as a result of their perception that the research was for the Accra Metropolitan Assembly’s (AMA) revenue task force. The perception was based on a rumour that went round the study area that the AMA had sent a team to investigate their income to determine the taxes to levy them. In the face of the above problem, those willing to take part in the research were involved, though the researcher had to convince the masters/owners of the various artisans to allow them to be interviewed. In this way, 15 auto mechanics, 12 auto welders, 15 auto sprayers, 10 auto spare part dealers and six auto electricians were selected. Table 3 below is a summary of category of individual artisans selected.
Table 2: Summary of Respondents Interviewed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of Respondents</th>
<th>Number Sampled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auto Mechanics</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto Welders</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto Sprayers</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto Spare Part Dealers</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto Electricians</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officials from DFI, NBSSI, TUC, BPS, GHS</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Number of Respondents Interviewed</strong></td>
<td><strong>64</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Fieldwork, 2014

Table 3: Summarized Category of Artisans Selected

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Artisans</th>
<th>No. of Owners/Masters</th>
<th>No. of Senior Apprentices</th>
<th>No. of Apprentices</th>
<th>No. of workers</th>
<th>Total Sampled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mechanics</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sprayers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spare Part Dealers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welders</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricians</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Fieldwork, 2014

In addition, six officials of state regulatory agencies (key informants) namely; an official of the Department of Factories Inspectorate (because of their inspection role in all factories, shops and places of work), the National Board on Small and Medium Scale Industries (due to their activities of giving credit to these artisans), the Trade Union Congress (their role of organizing informal workers), Ghana Health Service (the head of their Occupational and Environmental Health Unit) and the Bureau of Public Safety (an advocacy group on safety at public places such as Kokompe) were also selected.
5.7.0 Instrument for Data Collection

5.7.1 In-depth Interviews

The suitable instrument often used in qualitative research is the interview guide, semi-structured in format. Patton (1990) observes that this method of generating qualitative data increases their (data) comprehensiveness as well as making the data collection systematic for each respondent.

Following Kvale (1996) guidelines for conducting qualitative interviews, questions were developed to allow artisans to tell their stories in their own terms. Using this form of in-depth, semi-structured interview served the purpose of obtaining individual perceptions of the work conditions and of the work-related accidents. An interview guide was used for three reasons: firstly to ensure that all relevant themes were raised, secondly to ensure that the scope and direction of questioning followed the objectives of the study, and thirdly to provide probes when further information was necessary (Kvale, 1996).

In the case of the artisans interviewed, this method was useful since it afforded the researcher enough time for each respondent by asking the relevant questions and probing for responses which could not have otherwise be obtained using questionnaire. Thus, in-depth interviews were held with artisans and complemented with direct observations of artisans at work. Key informants and some officials of some state regulatory agencies were also interviewed.

It was expected that the in-depth semi-structured interview guide enabled the researcher anticipate logical gaps in the investigation and had such gaps closed. The interview process was often conversational and situational with occasional interruptions from customers and other
artisans seeking some explanations from the interviewee. In many instances, interviewing these artisans was a great fun as some of them wanted to know why I had spent so much time collecting information on their OHS issues they consider a normal part of their daily activities.

At the end of each interview, the apprentice artisans ask for ‘something small’ (some money) to buy soap for washing their ‘working gear’ or working clothing. In the main, issues discussed in these interviews included general safety conditions of the workplace, awareness of occupational hazards, nature and types of accidents and injuries experienced, causes of these injuries and accidents and what they attributes it to, the consequences and effects, safety measures put in place, immediate treatment and compensation for accidents, safety culture and safety behaviours at work and the presence of inspection and regulatory agencies at the workplace. The semi-structured interview guide was supplemented with direct observations of the artisans at work by the researcher in order to confirm or deny any claim or assertions they made.

5.7.2 Direct Observations

It was anticipated that due to the sensitive nature of artisans’ health and safety under investigation, adequate data may not be generated using in-depth interviews alone. This was due to the fact that, there were instances the artisans were not forthcoming with their responses on questions posed by the researcher. However, during the pilot studies, the researcher noticed that it was possible to directly observe the artisans while they were at work and to make meanings out of what they were doing. As a result, the direct observation was utilized in addition to the in-depth interviews. Through this approach, the researcher observed the artisans in their work activity with some working without the appropriate PPEs as well as the congestion of the area.
5.7.3 Key Informant Interviews

In an attempt to have a holistic understanding of the issue of OHS among artisans in the informal small-scale sector, the researcher decided to seek the views of some key informant on the issue. As a result, some key informants were identified and purposefully selected for data collection. The process was carefully crafted to ensure that the key informants selected were knowledgeable and respected by their colleagues and could provide the relevant information in the data collection processes. Since it was difficult to have contact with these key informants, I made personal visit to the institutions involved with official introductory letters from my department indicating my intention. After initial setbacks I was able to get the key informants to take part through discussions on the objectives of the study. The informants were made up of some officials of the state regulatory agencies in Ghana responsible for enforcing and inspecting OHS at workplaces in addition to some officials of the Trades Union Congress, National Board for Small and Medium Scale Industries, Ghana Health Service and the Bureau of Public Safety.

The first key informant interview was conducted with the Director of the Department of Factories Inspectorate in Accra. This was to seek his views on his outfits’ inspection role in the informal sector and particularly among artisans at Kokompe. The director was forthright and candid in the interview and provided useful information on the activities of the DFI in the informal sector as well as providing useful suggestions about how to improve OHS among workers in the informal sector in general.
The second key informant interview was conducted with the Informal Economy Desk Officer at the National Board on Small and Medium Scale Industries on the role of her department in improving working lives of artisans in the small and medium scale sector. In particular, the interview focused on the challenges facing small and medium scale enterprise and how the NBSSI was addressing those problems especially OHS problems.

The third key informant interview was with the Head of the Occupational and Environmental Health Division of the Ghana Health Service. This was to assess the current situation of OHS among informal workers especially artisans from the point of view of the Ghana Health service.

The fourth key informant was the Executive Secretary of the Bureau of Public Safety, an NGO interested in commenting and researching into issues of public safety at public places in Ghana. The aim was to seek the opinion of the Executive Secretary on the OHS concerns among artisans at Kokompe which is a public place.

Finally, the researcher interviewed two officials from the Ghana Trades Union Congress (GTUC) namely: the Informal Economy Desk Officer and the OHS Desk officer on what their outfit was doing to ensure occupational safety and health of informal sector workers, in particular artisans at Kokompe. The responses from all the key informants identified were revealing as they provided useful information on the issue of OHS in the informal sector as well as need for a national OHS policy and the challenges with the current legislations and regulatory frameworks in place. The interviews were recorded using tape recorder but in cases where the key informants declined recording, notes were taken.
5.8 Data Handling and Management

Data analysis in qualitative research consists of preparing and organizing the data that is text data as in transcripts, or images as in photographs for analysis, then reducing the data into themes through a process of coding and condensing the codes, and finally representing the data in figures, tables or a discussion (Creswell, 2007). Data from the field were in the form of notes, sound bites on recorders and pictures and videos on camera. While the notes were carefully read through to confirm information provided by the respondents, the interviews captured on recorder were played and transcribed and coding was then carried out. This involved organization of raw data into categorized themes or concepts. Further, data was re-categorized into subsections under the various themes which were represented in the interview question. Finally, the data was sorted into comparative themes and concepts based on the objectives of the study. Data so treated was then analyzed. In doing so, the researcher looked for patterns in the data such as recurrent behaviour under the various categorizations among the artisans. The analyses or explanations of the data under the various themes were done using the terminologies and concepts of the people studied.

Furthermore, data from the field were transcribed and organized into main themes based on the specific objectives of the study. From there the data were organized into sub-themes hoping that relevant meanings emerged. The researcher also analyzed and represented the data from the field by creating and organizing files for the data. This was followed by reading through the transcribed text, making margin notes and forming initial codes. The next stage was to describe the case and its context in terms of the specific subgroup. After this the researcher classified the data by using categorical aggregates to establish themes or patterns for the study. The
interpretation of the data was done using direct interpretations by looking at single instances and drawing a meaning from it. Then the researcher developed naturalistic generalizations from analyzing the data, generalizations that people could learn from the case either for themselves or apply to a population of cases. The findings finally presented in-depth picture of the case as well as using narrative tables and figures where applicable.

5.9 Ethical Consideration

Regardless of the approach to qualitative inquiry, a qualitative researcher faces many ethical issues that surface during data collection in the field and analysis and dissemination of qualitative reports (Creswell, 2007). In every study involving life, ethical considerations come to the fore. This is more so where human lives are involved.

In the course of data collection, firstly, I ensured that no participant was harmed through the revelation of facts that would embarrass him/her. Secondly, respondents were adequately educated about what was being investigated to enhance the chances of their participation. Further, I assured the respondents of confidentiality and their complete anonymity. I achieved this by concealing their true identities through the use of pseudonyms. Finally, due to the fact that the artisans were unknown to the researcher, they were initially unwilling to co-operate with the researcher. However, I convinced my respondents that I was pursuing a genuine intellectual exercise devoid of any deception by showing them a letter from the head of my department and my student’s identity card.
5.10 Limitations of the Study

The main limitation of the study is that the findings are made based on the responses of a small sample of 58 artisans. This represents only a small percent of the population of mechanics in the country. Thus, while conceding the limitation imposed by the sample size, it was equally important that we recognize the tentative nature of speculations and opinions around the subject matter. It was important to also emphasize the broader objective of the study, which throws more light on occupational health hazards with a view of finding possible solutions to deal with them.

5.11 Field Problems and Challenges

The commonest problem encountered throughout the study was the unwillingness of some of the auto-artisans to participate in the exercise. The auto-artisans had the impression that the study was funded and that they were expecting monies from the team. Apparently, a number of similar interviews had gone on in the past where the researchers made some financial and material promises. However, these promises were never fulfilled. For this reason, some of them were unwilling to participate in the study even though some of them understood the researcher’s plea that the research was for academic purpose only. However, it took the caretaker in charge of the artisanal centre to convince the artisans to participate in the study.

There was also the problem of some of the auto-artisans who were unable to attend to the researcher. Many appeared too busy to spare anytime for the interviews, while, in other cases, the interviews were interrupted because they had to attend to their customers. On many occasions, therefore, the interviews had to be rescheduled. These situations made the research assistants extend the number of days in each location. This had a lot of financial implications for the researcher.
During both the interview and observation processes, the tape recorder and digital camera were used but with the consent of the respondents to capture the conversation and scenes. This was necessary in view of the longer time spent to collect the amount of detailed information. In instances where artisans did not favour the recording of their voices, their responses were written down by the researcher.

Although the researcher desired to use camera to capture artisans and their work environment in particular some awkward sitting and working positions and the use of inappropriate PPE, he was very much limited in the use of the gadget as most of the artisans rejected the idea and became more suspicious of the motive behind the exercise. Under these circumstances some pictures as well as videos were captured, despite the fact that the direct observation served a great purpose by helping capture additional data. I visited the research area (Kokompe) ten different times besides the in-depth interview sessions with the artisans in order to observe them. Non-participant observation was adopted in which the artisans were studied from outside the group by watching, listening and recording the information where possible.

Finally, the period of the research work was within the rainy season. On many occasions the rains interrupted the interviews. The interviews had to be postponed on such occasions. The researcher, therefore, spent more days and money on the data collection than estimated.

5.12.0 Artisans and their Demographic Characteristics

It is important to provide insight into some socio-demographic characteristics of the artisans selected. Knowledge of their socio-demographic characteristics is important because as the Marxian aphorism goes, a person’s social position largely influences his/her level of
consciousness. Thus in terms of workplace behaviour or avoidance of accidents, it is to be expected that the more knowledge a person has on the causes and prevention of hazards or accidents the more he/she is expected to exhibit care in the workplace environment. Though the study is qualitative, the socio-demographic characteristics are analysed statistically. This is to indicate the number of respondents in respect of the various socio-demographic variables. However, this do not in any way render the study quantitive as the main findings have been analysed qualitatively. The demographic characteristics of the artisans discussed are age, sex, marital status, level of education, category of worker and number of year of work.

5.12.1 Age of the Artisans

Previous studies among informal small-scale workers (Dua-Adonteng, 2007; Ackerson and Awuah, 2010; Dwomoh, et al., 2013; and Kwankye, 2012), have shown that generally, such workers were very young. This is a clear indication that the nature of work in this sector requires young people who could much up with the physical energy and strength needed.

When asked about their age, many of the artisans in their answers re-posed the question to the researcher “How old am I?” This question is bi-vocal: first, it underscores the difficulty in compiling data on age in Ghana where many people do not know their true ages. Second, some Ghanaians find it difficult to disclose their age to others they consider as ‘strangers’.

The data show that the age of the artisans ranges between 15 to 65 years and above with the majority falling within the age group of 15-45 years. Some of them (10) artisans interviewed were in the age group of 46-64 years. The age group “65 and above” recorded the lowest
accounting for six artisans interviewed. The data shows that the majority of artisans were young and were between the ages of 15 to 45 years as indicated in table 4.

The table below displays the age categories the artisans interviewed at Kokompe.

Table 4: Age of Artisans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15-45</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-64</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 and above</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>58</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Fieldwork, 2014

The general outline of the age distribution indicates the youthfulness of the artisans interviewed due to the fact that majority of the artisans interviewed fall within the age group of 15-45 years. The youthfulness of the artisans shows that the nature of work at Kokompe requires the services of young people who have the physical energy and fitness to engage in such energy-demanding activities such as carrying and lifting metal and vehicle parts. In many cases, the older artisans were mostly involved in activities such as selling spare parts and spraying vehicles which do not require much physical energy. In few cases where these older artisans were encountered, they were master-artisans who directed the younger artisans or they simply manage the shop. When asked about youthfulness of the artisans, a 57 year old master artisan indicated that they needed a lot of young people, especially, men to do the jobs since work requires physical energy in most cases. According to him:
Here we often lift and carry machines and vehicle parts. And since the older folks cannot do that, we need the young ones to do that for us. This explains why we have a lot of young people over here.

The above opinion was re-echoed by several other artisans both young and old. In addition, because Kokompe employs the services of a lot of apprentices, it is not surprising the age distribution shows a young work force. It is, therefore, proper to relate the youthful age of the artisans to the nature of their work. According to the Ghana Statistical Service Survey (GSS, 2013), about 75.7% of the adult population is economically active and about 54% of the country’s population is young. This further gives meaning to the finding that the majority of the artisans are young. Therefore, this finding does not only confirm the existing literature but also gives meaning to the nature of activities engaged in by of these artisanal workers. In a study by Okuga et al. (2012) among roadside welders in Uganda, they found their mean age to be 31 years. Most of the welders were above 25 years of age. In addition, a study among mechanics at Odwana in Accra by Dua-Adonteng (2007) revealed that, the majority of respondents were young (between the ages of 15 to 36 years) of age.

5.12.2 Gender of Artisans

Data from the study indicated that the majority of the respondents 48 artisans (n=58) were males and only few (10) were females. The finding reveals that, out of the female artisans, seven of them were spare part dealers and three of them were sprayers. The gender inequality in the artisans’ population could be explained by the fact that the Kokompe artisanal centre engages the services more males than females due to the nature of activities they are involved in. In addition, the low representation of females among respondents typically confirms the fact that the number of females involve in vehicle repairs in Ghana is small. This could be attributed to the culture and socialization process for different genders.
However, it is interesting to find that a traditionally male dominated work such as vehicle repairs and maintenance is now attracting some females. In addition, it is also interesting that all the female interviewed are into spraying and the sale of vehicle spare parts which are the traditionally expressive roles of women (decoration and selling respectively). In addition, because Kokompe artisanal centre deals with spare part retail and vehicle repairs, the services of males are needed more than those of females. This explains the greater representation of men in the study sample. Findings from other studies (Dua-Adonteng, 2007; Okuga et al., 2012) however revealed that all the respondents involved were male and this was due to the fact that in both studies the focus was on jobs that traditionally require the services of males.

5.12.3 Marital Status of Artisans
The study was interested in finding out the possible consequences artisanal workers and their families face when they suffer injuries. Data from the fieldwork indicated that many of the respondents (26 artisans) were single, some were married (20 artisans) and few were divorced (12 artisans) at the time of the interviews. One observation made by the researcher was that some artisans were living in kiosks (wooden structures) with their families. The kiosks served as their places of abode where they cooked, bathed and did everything as families. Some of these kiosks also provide shelter for food vendors to prepare their dishes which they sell to the artisans exposing them to possible fire-outbreaks.

