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UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

**ARTISANAL SKILL ACQUISITION AND EMPLOYMENT CREATION IN
THE INFORMAL SECTOR: A CASE STUDY OF TEMA, GHANA**

BY

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(10172620)

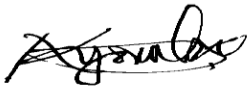
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DECLARATION

I Yeboah Cyril Charles do hereby declare that this work is the result of my own original research under the supervision of DR. Kofi Takyi Asante and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere. All references used have been duly cited.


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ABSTRACT

This research delves into the intricate landscape of artisanal skill acquisition and employment in the informal sector of Ghana. Employing a qualitative phenomenological approach, the study aimed to unravel the barriers hindering artisanal skill acquisition, understand the approaches to informal artisanal training, and identify limiting factors impeding employment opportunities among artisans. My inclusive approach involves interviews with current apprentices and master craftspersons. The research, conducted in the Tema Metropolitan Assembly, explores the lived experiences of 25 participants engaged in various artisanal trades, ranging from masonry to beautician services. Financial constraints, social stigma, and exploitation emerged as significant barriers to informal artisanal skill acquisition in Tema. Common training modes included apprenticeship, informal observational learning, and self-directed learning. Employment challenges encompassed financial barriers, urban planning decisions, bureaucratic hurdles, and limited access to startup capital. The findings contribute to the existing literature by offering depth and empirical analysis that delves into young people's perceptions of the apprenticeship system, offering distinctive insights. Unlike prior studies, I holistically examined various phases and characteristics of informal apprenticeships, exploring barriers to training across diverse artisanal trade categories. Overall, I explicitly outlined barriers, demonstrating the system's impact on economically disadvantaged youth in Tema.



DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my daughter, Cassara Obenewa Barifi Yeboah, and to my mother Mad. Deborah Adjei for their support throughout my graduate education. I also want to dedicate this work to the loving memory of my late uncle, Dr. Alex Obeng Barifi who in diverse ways supported and inspired me to pursue higher education.



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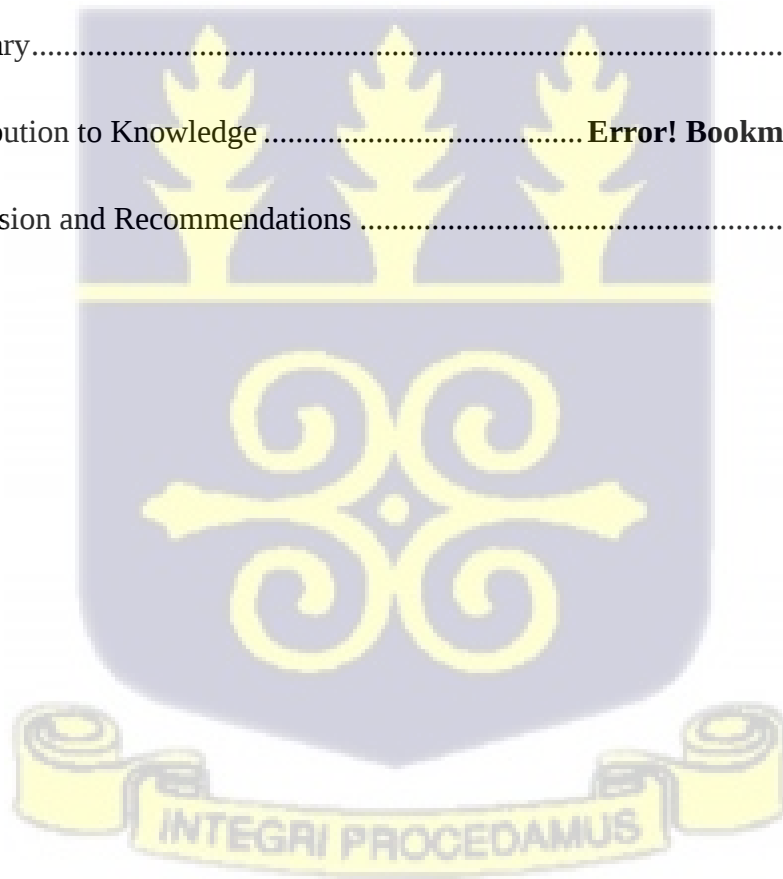
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ILO	International Labour Organization
JHS	Junior High School
JSS	Junior Secondary School
MSE	Micro and Small Enterprises
SDT	Self Determination Theory
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
WASSCE	West African Senior School Certificate Examination



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The global landscape of employment, as highlighted by the International Labour Organization (ILO), underscores the pervasive nature of the informal sector, particularly in Africa. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), nearly 83% of employment in Africa and 85% in Sub-Saharan Africa is informal, absorbing many of the continent's young employment seekers (ILO, 2018). The proportion is 68.2 per cent in Asia and the Pacific, 68.6 per cent in the Arab States, 40.0 per cent in the Americas and 25.1 per cent in Europe and Central Asia (ILO, 2018). In all, the informal economy comprises more than half of the global labour force and more than 90% of Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) worldwide (ILO, 2018).

Not only that, the ILO (2019) further disclose that the global average of employment in craft and related trades as a percentage of total employment was 11.5% in 2019. The regional averages for Asia and Africa were 13.7% and 10.7%, respectively.

Although not all craft and related trades workers are artisans, some may work in formal or modern sectors. This raises the probability that the proportion of employment accounted for by artisanal workers in total employment is likely lower than these estimates. The proportion can vary depending on the definition and criteria of artisanal work. These figures suggest that the informal sector is a significant and dominant part of the economy and labour market in Ghana and many other African countries. It plays a major role in production, employment creation, and income generation.

Artisanal skill acquisition and employment creation are crucial for the socio-economic development of Ghana, a country that faces many challenges in these areas. According to the World Bank (2019), Ghana's unemployment rate was 6.1% in 2005, with the youth (15-24 years old) being the most affected group. The rapid population growth, urbanization, low quality of labour supply, and weak labour absorption capacity of the economy are some of the factors that contribute to this problem (World Bank, 2019). Moreover, Ghana's education and training system has been criticized for its low external efficiency and relevance to the needs of a diversified and competitive economy (World Bank, 2019). Obviously, there is a mismatch between the skills developed and the skills demanded by the labour market, resulting in unemployment, low productivity, low wages, and low quality of jobs (King & Palmer, 2013).

One of the potential solutions to these challenges is to promote and support informal sector artisanal work, which is a major source of employment and income for many people, especially in urban areas. The informal sector itself is experiencing formidable challenges particularly with respect to skills development and training for its workers and entrepreneurs. A study by Adams et al., (2013) found that the availability of formal Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is highly restricted in the informal sector particularly with regards to the proportion of youth (aged 15–30) who have undergone TVET and apprenticeships. In general, it was established that a mere 2 percent of youth within the 15–30 age range have participated in TVET programs. Specifically, the highest proportion is observed in the private formal wage sector, where 8 percent of youth have undergone TVET (Barasa & Kaabwe, 2001; Chisom et al., 2022). This highlights the need to increase access to TVET and

apprenticeships for youth in the informal sector as this is a serious challenge and the need to focus attention on informal artisanal skill training cannot be overemphasized.

Artisanal training or apprenticeship is a form of vocational education that aims to equip people with skills and knowledge in various crafts and trades, such as carpentry, tailoring, welding, pottery, etc. Most of these trades are carried out in the informal sector where wages are low. These artisans are self-employed workers who produce goods or provide services using their skills and tools, often without formal education or training. They include carpenters, tailors, mechanics, hairdressers, welders, electricians, and many others. These artisans operate in a dynamic and flexible environment that allows them to adapt to changing market conditions and customer preferences.

However, in spite of its acknowledged significance, municipal authorities and governments often rather perceive the informal sector as a hindrance to urban development (Akuoko et al., 2021; Darbi et al., 2016). Historically, based on the conjectures of neoliberal scholars, the informal sector was disregarded and assumed to assimilate into the formal sector.; nevertheless, the informal sector has endured and city authorities, in grappling with the multifaceted challenges posed by the informal sector's expansion, have adopted a range of strategies (La Porta & Shleifer, 2014; Obeng-Odoom, 2011). For example, a study by the International Labour Organization (ILO) discusses the persistence of the informal sector and its implications for urban development. The report outlines how local governments have sought strategies like formalization programs, creating hybrid spaces that balance formal and informal activities (ILO, 2018). In another study, Bromley (2000) explored how urban authorities have adapted to the growing informal sector by implementing policies that

balance regulation and support, such as microfinance access, designated vending zones, and cooperative associations for informal workers.