Considering workplace safety, married workers are assumed to be more careful than the unmarried workers. This is because the married workers have social and economic responsibility of caring for their dependents and thus, do not want to suffer any injuries which may affect their
economic conditions. The revelation that more unmarried respondents were represented confirms earlier studies such as (Dua-Adonteng, 2007; Kwankye, 2012 and Theuri, 2012) all of which found that more unmarried respondents were involved in studies involving occupational health and safety among workers in small-scale informal enterprises. Deductively, based on the observations of the researcher, therefore it may perhaps be said that married workers comply more with safety legislations and regulations than unmarried workers.

5.12.4 Educational Background of Artisans

Data on the educational background of the artisans show that many of them are basic graduates (primary and junior high school). Data reveal that out of 58 respondents, some of them (26) had basic education (primary and junior high school), while 10 artisans in each category had no formal education, middle school education, and secondary school education. Only two artisans attained tertiary level education (in particular Higher National Diploma from the Polytechnic). Further breakdowns of the educational background of the respondents indicate that two of the spare part dealers attained tertiary level education obtaining Higher National Diploma (HND) from the polytechnic. Clearly, in general, the educational background of artisans is low. The low educational background of the artisans can be explained by the fact that Kokompe engages the services of many apprentices who acquire artisanal skills through informal training and many of these apprentices are school drop-outs who usually end up in apprenticeship training programme.

5.12.5 Number of years of work

Respondents were asked to state the length of time they have been on their respective jobs. The rationale for the question is that the length of experience on the job may vary inversely with experience of injury. In other words, it was expected that the number of times a respondent experienced injuries could be related to the length of time he/she had stayed on the job. A close
observation and analysis of the work experience of respondents shows that many of the artisans (35) have spent between zero to five years working in Kokompe whiles some (23) artisans spent between six to 25 years in their respective fields. Further analysis indicated that the spare part dealers and mechanics were among the artisans who have spent more years in the place. For instance a 65 year old spare part dealer, Nana Asante who had worked in Kokompe since 1989 indicated thus:

I have been working here for the past 25 years and my entire life has been lived here. Everything about this centre affects my life and this is why I believe that the spirit of this place is dead with the poor organizational structure and problems.

Other category of artisans such as mechanics, sprayers, welders and electricians are made up of owners/masters as well as apprentices. Most of the owners/masters have spent between 10 and 20 years working whiles many of the apprentices as at the time of the interview have spent between one to 10 years working. The nature and pattern of work experience of the artisans may also signify that the sector has become a source of employment as well as apprenticeship training for the youth.

5.12.6 Motivation to Work as an Artisan

It is assumed that once an individual chooses to pursue a particular career path, he or she needs to be mentally prepared to learn the nuances that come with the job. On the other hand, if one is forced into a job, he or she may be unwilling to learn all the necessary ‘tricks of the trade’ that are required to make him or her successful at it. Respondents were therefore asked to state why they were motivated to choose their respective jobs. Responses elicited indicated that the artisans were motivated to their respective jobs through several factors.
From the interviews some of the artisans got into their job through the influence of their parents who were themselves in the job. This was the situation especially in the case of the spare part dealers some of whom have inherited the business of their parents. For example, a 35 year old spare parts dealer intimated that he was continuing the business of his father. He disclosed thus:

*After the death of my father I had no option than to take over the running of this business being the first male child of my father. I now use the income to take care of my own family and my two other siblings.*

In some other cases, parents of these youth decided to equip them with some skills and opportunity to be employable so as to reduce their children’s dependency on them. A 32 year old JHS graduate reported that he was influenced by the mother to learn a trade as an auto electrician. According to him:

*When I completed the JHS and my results were poor, my mother insisted that I should learn a trade since she was not in a position to further my education as a single parent. She therefore approached a relative who was already here (Kokompe) as an auto electrician. So, I had no option but to learn that trade.*

These same sentiments as captured above were expressed by several other apprentices interviewed during the fieldwork. However, one notable character of such apprenticeship in the informal sector is that it is often largely not documented; employment and apprenticeship contracts are in some cases established verbally with family and friends witnessing agreements. For example, a 25 year old sales boy reported:

*My madam (employer/owner) is a friend of my mother. So my madam told my mother she needed someone to assist her sell her spare parts here at Kokompe. I was at home unemployed after my JHS education and so my mother asked me to take up this job and I agreed to do so.*

Even though Ghana’s Labour Law (Act 651, 2003) requires that employment relationships are formalized with the signing of a written contract between employers and employees, in the case
of employees and apprentices in the informal sector, the provision is hardly complied with by employers (in this case masters/ owners). Most employment and apprenticeship agreements are established verbally, making monitoring and enforcement of relevant laws difficult.

The issue of parents relying on informal sector enterprises to provide employable skills for their children directly questions the relevance of the nation’s formal education system. The Junior Secondary School (JSS) concept which was mooted in the 1970’s and became fully operational in 1987 was meant to equip Ghanaian children with employable skills. However, this appears to have met with little success. Also, governments’ inability to promote technical and vocational education in order to equip the youth with employable skills is a contributing factor for parents’ reliance on the informal sector to provide jobs for the youth. Thus, in Ghana, there is a highly developed but informalized apprenticeship system where young men and women undertake training which equips them with skills used in both the informal and formal sectors. Apprentices make up nearly 25% of working-age Ghanaians and are normally not paid; they receive cash as pocket money (Monk et al., 2008).

Apart from parental influence, some of the artisans, interviewed indicated that, their motivation to work as (spare parts dealers, mechanics, welders, sprayers and electricians) was as result of self-initiative and financial difficulties. They therefore became apprentices through their own saving, the support of friends and the benevolence of their masters. In the case where their masters accepted them without paying anything after their graduation, they are required to serve their masters for a specified period of time (often 3 years). The view of a 40 year old apprentice mechanic captures this point more forcefully:
I came here to learn this trade through the little money I saved as a truck pusher. I approached my master through a friend who was already working here as an apprentice and he (my master) agreed that after my training I will serve him by working for him here. After my training which took 5 years to complete, I am now serving him and in my 3rd year of service. Now I am the senior in charge when my master is not around and I control all the other workers and apprentices totaling 5 workers.

The duration for the apprenticeship training is not specific and this differs depending on the rate at which the apprentice is able to acquire the requisite skills. At the time of the field study, the most senior apprentice encountered in one of the mechanic workshops had spent about 15 years with his master.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, this chapter examined the activities that occurred in the field during the data collection process. The chapter gave an insight into how the researcher entered the field, the tools and instruments used for gathering data, the difficulties encountered and how they were resolved as well as the socio-demographic characteristics of the artisans. Though a difficult and tedious process, it was interesting and useful since it gave me the opportunity to have interaction and firsthand information from the artisans as a means of understanding their working lives. The next chapter discusses the social structure and organization of Kokompe the study area.
CHAPTER SIX

KOKOMPE: AN ORDERED ANARCHY

6.0 Introduction

The title of this chapter is an oxymoron – a contradiction in terms. However, it is appropriate for
the description of the social organization of Kokompe artisanal center since to a first-time visitor,
the place appears chaotic and disorganized. In his classic monograph on the Nuer of Southern
Sudan, Evans-Pritchard (1940:54) was both impressed and overwhelmed by the precarious and
yet ordered nature of Nuer social structure. In an acephalous society where conflict could break
out at anytime, he was nonetheless impressed with the apparent law and order that characterized
Nuer society. In encapsulating his impression about the society he describes it as “ordered
anarchy;” ‘anarchy’ because lack of a recognized ruler and laws suggested an anarchic or lawless
situation; ‘ordered’ because although they had no developed legislative and judiciary systems,
the people knew very well what their rights were and lived by them. Even there was order in
conflict since there were rules regarding the way to fight enemies and relations. Similarly, taking
a panoramic view of the structure and organization of the study locale, the researcher cannot but
describe Kokompe as an “ordered anarchy”. In the following discussion, the researcher describes
the research location. To do this adequately, the chapter focuses on the historical origin of
Kokompe, infrastructure and social life of the artisans.

In addition, the chapter describes how the artisans operate and manage their activities in spite of
the apparent confusion created by mountains of scrap metal, and several hundreds of abandoned
vehicles of various brands. The chapter also discusses land tenure and tenancy issues confronting
workers in this community as well as collective interest in the community. This exercise is
necessitated by the fact that such description provides insight into the environment of the study area as well as the nature of hazards and risks those who work here are exposed to.

6.1 Historical Origin of Kokompe

Nobody knows the real origin of the name ‘Kokompe’. Efforts to get the etymology of the name from the elders and district assembly officials ended fruitless. However, in the ordinary Ghanaian parlance ‘Kokompe’ refers to a ‘useless object’ or ‘case’. Therefore, in instances when someone refers to a person or event as Kokompe, it literally means the referent is of ‘no use’ or ‘useless’ or ‘without any use’.

There are no written accounts on the historical origins of Kokompe, but there are popular versions. Oral narrations and accounts by the caretaker indicate that, Kokompe developed around former armories in the 1930s and 1940s during which guns were made for hunting in many rural communities. Later blacksmiths began to forge spare parts for vehicles and the trade of mechanics developed along with other artisans involved in vehicle repairs and spare parts retail. However, between 1950 and 1960s, Accra City Council (ACC) moved vehicle repair enterprises from the central to periphery of Accra. Later, when domestic and multinational companies opened garages in Accra, mechanics in Kokompe had a respectable share of vehicle owners who could not afford the cost of repair works in established garages.

Moreover, the use of the term might also have been derived from the fact that from about the 1970s when Ghana’s economic difficulties affected the importation of new vehicles and their parts, many vehicle owners who could not maintain their vehicles chose to sell them off at give-away prices. At the same time such abandoned vehicles were cannibalized and their parts sold to other vehicle owners. Conceivably, therefore while Kokompe may refer to useless or
abandoned vehicles, in another direction today it has become the ‘saviour’ of many vehicle owners who go there for cannibalized spare parts. Today, the name Kokompe has traversed the boundaries of Accra into other regions.

From the 1990s -2000s, the growth of these small-scale artisans continued with growing numbers of apprentices graduating and starting their own businesses and this was through little introduction of technology and skills. As a result, the number of enterprises in Suame and Kokompe rose and the cluster spilled over its original borders, with spare part dealers increasingly dominant. The consequence of this was increasing land pressure, disputes and use of temporal structures. To date, Kokompe is estimated to be accommodating approximately 500 people working in various small informal enterprises.

6.2 Location

Kokompe is located in Darkuman, a suburb of Accra. It is along the Accra-Cape Coast highway. Kokompe shares boundary with Bubuashie to the east and Odokor to the west. The northern end shares boundary with Accra-Winneba road to the south.

Covering an area of about 90 acres, Kokompe lies on the left and right sides of the main Darkuman road leading to the main George Walker Bush Highway. The façade of permanent metallic and temporal wooden structures of the Kokompe area stretches to a half kilometre of the main Darkuman road, where vehicle spare parts are sold. This situation always results in heavy vehicular traffic on the main road especially during peak periods of the day. Due to the lack of parking lot and arterial road, vehicles always park on both sides of the road, creating bottleneck and impeding free flow of traffic. Within the core area of Kokompe, most buildings are constructed of wooden boards and iron sheets. Plots within the area are not well zoned and
demarcated. This is mainly due to the haphazard location of stores of spare part dealers and artisans’ workshops. Abandoned vehicles, engine oiled floor, metal scrap and metal chips are typical features of Kokompe. On the other side of the main area, which narrowly stretches into the residential area of Odokor Official Town, the sale of decoration items, second-hand vehicles and spare parts as well as the manufacture of donkey carts and push trolleys have become permanent landmarks.

To the first-time visitor, Kokompe is chaotic and one wonders how the artisans are able to conduct their daily activities and businesses. It is within this context that the discussions focus on safety and accidents. In discussing workplace accidents and safety, it is important to examine the social organization and structure of the study area. This is because the work environment can affect the incidence of accidents and promote or constrain safety. Throughout the field trips and interviews, the researcher observed that the artisans and spare part dealers went about their daily activities by adopting some ingenious methods (discussed in the next two sections) in terms of their dealings with customers. In spite of the lack of accessible road network, overcrowded spare part stalls, abandoned vehicles, a customer is able to make his/her way to Kokompe to transact business.

6.3.0 Collegial Solidarity

One interesting observation made by the researcher was that, in spite of their large numbers, the artisans know one another and the wares each person sells. As a result, for instance, when a customer wants to buy a spare part of a particular type, the spare part dealer who does not have that part is able to direct the customer to another dealer where the part can be found. In this way, in spite of the seemingly chaotic organization of the market, customers and the spare part dealers are able to negotiate their ways through the place and transact their business. There are instances
where the spare part dealers and artisans stand by the main Darkuman road inviting prospective customers and drivers in their vehicles for spare parts they are looking for. This is an interesting marketing strategy used by the spare parts dealers to sell their wares. In some cases, the spare part dealers serve as intermediary for the other artisans such as welders, mechanics, auto electricians and sprayers.

In other cases, since the spare part dealers themselves are mechanics, they are able to get job for the other artisans depending on which spare part the customer is interested in. For instance, a spare part dealer is able to get a job for a mechanic or welder when a customer is looking for a particular part that requires the services of the mechanic and welder. In this way there is a strong sense of solidarity among the artisans as far as their business activities are concerned. This solidarity has helped the artisans to achieve some level of orderliness in spite of the apparent confusion greeting a first-time visitor to Kokompe. Another aspect of this social solidarity among the artisans is the phenomena of “affairs/connection” boys.

6.3.1 “Affairs/Connection” Boys

There are a group of men who are either spare part dealers or artisan apprentices but serve as middlemen for the customers and the spare part dealers. These men approach unsuspecting customers and first-time visitors asking them what they want to buy. They then tell the customer to wait while they go round the market to get the part needed, but in the process they inflate the price apparently to compensate for their time. These men operate all over Kokompe and have become an integral part of the Kokompe social structure. The artisans and spare part dealers refer to these men and their activities as “Affairs” or “Connection” Boys.
Some of the “Affairs” or “Connection” Boys interviewed indicated that they make the work of artisans and spare part dealers easier. Furthermore, they are also there to make the movement of the customers and first-time visitors less stressful considering the overcrowded nature of Kokompe. Although some of them denied the allegation that they normally inflate the prices of the spare parts they help customers to buy, others admit the allegation. To them, they have always been of help to the customers and do not see anything wrong with that. Many of the artisans and spare part dealers confirmed the allegation that the connection men or affairs boys usually inflate the prices of wares they come to buy from their stalls. They also indicated that the activities of the ‘connection’ Boys or the phenomenon of ‘Affairs’ is common in Kokompe as well as Abbosey Okai and that they had nothing to do to stop them.

6.4 Types of Vehicles and Spare Parts

The Kokompe area is a cluster made of different categories of artisans namely, auto mechanics, auto electricians, welders, sprayers, vulcanizers, spare part dealers, scrap dealers and food vendors. The Kokompe area is a popular artisanal centre with all varieties of vehicles and spare parts. It was observed that all kinds and types of vehicle parts from the oldest models to the latest can be found at Kokompe. It is interesting to note that all types of vehicle spare parts such as car lights, engines, body parts, shock absorbers, are found at the place. According to some other mechanics and artisans who do not operate at Kokompe, it is the place where all sorts of vehicle parts can be found. This assertion was confirmed by some mechanics around the Kisseman area who indicated that there are several spare parts and good mechanics you can get in Kokompe and not in Abbosey Okai.
In addition, in Kokompe, the spare part dealers and artisans deal in accident and abandoned vehicle that they buy here in Ghana. Therefore, it is possible to get the parts of any car there which cannot be available at Abbosey Okai. The main difference between Kokompe and Abbosey Okai being that whiles they both deal in vehicle spare parts, those in Kokompe in addition buy abandoned and accident vehicles which cannot be found at Abbosey Okai. As some of the spare part dealers interviewed during the study put it, at Abbosey Okai, the dealers do not have the space to bring accident and abandoned vehicles as they at Kokompe are able to do. As a result, though both artisanal centres operate similar kind of business, Kokompe is considered the ‘last stop’ as far as any vehicle parts, whether old or latest is concerned.

Besides, in Kokompe, the spare part dealers and artisans deal in broken-down and abandoned cars they buy here in Ghana; therefore it is possible to get the parts of any car there, which cannot be available at Abbosey Okai. This assertion was confirmed by some mechanics in other parts of Accra for instance, around the Kisseman area during the pilot study. They indicated that there are several spare parts and good mechanics you can get in Kokompe and not in Abbosey Okai. For instance, Master Atta, one of the auto mechanics at the Kisseman area indicated that;

*Boss (referring to the researcher) there is almost every type of spare part you need at Kokompe, except where the car is not in the Ghanaian market. They (traders and artisans at Kokompe) have a lot of accident cars there and therefore you are always assured of whatever parts you want for your car.*

The above assertion is indicative of the fact that, the Kokompe spare part area in Accra is the ideal place that would offer the researcher the opportunity to get sufficient research participants and a variety of cases to observe for the study. Therefore, availability of participants and cases to be studied made the study area the prime choice for the study.