Undoubtedly, most governments in sub-Saharan Africa have predominantly focused on the illegality of the informal sector rather than recognizing its developmental potential (Benjamin & Mbaye, 2014). Cernea (2006), and Steel et al., (2014) disclose that as an alternative policy approach, municipal authorities often respond to informality through various means, including displacements and resettlements, demolitions, relocations, and evictions.

Despite all these developments, the informal economy has been thriving and expanding over the decades and constitute a major source of employment for many (Osei-Boateng & Ampratwum, 2011). Not only that, it is an important means of skill transfer, providing livelihoods to a significant number of people in the country who are unable to find jobs in the formal sector (Palmer & Wedgewood, 2013; Osei-Boateng & Ampratwum). The informal sector is a part of the economy that operates outside the formal regulations and institutions, such as taxation, social security, labour laws, etc. The informal sector is often characterized by low productivity, low income, low security, and low quality of goods and services (Adams et al., 2013). In spite of that, the sector contributes to the development of the local economy by providing infrastructure, housing, transportation, and sanitation services (Cavallo et al., 2018; Ganchenko & Bodrov, 2019; Osei-Boateng & Ampratwum, 2011).

1.2 Problem Statement

According to Osei and Adu-Gyamfi (2014), the informal sector in Ghana employs 80% of the workforce, mostly women and men. However, the growth in this sector

did not start until the 1990s. The IMF's structural adjustment programme caused many workers to shift to the informal sector due to layoffs in the formal sector. This shift caused the informal sector to grow faster than the formal sector by the end of the decade.

Despite the vital role of artisanal skills in the informal sector, there exist formidable barriers that impede their development. These barriers extend beyond the immediate challenges faced by artisans and include systemic issues, such as limited access to quality education and training programs, inadequate resources, and cultural biases against these skills. Quite disappointingly, research on artisanal training programs in the informal sector, specifically focusing on apprenticeship training, is scarce. Only a limited number of studies have been conducted in this area (Palmer, 2017; Schraven et al., 2013), leaving significant research gaps. These gaps include the need to explore the approaches adopted by delivering these training programs, reasons for low enrolment in apprenticeships, barriers to successfully completing the programs, and the relationship between artisanal skills and employment opportunities in the informal sector.

A recent study by Alla-Mensah and McGrath (2021) used the capability approach to explore the role of informal apprenticeship in the human development of informal apprentices in Ghana. They conducted qualitative interviews with 20 informal apprentices and 10 masters in four trades: carpentry, dressmaking, hairdressing, and welding. They found that informal apprenticeship was a valuable source of skills development and livelihood for the informal apprentices, but it also had limitations and challenges that affected their well-being and agency.

In a related study, Anokye et al. (2014) used a mixed-methods approach to assess the labour market outcomes and impacts of informal apprenticeship in Ghana. They conducted a survey with 1,200 informal apprentices and masters in six trades: auto mechanics, carpentry, dressmaking, electronics, hairdressing, and welding. They also conducted focus group discussions and key informant interviews with relevant stakeholders, such as informal sector associations, training providers, and policy makers. They found that informal apprenticeship had positive labour market outcomes and impacts for the informal apprentices and masters, but it also had variations and limitations that depended on the enabling or disabling environment.

Several other studies including Ngyah-Etchutambe et al (2022), Amegashie-Viglo & Bokor, (2014) acknowledge the barriers, nonetheless there is a noticeable gap in the comprehensive exploration of these challenges. Understanding these barriers holistically is crucial for formulating effective strategies to promote artisanal skill development and perhaps provide insight into approaches that can be adopted to ensure sustainable livelihoods and employment for informal artisans. Besides that, these studies, although relevant, contextually, they are papers written for international organizations hence leaving a yawning gap to be filled in academic contexts.

Another research gap on informal apprenticeship in Ghana is the labour market outcomes and impacts of informal apprenticeship, and how they are affected by the enabling or disabling environment. This gap is important because it can help to measure and evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of informal apprenticeship, and to identify and address the factors that enhance or constrain the employability and productivity of informal apprentices and masters.

1.3 Specific Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to comprehensively investigate and analyse the factors influencing artisanal skill acquisition within the informal sector in Tema, Ghana. The specific objectives to be accomplished in this study are

- I. To examine the approaches to informal artisanal training in Tema
- II. To explore the barriers to artisanal skill acquisition in the informal sector in Tema.
- III. To determine factors hindering the employment prospects of informal sector artisans.

1.4 Research Questions

The main research question that this study seeks to answer is what are the major influences of informal artisanal skill acquisition and employment in the informal sector in Tema?

Specific research questions to be addressed in this regard include:

- I. What are the common approaches to informal artisanal training in Tema?
- II. What are the barriers to artisanal skill acquisition in the informal sector in Tema?
- III. What are the factors hindering the employment prospects of informal sector artisans in Tema?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study bears profound significance across diverse domains, addressing the concerns and inclinations of academic, policy, and various stakeholders as discussed below

1.5.1 Academic Significance

This study makes a substantial contribution to the academic sphere by delivering a nuanced and comprehensive examination of the obstacles hindering artisanal skill acquisition in the informal sector, with a specific emphasis on the African context. The academic community stands to benefit from empirical insights and a thorough exploration of challenges encountered by artisans. By filling the identified research gap, scholars and researchers can build upon this foundation, cultivating a deeper understanding of the dynamics within the informal sector. The study's concentration on the approaches to informal apprenticeship training and its alignment with the skill requirements of artisans augments existing scholarly works by providing insights into the effectiveness of existing training programs. This academic exploration helps in shaping and enhancing the ongoing discourse about artisanal training and the informal sector by helping to better focus interventions in such a dynamically diverse sector.

1.5.2 Policy Relevance

Policymakers will derive immense value from the outcomes of this research. The identification and detailed analysis of obstacles to artisanal skill acquisition equip policymakers with actionable insights. Understanding the challenges faced by artisans enables policymakers to tailor interventions and devise policies that directly tackle these impediments.

Furthermore, the study's examination of approaches to informal apprenticeship training lays the groundwork for designing more efficient and targeted training programs. Policymakers can leverage this information to enhance the quality and relevance of training initiatives, cultivating an environment conducive to skill development within the informal sector.

1.5.3 Relevant to other Stakeholders

Beyond the academic and policy spheres, this study dispenses valuable insights to a diverse array of stakeholders, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private sector entities, and international development agencies. These stakeholders play pivotal roles in supporting and catalysing initiatives within the informal sector. NGOs can employ insights from this research to structure skill development programs that directly tackle the identified barriers. Not only that, understanding the modes of training empowers artisans by providing insights into effective learning pathways. This knowledge aids in the creation of mentorship programs, skills enhancement initiatives, and avenues for continuous learning, contributing to artisans' career progression.

1.5.4 Community and Economic Development

At the grassroots level, the study holds significance for local communities and artisans. By recognizing and addressing barriers to artisanal skill acquisition, this research directly contributes to community development. It empowers artisans by enabling them to surmount challenges in accessing education, training, and resources, thereby fostering economic self-sufficiency.

Mitigating these barriers is a direct pathway to sustainable economic growth within the informal sector. As the study illuminates the contributions of artisanal skills to sustainable employment, it becomes a catalyst for positive change at the community level, promoting the recognition and value of these skills within society.

1.6 Limitations

While the study contributes valuable insights to the understanding of informal artisanal skills and employment in Tema, Ghana, it is crucial to acknowledge certain limitations that may impact the interpretation and generalizability of the findings. The study's scope does not fully encapsulate the diversity within the broader informal artisanal sector, and variations in experiences among different trades and regions might not be fully represented.

Furthermore, the study's temporal scope may pose limitations as economic, social, and policy landscapes within the informal sector can evolve over time. The findings might not fully capture the dynamic nature of challenges and opportunities faced by artisans, especially in the context of changing economic conditions or policy interventions.

The study also acknowledges the potential for response bias, as some participants in the study appeared to have been influenced by social desirability so did not feel entirely comfortable sharing certain experiences. This bias could have impacted the accuracy and depth of some of the information gathered, particularly regarding sensitive topics such as exploitation within training or personal struggles.

1.7 Organization of the Study

This dissertation is organized into five chapters. Having discussed the first chapter extensively in section 1.6 above, this section discusses in brief what is covered in the next four chapters.

Chapter Two is the literature review chapter of the study and delves into the existing body of knowledge related to artisanal skill acquisition, employment creation in the informal sector, and the specific context of Ghana. The literature review is organized into thematic sub-sections to provide a structured exploration of relevant scholarly works. It commences with an examination of global perspectives on the informal sector, shedding light on its prevalence and significance, particularly in Africa.

Subsequently, the review focuses on studies that delineate the role of artisanal skills within the informal sector, emphasizing their impact on employment creation and socio-economic development. This section aims to establish a foundational understanding of the broader concepts, setting the stage for the subsequent exploration of the specific challenges and opportunities faced by artisans in the informal sector.

The literature review also critically assesses the existing gaps in the current body of knowledge, emphasizing the scarcity of research dedicated to artisanal training programs in the informal sector.

The final part of the literature review is dedicated to examining relevant theoretical frameworks that can be applied to analyse the dynamics of artisanal skill acquisition and its impact on employment in the informal sector. The chosen theoretical perspectives are carefully selected to provide a robust analytical framework for the subsequent chapters of the study.

Chapter Three, the methodology chapter, outlines the research design, sampling strategy, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques employed in the study. It begins by justifying the choice of a qualitative research design, considering the exploratory nature of the research questions and the need to gain in-depth insights into the experiences and perspectives of artisans in the informal sector in Tema.

The sampling strategy is elucidated, detailing the criteria for selecting participants to ensure a representative and diverse sample. The section also discusses the data collection methods, including semi-structured interviews, chosen to capture a comprehensive understanding of the barriers to artisanal skill acquisition, the approaches informal artisanal training, and the effects of such skills on employment. Moreover, the methodology chapter explicates the steps taken to ensure the ethical conduct of the research, safeguarding the rights and confidentiality of the participants. Rigorous data analysis procedures are articulated, including phenomenological thematic analysis and triangulation methods to enhance the validity and reliability of the findings.

The Chapter Four is dedicated to the presentation of the empirical study findings. It is organized according to the specific objectives of the study, providing a detailed account of the identified barriers to artisanal skill acquisition, approaches to informal artisanal training, and the observed effects of these skills on employment in the informal sector in Tema. Rich qualitative data, supplemented by relevant quantitative insights, is presented coherently to facilitate a nuanced understanding of the research outcomes.

Chapter Five, the concluding chapter synthesizes the key findings of the study, drawing connections between the empirical evidence and the existing body of knowledge. It culminates in comprehensive conclusions that address the research questions and contribute to the broader understanding of artisanal skill acquisition and employment creation in the informal sector. The chapter concludes with practical and context-specific recommendations for policymakers, stakeholders, and future research, emphasizing the study's potential impact on both academic discourse and practical interventions in the field.

1.8 Definition of Terms

The following are definitions of important concepts related to this study:

1.8.1 Artisanal skill

Artisanal skill refers to a specific set of hands-on, manual abilities and techniques that are typically acquired through practical experience and training. These skills are often associated with traditional crafts and trades, and they can encompass a wide range of activities such as carpentry, metalworking, pottery, weaving, and other similar artisanal practices.

1.8.2 Apprenticeship

Apprenticeship is a form of vocational training and skill acquisition that involves a structured learning process where individuals, known as apprentices, work under the guidance and supervision of experienced artisans or craftsmen. Apprenticeships typically combine practical on-the-job training with theoretical instruction and can vary in duration depending on the trade or craft being learned.

1.8.3 Training

Training refers to the process of providing instruction and education to individuals with the aim of developing or enhancing their knowledge, skills, and abilities in a particular field or occupation. Training programs can be formal or informal, and they can range from structured classroom-based courses to hands-on practical learning experiences.

1.8.4 Informal sector

The informal sector refers to economic activities that are not regulated by formal laws, regulations, or institutions. It encompasses a wide range of activities and occupations that are typically characterized by their low levels of organization, lack of legal recognition, limited access to social protection, and reliance on personal relationships and networks. The informal sector often includes self-employed individuals, small-scale entrepreneurs, and workers in unregistered businesses or household enterprises

1.9 Summary of Chapter

The first chapter of the study began with a broad overview of the global employment landscape, emphasizing the prevalence of the informal sector, particularly in Africa and discussed the importance of artisanal skill acquisition and employment creation in the socio-economic development of Ghana. The chapter also discussed the problem statement and identified the informal sector as a dominant employer in Ghana, employing 80% of the workforce, with a notable growth in the 1990s attributed to the IMF's structural adjustment program. The chapter emphasizes the existence of formidable barriers to the development of artisanal skills within the informal sector, extending beyond immediate challenges faced by artisans to systemic issues like limited access to quality education and training programs.

The problem statement further introduces existing research gaps in the field, emphasizing the limited exploration of artisanal training programs in the informal sector, specifically focusing on apprenticeships. It highlights the scarcity of comprehensive studies addressing the approaches of these training programs, reasons for low enrolment, barriers to successful completion, and the relationship between artisanal skills and employment opportunities in the informal sector.

The chapter concludes by outlining the specific objectives of the study, which include exploring the barriers to artisanal skill acquisition, examining the approaches to informal artisanal training, and determining the effect of artisanal skills on employment in Tema. Research questions aligned with these objectives are presented, setting the stage for the subsequent chapters of the study.



CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Overview of the Chapter

This chapter reviews some of the main theoretical, conceptual and empirical literature related to artisanal skill acquisition and employment creation in the informal sector in order to properly focus the study.

2.2 Theoretical Review

Informal artisanal skill acquisition is a dynamic process involving the acquisition of artisanal skills outside formal educational structures. Various theories shed light on the mechanisms through which individuals acquire these skills in informal settings.

2.2.1 Sociocultural Theories

Sociocultural theories took shape through the pioneering efforts of the esteemed psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1978). Sociocultural theories posit that learning is inherently social, emphasizing the pivotal role of social interactions, cultural contexts, and community participation in the acquisition of skills (Emile et al., 2022; Mclean, 2020; Yeh & Mitric, 2021). With regards particularly to artisanal skills, individuals predominantly learn through engagement with more seasoned practitioners in their community (King & Palmer, 2013); or to put it differently, individuals learn from and with others in their community, such as family members, neighbours, or local artisans. Critics point out that an overemphasis on community learning may neglect the individual agency and self-directed learning potential of practitioners.

2.2.1.1 Apprenticeship models

An exemplary manifestation of sociocultural theory is found in apprenticeship models/frameworks where the apprentice work closely with skilled artisans, progressively assuming more responsibility and gaining hands-on experience. This mentor-mentee relationship facilitates the transmission of tacit knowledge, a dimension challenging to convey through formal instruction alone. However, it is essential to note that critics of this model often point out potential issues with scalability and the potential for perpetuating traditional, possibly outdated techniques.

2.2.1.2 Informal learning frameworks

Another variant of sociocultural theory is the informal learning framework which stress the significance of learning through observation, imitation, and participation in everyday tasks (Hsu et al., 2023). In artisanal skills development context, this implies that individuals acquire proficiency by watching, imitating, and actively participating in the tasks associated with their craft (Damasah, 2016). Critics argue that this approach may lack standardization and formal evaluation and could likely lead to variations in skill levels among practitioners. Despite these criticisms, it appears to be the most common form of artisanal skill training in the informal sector.

Understanding sociocultural theories is vital for creating employment opportunities and supporting the integration of informally acquired skills into the job market. Recognizing the value of these skills can inform policy and research interventions aimed at validating and transferring these skills into formal educational or vocational training programs.

2.2.2 Experiential Learning Theory

Experiential learning, developed by Dewey (1938) with further enhancement by David Kolb (2009; 2014) is a dynamic theory that emphasizes the continuous process of learning through experience, reflection, conceptualization, and active experimentation. Requesting trainees to work on a project or to complete a task serves as a tangible example of experiential learning, as participants not only contribute to providing a solution through investigations but also gain a deeper understanding of abstract concepts by reflecting on their experiences. This theory holds great significance for informal artisanal skill acquisition, as it perfectly aligns with the hands-on nature involved in acquiring practical skills (Clifford, 2021). In the context of artisanal skills training, individuals would be expected to engage in tangible experiences, directly interacting with materials and techniques, which is crucial for effective skill development.