In addition, artisans indicated that Kokompe was the original spare part and vehicle repairs
center and that Abbosey Okai started as a result of some of the dealers of Kokompe moving to Abbosey Okai. One of the spare part dealers interviewed intimated:

*Master, you see Kokompe is always original and the first place of contact as far as spare parts and vehicle repairs are concerned. Even those in Abbosey Okai know that they relocated to their present location from here.*

### 6.5 Illegal Utility Connections and Sanitation Facilities

Apart from the presence of make-shift wooden structures, there are instances of illegal water and electricity connections at the place. Some of the artisans use their shops as a place of residence where they cook and sleep. This has often resulted in frequent fire out breaks. In some cases, the fires can be attributed to food vendors using open flames to cook as well as electrical faults due to illegal electrical connections with electrical wires exposed.

In addition, in the case of an outbreak of fire, the severity can be exacerbated by a number of factors to do with the infrastructure, planning and design of the place as many of the market stalls are constructed with wood, which makes them highly flammable. Another situation observed by the researcher was that, access routes are often blocked by the ad hoc placement of stalls and spare parts, which means that it can take a long time for firemen to reach the source of fire as well as trying to access water.

Furthermore, the congestions and poor planning show that there are no easily accessible fire hydrants which have either been covered by rubbles, stalls and abandoned vehicles or they are non-existent. The observations of the researcher also indicated that most of the workshops lacked fire extinguishers, despite the fact that Ghana’s National Building Regulation requires local government authorities to provide these official public markets with fire extinguishers. In the
mist of these poor planning and infrastructure deficiencies, they conduct their activities with some level of orderliness as you interact with them.

Problems with sanitation is very visible at Kokompe with plastic ‘pure water’ bags, dirty oil from vehicles, broken and cannibalized spare parts and debris choking many of the poor drainage gutters which run through the area. These choked gutters become the breeding ground for disease vectors, and the smell from them can be intolerable. Some mechanics and welders who are close to a large and particularly choked gutter complained that:

*The gutter is always choked with pure water rubbers (small left over plastic bags which contain purified water) and others. So anytime we come here and flies from the dirt come and we eat, we get sick... and we often get cholera...Since January this year (2014) the rubbish in the gutter has not been cleared (40 year old mechanic).*

The smell from the gutter is so bad that in the presence of the researcher a 46 year old female spare part dealer had to sprinkle Dettol disinfectant around her stall to reduce the scent otherwise she feared customers would not be able to stay long at her stall. A large part of the sanitation problem relates to the inadequate provision of refuse removal points within the market and workshops. Refuse collection in Ghana works on the central container system whereby large waste containers are placed at central points throughout the city. These waste containers are never actually placed within market areas, and it is the responsibility of traders to move their refuse from within the market to the container.

Sanitation problems at Kokompe are also exacerbated by the lack of accessible running water, as well as inadequate toilet facilities. Many of the artisans complain that the public toilets located near markets (around Bubuashie) are far and unusable. Lack of accessible running water makes this situation even worse—artisans have to pay to access water tanks from which they can collect
water, or they have to buy ‘pure water’ bags from vendors. As a consequence they are forced to build their own toilet and urinal some few meters from the market which they operate. However, artisans using the facility are expected to pay user charges of 20 Ghana pesewas.

The topography of Kokompe is that of a low lying area. It has been noted as one of the suburbs in Accra which experience annual floods just like parts of Darkuman and Santa Maria. During the raining season the place is flooded due to the sitting of the total filling station on water way. This leaves the place muddy and water-soaked affecting the activities of the artisans. The researcher witnessed one such incidence when after a heavy rainfall in Accra the previous night, the whole of Kokompe was flooded with water the next day during a field trip for interviews. According to the artisans, the sitting of the Total Filling Station near Kokompe artisanal center is the main cause of the flooding. They explained that the filling station is on water way and hence any time it rains heavily, the water is unable to move through its natural way. They indicated that several calls on the AMA to do something about this situation were unheeded. Despite the existence of the poor sanitation and annual flooding, the artisans have been able to operate at the place by regularly filling the place with gravels and sand to make the place conducive for human habitation.

6.6 Tenancy Issues

Contrary to the widely circulated public view that the land on which Kokompe is situated is owned by the spare part dealers and other artisans, the findings of this study revealed that the land belongs to an individual family in Darkuman. This situation has resulted in a problem of land tenure and tenancy. Many of the spare part dealers and artisans have complained about the exorbitant rent they have to pay for their stores and spaces as a main challenge affecting their operation. According to the former chairman of the Spare Part Dealers Association, the land on
which Kokompe is located is the centre of a court dispute for almost five years now between two families. The former executives of the Spare Parts Dealers Association decided to support one of the families in the dispute. Unfortunately for them, the family they supported lost the case at the High Court. The leader of the family which won the case decided to dissolve the existing union by asking the elected executives of the spare part dealers association to step aside and decided to appoint a caretaker in charge of the place. The caretaker who is also a shop owner and a spare part dealer at Kokompe is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the place in terms of collecting rent and any other issues.

At the time of conducting this interview, the cost of rent in the Kokompe area was 18 GH cedis (about 60 U.S. dollars) per month and this is renewable every two years at the time of this interview. The land owner has indicated that from June the rent was to be increase from 18 Ghana cedis per month to 25 Ghana cedis (about 83 U.S dollars) per month. This rent was applicable to the mechanics and other artisans who operate in the Kokompe area. For many of the spare part dealers and other artisans, the issue of high rent is a serious problem affecting their operations. Because the land is for an individual, he decides what to do and for many of the spare part dealers and artisans, this is not good for them. Some of the spare part dealers and mechanics expressed their frustration as follows:

_The rent keeps going up and this is seriously affecting our business. Now the market is poor and sales are bad but you have to pay your rent. The land owner does increase the rent without consulting us, for him if you cannot pay, you can leave the place (Master Kwesi, Spare Part Dealer)_
Another spare part dealer concurs and added that:

*Land tenure is a major problem here. From next month the land owner is increasing the rent. He did not consult anyone here, but just decided on the new rent charges all by himself. He even prevented us from forming a union or electing leaders to represent us. You cannot challenge any decision of the land owner. Every two years, you have to renew your tenancy and if you cannot pay you move out. Nobody is happy about the tenancy situation and high rent payment here and since we cannot put up our own permanent structures, we are forced to pay (Nana Adom).*

Another mechanic also indicated:

*The rent here is too high for such a small space for our work. How much do we get from our work to pay such an exorbitant price? The rent is really killing us here and something has to be done about it* (Master Dovi, master/owner mechanic).

These same sentiments of the spare part dealers and mechanics were expressed by several others the researcher spoke to during the interview at Kokompe.

Due to the fact that the land does not belong to the government and the artisans at Kokompe, it has been very difficult to undertake any development at the site. This has resulted in poor planning and development at the place.

### 6.7 Relocation of Kokompe

The Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA) had on several occasions attempted to relocate the artisans firstly to the Kasoa Iron City and lately Anyaa Iron City for their operations. The reason for the relocation was the complaint from the AMA concerning the traffic congestion on the Darkuman road as a result of the location of Kokompe. In addition, the artisans and spare part dealers have also complained about the high rent paid to the landowner. According to the former union leader of the spare part dealers association, around the late 1990’s the AMA allocated a
parcel of land at Kasoa to relocate the artisans. However, as a result of encroachment on the land by private developers at Kasoa, the artisans were unable to move to the site. Also, the area had no utilities—water, roads, electricity, health centre, etc. and so the artisans refused to move. As a result of this, the AMA had to reallocate another parcel of land at Anyaa for the artisans. The land at Anyaa acquired almost five years ago is currently a source of dispute as some of the old union executives have allegedly sold portions of the land to some private developers. This has brought development on the land to a standstill. In addition, a court injunction instituted by one of the private developers against the artisans and AMA has further complicated the issue.

According to some of the artisans, the last time there was a fire outbreak in the market, the Accra Metropolitan Assembly brought cement, blocks and alluminium roofing sheet to the Kokompe area but had to take these to Anyaa. However, because of the court injunction the donations were returned to AMA. The artisans indicated that, the AMA revenue collectors come to them to collect taxes from their operations.

The general belief is that the spare part dealers and mechanics are unwilling to leave Kokompe because of its proximity to town. Interviews with some artisans indicate that, contrary to widely held view, the dealers are willing to leave Kokompe for Anyaa Iron City. According to them, Anyaa land is government owned and therefore the rent will be lower than what they currently pay at Kokompe. For others, Anyaa is spacious and this will enhance their activities. As one of the spare part dealers intimated:

*If your house is not good, you cannot compare it to others. The land at Anyaa is for the government and so the rent we will pay there will be low. In life the beginning of everything is difficult when we go there we will have challenges in the beginning. But it is still better than staying on a private land where the owner decides to charge new rent* (Kwame, Spare Part Dealer).
A 65 year old spare part dealer supported the previous respondent by stating that:

Moving to Anyaa is better for us. This is because the land owner here in Kokompe is harassing us with exorbitant rent and the business here is no longer booming as it used to. The rent keeps going up, so now that we have our own land, it is better we move to Anyaa so that people would know and be familiar with the place. If anyone here tells you that staying here is good, then the person is deceiving you. There would be adequate parking space at the Anyaa site so it is better for us to move there (Master Ogyam, Spare Part Dealer).

Even though artisans indicated their preparedness to move to Anyaa, some have some few reservations and concerns. For some going to Anyaa, means that everybody should be moved and no one should be allowed to remain at Kokompe.

A spare parts dealer opined thus:

If we go to Anyaa, that will be better for us. But as far I am concerned, if we move our stores and everything to Anyaa and some people still remain here to work, it will affect our business. Therefore, if we move to Anyaa, then the Government should make sure that no spare part dealer is allowed to remain here. In this case we can move to Anyaa, otherwise it will be a problem (Nana, Spare Part Dealer)

The researcher decided to seek the opinion of the artisans on whether their movement to Anyaa would affect their business in any way. This is due to the fact that Anyaa is far away from town and this would affect their operation if they move from their current location at Kokompe. Some car owners who patronize Kokompe argue that moving Kokompe artisans to Anyaa means that other artisans and spare part dealers at Abbosey Okai could take over their business. However, responses from the study indicated that, many of the artisans do not believe that moving to Anyaa will affect their business operation in any way. This is because for them, they have worked in this field for a long time and many of their customers have their contacts and will always come for them when the need arises.
They also argue that the Anyaa site is bigger and spacious and they will have more space to park their accident cars for repairs as well as their spare parts. On the view that moving to Anyaa will give artisans at Abbosey Okai an advantage over them, they argue that, they deal in parts which cannot be found at Abbosey Okai and therefore there is no way moving to Anyaa can affect their operations. This is because customers will still come to them wherever they go since they have spare parts and are able to repair vehicles which cannot be found at Abbosey Okai.

6.8 Unionization

One expects that such a large number of workers with a collective aim should form a strong association to promote their interest. However, contrary to this expectation, at the time of this study, there was no form of union or association that brings all the artisans together. As a result, one of the main concerns raised by the spare part dealers and other artisans at Kokompe was the absence of a functioning union. The absence of a functional union in the area is the result of the landowner dissolving the old union after the High Court ruled in his favour in the land dispute. The artisans indicated that initially, there was an active and effective union which promoted discipline among the dealers and represented the interest of the members.

The artisans observed that, the absence of a union have resulted in the exploitation by the landowner when it comes to the issue of tenancy agreement and rent payment. As reported, the landowner increases the rent payable every two years without seeking the views of the artisans.

In the view of the artisans, the existence of an active union would have allowed them to negotiate with the landowner before any increase in rent is made. They also complained that the absence of a union has brought about indiscipline in the area since they have no leaders to ensure law and order.
For instance:

_There is no leadership/union here. People do whatever they want to do. If there was a union with leaders as we used to have, they would have set rules and regulations in this place and the market would have been well planned in terms of safety and discipline. Lack of leadership is the main problem here as far as safety and our working conditions are concerned_ (Master Kwame, 35 year old owner/master mechanic).

Another artisan indicated that:

_Master, a community without a leader or a chief lacks development and for emphasis, a community without a leader or a chief lacks development. The land owner does not sell here but we know what we are going through here. I believe he (land owner) does not want us to be united since he prevents us from forming a union and electing our own leaders. As a result he just leaves his house and sets rules and regulations for us_ (Nana Asante, the 65 year old spare part dealer).

The above views of the spare part dealers and mechanics were expressed supported by several others during the study. In the absence of a functional union the various spare part dealers and other artisans decided to meet independently to present their concerns and problems to the caretaker appointed by the land owner. In some cases, such meetings have led to some concerns partly addressed. They gave the example of a meeting the various artisans leaders (leaders of the spare part dealers, mechanics, sprayers, welders and auto electricians) held with the caretaker on the need to send a representative to the AMA to discuss the issue of the dispute about the Anyaa Iron City. Though at the time of the interview they had not received any feedback from the AMA, they indicated their move was an indication of how they could still achieve some of their aims without a functional union. In spite of the above challenges, the artisans still go about their daily activities.

This chapter discusses the social structure of the study area. The chapter describes Kokompe as an “ordered anarchy” due to the chaotic nature the first-time visitor to the place perceives:
congested with human and vehicular population on a small stretch of a street. In spite of the apparent confusion, a clear observation shows the place as exhibiting some degree of orderliness. Kokompe as an artisanal area has a long history. The area evolved spontaneously without any well developed plan. The activities in the area involves interconnected operations of welders, sprayers, mechanics, auto electricians and spare part dealers each requiring the services of others one way or the other. The major problems facing the artisans in their operations include high rent charges, poor infrastructure, lack of access roads and parking space, illegal electrical connections, lack of sanitation facilities, overcrowding and the absence of a union etc. The next chapter focuses on safety and working conditions of the artisans.
CHAPTER SEVEN

THE ARTISANS: CONDITIONS OF THEIR WORKING ENVIRONMENT

7.0 Introduction

We are at a turning point in understanding that a healthy and safe workplace is not a burden, but a resource for all, enterprises (formal or informal), societies (urban or rural) and countries (developed or developing), and the working people—rich or poor—(Rantanen, 2004:1).

The above statement made by Prof. Jorma Rantanen, former President of the International Commission on Occupational Health and Safety, captures the focus of this chapter. The chapter provides a fuller description of working conditions of the artisans. This is because any attempt to reduce workplace accidents and injuries among workers must start with an understanding of their working environment and conditions as well as their attitude and behaviour towards safety. This chapter comes at the backdrop of the last chapter (chapter six) which described the social structure and work environment of the artisans at Kokompe.

This chapter begins with a discussion on the general safety and working conditions of the artisans. This is followed by an exploration of their awareness of occupational hazards and risks, the predisposing factors and nature of workplace accidents experienced. Finally the chapter discusses safety culture among the artisans in terms of their attitudes and behaviour towards workplace safety and how they prioritise their safety at work. The relevance of this chapter is based on the fact that, any attempt to reduce workplace accidents and improve safety would fail unless workers are made to change their behaviour, values and attitudes towards accidents and safety.
In this chapter, the field data are analysed to address the first three objectives of the thesis namely:

1. To describe the general safety and working conditions of artisans at Kokompe;
2. To identify the types and predisposing factors of accidents, hazards and injuries in the study area as well as workers’ levels of awareness of them;
3. To examine safety culture among the artisans in relation to work behaviour and attitudes towards workplace safety

7.1 General level of Safety and Working Condition among Artisans

The conditions under which most of the workers at Kokompe operate are precarious and unsafe. A study by Theuri (2012) in Kenya found similar conditions under which many of the informal small-scale workers operate. Many of these small-scale enterprises operate in makeshift structures, lacking sanitary facilities or potable water and have poor waste disposal systems.