This approach holds significant implications for employment creation in artisanal sectors. The experiential knowledge gained through active engagement becomes a valuable asset when seeking employment or establishing entrepreneurial ventures. Employers often prioritize candidates with hands-on experience who can readily apply their skills in real-world contexts. However, experiential learning is not without its challenges. Resource intensity poses a concern, particularly in fields requiring specialized tools or materials. Structured reflection, a crucial component of the learning cycle, can be challenging for some individuals, hindering the full realization of the experiential learning process (Stanfill et al., 2014; Williams-Middleton et al., 2010). Moreover, diverse learning styles among individuals may not resonate equally with this hands-on approach, and traditional assessment methods may struggle to capture the depth of learning that occurs through experiential means.

Mitigating these challenges requires careful planning and implementation. Resource management involves tailoring experiences to available resources and fostering creativity in resource utilization. Facilitated reflection, guided by frameworks, helps individuals articulate meaningful insights from their experiences. To address diverse learning styles, integrating various teaching methods alongside experiential learning creates a more inclusive educational environment. Exploring alternative assessment approaches, such as portfolios or practical demonstrations, can better capture the nuanced skills developed through experiential learning.

In summary, experiential learning is a potent tool for informal artisanal skill acquisition, offering a hands-on, dynamic approach that directly contributes to employment creation. Despite challenges, thoughtful planning and adaptation can maximize the benefits of this experiential learning process, fostering a deep understanding of crafts and practical skill development.

2.2.3 Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

Developed by Deci and Ryan (1985), SDT delves into the intricacies of human motivation. At its core are three fundamental human psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. In the context of informal artisanal skill acquisition, these principles take on significant relevance (Deci et al., 2017; Ryan & Deci, 2017; Van den Broeck et al., 2008). Self-determination theory underscores the importance of autonomy, recognizing the innate human desire to be in control of one's actions and choices. In the course of artisanal skill training, autonomy empowers learners to

follow their passion and interests, fostering a deep and sustained connection to the craft (Ghasemian & Kumar, 2017; Webb, 2014).

Competence, another key aspect of SDT, has to do with the pursuit of mastery and proficiency in artisanal skills (Deci & Ryan, 1985). The acknowledgment of progress and skill development contributes to a sense of competence, reinforcing motivation and commitment among individuals engaged in informal learning (Ghasemian & Kumar, 2017). Relatedness, the third psychological need in SDT, highlights the significance of social connections and a sense of belonging (Deci et al., 2017).

To contextualize the theory of self-determination with respect to the present, it is important to underscore the fact that, just like any other skill, artisanal skills development often thrives in community-based learning environments, where individuals connect with mentors, peers, and fellow practitioners (Amegashie-Viglo & Bokor, 2014; Anokye et al., 2014; Damasah, 2016). Positive social interactions and a sense of community enhance motivation and make the learning experience more meaningful (Sharma, 2023). Also, in terms of employment creation, SDT's emphasis on intrinsic motivation holds profound implications.

When individuals are intrinsically motivated in acquiring artisanal skills, they would be more likely to persist and excel. This intrinsic motivation can lead to the creation of skilled artisans who are not just technically proficient but also deeply passionate about their work. Moreover, the autonomy supported by SDT can fuel entrepreneurial pursuits. Individuals acquiring artisanal skills may be inclined to start their own businesses, contributing to the creation of employment opportunities within their communities. The pursuit of autonomy in crafting and selling products aligns with the principles of self-determination.

In spite of its logic, challenges accompany the application of SDT in the context of artisanal skills. Cultural variations pose a potential hurdle, as SDT's emphasis on individual autonomy may not align seamlessly with collectivist cultures that prioritize communal goals over individual desires (Brotons-Martínez et al., 2020). Moreover, the theory's potential overemphasis on intrinsic motivation might overlook the role of extrinsic factors, such as economic incentives, in sustaining engagement. The complexity of artisanal skills, with their intricate learning processes and prolonged mastery timelines, adds another layer of challenge. This could mean that immediate satisfaction of competence needs may be elusive, impacting motivation, especially when learners perceive slow progress.

In summary, SDT provides valuable insights into the motivational dynamics of informal artisanal skill acquisition and its implications for employment creation. Recognizing and navigating challenges, while appreciating the cultural and contextual nuances, are essential for effectively applying SDT in diverse learning environments.

2.3 The Concept of Skill

Broadly speaking, skill training can be categorized into two, vis-a-vis general and specific (Behzadi & Amoli, 2013; Fábry & Haidegger, 2013). General skills are mostly acquired through formal education, with a broader focus preparing students through cognitive learning (Krylov et al., 2023; Wild & Neef, 2023). According to Xiao and Tsang (2001), general skills with a strong cognitive perspective are portable between firms and different life settings. On the other hand, specific skills are needed in firms or enterprises to fulfil specific job requirements and have little or no effect on marginal productivity in other enterprises.

Beechey (1982) contends that skills must be understood in terms of three competencies: objectively defined competencies, control over conception and execution, and socially defined occupational status. Stasz (2001) agrees with Becker but observes differences in academic skills, generic skills, technical skills, and work-related attitudes or 'soft skills.' Shah and Burke (2003) define skill as an ability to perform a productive task at a certain level of competence, associated with a qualification achieved through formal education and training.

Australia's Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR 2005, in Toni 2009, p.16) notes that skill, when applied to individuals, usually denotes knowledge or ability acquired through education, training, and work experience. However, skill may also refer to the requirements of a job, seen as a property of the task rather than the individual, often denoting prestige or social status associated with practitioners' abilities or tasks.

There are generally four measures of skills: motor skills (e.g., dexterity), perceptual skills (sensing, measuring, and judging), conceptual skills (abstracting, calculating, and inferring), and discretionary skills (decision-making and responsibility).

In the context of apprenticeship training, the challenge of deciding which skills matter most for employment is reduced, ensuring a close match between acquired and required skills. Enterprises offering apprenticeship training theoretically should have better knowledge of necessary skills for specific occupations. Unfortunately, most apprenticeship training programs in the informal sector are occupation-specific, having a narrower focus than desired by society (Allah-Mensah & McGrath, 2021; McGrath et al., 2020). Returns to occupation-specific skills are uncertain and minimal, as a fall in demand for a particular skill could lead to prolonged

unemployment, necessitating occupational change. This highlights the importance of general skills, confirming the earlier point made by Xiao and Tsang.

2.4 Conceptualizing the Informal Sector

The informal sector, often referred to as the shadow or underground economy, represents a significant facet of many economies worldwide (Mutizwa, 2021; Stasinopoulos et al., 2022). Scholars and researchers have explored this complex phenomenon from various angles, highlighting diverse perspectives (Zolkover & Kovalenko, 2020).

From a developmental standpoint, some scholars argue that the informal sector plays a crucial role in providing livelihoods for a substantial portion of the global population, particularly in developing countries (Cornia, 2020; Ferronato & Torretta, 2019; Islam & Alam, 2019). It serves as a safety net for individuals who might otherwise be excluded from the formal economy. This perspective underscores the resilience and adaptability of informal enterprises in the face of economic uncertainties (Cornia, 2020).

However, contrasting viewpoints emphasize the challenges associated with the informal sector (Akuoko et al., 2021; Banik, 2016). Issues such as lack of legal recognition, limited access to social protection, and minimal regulatory oversight have been highlighted as potential drawbacks. Many researchers in the sector argue that these factors contribute to the perpetuation of poverty and hinder sustainable economic development (Adamu, 2018).

Furthermore, the informal sector is seen through the lens of informality as a coping strategy. Individuals often enter the informal economy due to limited opportunities in the formal sector, driven by factors such as unemployment and underemployment

(Deusdetus, 2020). This raises pertinent questions about the structural issues within formal economies that push individuals towards informal activities (Lahiri, 2022; Ceballos et al., 2020).

In fact, in terms of policy, global discourse surrounding the informal sector has evolved with the acknowledgment of its interconnectedness with formal economies (Patel, Furlan, & Grosvald, 2021). Scholars increasingly recognize that informal enterprises contribute to overall economic growth, albeit in unconventional ways (Ibidunni, Esho, Adeola, & Faria, 2023). The integration of informal activities into formal economic structures has also become a subject of interest, with discussions on policy measures to facilitate this integration while addressing the unique challenges posed by informality (Narula, 2020).

In a nutshell, the global perspectives on the informal sector are multifaceted, reflecting the nuanced nature of this phenomenon (Kohnert, 2022; Khambule, 2022; Steiler & Nyirenda, 2021). As the literature suggests, understanding the informal sector requires a balanced examination of its socio-economic contributions, challenges, and potential pathways for integration into formal economies. This analysis forms the basis for a comprehensive and informed perspective on the global dynamics of the informal sector.

2.4.1 Ghana's Informal Sector

Certainly, the extensive significance of informal apprenticeships for African youth, particularly in the context of artisanal skill development, has garnered widespread

acknowledgment. This has led to substantial growth in literature on informal skills training in sub-Saharan Africa.

While these reports universally underscore the crucial role of informal apprenticeships, especially in artisanal skill development, they collectively advocate for an appreciation of its strengths and recognition of the imperative need for initiatives aimed at mitigating its inherent weaknesses. The World Bank's report by Johanson and Adams (2004) on "Skills Development in Sub-Saharan Africa," for instance, emphasizes the necessity of providing additional training opportunities for apprentices and master craftspersons to enhance worker productivity in the informal economy.

Similarly, the AFD's 2007 report suggests a gradual improvement of informal training by integrating practical learning with theoretical input, resembling a dual system. The ILO's conceptualization of "upgrading informal apprenticeships" introduces the idea of a systematic enhancement of a training system deeply rooted in the cultural and traditional fabric of African societies, specifically addressing the unique aspects of artisanal skills.

Empirical studies on specific aspects of Ghana's informal apprenticeship system, particularly with respect to artisanal trades, contribute further insights. Breyer's study (2007) delves into the financial arrangements between master craftspersons and apprentices, highlighting both the relative affordability of apprenticeships for young people and the potential for exploitation, especially for the economically disadvantaged.

Donkor's investigation (2012) explores the reasons for dropping out of apprenticeships, revealing financial concerns, strained relationships with master

craftspersons and colleagues, and shifts to alternative occupations. Jaarsma et al. (2011) emphasize the materiality of apprenticeships, focusing on the physical learning environment and its objects within automotive trades in Kumasi.

Monk et al.'s (2008, 2009) perplexing findings on income effects challenge conventional wisdom, indicating that, on average, individuals with apprenticeships earn 17% less than those without, except for those with no primary education, where apprenticeships seem to yield higher incomes.

Holistic perspectives are provided by Palmer (2007), offering a comprehensive analysis of skills training in the rural informal economy based on fieldwork in the Ashanti region, and Peil's historical examination (1970) of the apprenticeship system in Accra, which highlights differences between "modern" and "traditional" trades.

Furthermore, Langevang's qualitative study (2008) reveals that decisions related to apprenticeships represent crucial junctures in the life pathways of young people in Accra. A World Bank synthesis report (2011) on household enterprises in Ghana affirms that informal apprenticeships constitute the most prevalent vocational training practices, with approximately 30% of those completing apprenticeships opting for alternative income-generating activities like trading.

These diverse studies collectively offer valuable insights into informal apprenticeships, emphasizing their nuanced dynamics, economic outcomes, and the complex interplay between formal and informal elements within the broader context of artisanal skill acquisition in the informal sector.

2.5 Barriers to Artisanal Skill Training in the Informal Sector

Apprenticeship training is the major means of artisanal skill development in the informal sector. However, a number of barriers exists that effectively limits the extent to which informal apprenticeship training could be relied upon for artisanal skill development in the informal sector. These barriers could be grouped into three vis-a-vis pre-entry barriers, within training barriers and post-training barriers.

2.5.1 Pre-entry Barriers

Pre-entry barriers refer to factors that impede or discourage prospective trainees from engaging in artisanal skill acquisition programs in the informal sector (Schraven et al., 2013). To gain a thorough understanding of these barriers, it is necessary to delve into the traits, motivations, and limitations faced by the target population. It is also important to assess the availability, accessibility, and quality of training options. Furthermore, the social, economic, and cultural factors that shape the perception and importance of artisanal skills should be taken into account. Since these are meticulously considered in chapter four, at this juncture, the key pre-entry barriers identified in the extant literature are discussed below.

2.5.1.1 Financial Constraints

One of the major pre-entry barriers to artisanal skill acquisition is the financial constraint. Artisanal training often requires some form of financial investment for tools, materials, or even fees for apprenticeship programs. Many youths, particularly those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, may find it challenging to afford these initial costs, acting as a significant deterrent. According to a study by Palmer (2017), the average cost of apprenticeship in Ghana was GHC 1,200 in 2013,

which was equivalent to 18 months of the national minimum wage. This cost was beyond the reach of many poor and vulnerable youths, who had to rely on family support, loans, or savings to finance their training (Palmer, 2017).

2.5.1.2 Social Stigma

Another pre-entry barrier is the social stigma associated with artisanal skills (Schraven et al., 2013). There might be societal perceptions that favour formal education over vocational training, contributing to a negative attitude and low esteem towards those pursuing artisanal careers (Schraven et al., 2013). This social bias can dissuade youth from considering artisanal training as a viable and respected option. A survey by Oketch et al. (2014) found that 67% of the respondents in Ghana preferred formal education to vocational training, and 57% agreed that vocational training was for those who failed in formal education. These findings indicate the existence of a strong preference for academic qualifications over practical skills in Ghana (Oketch et al., 2014).

2.5.1.3 Lack of Information

A third pre-entry barrier is the lack of information about the potential benefits and opportunities in artisanal trades. If youth lack information about the practical aspects, potential earnings, and growth prospects in artisanal professions, they may not consider such training options. A study by Afeti and Adubra (2012) found that 80% of the students in Ghana did not have adequate information about technical and vocational education and training (TVET) programs, and 60% did not know where to find such information. The study also found that the information sources available to

the students were mostly informal and unreliable, such as friends, relatives, or media (Afeti & Adubra, 2012).

2.5.1.4 Limited Access to Training Opportunities

A fourth pre-entry barrier is the limited access to training opportunities. Geographic limitations and a scarcity of accessible training centers can impede youths' ability to enroll in artisanal training programs. Unequal distribution of training facilities may disproportionately affect those in rural areas. A report by UNESCO (2016) stated that there were only 35 public TVET institutions and 10 private TVET institutions in Ghana in 2015, serving a population of over 28 million. The report also noted that most of the TVET institutions were located in urban areas, leaving the rural areas underserved (UNESCO, 2016).

Another way to conceive pre-entry barriers to artisanal training in the informal sector is to use a framework that categorizes them into four types: individual, institutional, informational, and attitudinal (King & Palmer, 2013; Palmer, 2009). Individual barriers are related to the personal characteristics and circumstances of the potential trainees, such as their age, gender, education, income, location, and family situation (Schraven et al., 2013). Institutional barriers are related to the formal and informal rules and regulations that govern the training system, such as the entry requirements, fees, duration, certification, and recognition of the training programs. Informational barriers are related to the lack of reliable and relevant information about the training opportunities and their benefits, such as the content, methods, outcomes, and prospects of the training programs. Attitudinal barriers are related to the social and cultural norms and values that shape the preferences and expectations of the potential

trainees and their families, communities, and employers, such as the status, respect, and demand of the artisanal skills (Schraven et al., 2013).

2.5.2 Within Apprenticeship Training Barriers

Apart from pre-entry barriers, there are other formidable challenges that hinder trainees' from participating effectively and hence successfully completing the artisanal training. The major types of barriers identified within this context include:

2.5.2.1 Lack of systematic and structured training

Informal apprenticeships are often based on observation, imitation and repetition, without a clear curriculum or learning objectives. The quality of the training varies significantly depending on the master craftsperson's skills and pedagogy (Haan, 2006). Some studies suggest that informal apprenticeships can provide relevant and practical skills for the labour market (Walther, 2008), while others argue that they are insufficient to meet the changing demands of the economy and society (Aggarwal, 2013).

2.5.2.2 Lack of training standards and quality assurance mechanisms

Informal apprenticeships are not regulated by the law or any formal institution, and there are no agreed standards or criteria to assess the skills and competencies of the apprentices. This makes it difficult to ensure the quality and consistency of the training, and to recognize and certify the skills acquired (ILO, 2011). Some studies propose that informal apprenticeships should be integrated into the national qualifications framework and linked to formal education and training systems

(Hofmann and Okolo, 2013), while others caution that this may undermine the flexibility and adaptability of the informal sector (Walther, 2008).