At Kokompe, as described earlier, the structures are mainly constructed of temporal materials of wooden boards and iron sheets. The poor infrastructure is compounded by the wooden structures which have no well-laid down pattern, resulting in overcrowding. There is also lack of access road to the area since abandoned vehicles, metal scraps and metal chips have taken over the whole place. Some of the abandoned vehicles serve as “houses” for some of the mechanics and other artisans. The spare part dealers mostly occupy spaces close to the main road because they always want to attract the attention of potential customers. The other artisans such as the mechanics, electricians, welders and sprayers are located at the outskirts of the area. Worsening the potential health and safety of these artisans is the scorching sun under which the mechanics, welders and electricians in particular work. Price (2004) argues that exposure to extreme heat may result in heat stroke and heat exhaustion which may also increase the possibility of acute
cardiovascular diseases. Exposure to heat during work has also been reported to cause reduced sperm count in men and to cause non-melanoma skin cancer (Fartasch, Diepgen, Schmitt and Drexler, 2012).

The enclosed structures like those used by the spare part dealers and sprayers are not designed to be used as workplaces and so do not have adequate ventilation. They lack sanitary facilities, potable water and adequate refuse disposal facility. Waste disposal has become a problem as many workshops in the area dispose off hazardous waste in an improper manner with an adverse impact on the work environment. The workers are also at risk of being exposed to the extreme weather conditions and the hazardous substances generated. Problems with sanitation are very visible at Kokompe: empty plastic water sachets, oil from vehicles, disused pieces of spare parts and other waste products choke the open drains which run through the area. These choked drains become the breeding ground for mosquitoes besides the offensive smell emanating from them.

A mechanic who works along a large and particularly choked gutter complained thus:

The gutter is always choked with ‘pure water’ rubbers (small plastic bags and others. So, anytime we come here and eat, we get sick... and we often get malaria...Since January this year (2014) the rubbish in the gutter has not been cleared.

The smell from the gutter was so offensive that a female artisan had to spray a disinfectant around her stall to reduce the smell in order to attract customers to her store.

Another observation made by the researcher concerning safety and working conditions among the artisans was that, welding, spraying, vehicle repairing and other related activities were all carried out at the same place and at the same time. This has resulted in multiple exposures to different hazards including excessive noise apparently beyond the recommended maximum noise levels of 85 dB (A) for an eight–hour working day (ILO/WHO, 2013). The high level of noise is
a concern raised by most of the artisans interviewed. They complained that it was a major problem but there is nothing they could do about it since noising-making is one of their occupational hazards. According to a 45 year old mechanic:

The noise level here is too high for us and at times it is even difficult to hear your colleagues when they call you. Some of us have started developing hearing problems as a result. But there is nothing we can do about it since we do not have ear plugs.

The above views of the spare part dealers and mechanics were expressed by several others during the interview with the researcher.

The researcher also observed that, the small workshops suffer from poor housekeeping. Tools and materials are usually out of reach and working postures causing strain are common. In many cases, artisans work in awkward positions as a result of limited working space. Artisans especially spare part dealers lift engines and other heavy parts and sometimes over a long distance. In several instances, no proper ergonomic chairs were available and artisans were observed sitting on makeshift ‘seats’ such as concrete stools, drums, crates, buckets and other non-ergonomically designed chair. As a result of using these makeshift ‘seats’, some of the artisans, especially the spare parts dealers, mechanics and welders claimed they have developed waist problems. A 43 year old welder, whose views were shared by others observed:

We have to make our own seats out of concrete, stones, drums and so on. This is the only way we can sit while working; some of us are experiencing pains in our waist. Now I find it difficult to bend down when I am working.

It was also observed that sprayers were exposed to a range of hazardous chemical substance (HCS). A strong smell of paint vapours, paint removers and paint thinners were encountered
during the field study in the paint mixing and spraying processes. Spies (2008) has observed that sprayers and painters are often exposed to high concentration of isocyanates.

One remarkable character of the artisans’ work was the absence of personal protective equipment (PPEs). It was observed that in many cases, the artisans lacked gloves, eye goggles, safety boots and protective clothes. For example, a sprayer was observed using a surgical mask ostensibly to protect his face from exposure to volatile organic chemical compounds. In another case, some welders were seen using ordinary sunglasses to protect their eyes from the gas flames. In effect, it was observed that in many cases, the proper PPE was not used. The welder who was using the ordinary sunglass rationalized his action as thus:

*I am aware of the dangers of working without protecting my face and this is why I am using this sunshade. For me whether it is a sunglass or a goggle does not matter, but what is important for me is that it provides protection (45 year old welder).*

The above sentiment was a reflection of the views of many other artisans who were observed using inappropriate PPE. For many of these artisans it was better to use the inappropriate PPE rather than not using any at all.

Throughout Kokompe, there is lack of fire fighting appliances as water hydrants are not visible. Fire hazards from naked paraffin lamps; LPG (for cooking and welding) and unsafe electrical connections make Kokompe a potential disaster zone. This situation explains why in recent times two major fire outbreaks have occurred with grave consequences for life and property. For example, in October 2011, Kokompe artisanal center was gutted by fire which was estimated to have destroyed over 400 market stalls, as well as a significant amount of goods and cash. Many market stalls are constructed from wood which makes them highly flammable. In addition, naked
electrical wires traversing the area and flammable chemicals used underscore the importance of fire safety equipment.

The Ghana Fire Service also complains that access routes to market are often blocked by stalls and goods which mean that fire engines are obstructed in cases of fire outbreaks. The lack of basic firefighting and safety equipment such as extinguishers and fire alarms at Kokompe in addition to lack of training on fire management for the artisans pose, a huge danger to life and property at Kokompe.

The researcher also found that the operations of the artisans are not covered by social security and health insurance schemes. Thus, when old age or ill health affects their operations many of these businesses are closed down. Also, because most of these enterprises are family-based and mainly operate outside the main institutional framework, they are rarely supervised. Their standards of safety and health are so low that they hardly meet the requirements for registration as places of work.

The lack of basic first-aid items and personnel with elementary first-aid skills at the workplaces are a challenge to the general safety, health and welfare of the artisans. This, added to the lack of a medical outfit within the immediate confines of the workshop is likely to result in loss of lives in the case of a major accident. The importance of first-aid equipment and supplies and availability of personnel with basic skills in first aid administration at the workplace has been emphasized by several authors (Erickson, 1996; Alli, 2008).

Finally, the findings in the field indicate that the artisans practice poor hygiene. Although the majority of the artisans maintained that they frequently wash their hands at the workplace, it was observed that this is not done adequately to effectively remove grease, grime and other deposits
on their hands. Adequate hand washing entails washing both hands with soap under running water. Deposits of dirt were evidently observed beneath the fingernails of many of the artisans. Particularly, some auto mechanics observed during the fieldwork had a characteristic black-tainted palms resulting from contact with greasy vehicle components and engine oil.

In summary, based on observations and responses from most of the artisans, the general safety and working conditions at Kokompe is poor. Access road to the place is poor and artisans live in wooden and makeshift structures. In the words of a spare part dealers:

*There are no structures, no security, no clinic here. All that we have are sheds. The insurance companies are not willing to insure our wooden structures. The security and safety situation is bad and when we come and see our goods or cars broken into, there is no one to report to and all you can do is to curse the thief.*

At this point, the researcher can conclude that the general safety conditions of artisans at Kokompe is poor made up of improper infrastructure, bad roads, poorly planned area putting the artisans in danger of being exposed to all kinds’ hazards and accidents. The above narrative concerning the general level of safety and working conditions among the artisans clearly shows that their working conditions are poor as a result of haphazard siting of temporary workshops by squatter artisans as well as lack of fire fighting, safety and first aid equipment. Bittel’s framework of accident prevention namely the 3Es: Engineering, Education and Enforcement could be used to explain the above situation, showing that the workplace is not well engineered for safety. This means that the workplace was not well structured for the reduction of work-related accidents and injuries.
7.2 Awareness about Occupational Hazards and Accidents

Having examined the general level of safety and working conditions among the artisans, it is now important to access the artisans’ levels of awareness of occupational hazards and accidents associated with their daily operations. This is necessitated by the point that apart from it being one of the objectives of this study, workers’ level of awareness of accidents and hazards associated with their work is crucial to accident reduction, prevention as well as ensuring a safe and healthy workplace. According to Okuga et al. (2012) in Kenya, awareness of occupational accidents and hazards is the first step in promoting workplace safety.

Findings of the study revealed that, majority of the artisans are aware that there are risks and hazards associated with their work while a few of them had no idea. Awareness of occupational hazards was independently matched with the category of artisan. The findings indicated that all the sprayers, mechanics, welders and electricians are aware of the hazards associated with their respective jobs. For the spare part dealers, two of them had some idea about the hazards associated with their jobs whiles the remaining six had no idea. The hazards identified by the respondents are physical, psychosocial and ergonomic hazards. The work processes undertaken by these artisans present the risk of physical hazards such as cuts, burns, hearing impairment resulting from loud noises and eye injuries due to excessive UV-radiation and respiratory dysfunctions due to the noxious metal and spraying paint fumes inhaled. There is also a risk of exposure to psychosocial hazards such as stress at work and exhaustion. In addition to the ergonomic hazards that mainly results in musculoskeletal injuries such as muscle pain, dislocation and fractures.

The welders interviewed indicated that, they are aware their work exposes them to physical hazards such as welding sparks, inhaling welding arc and fumes, handling of hot metals and
extreme weather conditions among others. For the mechanics, electricians and spare part dealers, the hazards and risks they are exposed to include poor lifting methods, and car jacking practices resulting in dislocations and fractures among others. There are cases where a car that was not properly jacked may fall on a worker. A 35 year old apprentice mechanic narrated his experience six months earlier when a car he was working on with another apprentice electrician trapped underneath. According to him:

*It was only a miracle that happened that day if not we would have been dead now. On that fateful day I had removed the tyres of a car and jacked it with two big concrete blocks and I went under it to work. My other colleague, the apprentice electrician, joined me under the car to check an electrical problem. After some time I decided to get out from under the car to pick a tool while the apprentice was called by a customer to check something on his car. Minutes after the car came down. You can imagine what would have happened to us if we were still under that car (35 year old apprentice mechanic).*

The above incident is just one of the near misses of occupational hazards and risks that artisans are exposed to in their daily operations. In this study, it was found that artisans have a high level of awareness of occupational hazards and risks associated with their respective jobs.

The data show that hazards varied according to individual’s occupation. Some of the most prevalent problems are poor lighting, inadequate ventilation, poor housekeeping, inadequate working space, poorly designed working tools, lack of suitable and adequate personal protective equipment, exposure to hazardous chemicals and dusts, high levels of noise and long hours of work. The most reported health and safety hazards are musculoskeletal disorders, low back pain, allergic reactions and other respiratory disorders, noise-induced hearing loss, physical strain, fatigue and stress. Even with these conditions artisans are forced to work for long hours since the returns are directly proportionate to work activity.
7.3.0 Injuries, Accidents and Non-Work related Illnesses

Having assessed artisans’ level of awareness with occupational hazards and risks they are exposed to in their work, this subsection will now focus on examining the artisans’ experience of workplace accidents and injuries as well as the nature and types of injuries and accidents they experience. The types of injuries artisans experience are related to their work.

In order to know the nature and type of accidents and injuries, the artisans were asked to report and narrate accidents and injuries they have ever experienced especially those they have experienced in the last six months prior to the study. The nature of injuries and accidents varied from minor to severe ones. In other words, the nature of accidents and injuries could be classified as recordable/serious incidents, non-recordable and near-misses.

The most common type of injuries sustained was cuts and burns and the least common were fractures. Other injuries included backaches, chest pains, eye injuries and hearing problems. For the welders in this study, the common injuries and accident they experience in the course of their job included cuts and burns on various parts of their bodies as a result of the handling of hot metals during welding. However, other welders, experienced eye injuries due to exposure to naked fire. A 35 year old apprentice welder narrated an injury he sustained about three months before while working on a car. According to him:

*I was working on a car when I realized that the fire from the welding machine was poor. I, therefore, decided to increase the oxygen outflow by pouring water on the carbonated stones. All that I saw was that my cloth has been lit with fire and burning my hand. It took the timely intervention of my master and others to save me. You can now see my arms with the healed scars (35 year old apprentice welder).*
The mechanics and spare parts dealers reported the occurrence of cuts, dislocations and fractures on various parts of the body, especially the shoulders and arms. For most of them the cuts, dislocations and fractures are due to manual handling of heavy car parts and engines they work with as well as awkward postures, lifting, and twisting, bending and repetitive working movements. The electricians experienced accidents in the form of electric shocks and cuts on the hand. It was realized that most electricians who had never experienced any form of injury were new apprentices who had just come into the job.

7.3.1 Work-related Illness and Diseases
Apart from physical injuries identified, there are other non-physical work-related injuries at Kokompe. For example, as a result of excessive noise levels and prolong inhalation of contaminated air (isocyanates in spray paints and dust), there were complaints of hearing and respiratory problems. According to existing literature, this could result into reduced hearing acuity and work–related asthma (Williams, Jones and Cocker, 1999 and Pronkand Skarping, 2006, as cited in Monney et al., 2014).

In addition, due to the physical exertion one expects high prevalence of musculoskeletal disorders (shoulder pains, backaches, numbness of hands and feet and rheumatism/arthritis) among the artisans. Consistent with these findings, other studies such as Okuga et al., (2012); Theuri, (2012) and Katula, (2013) have all revealed high-incidence of musculoskeletal disorders among workers whose work involves physical exertion. These include musculoskeletal disorders (shoulder pains, backaches, numbness of hands and feet and rheumatism/arthritis); eye strain and injury, skin irritation and respiratory disorders (Price, 2008). Spies, (2008) and Fartasch et al., (2012) have also reported that persistent coughing is among the early symptoms of exposure to
isocyantes in spray paints, which after long-term exposure could result in lung infections and even deaths.

**7.4 Predisposing Factors of Accident and Injuries**

The main predisposing factors of accidents and injuries experienced by the artisans are non-use of PPEs, carelessness at work, fatigue caused by overworking and lack of skills.

Additionally, some of these accidents are caused by failure to follow established safe-working procedure, unsafe personal acts and not wearing the right (PPEs) whiles on the job. Some of the artisans who have experienced accidents claimed that it was due to defective conditions of equipment or tools. During one of the field trips, the researcher witnessed an incident which was due to carelessness on the part of the artisan involved. In this case, a 25 year old apprentice welder who was not wearing any protective shoe burnt his leg when he stepped on hot metal in the process of welding. The master was angered by his boy’s carelessness, for he could not understand why the apprentice removed his sandals whiles working.

The researcher also observed, some of the sprayers who were supposed to have put on the gloves whiles mixing the paint for spraying, but doing so with their bare hands and had to be reminded by their master of the correct procedure. In another instance, the master had to remind an apprentice sprayer to put on his nose mask before entering the spaying area. Most of the apprentices interviewed indicated in the absence of their master that, he himself (the masters do not normally put on the PPEs while working and therefore it was a normal thing for them to work without the PPEs. This shows that, most of the workers do not put on the right PPEs while on the job and this accounted for the most of the work-related accidents. Reasons cited for
irregular and non-use of PPEs were that, PPEs were uncomfortable while working, not always available because of the cost. For others, PPEs have been given to a colleague to use, forgetfulness and not being aware that PPEs are needed for even ‘simple’ tasks.

The study revealed that the predisposing factors of accidents and injuries identified by the artisans can be classified into three categories namely, human, environmental and mechanical factors. The human factors identified include failure to follow safety rules, lack of attention, improper posture, improper lifting and fatigue. The environmental factors include slippery and muddy floors due to rain, hazardous chemicals, poor illumination and source of electricity. The mechanical factors identified include unsafe tools, heavy tools and rapidly moving parts.

The finding of this study also confirms the findings of other studies. Okuga et al. (2012) also observed in Uganda that most common ergonomic hazards result in poor working posture, long hours of working, handling of heavy loads and uncomfortable seating. In Namibia, Amweelo (2000) reported that most occupational accidents were due to falling, flying or moving objects. The findings of this study agree with those cited in other contexts concerning the predisposing factors of accidents and injuries in the informal sector.

However, it was interesting to observe that apart from the above factors (human, environmental and mechanical), most of the artisans attribute accidents to unforeseeable forces or bad luck. One example which illustrates this case occurred to a welder. The apprentice welder was welding a part of a car of which the master had instructed him on what to do. While engaged in the task, he was at the same time talking to two colleagues. The apprentice welder was apparently so
preoccupied with the conversation with his friends that suddenly his forefinger was caught by the fire. Immediately after the accident the master gathered all the workers and apprentices for a meeting in order to discuss the event and how to avoid its recurrence.