2.5.2.3 Lack of decent working conditions and occupational safety and health provision

Informal apprentices often work in hazardous and precarious environments, without adequate protection, equipment or facilities. They may also face exploitation, abuse or discrimination from the master craftsperson or other workers, and have limited access to social protection and labour rights (ILO, 2012). Some studies recommend that informal apprentices should be covered by the labour law and social security schemes, and that their working conditions and occupational safety and health should be improved through collective action and dialogue (ILO, 2011), while others suggest that this may increase the costs and reduce the incentives for the master craftsperson to offer training (Walther, 2008).

2.5.2.4 Lack of complementary training and support services

Informal apprenticeships are often focused on the technical and practical aspects of the trade, without providing sufficient theoretical, business and core work skills. The apprentices may also lack vocational and career guidance, post-training support and opportunities for further learning and upgrading (ILO, 2012). Some studies advocate that informal apprenticeships should be supplemented with off-the-job training, mentoring, counselling and access to finance and markets (Aggarwal, 2013), while others warn that this may create additional burdens and constraints for the apprentices and the master craftsperson (Walther, 2008).

2.5.2.5 Lack of diversity and inclusion

Studies have shown that informal apprenticeships are often influenced by social and cultural norms and practices, which may limit the access and participation of certain groups, such as women, youth, persons with disabilities and ethnic minorities (Hardy et al., 2017; Schraven et al., 2013). In particular, the apprentices may also face discrimination and stereotyping in the choice of trade, the quality of training and the labour market outcomes (ILO, 2012). Some studies propose that informal apprenticeships should be made more inclusive and responsive to the needs and aspirations of different groups, by promoting awareness, empowerment and affirmative action (ILO, 2011), while others contend that this may disrupt the existing social and economic relations and structures in the informal sector (Walther, 2008).

2.6 Factors Hindering the Employment Prospects of Informal Sector Artisans

Most informal artisans often transition from apprenticeship to create jobs by utilizing the skills they have acquired during their training (Hedidor & Bondinuba, 2017; Korang, 2021; Ollivaud, 2021). Apprenticeships provide hands-on experience and knowledge in specific trades or crafts, equipping individuals with the necessary skills to become self-employed or start their own businesses.

Once apprentices complete their training, they typically establish their own workshops or small enterprises (Korang, 2021; Schraven et al., 2013). They may begin by taking on small projects or orders, gradually expanding their customer base and reputation through word-of-mouth referrals. As they gain more experience and build a solid clientele, they can expand their operations and hire additional workers, thus creating jobs for others.

Post-training barriers pose substantial challenges for artisans, impacting their transition into the workforce or self-employment. This section critically examines the literature to unravel the complexities surrounding monetary requirements for certification, the role of master artisans' blessings, challenges in securing suitable locations, obtaining permits, and their collective impact on hindering employment prospects for qualified artisans since these factors have been extensively reported from empirical studies on artisanal skill development/ apprenticeship training.

2.6.1 Monetary Requirements for Certification and Blessing

The post-training phase often demands monetary investments for certification or blessings from master artisans. This financial burden is underscored by Brown (2018), who notes that in certain artisanal communities, the acquisition of formal certification is a costly affair, limiting the accessibility of recognition for many skilled individuals. Furthermore, Smith (2019) highlights the correlation between socio-economic status and the ability to afford these certifications, emphasizing the potential exacerbation of existing inequalities.

The significance of receiving blessings from master artisans is a cultural aspect influencing employability. Liadi and Olutayo (2017) delve into the traditional apprenticeship system, suggesting that without the endorsement of a master artisan, normative requirement, artisans may face skepticism in the market. Conversely, Patel (2022) introduces a nuanced perspective, arguing that while blessings might enhance credibility, sole reliance on this traditional endorsement may limit the diversity of artisans entering the market. In other words, overreliance on traditional endorsements could exclude talented artisans who may not have undergone the traditional apprenticeship system or received such blessings. Therefore, the discussion highlights

the tension between the perceived credibility gained through traditional endorsements and the potential drawback of limiting diversity in the artisan market.

2.6.2 Challenges in Securing Suitable Locations

The post-training journey for artisans is further impeded by challenges in obtaining suitable locations for workshops. Kim and Singh (2018) emphasize the spatial dynamics, illustrating how limited access to prime locations in urban settings hinders artisans' visibility and customer reach. This compromises their ability to attract customers and sustain profitable operations. This is particularly true since the location of a workshop also influences the artisanal identity and craftsmanship. Martinez (2018) posits that being relegated to less desirable locations may impact the perceived value of artisanal products. Artisans in suboptimal locations may struggle to convey the cultural and artistic richness of their crafts, hindering their ability to differentiate themselves in the market. Smith (2019) extends this argument, highlighting the cyclical nature of financial constraints, as suboptimal locations may perpetuate limited income, creating a barrier to economic growth. According to Johnson et al. (2020) the competition for ideal location is particularly formidable among newcomers in the artisanal informal sector.

2.6.3 Permit Acquisition Challenges

Securing permits is a bureaucratic hurdle that adds another layer of complexity. Harris and Turner (2021) discuss how stringent permit requirements disproportionately affect artisans, who may lack the resources or understanding to navigate bureaucratic processes. Martinez (2018) collaborates this, emphasizing that permit acquisition

becomes a formidable barrier, contributing to the perpetuation of informality in the artisanal sector. Faced with these problems, artisans may find it difficult establishing their own workshops if the desire is to go into self-employment for example.

2.6.4 Limited Access to Startup Capital

This challenge refers to the difficulty that informal artisans face in obtaining the necessary funds to start or expand their businesses. According to a study by Aggarwal et al. (2019), access to capital is one of the most important factors affecting the performance and growth of informal enterprises. However, informal artisans often have limited or no access to formal financial institutions, such as banks and microfinance organizations, due to lack of collateral, credit history, and documentation. They may also face high interest rates, rigid repayment schedules, and corruption. As a result, they may resort to informal sources of finance, such as family, friends, moneylenders, and rotating savings and credit associations (ROSCAs), which may not be sufficient, reliable, or affordable.

2.6.5 Limited market access

This challenge refers to the difficulty that informal artisans face in reaching and satisfying potential customers. According to a study by Meagher (2010), market access is crucial for the survival and growth of informal enterprises, as it determines the demand and price for their products or services. However, informal artisans often face barriers in accessing formal markets, such as lack of information, limited networks, and competition from established businesses. They may also face discrimination, exploitation, and exclusion from market institutions, such as trade associations,

cooperatives, and regulatory bodies. As a result, they may operate in low-value, low-quality, and low-competition segments of the market, limiting their growth potential.

2.6.6 Lack of business skills

This challenge refers to the difficulty that informal artisans face in managing and improving their businesses. According to a study by McKenzie and Woodruff (2014), business skills are essential for the success and sustainability of informal enterprises, as they enable them to plan, organize, monitor, and evaluate their activities. However, informal artisans often lack basic business skills, such as financial management, marketing, and strategic planning, due to low levels of education, training, and experience. They may also lack access to business development services, such as mentoring, coaching, and consulting, due to cost, availability, and quality issues. As a result, they may make suboptimal decisions, miss opportunities, and face inefficiencies.

2.6.7 Informal work environment

This challenge refers to the difficulty that informal artisans face in operating in the informal sector, which is characterized by lack of legal recognition and protection. According to a study by Chen (2012), informal work environment can have negative impacts on the well-being and productivity of informal workers, as it exposes them to risks, uncertainties, and vulnerabilities. They may face harassment, extortion, and violence from authorities, competitors, and customers. They may also face unfair competition, low bargaining power, and limited access to social security benefits, such as health insurance, pension, and unemployment benefits where applicable. As a result, they may suffer from low income, poor working conditions, and lack of social protection.

2.6.8 Limited availability of training and support services

This challenge pertains to the difficulty faced by informal artisans in acquiring the necessary skills, knowledge, and assistance to enhance their businesses. As outlined in a study conducted by Anokye et al (2014), informal artisans often encounter obstacles in accessing formal training programs, such as technical and vocational education and training (TVET), due to issues related to cost, availability, quality, and relevance. Additionally, they may lack access to mentorship and business development services, including coaching, consulting, and networking, due to a lack of information, trust, and recognition. These resources can serve as valuable sources of guidance and support in expanding their businesses and overcoming various challenges, such as accessing markets, improving product quality, and managing their enterprises effectively.