In spite of the detailed account, most of the masters ended up, as in the case above, attributing the accidents to unforeseeable circumstances and in some cases in combination with workers’/apprentices’ indiscretion. In many cases, the masters attribute the cause of accidents solely to the injured person, and in only few cases did they partly attribute the causes to themselves. In many cases the injured workers had their attribution patterns reflecting those of the owners/masters. An instance of a master welder’ attribution, in which he resorted to unforeseeable circumstances/bad luck, is in the following narrative:

*This particular accident can’t be prevented...it was simply bad luck. He (the injured apprentice) wasn’t thinking properly. He handled the welding machine improperly... it wasn’t a matter of whether or not he used the machine... it was simply bad luck (45 year old master welder).*

In spite of the fact that both masters and workers/apprentices provided detailed explanations of the causes of accidents, (human, mechanical and environmental), most of them ended up attributing the accidents to unforeseeable circumstances- in other words, bad luck. This is in spite of the point that the artisans at Kokompe identified many different factors (human, environmental and mechanical factors) that contributed to accident. Workers differ in respect of the number of accidents they are involved in.

As explained earlier in chapter two (on conceptual framework section), some theories have been advanced to account for individual differences in susceptibility to accident. With the theory of chance or luck, all persons are equally able to suffer accident and it is simply a matter of luck
that it happens. One person is just as likely as any other person to have a moment of carelessness resulting in an accident. This is not bad luck but rather a moment of carelessness on the part of the artisans.

In some cases, artisans gave spiritual explanations for the accidents they experienced. For example, witchcraft was used as the underlying cause of the accidents by some of the artisans. Few of the artisans accused their colleague artisans of bewitching them and in the process resulting in the accidents. Evans-Pritchard (1937 cited in Nukunya, 2003) indicates that witchcraft accusations are function of social relations which are likely to result from jealousy, hatred, envy and fear. The relations may be that of kinship, neighbours, friends, colleagues or co-workers. This explanation could be considered to be the case among the artisans since the witchcraft accusations come from someone the supposed victim must have some relationship with.

7.5 Safety Culture, Work Behaviour and Attitude of Artisans

On the theme of synthesized conceptualization of safety culture in terms of changeable factors such as organizational policies, procedures and structures (Normative culture), behavioural practices and norms (pragmatic culture) and beliefs, values, attitudes, assumptions and expectations (anthropological culture), the findings indicate the chaotic manner in which the workshops are organized gives an indication of a poor safety climate exposing the artisans to all kinds of hazards and risks. This was well documented in the previous section of this chapter (section 7.1) on the general level of safety and working conditions as well as chapter six of the thesis. The findings on safety behaviour and safe work procedures indicate that at the time of the fieldwork, many of the artisans were not using the appropriate (PPEs) and did not follow safe
working procedures. As indicated in the previous section (7.1), many of them worked without the required PPEs and in the cases where some used them, they used inappropriate PPEs.

On the issues of masters/owners commitment to safety issues, the findings reveal that, there are no explicit safety policy, procedure, structures and practices in place for promoting workplace safety although some owners expressed an explicit positive and proactive approach to safety. In most of the cases though, the owners have an ambivalent attitude towards workplace safety. On one hand they emphasized the importance of safety and on the other do not feel that they could do anything to promote it. In general, the owners ‘react’ to safety issues and problems by dealing with them as they arise, and most are of the opinion that accidents in general are due to worker faults or unforeseeable circumstances – both of which they mean are beyond their control and not the fault of the masters/owners.

The key issue of work safety has to do with the level of consultation and involvement of apprentices and other workers on matters of OHS issues. It was observed and confirmed by the respondents that, masters/owners carried out little consultations with the apprentices concerning safety issues and concerns. The owners/masters forget that healthy and safe workers are better motivated, enjoy greater job satisfaction and contribute to better quality products and services, thereby enhancing the overall quality of the enterprise and the life of individuals. The health, safety and well-being of the working people are therefore fundamental for improvement in quality and productivity, and of the utmost importance for equitable and sustainable socio-economic development in Ghana.
The general attitude and perception of the artisans including the owners/masters and their workers is fatalistic. That is a belief that most of the accidents and injuries are unavoidable part of their daily work, and that little or nothing can be done to prevent them. This means that masters/owners do not invest much time, resource, and do not mean what they say in safety issues. Hasle et al. (2009) noted that besides leadership style, management commitment plays a vital role in all aspects of safety intervention. Management commitment to safety indicates the extent to which the organization’s top management demonstrates positive and supportive safety attitudes towards their employees’ safety and health concerns. Like other safety experts, Yule, Flin and Murdy (2000 cited in Hasle et al., 2009) also noted that employees’ perception of dedicated management’s action to safety has resulted in accident reduction.

It is clear from the findings of the study that, most of the artisans have some insight into the occupational hazards and risks associated with their work but generally lack thorough factual OHS knowledge and procedures for reducing workplace accidents and improving safety. The artisans are able to mention certain safety-related occupational health risks and how dangerous they are to them but do not see the need to use the proper personal protective equipment when working. For instance, an apprentice welder who was seen working on a vehicle without an eye goggle, protective cloth and boot indicated that he knows it was hazardous but felt it was just normal to work without the PPEs. In his words:

_I know the naked fire can expose my eyes to injuries, but you see, we always work like that and everything is fine. Even though we sustain some injuries and accidents, it is part of our everyday job and just as the farmer will by all means experience cutlass wound in the farm, you expect us also to suffer burns from fire and cuts from the metals as we work_ (36 year old apprentice welder).
The above assertion of the apprentice welder is a clear indication that he is aware of the consequences of adopting improper safety procedures, but felt that it was normal to experience some form of injuries while working. This was the attitude, behaviour and assumption of most of the artisans interviewed. Some of the sprayers interviewed and observed considered spray-painting to be dangerous due to the fumes they inhale but were reluctant to wear protective nose masks.

Consequently, because they think along these lines, they hardly do anything to prevent accidents by complying with rules and procedures. It was also found that the most prevalent occupational hazards and risks among the artisans are of an organizational, hygienic or ergonomic nature which means that many hazards can be avoided by behavioural change as well as putting in place proper structures, policies and inculcating in the workers the need to adopt safety procedures when working.

The results obtained also indicated that, though the artisans consider themselves working in a high-risk sector, their attitudes, and behaviour towards OSH suggest that the improvement of their work environment is not one of their top priorities. The financial outlay and the point that occupational hazards and diseases are not always available, means that the limited resources of the workers are allocated to other fields than OHS. This leaves us with a discrepancy between the gravity of the OSH situation on the one hand and the priority of artisans (masters and workers) on the other.
Moreover, the artisanal workers in the informal sector do not enjoy a traditional employer-employee relationship in which the employer is obligated to take care of the OHS situation at the workplace. For example, in the view of a 50 year old master welder, his main aim then was to get some money and replace his oxygen machine since the old one was leaking badly and not getting PPE such as eye goggle.

According to him in the following response:

*I know I need these things (referring to PPEs like eye goggles, gloves and more) to protect myself and my workers from accidents but you see with my small earnings from this work, my immediate problem is how to save money to replace my oxygen machine for welding. You see, it is when I have this machine that I can work and get money to feed my family before thinking of getting PPEs.*

The above sentiment indicates that most of the owners in Kokompe consider improvement of their work environment second to their financial returns and other investment in procuring the machines. This is because the consequences of exploded gas cylinder are more serious than faulty eye goggle as far as they are concerned.

In other instances, the attitude and behaviour of the owners in terms of the importance they attach to financial returns and other machines to the neglect of procuring personal protective equipment could be explained using Maslow’s Need theory. Due to the fact that they have not completely satisfied their physiological needs of buying the welding machines as well as enough financial returns, they do not see the need to invest in PPE which is part of safety needs. In the view of the owners/masters, since the parents of the apprentices do not provide the PPE, there is no need for them as masters or owners to procure them. For some workers and apprentices,
investment in PPE is too expensive as the money for such investments could be saved to start their own shops after the completion of the apprentice training or upon becoming free from the master.

According to a 35 years old apprentice sprayer:

If my master does not buy the nose mask for us to use why should I buy one on my own? The workshop is for him and why should I use the small money he gives me for my upkeep to buy those things? It is better for me to use this money for my upkeep and save some for setting up my own shop after completing my training here (35 year old apprentice sprayer).

What many of these artisans (owner and their workers and apprentices) forget is that any accident or injury sustained will have far reaching consequences on their livelihood.

From the above discussions, there is an absence of a safety culture at least in terms of safety climate, safety behaviour and owners/masters commitment to safety issues. The artisans claim that they have their own mechanisms and measures of ensuring workplace safety and accident prevention. Many of them claim that because they are aware of the hazards associated with their operations, they are always careful while working. Some of the owners or masters also are of the view that an accident suffered by any worker or apprentice means the loss of a worker and thereby reduction in the workforce. In the light of this, they try to ensure that workers do their work safely and reduce the incidence of accidents and injuries. However, because elementary safety measures are not explicitly written or enforced, many of the workers end up compromising safety measures. Furthermore, due to the absence of any effective inspection and regulatory systems in the informal small-scale sector, the workers end up not complying with safety mechanisms and procedures.
The findings above clearly indicate poor work and safety attitudes and behaviour among the artisans. This confirms existing literature on the attitude of informal small-scale enterprise workers towards occupational or workplace safety and health. Amweelo (2000) investigating workplace accidents in Namibia reported some occupational health and safety issues such as careless attitude towards work which leads to risk and hazards of work. In South Africa, more than 300,000 workplace accidents are said to take place every year due to poor and careless attitude towards work (Bell, 2007). However, given the inadequate occupational health and safety infrastructure, the above figure could be much higher than reported. It was revealed that, South African mining companies are leading in occupational health and safety incidents and many other African countries are no exception (Bell, 2007). However, the artisans especially the owners/masters predominately attribute incidence of accidents to unforeseeable factors/bad luck and to workers’ fault as well as witchcraft.

Due to their belief that accidents and injuries are normal parts of their daily work as well as their fatalistic attitudes towards accidents, they do not see the need to protect themselves in many instances when working. As a result, they have a poor safety culture and their behaviour and attitudes towards work is that of carelessness exposing them to injuries and accidents. The next chapter explores the consequences of accidents on the artisans and how they cope with these accidents as well the measures put in place to prevent accidents at their workplace.
CHAPTER EIGHT

MEASURES FOR REDUCING WORKPLACE ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES

*If we hope to achieve a safety culture it is extremely important to encourage culture change within the workplace, extending from the executive to the shop floor. There is a popular Swahili saying in Kenya, ‘ajali hain akinga’ which when loosely translated means ‘accidents are a consequence of fate and cannot be prevented.’ But we all know that this is not true- since with long-term safety measures, workplace accidents and injuries can be prevented. It is important to remember that the most expensive preventive step is the one you don’t take* (Kim C. Martin, 2006:10).

8.0 Introduction

The above aphorism captures the essence of developing and maintaining safety culture as well as putting in place measures to reduce and prevent accidents within the workplace. With the above in mind, the orientation of this chapter is to explore the perceived consequences of injuries sustained as well as the coping strategies adopted by the artisans. In addition, the chapter assesses measures the artisans have put in place to reduce accidents by using safety mechanisms and procedures as individual artisans and as an association. Finally, the chapter assess the role of state inspection and enforcement agencies in ensuring safety and health at these workplaces.

The relevance of this chapter is based on the fact that, any attempt to reduce workplace accidents and improve safety would fail unless workers appreciate the consequences of the accidents financially and the social effects of such accidents. Also, any mechanisms or measures undertaken by workers to improve workplace safety and reduce accidents require that there are institutional frameworks to inspect and enforce these measures. In other words, there should be regulatory agencies responsible for inspecting the workplaces to ensure that safety mechanisms are complied with.
In furtherance of this view, this chapter examines the measures put in place by the artisans to reduce and prevent accidents and how they cope with accidents and injuries they experience in their work. Additionally, the chapter assesses the role of state regulatory agencies that are tasked with the function of inspecting workplaces to check unsafe practices. The data in this chapter are analysed to address the last two objectives of the study summarized as follows:

- To explore the perceived consequences and effects of injuries and accidents experienced by artisans.
- To assess the safety measures put in place by artisans as well as the role of state inspection agencies in accident prevention.

8.1 Consequences of Workplace Accidents and Injury

In the study of economic aspects of health and safety, a growing body of evidence shows that occupational health and safety risks cause costs to enterprises, societies and workers themselves. Most of these losses could be prevented. Some studies also show that besides economic loss a good occupational health and safety is closely associated with the productivity of a company. It is becoming clear that gradually, the resource inputs into health and safety are good investments. The question is no longer whether an industry can afford health and safety, but rather whether it can afford to be without it (Rantanen, 2004).

Work-related accidents and diseases are very costly and can have many serious direct and indirect effects on the lives of workers and their families. For workers, some of the direct costs of injury or illness are the pain and suffering from the injury or illness; the loss of income; the possible loss of a job; and health-care costs. In addition to pain and possible crippling economic effect, an injured worker and his family often suffer a serious financial loss despite payment of
workmen’s compensation. However, no payment is adequate compensation for a death or a permanent impairment.

When accidents occur, various things result from it: damage to property, injuries to people and loss of time, reduced production, etc. Workplace injuries and diseases are of concern because they impose costs not only on injured workers and their employers, but on society. The causes of injuries prompted the researcher to further examine the socio-economic consequences of these injuries. The study found out from the artisans how injuries and accidents they sustain affect their performance at work as well as how they are affected financial and other social consequences. Most of these workers are married and are breadwinners; others who are not married have dependants and in many cases these accidents have implications for their dependants. According to Nagash (2002:174), “One of the most obvious indirect costs is the human suffering caused to workers' families, which cannot be compensated with money.”

In this study, most of the respondents indicated that they face direct serious financial problems as a result of the accidents and injuries they sustain during work. This is because since their jobs are not salaried, they are not paid anything due to their inability to work after their injuries. This means the loss of day’s wages or income and this implies that there would be no income to take home. This impact or perceived cost of accidents or injuries experienced by the artisans depends on the degree or severity of the injuries. For many of these apprentices and workers, apart from the indirect loss of income, the loss of their jobs due to these injuries also result in loss of customers, since they could no longer meet their (customers) orders and requirements. In any case, whether the loss of income as a result of one’s injury is through a direct or indirect means,
the implications for victims appear similar. Overwhelmingly, the artisans complained that they face difficulties meeting the basic necessities of life such as providing food, shelter, clothing and paying children’s school fees and utility bills. However, even in this instance, some differences in the responses could be gleaned: those who feel bitter about their plight are the married ones who have more responsibilities and financial obligations than the unmarried workers. For instance according to a 45 year old married mechanic:

*My whole life depends on this job.... so you can imagine the case of an accident or injuries during work. Absence from work for just a day means that I would not have any income or money and my brother you know the effect of that. At times you come to work and customers do not come regularly, so just imagine you did not come at all due to injuries* (45 year old married mechanic).

On physical impairment as a consequence of job-related hazards, the artisans confirmed suffering job-related injuries resulted in physical disabilities such as broken legs and arms, resulting sometimes in amputations. For instance, at the time of conducting the interviews, it was reported by an apprentice welder that, as a result of an injury sustained at work by one of their colleagues, he had been hospitalised for the past six months with a broken leg.

The consequences of work-related injuries may not be limited to only workers. Indeed, there are some serious implications for employers/owners. The cost to employers of occupational accidents or illnesses is also estimated to be enormous. For a small business, the cost of even one accident can be a financial disaster. For employers/owners, some of the direct costs are: payment for work not performed, medical expenses, repair or replacement of damaged machinery and equipment, reduction or a temporary halt in production, increased training expenses and administration costs, possible reduction in the quality of work, negative effect on morale in other
workers (Nagash, 2002). It is however clear that the degree or severity of the injury determines the cost or effect on the worker.

Overall, the cost of most work-related accidents or illnesses to workers and their families and to employers is very high. On a national scale, the estimated cost of occupational accidents and illnesses can be as high as three to four per cent of a country's Gross National Product (Clarke, 2012). The economic loss related to these accidents and diseases is estimated to amount to four percent of world’s national product (Machida, 2013). This economic burden is huge and in some cases, it exceeds the total budget of the national health system (Mikeev and Goelzer, 1996). In reality, the total cost of work-related accidents or diseases might never be known because there are a multitude of indirect costs which are difficult to measure besides the more obvious direct costs.

8.2 Management of Workplace Accidents and Injuries

This section was interested in finding out the response time of (masters or owners) in attending to the medical needs of injured workers as well as how the artisans generally cope with accidents and injuries they experience. The interest of the researcher in this was aroused by the general consensus in the literature that most employers/owners or masters do not assume full responsibility for the safety and health of their workers. Hence, this section was interested in finding whether employers assume some responsibility for immediate medical attention their workers may need when an accident occurs. Furthermore it was necessitated by the need to examine how workers/apprentices treated injuries and accidents sustained while working.
The results from the interviews granted by the artisans showed that the type of treatment sought depended on the severity of injury sustained. The findings show that majority of artisans who were injured during their work did not seek medical attention; rather they resorted to self-medication. However, few of them indicated they sought medical attention at a clinic (Dansoman Polyclinic in particular). Some of the respondents indicated that first aid was given to injured workers in the cases of minor cuts. The respondents who did not seek any medical attention indicated that the nature of first aid treatment was in the forms of injection violet, plasters and bandages which were usually bought from near-by pharmacy shops. This suggests that masters do not keep first aid boxes at the work sites. As a result, there are cases of self-medication among the artisans leading to possible health effects, as shown by various studies (Senah, 1997), (Afolabi, 2008 and Lawan, Abubakar, Jibo and Rufai, 2013 as cited in Monney et al., 2014). Besides misapplying the medicines, the practice of self-medication is also known to contribute to the development of antibiotic resistance. As a result, there is the need to create awareness among the artisans on the effects of this practice on their health since ignorance is known to be partly responsible for this phenomenon (Jain, Malvi and Purviya, 2011 as cited in Monney et al., 2014).

For the artisans who sought medical attention, they were taken to the hospital usually in cases when the injuries were potentially fatal. At the time of the study an accident occurred involving a car falling on a worker because the car was not properly jerked whilst the worker was working under it. The victim became unconscious and was rushed to the hospital. Some of the respondents said they were granted some days off work as a result of injuries they sustained at work. Such injuries, the researcher gathered included fractures, slight burns and eye injuries. Some of the respondents took to personal treatment while others said no treatment was given.
8.3 Payment for the Cost of Treatment

With the artisans indicating that they sought some form of medical attention in cases of injuries and accidents, it is important to find out who bears the cost for their medical treatment. Responses elicited from respondents who sought medical attention when injured indicated that they had their medical bills settled by the proprietors of the workshops, while few of them settled their own bills through the help of their parents and guardians. Respondents further mentioned that before they were accepted into the job they were made to pay some fees which were meant for such purposes of health care. In the case of artisans who did not seek any medical attention, they paid for the drugs they bought themselves. The results also show that there were no insurance schemes to assist them in times of trouble.

Further conversations revealed that they have some form of welfare system where monies were contributed and such monies are channelled into providing medication for workers. Part of the monies is also used for funeral expenses of bereaved colleagues. There is the need to examine what the artisans do to reduce or prevent workplace accidents and injuries knowing the consequences of these accidents to them.

8.4 Prevention and Reduction of Work-Related Accidents

The need to know the measures put in place by the artisans to reduce or prevent accidents and injuries in the course of their work is crucial to this study. This is because workers in informal small-scale enterprises can only be assured of their daily wages and incomes when they work in a safe and healthy workplace. As a result, it is important to know their coping mechanisms with accidents they experience at their workplaces as well as measures they have put in place to reduce and prevent such accidents and injuries from occurring. A safe and healthy workplace
also means that accidents, injuries and hazards are reduced and prevented to the barest minimum. This is where workers also have a role to play in ensuring that the workplace is safe and healthy through mechanisms and measures they put in place.

To this end, artisans were asked to indicate how they prevent injury at the workplace. Responses from the artisans indicate that, they do not have adequate measures of reducing or preventing hazards and risks associated with their respective jobs. The findings of the study show that majority of the artisans do not use any PPEs while working.

Furthermore, some of the welders indicated that they normally use eye goggles/glasses to protect their eyes when welding in addition to the protective cloth and safety boots they wear. The sprayers interviewed indicated that, they normally wear nose masks and eye goggles to protect their eyes and noses, respectively when spraying. A group of artisans said they wore gloves to prevent injuries to their hands while at work. Such artisans, however, mentioned that this is not regular. They wear gloves whenever they thought that the job is extremely dangerous and potentially injurious to the hands. This information was obtained from welders who more often than not work with fire and other hot objects as well as spare part dealers who deal with various car parts. For example, as indicated in the previous chapter (chapter seven) a welder was seen wearing a sunglass which he considered as an eye goggles. Other artisans explain that they are always careful on their respective jobs. The common assertion by the auto-mechanics, spare parts dealers and auto electricians (who, due to the nature of work, always come in contact with grease, oil and other corrosive substances as well as electrical wires was) that they wear safety boots and protective clothing while working.
From the above responses, the artisans claimed to have some mechanisms for preventing occupational and workplace accidents and hazards. However, during the field study one of the critical observations made was that in many instances, artisans were working without the appropriate or required (PPEs). For example, some sprayers were seen entering the spraying area without any nose mask, gloves and eye goggles. Those who were seen wearing any protective equipment were mainly using surgical mask whiles spray-painting to protect themselves from exposure to volatile organic compounds.

It is therefore clear that at the individual level, the use of PPEs is low. Reasons for irregular and non-use of PPEs are that wearing PPEs while working is uncomfortable and not always available because of the cost implications. For others, it is forgetfulness and not being aware that PPEs is needed for even ‘simple’ tasks.

Similar to the findings of this study, Okuga et al. (2012) reported very low use of PPEs among small-scale welders in the Jinja Municipality of Uganda. All the respondents in their study were male and most had a secondary-level education, while few had received no formal education. The findings showed that the regular use of PPEs was low among the welders in Uganda. Reasons for the irregular use of PPEs included discomfort of PPEs, unavailability of PPEs due to cost implications as well as forgetfulness. The most common type of PPEs owned were goggle, while the least commonly owned were gloves. Only few of the respondents had ‘all’ of the gear, including goggles, gloves, overalls and boots. Their findings found that welders had high level of awareness of occupational hazards, but their use of PPEs was low.
Findings from the study further indicated that, PPEs was provided by masters, who were usually the owners of the shops and this was the claim of most of the apprentices and workers interviewed. However, other artisans revealed that new entrants to the jobs were made to pay fees which were used to procure the protective equipment for them. It was also observed that some workshop owners do not provide this equipment even when monies have been paid to them. Another group of respondents indicated that they provide their own PPEs. For others their parents provide them but for some, they borrow it from their colleagues.

The study findings clearly indicate that many of the workshop owners do not see the need to provide PPEs for their apprentices and workers. Their explanations are that it is the responsibility of parents of these apprentices to do so. In the words of a 45 year old master/owner welder:

\textit{When you are sending your children to school, you provide them with all the required items. So why do parents of apprentices refuse to provide their wards with the PPEs they are to work with but think that it is my responsibility? That is not proper} (45 year old master/owner welder).

Most of the workshop owners in the study expressed views similar to the above. This is perhaps the norm in traditional apprenticeship. Apprentices buy tools so that by the time they graduate they have enough basic tools to start work on their own.

However, considering the views of masters or workshop owners regarding the procurement of protective gears and equipment, one can appreciate the view that the masters do not assume full responsibility for the health and safety of their workers. By extention, therefore, masters’ inability to insist that their apprentices wear protective gears is understandable. Thus, though essential, the apprentices will graduate without imbibing the need to take occupational safety precautions
seriously. This conclusion is supported by the findings from Ghebreyohanne’s (2005) study of garage workers in Eritrea. It was discovered that most small-scale garage owners in particular do not invest money to improve the conditions in their workplaces in order to prevent occupational hazards from occurring. Similarly findings from this study also indicate that in most cases, the owners refrain from initiating any accident prevention measures. If the owners undertook any measures; they were mainly directed towards worker behaviour. In a few cases, special post-accident meetings were held to discuss the accident and to raise safety awareness.

The workshop owners had no explicit safety policy although some owners expressed an explicit positive and proactive approach to safety. In most of the cases though, the owners had an ambivalent attitude towards working with safety. On one hand they emphasized the importance of safety and on the other do not feel that they could do anything to promote it. In general, the owners ‘reacted’ to safety issues and problems by dealing with them as they arise, and most were of the opinion that accidents in general are due to worker faults or unforeseeable factors/bad luck – both of which they meant are beyond their control.

The results of this study confirm earlier findings regarding the level of preventive safety activities in informal small-scale enterprises (Hasle and Limborg, 2006). If prevention measures are undertaken they are mainly on an ad hoc basis. Accidents are, considered as unforeseeable and/or attributed to a worker’s carelessness. Difficulties in explaining the causes of the actual accident and the lack of a safety policy of the enterprises also seem to indicate that safety activities are not a priority. It is therefore fair to conclude that, because the owners as well as their workers and apprentices are fatalistic, (believing that workplace accidents and injuries are
an unavoidable part of their work), little has been done in terms of putting in place mechanisms and measures to ensure the reduction and prevention of accidents and injuries.

Another major observation made by the researcher is that, apart from the evidence that individual artisans do not have any well established mechanism for prevention of workplace injuries and accidents, at the level of their association, there are no mechanisms as well for the reduction of accidents. Though since there is no viable union at Kokompe (bringing all artisans together) as earlier stated the researcher wanted to know whether there were work-specific groupings or associations. The findings show that what exist are work-specific artisanal associations such as association for mechanics and sprayers among others. The primary aims of these associations are oriented towards ensuring the welfare of their members and are made mainly of apprentices and some few masters. Given the low levels of their contributions which are used mainly for social needs of members (e.g. funeral donations), safety issues which require among others, the provision of PPEs are treated as ‘secondary’ matters.

As a result of the absence of a union at Kokompe, they are unable to enforce occupational health and safety mechanisms and measures for the prevention of workplace accidents and injuries. As a result, it would be difficult for the artisans to collectively act to address some of their concerns on issues affecting their health and safety needs. The next section of this chapter is devoted to examining the role of the Department of Factories Inspectorate and other state regulatory agencies in enforcing safety at the workplace.
8.5 State Regulating Agencies and Advocacy Groups in OHS

The success of all workplace safety programmes and mechanisms must include the collaboration of all the social partners in industry namely, workers and their unions, employers and their association and the government and its agents. It is also important to note that workplace safety programs and policies can work only when they are well enforced and regulated by the appropriate agencies. All the social partners in industry, (unions, management and the state) have a responsibility for the enforcement of these safety programmes and mechanisms.

The responsibility of the state in ensuring the safety of workers is two-fold; firstly, the state is expected to make laws to protect workers. Secondly, the state is to ensure that the enacted laws are enforced through inspection.

Findings from this study indicate that the activities of the DFI do not cover the operations of artisans at Kokompe. All the artisans interviewed confirmed that the officials of the DFI do not come to their workshops to inspect safety mechanisms and procedures. Many of them claimed they have never seen any officials of the department during their work. According to the caretaker and the former chairman of the spare part dealer association:

*We do not have anybody from the DFI who visits us for any inspections. They do not come here and we ourselves are our own inspectors, I can say jokingly* (Former Chairman Spare Part Dealers association).

According to Director of the DFI in Accra, their inability to conduct inspection is due to the unregulated nature of the operations of artisans at Kokompe and the fact the artisans are not registered with the DFI. However, inspectors from his department are able to conduct inspections at other informal small-scale workplaces such as Timber Market in Accra.
The director further indicated that, the department has offices in eight of the 10 regions of Ghana. In addition, there is only 45 technical staff to serve the whole country, with 15 staff members serving Accra alone. Inspectors are limited in their ability to inspect work premises by a lack of transport – the DFI owned only 10 vehicles. The department according to him faces human, financial and logistical constraints, which have stifled their operational efficiency. The Chief Factory Inspector lamented on the situation:

*Our scheme of service is not attractive so we recruit staff, get them trained for the basic rudiments of factory inspection and then after one year they find some lucrative places to go and work; so our labour turnover is as high as fifty percent. The department is also constrained by logistic and financial problems.*

He went on further to explain the difference between the situation in the formal and informal sectors as far as inspection is concerned. For him, even in the formal organizations and industries, there are safety concerns and challenges even though their inspections are not frequent and regular. In his words:

*The workers in the industries in Ghana are timid and do not demand their rights. The situation is one where jobs are few and many graduates are walking on the streets without jobs. Some employers and managers are aware of this fact so they just do not listen to the safety and health concerns of their workers. When workers try to complain, employment is terminated and another fresh person is employed. With an abundant labour force but few jobs, many workers do not take the risk of reporting to the labour offices and appropriate authorities any injuries and illnesses they suffer during their work. Employers/ managers, in turn, are relax and do not bother to take serious safety and health precautions at workplaces since they know that most workers will not raise these issues. So, if these are happening even in the factories and industries with structures for enforcing OSH, you can imagine the situation among the artisans in Kokompe and several places.*

In addition, he advocated the decentralization of the activities of the DFI to allow Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) to use their environmental health and safety departments to inspect safety and health especially among small-scale informal workers. In
addition, the inspectors of the MMDAs should be adequately trained, remunerated and motivated to remain in the job.

Under the current circumstances, it is clear that the DFI would be unable to incorporate informal workers into its mandate without major changes in legislation and resourcing. While advocates in Ghana have been working towards a change in legislation, a lack of political will on the part of the government appears to be a major stumbling block as the proposed amendments and OHS policy draft are still at cabinet level. The findings of this study also revealed that, the management of OSH in Ghana is currently not co-ordinated; a number of ministries oversee various statutes, which have been introduced in complete disregard of existing ones.

According the Director of the DFI, a major deficiency in the present OHS management system is the lack of a national policy on OHS defining the responsibility of the stakeholder partners – government, employers/ owners and employees- as well as the operational jurisdiction of the enforcement agencies. This has also resulted in inadequate coverage of all economic activities by the existing statutes. Comparing the situation in Ghana with that of a developing country like Uganda, Kenya and Zambia which have adopted national policies on OHS, Ghana is lagging behind. For instance, according to Abongomera (2006), in Uganda, the Department of Occupational Safety and Health makes random visits to workplaces in Kampala City and occasionally moves up to country towns. According to him these visits are not only limited to formal workplaces but also informal small-scale enterprises such as maize milling shops and carpentry shops.
In addition, according to Theuri (2012), in Kenya, the Department of Occupational Safety and Health Services (DOSHS) is in the Ministry of Labour that is responsible for promoting safety, health and welfare at work in all workplaces in all sectors including the formal and informal sectors. According to him, the department enforces two Acts of parliament, namely the OSHA Act of 2007 (OSHA) and the Work Injury Benefit Act of 2007 (WIBA). The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 2007 apply to all places where any person is at work whether temporarily or permanently, including small-scale enterprises and the informal sector.

The inability of Ghanaian governments, past and present, to pass this draft document into law is of concern to some advocacy groups on OHS such as the Bureau of Public Safety. The Bureau of Public Safety, a non-profit organization which works in collaboration with government agencies, businesses and civil society organizations. It aims at improving the quality of public safety through advocacy, education and development of the environment and public health. The Executive Director of the Bureau of Public Safety in an interview expressed his frustration with Ghana’s delay in enacting a national policy for OHS. A check from the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relation on the state of the National Policy on OHS and the Occupational Safety Bill indicated that, both are still with the ministry awaiting some inputs from the current minister before it is sent to cabinet.

Furthermore, the Executive Director of the Bureau of Public Safety indicated that there are several safety concerns and problems at many public places in Ghana, and that the country is awaiting a disaster in any of these public places since there are no safety policies and precautions in place to protect the citizenry. In particular reference to the Kokompe and Abbosey Okai
artisanal centres, he wondered how such a place is located in a busy area of the city creating vehicular traffic and human congestion. He further explained that, occupational health and safety among the artisans at Kokompe is a major concern to his organization and indicated that he had personally called on government and the AMA to relocate them to a new place as well as improving working conditions of the artisans.

To ascertain the challenges in the informal sector, the researcher interviewed two official of the Ghana Trade Union Congress (GTUC) namely, the informal economy officer and the OHS desk officer. According to the informal economy desk officer of the TUC, the union in the past few years had tried to encourage workers in the informal sector especially the self-employed to join its activities. In the case of (Ghana) TUC, informal sector members are regarded as associates and they do not have full affiliate status, he stated. According to him, some challenges have hindered organising the activities of the informal sector workers in Ghana. Trade unions in Ghana have not found it financially viable to organise informal sector workers because it is estimated to be more costly than organizing workers in the formal sector. He indicated thus:

*The issue of organizing informal sector workers is not simple. It’s very expensive yet it brings little returns. Most informal sector workers cannot afford to pay dues. So what do you do? Do you collect the dues of formal sector workers and use that to organize informal sector workers? And how do you justify that to your national executive committee members? Am telling you it’s not easy.*

The above expression of the officer in charge of the informal economy is a clear admission that trade unions are facing major challenges in the attempt to organize workers in the informal sector. These challenges include their inability to ensure that employees and apprentices work in an environment which is not harmful to their safety and health as well as securing their basic human rights and needs. He also indicated that they have not been very successful in getting
artisans at Kokompe and other places to come on board. According to him, several attempts have been made to encourage these artisans to form unions and come together to protect their interest as well as take advantage of the facilities of the GTUC, but these have not yield any dividends.