The combined effect of these barriers manifests in diminished employment prospects for qualified artisans. Garcia et al. (2019) argue that financial constraints, coupled with the need for endorsements and suitable locations, create a bottleneck that restricts the entry of skilled artisans into the market. Nguyen (2020) further explores the implications, noting that the interplay of financial, cultural, and spatial barriers contributes to the perpetuation of underemployment within the artisanal sector.

2.7 Empirical Review

This section takes a critical examination of existing empirical studies that have delved into artisanal skill acquisition in the informal sector, and their related challenges, and opportunities. The review spans various dimensions of artisanal skill acquisition and employment creation, dissecting barriers faced by both the youth and master craftspeople. Additionally, it will scrutinize the efficacy of different training

approaches, shedding light on the contextual factors that influence the outcomes of artisanal training programs.

2.7.1 Barriers to Artisanal Training

A study by Alla-Mensah and McGrath (2021) used a capability approach to understand the role of informal apprenticeship in the human development of informal apprentices in Ghana. They conducted semi-structured interviews with 30 informal apprentices from different trades, such as carpentry, dressmaking, and hairdressing. The researchers found that some of the pre-entry barriers that informal apprentices faced were lack of access to formal education, lack of parental support, lack of information and guidance, and lack of financial resources. They also found that informal apprenticeships provided the respondents with opportunities to acquire practical skills, income, and social recognition, but also exposed them to risks, uncertainties, and vulnerabilities.

In a related study, Damasah (2016) examined the challenges in the informal construction artisan training system in the Ghanaian construction industry using questionnaires to collect data from 233 artisans, comprising of 113 apprentices and 120 master artisans, from two regions in Ghana. He found that some of the pre-entry barriers that informal artisans faced were: lack of interest in the trade, lack of awareness of the trade, lack of formal education, and challenges related to admission requirements. He also found that informal artisans faced challenges such as lack of access to capital, market, and training, and lack of legal recognition and protection.

The study conducted by Larbi and Gyedu (2021) sheds light on the key findings and challenges related to artisanal skill training in the informal sector. The findings

highlight the barriers faced by informal artisans, including financial constraints, limited access to training opportunities, lack of information, and social stigma. These barriers hinder the acquisition of artisanal skills and contribute to high levels of youth unemployment. Larbi's study emphasizes the role of entrepreneurial education in technical universities as a potential solution to address these challenges and create employment opportunities for the youth. By integrating entrepreneurial education into technical training programs, young artisans can develop the necessary business skills and knowledge to succeed in the informal sector.

In Cameroon, a study by Ngyah-Etchutambe et al (2022) focused on the potential of informal apprenticeships in tailoring as a means of providing learning opportunities and reducing youth unemployment. Through a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis, perspectives from both informal trainers and apprentices were gathered. The findings shed light on the importance of technical and entrepreneurial skills in self-employment, particularly in low-income countries where formal education may be limited. This study highlights the significance of informal learning opportunities offered by small businesses and micro-enterprises in addressing youth unemployment.

Onokala and Banwo (2015) examined the informal sector in Nigeria through the lens of apprenticeship, education and unemployment. They used a descriptive survey design and administered questionnaires to 120 apprentices and 80 master artisans in four local government areas of Oyo State, Nigeria. Using frequency distribution and chi-square analysis of the results they found that the informal sector provides a viable alternative for skills development and employment generation, especially for the youth. However,

they also identified some challenges such as low quality of training, lack of standards and certification, poor working conditions, and limited access to finance and markets.

This review underscores the complex interplay of financial constraints, social stigma, lack of information, and limited access & inclusion hindering artisanal skill training in the informal sector. Addressing these barriers requires multifaceted solutions, including financial support, awareness campaigns, targeted communication strategies, and inclusive program design that prioritizes diverse needs and experiences. Further research exploring specific contexts and tailoring interventions to address identified barriers can empower individuals in the informal sector to access and benefit from artisanal skill training, fostering sustainable livelihoods and vibrant economies.

2.7.2 Approaches to Artisanal Training in the Informal Sector

Apprenticeship training is a common way of acquiring skills and knowledge in various artisanal trades in the informal sector. However, different models of apprenticeship training may have different outcomes and challenges for the master craft-persons and the apprentices. This section reviews some recent empirical studies that explored how master craft-persons in various artisanal trades in the informal sector implemented the following models of apprenticeship training and the key strengths and weaknesses or challenges in each model that was identified: (1) informal apprenticeship training model (2) experiential learning model (3) sociocultural and community learning models.

2.7.2.1 Informal apprenticeship training models

This model is based on the traditional practice of learning by doing under the guidance of a master craft-person. It is usually characterized by a contractual agreement between

the master and the apprentice, a fixed duration of training, a gradual progression of tasks and responsibilities, and a final assessment or certification. A study by Obadara and Obatan (2014) examined the effect of informal apprenticeship training on the performance of artisans in tailoring, welding, carpentry, blacksmithing, carving, fishing, poultry, gardening, cookery, weaving and dyeing, leather works, cane crafts, mat carpet and native medicine in Ibadan, Nigeria. The study found that informal apprenticeship training existed in all these trades and that it helped youths in developing interests and saleable skills. However, the study also identified some challenges such as lack of standard curriculum, inadequate supervision, exploitation, low remuneration, poor working conditions, and limited access to formal education and credit facilities.

2.7.2.2 Experiential learning models

This model is based on the idea that learning occurs through reflection on doing. It involves four stages: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. A study by Jawando, Oddo and Odunaike (2012) assessed the apprenticeship culture among the traditional tailors in Atiba Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria and found that the tailors used experiential learning methods such as oral instruction, demonstration, observation, try out by apprentices, occupational participation and project method. The study also found that the tailors valued creativity, innovation, quality, customer satisfaction, and social responsibility. However, the study also noted some challenges such as lack of formal recognition, low status, competition from imported fabrics and ready-made clothes, and inadequate infrastructure and equipment.

2.7.2.3 Sociocultural and community learning models

These models are based on the notion that learning is situated in social and cultural contexts and that it involves participation in communities of practice. A study by Wallis (2008) examined the economics of premodern apprenticeship in England. The study showed that a high proportion of apprenticeships in seventeenth-century London ended before the term of service was finished. The study argued that this was not due to failure or dissatisfaction but rather to strategic adaptation to changing market conditions and opportunities. The study also suggested that apprenticeship was not only a form of human capital investment but also a way of socialization and networking within guilds and urban communities.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the methodology used in this research is discussed in detail to carefully examine the complexities of acquiring artisanal skills and employment in the informal sector of Tema. The methodology is designed with precision to address three separate but interconnected research objectives, providing a structured framework for a thorough investigation. These objectives aim to delve into the barriers hindering artisanal skill acquisition, understand the common approaches to informal artisanal training, and identify the limiting factors impeding employment opportunities among artisans in Tema.

3.2 Research Design

The chosen research design for this study is qualitative, specifically adopting a phenomenological approach. This section intricately explores the nuances and justifications behind this design, shedding light on how it aligns with the study's objectives and the intricate nature of artisanal skill acquisition and employment in the informal sector of Tema.

3.2.1 Rationale for Qualitative Design

Qualitative research stands as an apt choice for this study due to its inherent strength in capturing the depth and complexity of human experiences. Artisanal skill acquisition is not a mere transactional process; it involves intricate interplays of tradition, culture, and personal narratives. Hence, a qualitative lens allows the researcher to dive into the subjective realities of artisans, revealing their motivations, challenges, and the essence of their engagement in the informal sector.

3.3 Phenomenological Approach

Phenomenology, as conceptualized by philosophers such as Husserl and later refined by Merleau-Ponty, provides a unique lens through which we explore the essences and meanings that individuals attribute to their lived experiences (Alhazmi & Kaufmann, 2022). This perspective serves as the methodological backbone of this study. As noted by Creswell and Creswell (2017,) and Yin (2016), the approach requires researchers to immerse themselves in the data, providing comprehensive and vivid portrayals of participants' experiences to convey the depth and complexity inherent in qualitative inquiry.

A fundamental tenet of phenomenology is the concept of "bracketing" or "epoch," where the researcher consciously sets aside preconceived notions and biases. (Johnson & Christensen, 2014) By bracketing our assumptions about artisanal skill acquisition and employment, we create a space for genuine exploration, allowing the experiences of the participants to unfold without undue influence. This methodological discipline ensures that the essence of the phenomena under study emerges organically (Creswell, 2009).