The OHS desk officer of the TUC also indicated that the health and safety performance of informal workplaces under informal small-scale enterprises particularly remain poor and owner /masters are willing to change their attitudes and take up the challenge of ensuring a safe and healthy working environment. In his view:

*The health and safety standard of informal small-scale enterprises has not been very encouraging and that is why they must have the benefit of coming to join us so that we may take the advantage to educate them about safety law and health and safety standards to be maintained at the workplace. The only way we can reach informal small-scale enterprises is for them to come to the health and safety forums that we organise as a union.*

The study also decided to examine the role of the National Board for Small-scale Industries (NBSSI) and their role in promoting the interest of small-scale self-employed workers especially their OHS at work. In an interview with the informal desk officer of NBSSI in Accra, the board has the responsibility of helping medium and small scale enterprises in their operations by providing financial support and training among others. According to him, other activities of the board include supporting interested individual in setting up their business. He further indicated that, they have in the past assisted artisans at Kokompe by having discussions with them on how to sustain and improve their businesses to achieve the maximum profit.

However, on the issue of OHS among artisans at Kokompe, he indicated that the board has not discussed OHS concerns of the artisans. When asked about his views on OHS issues and
problems in the informal sector in general and in Kokompe in particular, he indicated that, safety and safety issues are not taken seriously among workers in this sector. This is because attention is always focused on how to improve the profitability of their operations at the expense of the physical environment in which they work. This assertion is clearly manifest by the activities of the board which is skewed towards providing financial support for the workers. He also indicated thus:

*The moral commitment to ensure safe and healthy sites is very low amongst workers in this informal small-scale self-employed sector. The activity of the board is too focused on providing financial support to the artisans and workers. The owners/masters do not set good example and that is the problem. If for instance, the owner/master at the workplace put on the necessary helmet, boots and the necessary personal protective equipment, then they would be doing a lot of service to improving occupational health and safety and the apprentices and other workers would follow. Both owners/masters and the apprentices/workers are not committed to improving health and safety at the workplace; and therefore they are not serious.*

Finally, the researcher interviewed the head of the Occupational and Environmental Health Unit of the Ghana Health Service. According to her, the main problem with the promotion of OHS among workers in Ghana is the lack of a national policy on occupational health services. In addition, there are several shortcomings of the legal provisions on OHS. The vast majority of industries, including agriculture and most of the informal sector are therefore not specifically covered she noted. Furthermore, expenditure on OHS as an investment by government, employers as well as owners of informal small-scale enterprises is insufficient. Her views on the working conditions among artisans at Kokompe are that attitudes of informal small-scale enterprises (and by extension artisans at Kokompe) towards occupational health and safety is poor due to lack of awareness on health and safety issues. In addition, the desire to make more
money is seen to override other project objectives including health and safety. Attitudinal change is therefore considered necessary to ensure informal small-scale sector deliver projects at a higher level of health and safety performance than currently practiced. Moreover, her views are expressed in the following:

Small-scale owners/masters want to make the maximum profits and would not provide the personal protective equipment for their workers. They do not evaluate the risk involve in carrying out their jobs and as such do not take steps to minimise or eliminate hazards. Some of their workers are employed without completing their apprenticeship; while some may not be trained. They may not be sensitized for their safety. Most of their workers are apprentices still learning the trade and they may not go under any regulation or union. They wouldn't want to spend their time, money and resources to train their workers to a certain standard of safety and health.

A careful observation of the role of the above state regulatory agencies and advocacy groups examined indicate that there is no collaboration among them. For example, the NBSSI goes to the artisans at Kokompe to give them loans without involving the DFI on how to get the artisans to invest in PPE.

In conclusion, the accidents and injuries experienced by the artisans have direct and indirect effects on the victims, their dependents and the economy. In addition, such accidents and injuries have financial and social implications for the artisans. The findings also show that the artisans do not have any well established mechanisms for the prevention of workplace accidents. This is due to the non use of PPEs and the fact that the artisans’ at their individual and association levels do not have any established mechanisms and strategies for preventing accidents. On the role of state regulatory and inspection agencies at Kokompe, the study revealed that the DFI which is supposed to inspect and regulate OHS among the artisans does not conduct such inspections. This is due to financial, human and logistic constraints faced by the department. In addition, key

informants interviewed indicated that, the lack of a national OHS policy is a key obstacle to the promotion of OHS in Ghana.

Moreover, the attention of state agencies and the business community seems to be focused on improving the profitability and productivity of informal small-scale enterprises to the neglect of improving the OHS condition in which they worked. With the lack of effective inspection and enforcement of occupational safety and health requirement by the DFI at Kokompe, the artisans are at risks from the hazards associated with their work. This can be explained using Bittel’s 3Es framework of accident prevention with the focus on enforcement of safety rules which in the case of the artisans is lacking both at the level of the artisans themselves and the state enforcement and inspection agencies such as the DFI.

With this context in mind, the interview conducted during this study aimed at determining what mechanisms and institutions, in the absence of relevant OHS institutions, exist to protect artisans at Kokompe from unhealthy and unsafe working conditions. The findings of this study revealed that, the artisans have no established mechanisms and institutions for protecting the workers and this is mainly because they attributed accidents and injuries to unforeseeable factors/bad luck. The next chapter discusses the summary, conclusion and recommendations of this thesis as well as the contributions it makes to knowledge and suggested areas for future research.
CHAPTER NINE

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

9.0 Introduction

This last chapter provides the summary of the major findings of this study based on the objectives set at the beginning. This chapter also provides the conclusions, recommendations for policy implications and elucidates the study’s contribution to knowledge as well as areas for future research.

9.1 Summary of the Study

In the pursuit of a livelihood, artisans are exposed to varying risks and hazards. Some of these are peculiar to their own occupation, while others arise due to lack of supervision by appropriate state agencies. It is against this background that this study was conducted to examine workplace safety and accident situation among artisans and mechanics at Kokompe as well as mechanisms put in place for the reduction of risks and hazards they are exposed to.

This study was conducted at the Kokompe artisanal centre in Darkuman, a suburb of Accra, the capital city of Ghana. Kokompe was chosen because it provides a hub for all categories artisans (auto mechanics, sprayers, electricians, welders and vulcanizers) and spare part dealers in Accra. It is considered by many mechanics as the “last stop” for vehicle spares parts retail and repairs in Accra and Ghana as a whole. The study lasted for a period of three years spanning January 2012 to December 2014. The fieldwork covered about 14 months. Specifically, the study aimed to achieve the following objectives to:
1. Describe the general working conditions of artisans at Kokompe;

2. Identify the types and causes of accidents, hazards and injuries in the study area as well as workers’ levels of awareness of them;

3. Explore the perceived consequences and effects of injuries and accidents experienced by artisans;

4. Examine safety culture among the artisans in relation to their work behaviour;

5. Assess the safety measures put in place by artisans as well as the role of state inspection agencies in accident prevention.

9.2.0 Major Findings

Based on the above objectives, the major findings the study is grouped along three main themes namely;

(i) Findings relating to the artisans, their general working environment and conditions;

(ii) Findings relating to artisans perception/attitude/practices with regards to OHS issues;

(iii) Findings relating to policy that is functions of state OHS institutions to the informal sector or the limited extension of state OHS policy.

(I) Findings relating to the Artisans, their General working Environment and Conditions

9. 2.1 General Level of Safety and Working Conditions

The findings from the study revealed that:

The physical structures that make up the study area are mainly constructed of temporal materials of wooden boards and iron sheets. The poor infrastructure is compounded by the fact the constructions of the wooden structures do not follow any well laid down pattern resulting in overcrowding. There is also lack of access road to the area since abandoned vehicles, metal scrap
and metal chips have taken over the whole place. Some of the abandoned vehicles serve as shelter for most of the mechanics and other artisans.

Furthermore, the premises are makeshift, and most workers are exposed to all types of weather conditions. Worsening the health and safety of these artisans is the scorching sun under which the mechanics, welders and electricians in particular work due to lack of shelter. For those working in some kind of enclosed structures like the spare part dealers and sprayers, the workplaces are not designed to be used as such and often do not have adequate facilities. Workshops are mainly open shelters which lack sanitary facilities and portable water and suffer from inadequate refuse disposal. Waste disposal has become a problem as many workshops in the area dispose of hazardous waste in an improper manner with an adverse impact on the work environment. The workers are also at risk of being exposed to the extreme weather conditions and hazardous substances. Problems with sanitation are visible at Kokompe with plastic ‘pure water’ bags, dirty oil from vehicles, broken and abandoned spare parts and debris choking many of the poor drainage gutters which run through the area. These choked gutters become the breeding ground for mosquitoes, and the smell from them can be intolerable.

Another observation made by the researcher concerning the safety and working conditions among the artisans is that, all processes such as welding, spraying mechanic and other artisanal activities are carried out at the same place. This has resulted in multiple exposures to different hazards, especially in cluster zones; due to an excessive number of both people and products in the workplaces. The mechanics, sprayers, welders and electricians and even to some extent the spare part dealers are all located within the same place or workshop. This produces a lot of noise-
apparently beyond the recommended maximum noise levels of 85 dB(A) for an eight–hour working day according to the ILO/WHO Joint Effort on Occupational Health and Safety in Africa, 2013 report. The noise is as a result of the activities of the welders and other artisans and one is always welcomed to the area with the high level of noise. The high level of noise is in fact a safety concern raised by most of the artisans interviewed.

Besides this, another observation made by the researcher about the general level of safety and working conditions among the artisans is that the very small workshops suffer from poor housekeeping. Tools and materials are usually out of reach and working postures causing strain are common. In many cases, working in awkward positions as a result of poor working place design is observed. Artisans especially spare part dealers lift heavy loads and at times have to carry them over a long distance. In several instances no proper ergonomic chairs are available and artisans are observed sitting on makeshift ‘seats’ like concrete stools, drums, crates, buckets and other non-ergonomically designed chair.

It was also observed that artisans were exposed to a range of hazardous chemical substance (HCS). A strong smell of paint vapours, paint removers and paint thinners was noted during the paint mixing and spraying processes. In a study by Spies (2008), spraying workers were found to be exposed to high concentration of isocyanates. Also exposure to welding fumes that are a complex mixture of HCS were noted among welders as well as mechanics been exposed to oil and degreasers.
9.2.2 Fire Safety and the use of PPEs

Another observation made about the general safety and working conditions of the artisans was that, there is a frequent lack of PPEs and the absence of basic fire fighting and safety equipment. Fire extinguishers and fire alarms were not available in the shops in addition to the lack of training on fire management among the artisans. Most of the artisans do not know anything about fire safety and management in the event of a fire outbreak.

It was also observed that, the artisans lacked the proper PPEs such as gloves, eye goggles, safety boots and protective cloths that are PPEs was not widely used. Despite the host of hazards present at the vehicle repair workshops, only few of the artisans interviewed were observed to be using PPEs during their work. Even among this proportion observed, none of them used the full complement of the required PPEs such as safety boots, face shields, goggles, nose masks, overalls, gloves, and respirators. Few of the welders used protective goggles during welding. Furthermore, few sprayers used nose masks during the spraying process. This, however, does not constitute adequate protection from the hazardous chemicals they are exposed to since other parts of their bodies viz. face, hands and eyes are equally exposed to spray paints. The other sprayers only tied a piece of cloth around their nose during spraying. For instance a sprayer was observed using a surgical mask whiles spraying to protect him from exposure to volatile organic compounds.

Among the artisans who do not use any PPEs, some argued that they cannot afford to purchase them. Others also asserted that they feel uncomfortable to use them while others claimed that PPEs were irrelevant for their work. Other reasons for irregular and non-use of PPEs were that,
PPEs were not always available because of the cost implications; PPEs were given to a colleague to use, forgetfulness and not being aware that PPEs were needed for even ‘simple’ tasks.

(II) Findings relating to Artisans Perception/Attitude/Practices with regards to OHS

9.2.3 Awareness about Occupational Accidents and Hazards

Another important objective of the study was to examine the artisans’ awareness about occupational accidents and hazards. The study revealed that:

The artisans and mechanics have a fair knowledge about hazards. It therefore appears a lot remains to be done in terms of making mechanics become better aware and knowledgeable about occupational health hazards. Making the mechanics more aware about health and safety issues related to occupational hazards should serve as the first important step towards remedying the problem.

The hazards identified by the respondents were physical, psychosocial and ergonomic hazards. The work processes undertaken by these artisans present the risk of physical hazards such as cuts, burns, hearing impairment resulting from loud noises and eye injuries due to excessive UV-radiation and respiratory dysfunctions due to the noxious metal and spraying paint fumes inhaled. There is also a risk of exposure to psychosocial hazards such as stress at work and exhaustion, in addition to the ergonomic hazards that mainly involve musculoskeletal injuries such as muscle pain, dislocation and fractures.

9.2.4 Incidence of Physical Occupational Injuries and Accidents

The discussions of the findings in the study data has shown that:

The artisans had sustained various forms of work-related physical injuries. The pattern of physical injury cases reported within the work categories suggests that physical injuries are
highest among welders, followed by mechanics, sprayers, electricians and spare part dealers recording the least. In all 30 out of the 48 artisans who reported some form of injuries consented to show evidence of physical work-related injuries. These injuries generally are the result of cuts and burn at the workplace and have left most of the artisans with scars on various parts of their bodies.

The artisans experienced various forms of injuries and accidents at their work places. For example, changing or topping up acid in car batteries may lead to burns. For most of them the cuts, dislocations and fractures suffered are due to manual handling of car spare parts as well as awkward postures, lifting, twisting, bending and repetitive working movements. Cuts were suffered through several media including broken glass, knives, blades, bulbs, wires and mechanical parts. Some workers reported to have had paint and spurts in their eyes while others complained about hearing loss. Other workers complained of electrocution, severe headaches and general bodily pains.

9.2.5 Work-related Illness and Diseases

The findings of the study also showed that, apart from physical work-related injuries recorded by the artisans, as a result of the physical exertion involved in their work and excessive noise levels and contaminated air, other work-related illness and disease were reported. The result was that:

Artisans reported musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs), dizziness and headaches as the most common work-related illnesses experienced. In general, these were the three topmost illnesses reported among all the work categories except sprayers. For sprayers, coughing, headaches and dizziness were the three key illnesses reported.
9.2.6 Hygiene Practices among the Artisans

Regarding hygienic practices, the findings from this study indicate that the artisans were either unenlightened or unconcerned about the risks associated with poor hand hygiene in particular. Although the artisans maintained that they frequently wash their hands at the workplace, it was observed that this is not done adequately to effectively remove grease, grime and other deposits mostly on their hands.

However, some reported that they practice hand washing with soap at all times, others do so occasionally. Deposits of dirt were observed beneath the fingernails of the artisans. Particularly, some auto mechanics observed during the study had characteristic black-tainted palms possibly resulting from hand contact with greasy vehicle components and engine oil.

9.2.7 Predisposing Factors of Accident and Injuries to Artisans

The contributing factors of accidents and injuries identified by the artisans could be classified into three categories namely, human, environmental and mechanical factors. The human factors identified included failure to follow safety rules, lack of attention, improper posture and fatigue.

The environmental factors included slippery and muddy floors due to rain, hazardous chemicals, poor illumination and source of electricity. The mechanical factors identified included unsafe tools, heavy tools and rapidly moving parts.

However, it was interesting to observe that apart from the above factors (human, environmental and mechanical) the artisans (masters or owners; workers and apprentices) attributed accidents to unforeseeable forces considered spiritual. It is therefore fair to conclude that given this fatalistic stance, owners or masters as well as their workers and apprentice’s beliefs that workplace accidents and injuries are an unavoidable part of their work.
9.2.8 Safety Culture and Work Behaviour among Artisan

Another important objective of the study was to ascertain the existence of safety culture among these artisans in relation to work behaviour, values and attitudes regarding workplace safety. This is because any attempt to reduce workplace safety must start with changing workers’ attitude and behaviour toward workplace safety. The findings of the study indicated that:

In the case of the existence or otherwise of safety climate among the artisans, the findings revealed that, there were no explicit safety policy, procedure, structures and practices in place for promoting workplace safety although some owners expressed an explicit positive and proactive approach to safety. The chaotic manner in which the whole workplace was organized also gave an indication of a poor safety climate by exposing the artisans to all kinds of hazards and risks. Many of these artisans operate in ramshackle wooden structures with working conditions precarious and unsafe.

The general attitude and perception of the artisans including the owners/masters and their workers is fatalistic; that is a belief that most of the accidents and injuries are unavoidable part of their daily work, and that little can be done to prevent them. One major observation made by the researcher was that, many of the artisans believe that workplace accidents and injuries are just ‘accidents’, and that these accidents are an inevitable part of their daily working life. That these accidents are caused by bad luck and one just has to satisfy oneself with the situation meant that they do not choose safe working methods and procedures.
The findings on safety behavior indicated that at the time of the interviews during the field trips many of the artisans were not using the appropriate PPEs. As indicated in the previous chapter (seven), artisans were working without the required PPEs and in the cases where some used them, they were using inappropriate ones. For instance, at the time of the first visit to the study area, a number of artisans were observed to have overalls but no suitable nose masks, eye goggles, protective boots among others.

9.2.9 Coping with Work-related Accidents, Injuries and Illness

The study also sought to find out how the artisans coped with the work-related injuries and accidents they experienced while working. The findings show that:

Artisans injured during their work did not seek medical attention, but rather resort to self-medication. Only a few sought medical attention at clinics. Despite the high-incidence of work-related injuries among the artisans, first aid facilities are non-existent in the vehicle repair shops and majority of the artisans are unfamiliar with administering first aid to injured persons. Only a few of them claimed to have been trained by their masters in first aid administration at the workshop.

9.2.10 Consequences of Workplace Accidents and Injury on Artisans

It was also found that when accidents occur, various things result from it: damage to property, injuries to people and loss of time, reduced productivity, etc. The study tried to find out from the artisans how injuries and accidents they sustain affect their performance at work as well as how they are affected financially and socially.

The findings indicated that, the artisans faced direct serious financial problems as a result of the accidents and injuries they sustain during work. This is because since their jobs were not
salaried, they were not paid anything due to their inability to work after their injuries. This means the loss of day’s wages or income and this implies that there would be no income to take home. Overwhelmingly, the respondents complained that they faced difficulties meeting the basic necessities of life such as providing food, shelter, clothing and paying children’s school fees and utility bills.

On physical impairment as a consequence of job-related hazards, the artisans confirmed that job-related injuries resulted in physical disabilities such as broken legs and arms, resulting sometimes in amputations. For instance, at the time of conducting the interviews, it was reported to the researcher by an apprentice welder that, as a result of an injury sustained at work by one of their colleagues, he had been hospitalized for the previous six months with a broken leg.

### 9.2.11 Prevention and reduction of work-related accidents, injuries

The study also examined the measures put in place by the artisans for prevention and reduction of work-related accidents and injuries. The findings of the study revealed that:

Responses from the artisans indicated that, they do not have any established measures of reducing or preventing hazards and risks associated with their respective jobs. In many instances, the prevention of accident was done on ad hoc and curative basis without any preventive mechanisms.

The study also found that most of the artisans did not use any form of PPEs when working with only few of them indicated using PPEs. In many instances, the PPEs used were wrong or inappropriate for the nature of their respective jobs. These inadequate PPEs do not provide enough protection from the hazardous chemicals they are exposed to since other parts of their
bodies like face, hands and eyes are equally exposed. In some cases, artisans were observed using the wrong or inappropriate PPEs for their work such as using sunglasses instead of eye goggle when welding. Some sprayers only tied a piece of cloth around their nose during spraying. Additionally, others explained that being always careful on their respective jobs was their approach of preventing or reducing accidents. In short, most of these mechanisms were not adequate to reduce or prevent work-related accidents and injuries.

In most of the cases though, the owners had an ambivalent attitude towards working with safety. On one hand they emphasized the importance of safety, and on the other did not feel that they could do anything to promote it. In general, the owners ‘react’ to safety issues and problems by dealing with them as they arose, and most were of the opinion that accidents in general are due to worker faults or unforeseeable forces/bad luck or witchcraft – all of which they mean were beyond their control.

(III) Findings relating to Policy: Limited Functions of State OHS Institutions in the Informal Sector

9.2.12 The Role of State Regulatory and Inspection Agencies in Workplace Safety

The study also examines Ghana’s safety policy and the mechanisms put in place by the state to ensure workplace safety and health for artisans operating at Kokompe. The results of the study revealed that:

Ghana currently has no national policy on occupational health and safety services for its working population. The current OHS laws are outmoded in formulation (prescriptive in orientation), fragmented in operation, limited in scope and coverage, has not kept pace with international
development, has areas of inconsistency, its definitions do not address occupational diseases and it has complex legal procedures which delays judgment. Furthermore, the existing laws as well as regulatory and inspecting agencies do not cover the operations of the small-scale informal sector workers especially artisans at Kokompe.

There is also the absence of collaboration between the artisans and relevant stakeholders such as the Ghana National Fire Service (GNFS), the Ghana Health Service (GHS), NBSSI, and the DFI to organize training-of-trainers’ workshops for masters who would subsequently train their apprentices at Kokompe.

9.3 General Conclusion

Occupational Health and Safety are critical health and development issues, especially in a growing economy like Ghana where there is dearth of credible OHS data especially in the informal small-scale sector. Almost every workplace, including informal small-scale enterprises and business in the formal sector, suffer from one or more hazards. Occupational hazards may have health consequences for both workers and for any other person in the proximity of a production process. As indicated in the employment statistics, the informal sector and small scale enterprises play an important role in the labour market as well as in the diversification of the economy in Ghana. In view of this, the safety and health of workers in the informal small-scale enterprises should be recognized as it is in medium–size and large enterprises. Protecting the safety and health of workers in the face of hazards related to work activities is imperative because it promotes a healthy and vibrant economy in any country.
This study examines occupational safety and health issues among artisans at Kokompe; considered as one of Ghana’s enterprising indigenous artisanal centres. The researcher focused on a high risk group of artisans with low education, income, social status and with minimal support from state regulatory and enforcement agencies making the study very relevant. The study which is located in the informal economy started the literature review on the formal and informal debate and the origin of the informal economy. The literature review also emphasized globalization and occupational health and safety, accidents, hazards and injuries among informal small-scale workers as well as OHS issues in Ghana with the role of regulatory bodies, policies and laws for protecting workers.

The study adopted the qualitative method and justified it on the bases that it allowed the researcher to understand the socio-cultural context within which artisans and other stakeholders operate; fostering a better contact between researcher and the artisans. The study used the purposive and accidental sampling procedures which were justified by the unique nature of the study site and the artisans. In-depth interviews, direct observations and key informant interviews were used as the instruments of data collection.

The major findings of the study began with the descriptive aspect of Kokompe, the study area with the youthful nature of artisans and its male dominance due to the nature of work. In addition, a large section of the artisans are not educated beyond the basic (Primary and JHS) levels. The physical environment and the nature of work are both hazardous since the work entails improper sitting posture, lifting of heavy objects and generally working without any safety measures. Whilst these artisans and their apprentices know about some of the hazards
associated with their work, they are oblivious to the many dangers associated with their work which is largely unregulated. No wonder that the artisans complained of musculoskeletal disorders, allergic reactions, and noise induced hearing loss, physical strain, fatigue, cut and burns. Thus, the predisposing factors to workplace accidents that have been identified are non-use of protective equipment, carelessness, inexperience defective equipment or tools and bad luck (uncontrollable external forces). Workplace accidents lead to various costs to the artisans; illness/injury, loss of income, possible loss of job, limb, or life and the cost of health care. Their working environment is hardly regulated by the bodies mandated to do so. The DFI which is by law mandated to inspect all working environments have never been to Kokompe due to lack of personnel and insufficient logistics as the main excuses.

The study finally concludes that there is the lack of collaboration between the artisans and relevant stakeholders namely GNFS, GHS, DFI, AMA, NBSSI, TUC and Masloc in their support to artisans at Kokompe.

9.4.0 Recommendations for Policy Implementation

Based on the categorization of the findings of the study along three practical themes, the following targeted and implementable recommendations are made to guide the formulation of policy concerning workplace safety and health in the informal sector especially among artisans working in the vehicle repairs and spare parts retail business.
9.4.1 Recommendations relating to the Artisans, their General working Environment and Conditions

- There is the need for the AMA and city authorities for a re-engineering of the entire workplace of the artisans by planning and demarcating the structure in accordance with standard practice to enable work to be done in a safe and healthy environment.

- As a matter of urgency, the city authorities and government should quicken the relocation of Kokompe to the Anyaa Iron City and design structures that are ergonomic, safe and well-ventilated.

- To succeed in making occupational health and safety a concern for all stakeholders, business activities in the informal sector need to be reformed. The Ministries of Health and Employment must lead this charge in collaboration with the GHS.

9.4.2 Recommendations relating to Artisans Perception/Attitude/Practices with regards to OHS

- There is no doubting the view that the use of (PPEs) among artisans at Kokompe is low. The owners as well as artisans must be educated on the need and importance of PPEs in their work activities. The TUC and other labour unions can also help in this regards.

- There is the need to rather incorporate basic occupational health and safety practices into the informal job training sessions of these artisans. During their apprenticeship, artisans and the DFI and the GHS could collaborate to achieve this in order to instil in them the need to protect them at the workplace.

- Improve accessibility to occupational health and safety services by incorporating them into the current public health service provided by the city authorities. This should include intensive education on work-related occupational illnesses and diseases as well as the
usefulness of rudimentary protective equipment in reducing work-related injuries and illnesses.

9.4.3 Recommendations relating to Policy: Limited Functions of State OHS Institutions in the Informal Sector

- The Department of Factories inspectors should be provided with more logistics in terms of equipment, vehicles to enhance the activities of the department. Also more inspectors should be appointed to meet the increasing number of emerging companies or factories in Accra as well as informal enterprises like artisanal workshops.
- Also the activities of the DFI should be decentralized to give some of their activities to AMA’s environmental department to help in the inspection and enforcement.
- As a matter of urgency, the national OHS policy should be passed with all the relevant amendments and suggestions to provide a more comprehensive framework to regulate all sectors of the Ghanaian economy (formal and informal).
- Finally, there should be a close collaboration between the tertiary institutions and the AGI and the NBSSI to make it mandatory for all manufacturing companies to allow some form of research by students of tertiary institutions on the employee safety and health programmes, and the policy and legislations in operation in these companies.

9.5 Contributions to Knowledge and Areas for Future Research

Although several works have been carried out in the area of occupational health and safety, most of the studies conducted on occupational health and safety are foreign-based and as such available literature lack local context. Furthermore, only few empirical studies exist on OHS in
the informal sector; thus, studies on small-scale artisanal enterprises (in particular) Kokompe are virtually non-existent.

This study has made contribution to knowledge as it focuses on OHS problems and concerns among artisans at Kokompe. In addition, this study has provided a comprehensive and holistic examination of OHS in the informal sector by examining aspects such as:

- Artisans’ awareness and experience of workplace accidents, injuries and hazard
- Causes and consequences of accidents,
- Accident attribution patterns (with focus on bad luck or spiritual forces)
- Safety culture and work behaviour as well as
- The role of regulatory agencies in OHS in the informal sector.

In most of the existing literature, studies on OHS focus on these issues in isolation and were based on (content analysis) of existing literature. Therefore, future researchers can make use of the findings of this study in the form of literature review to enrich their researches.

In addition, this study is useful to policy makers with regard to work place health and safety issues. Policy makers can make use of the findings in policy formulation and implementation on health and safety practices for improved work situations especially in the small-scale informal sector. Despite the fact that the results of this study have provided useful insight into the benefit of OHS in the informal sector, the results cannot be generalized since it was based on a single case study and on only one section of the informal small-scale sector.

Theoretically, the study also contributed to knowledge by extending the use of Bittel’s 3Es (Engineering, Education and Enforcement) framework to how the social organization of the
workplace, attitudes, beliefs and perceptions of workers or artisans influence OHS issues in the informal small-scale sector.

In addition, future studies could also focus on occupational diseases and illness in the informal small-scale sector due to the underreporting of such diseases. Finally, this study suggests a fuller research into bio-monitoring and medical screening of the artisans to gain further insight into the adverse health effects resulting from their work.
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APPENDIX 1

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ARTISANS

Dear respondent, I am a final year PHD Sociology student carrying out a research on: Workplace Safety and Accidents among Artisans at Kokompe. This is purely for academic purpose. I will be very grateful therefore, if you would provide answers to the following questions. Please, be assured that the answers provided will be treated confidentially. Your identity is not required.

Interview Protocol Project: Workplace Safety and Accidents among Artisans at Kokompe

Time of Interview:
Date:
Place:
Interviewer:
Interviewee:
Position of Interviewee:
(Briefly describe the project)

Questions:

SECTION A: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

1. Age
2. Sex
3. Marital Status
4. Level of Education
5. Religious Affiliation
6. Category of worker
7. Number of years of working
8. Motivation to work
SECTION B: GENERAL LEVEL OF SAFETY AND WORKING CONDITIONS

9. How will you describe your work environment in terms of safety?
10. What are some of the safety concerns in your workplace?
11. Can you mention some of the challenges concerning your safety?
12. What are some of the risks and hazards associated with your work?
13. How do these hazards affect your safety at work?
14. What are some of the things you do to ensure your safety at work?

SECTION C: TYPES AND CAUSES OF ACCIDENTS AND HAZARDS

15. Can you identify some of the accidents experience relating to your work?
16. What are the causes of these accidents experienced?
17. What are some of the injuries sustained during these accidents?
18. What are the major causes of these injuries?
19. Apart from physical injuries and accidents, what are some of the diseases and illnesses you experience as a result of your work?
20. Can you briefly describe some of the incidence in the course of your work resulting in an accident or injuries?
21. What can you say about how your work environment leads to some of these accidents?
22. Would you say many of these accidents and injuries could be prevented? If yes how do you think they could be prevented?
23. What do normally do about these accidents and injuries when they occur at work?

SECTION D: CONSEQUENCES OF ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES

24. How do you deal with the accidents and injuries you experience?
25. Do you visit the hospital in times of accidents and injuries? Who pays for the cost?
26. Can you describe for me the economic cost of the accidents and injuries you experience?
27. How do these accidents affect your social life and wellbeing as a worker?
28. In what ways do these accidents and injuries affect your family life and source of income?

SECTION E: SAFETY CULTURE OF ARTISANS AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS OHS

Three (3) thematic areas of Safety Culture:

29. Safety Climate
   Do you have any shared policies of OHS at your workplace?
   Are there some established practices/structures/processes at your workplace for ensuring safety and health?
   Questions on: Behavioural Practices, Norms, Beliefs, Values and Attitudes of Artisans towards OHS during work

30. Safety Behaviour/Safe Work Procedure
   Do you use PPEs while at work?
   What PPEs do you use?
   Do you follow safe working procedures?

31. Masters/Owners commitment to Safety Issues at Work:
   What are the structures and mechanisms put in place to ensure safety at work?
What kind of importance or priority do you place on the safety of your workplace? Do you have any policies on safety and health for your workers?

SECTION F: MEASURES FOR REDUCING ACCIDENTS AND ROLE OF DFI

32. Do you have any mechanism in place for supervising and monitoring your own safety? What are these mechanisms?

33. Can you identify some of the mechanisms in place to ensure your safety?
34. What are some of the safety devices you use to protect yourself when working? And how often do you use them?

- Personal Protective Equipment used at work:

35. Do you have regulatory agencies inspecting safety facilities at your workplace? What are the agencies?

36. What do they normally inspect and check? How often do they visit?

37. What are your suggestions to improve your safety at work?
APPENDIX 2
INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR OFFICIAL OF THE DEPARTMENT
OF FACTORIES INSPECTORATE, ACCRA

1. What is the role of the Department of Factories Inspectorate in workplace safety?

2. How is the Inspection and examination of workplaces in the informal sector done?

3. What is the staff strength of factories inspectorate in Accra?

4. What is your impression about OHS among informal small-scale workers in Ghana?

5. What are your views about OHS among artisans at Kokompe?
   - How often do you inspect them?
   - What are the safety concerns there?

6. What are the challenges faced by the department in its activities
APPENDIX 3
INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR OFFICIAL OF THE GHANA HEALTH SERVICE, NBSSI AND THE BUREAU OF PUBLIC SAFETY, ACCRA

1. What is the current situation of OHS in Ghana?
2. What is the current situation of the legal and regulatory frameworks for OHS in Ghana?
3. How is the Inspection and examination of workplaces in the informal sector done?
4. What is your impression about OHS among informal small-scale workers in Ghana?
5. What are your views about OHS among artisans at Kokompe?
   • How safe are they?
   • What are the safety concerns there?
6. What are the challenges faced by regulatory agencies in their activities?
APPENDIX 4
Map showing the Study Area
APPENDIX 5
Pictures from the Field