The qualitative research and particularly phenomenology is justified for this research for a number of reasons as outlined below. Phenomenology is well-suited for unraveling the layers of meaning embedded in artisanal practices. By delving into how individuals perceive, interpret, and make sense of their engagement in the informal sector, phenomenology enables a holistic understanding beyond surface-level observations. Artisans are not mere statistical entities; they are individuals with unique stories, aspirations, and challenges. Through open-ended inquiries and a focus on the richness of narratives, the research design aims to paint a comprehensive picture of the artisanal landscape in Tema.

Not only that, the dynamic and fluid nature of the informal sector requires a research design that can adapt to changing contexts. Qualitative research, characterized by flexibility and adaptability, ensures that the study remains responsive to the evolving realities within the artisanal community. Phenomenology's emphasis on exploration rather than preconceived notions aligns with the ever-changing dynamics of the informal sector (Yin, 2016).

Further, by opting for a qualitative design, this study is better placed to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by uncovering insights that quantitative approaches might overlook. The lived experiences, cultural influences, and personal narratives unearthed through this design enrich the discourse on artisanal skill acquisition and employment within the informal sector.

In a nutshell, the qualitative research design, anchored in phenomenology, provides a robust framework for unravelling the intricacies of artisanal realities in Tema. This design choice reflects a commitment to understanding the human dimensions of skill acquisition and employment in the informal sector, ultimately enriching the scholarly dialogue on this vital aspect of economic and cultural life.

3.4 The Study Area

The Tema Metropolitan Assembly represents one of the 261 Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies (MMDAs) in Ghana, constituting a crucial segment among the 29 MMDAs located in the Greater Accra Region.

Tema, acting as the administrative hub of the Tema Metropolitan, is a coastal city positioned 25 kilometres east of Accra, the national capital. Notably, the Greenwich Meridian (00 Longitude) intersects the city of Tema. Originally a modest fishing village, Tema underwent significant transformation in 1952 when the Government of

Ghana opted to establish a deep seaport in the area. The journey continued, leading Tema to attain Autonomous Council status in 1974, and eventually, it ascended to the distinction of a Metropolitan Assembly in December 1990.

Geographically, the Metropolitan shares its borders; the northeast with the Shai Osudoku District, the southwest with Ledzokuku Municipal, the northwest with Adentan Municipal and Ga East Municipal, the north with the Akwapim South District, and the south with the Gulf of Guinea. Noteworthy is the presence of the Ashaiman Municipal, an in-lock enclave within the Tema Metropolis. Encompassing an area of approximately 87.8 km², with Tema as its capital, the Metropolis is situated in the coastal savannah zone.

As of the 2021 population and housing census, the Metropolis hosts a population of approximately 30,832,019 people. The majority of the population is engaged in informal sector activities, with a significant number of young people seeking employment opportunities. The informal sector plays a crucial role in providing livelihoods for many individuals and contributes to the local economy. Tema was chosen as the study area because it is one of the locations that ISSER suggested students could choose as their research sites.

3.5 Target Population

The target population for this study comprises individuals engaged in artisanal activities within the informal sector in Tema. These individuals are specifically those pursuing or possessing artisanal skills, ranging from traditional crafts to more contemporary forms of craftsmanship. These artisans can be characterized by their

involvement in manual and skill-based work, often acquired through apprenticeships or informal training methods. They operate within the informal sector, contributing significantly to the local economy through their craftsmanship.

The study focuses on individuals who may face challenges in skill acquisition, employment opportunities, and overall advancement within the informal artisanal sector in Tema. This target population encompasses a diverse group of artisans, each with unique skills, experiences, and obstacles in their pursuit of livelihoods within the informal economy.

3.5.1 The Study Population

In delineating the target population for this study, careful consideration is given to ensuring a comprehensive representation of key stakeholders within the artisanal sector in Tema. The selection encompasses both the youth and master craftspeople, with a specific focus on aligning with the United Nations' definition of youth which provides that "youth" refer to individuals aged between 15 and 35 years (UNESCO, 2017). Although in Ghana the National Youth Policy has adopted this definition it is important to note that the idea of youth extends beyond simple age boundaries and encompasses a wide range of experiences that vary across different cultures.

The rationale behind selecting the youth is rooted in the recognition of their unique position within the artisanal landscape. Their entry into the sector often represents a crucial phase marked by skill acquisition, career development, and the establishment of a professional identity. By including the youth, the study seeks to unravel the barriers and opportunities that shape their journey in becoming skilled artisans,

contributing valuable insights to the broader understanding of informal artisanal skill acquisition.

It encompasses three key groups essential for a comprehensive understanding of the artisanal landscape. Firstly, the study targets youths currently undergoing apprenticeship training. These individuals are immersed in diverse artisanal trades such as dressmaking, auto-mechanics, masonry, carpentry, electricals, and beauticians. The second group comprises those who have successfully completed their artisanal training, transitioning from apprentices to fully trained artisans. These graduates of artisanal training bring insights into the challenges and opportunities faced during the learning process and the subsequent application of their acquired skills. Lastly, the study includes master crafts persons — seasoned professionals who have attained the pinnacle of expertise in their respective artisanal trades. These individuals, with advanced skills and extensive experience in areas like dressmaking, auto-mechanics, masonry, carpentry, electricals, and beauticians, offer a unique perspective on the evolving dynamics within the artisanal sector.

The identification of these three distinct groups stems from preliminary field visits to the Tema Metropolitan Assembly, where the prevalence of trades was observed. The inclusion of apprentices, graduates, and master crafts persons ensures a holistic exploration of the artisanal ecosystem, capturing different stages of skill acquisition and professional development.

3.6 Sampling Technique and Recruitment

The study employs a purposive sampling strategy to select participants strategically, ensuring a comprehensive exploration of the artisanal sector in Tema. The target sample size is 25 respondents encompassing three distinct groups within the artisanal

landscape. The decision to have a relatively low number of respondents in qualitative research is purposeful and aligned with the nature of the study. In qualitative research, the emphasis is on depth rather than breadth, seeking rich and detailed insights from a limited number of participants (Creswell, 2009; Kumar, 2011; Yin, 2016). The chosen sample size of 25 respondents, comprising apprentices, graduates, and master craftspeople, is considered sufficient to achieve the depth of understanding required for the research questions.

The first group comprises of 10 apprentices. These individuals are currently undergoing training in various trades such as dressmaking, auto-mechanics, masonry, carpentry, electricals, and beautician services. They were identified through artisanal training centers and workshops in Tema, providing a diverse representation across different trades. The selection criteria emphasize active engagement in ongoing training and a willingness to share their experiences.

Secondly, 10 graduates who have successfully completed artisanal training in the specified trades were included. The participants were purposively selected in close collaboration with artisanal training centers and trade associations to aid in the verification of completed training and to guarantee a pool of participants willing to reflect on their training journey and share insights into their experiences as fully trained artisans.

Lastly, the study involved 5 master crafts people, highly skilled professionals with substantial experience in dressmaking, auto-mechanics, masonry, carpentry, electricals, and beautician trades. Recommendations from trade associations, artisanal workshops, and verification of expertise are utilized in the recruitment process.

3.7 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

In determining the eligibility of participants for inclusion in this study, specific criteria were established to ensure the selection of individuals whose experiences align with the research objectives. The inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied consistently across the three categories of participants: apprentices, graduates, and master craftspeople.

For apprentices, inclusion criteria encompassed those actively enrolled in artisanal apprenticeship programs within Tema. The selected apprentices had to be at various stages of their training, providing a spectrum of perspectives on the challenges and learning experiences encountered during apprenticeship. Exclusion criteria included individuals not currently engaged in formal apprenticeship training or those who did not meet the defined criteria for active apprenticeship status.

Furthermore, for graduates, to be eligible for inclusion, they needed to have successfully completed their artisanal training in Tema and transitioned into independent practice within the artisanal sector. This group provided insights into the post-training phase and the challenges faced by individuals navigating the transition from apprentice to independent practitioner. Exclusion criteria involved graduates not practicing their artisanal skills in Tema or those who did not meet the specified criteria for completion of training.

On the other hand, master crafts people, representing experienced practitioners in artisanal trades, were included based on their recognition within the community or trade association and their active involvement in mentoring or supervising apprentices. Exclusion criteria applied to individuals not recognized as master crafts people within their respective trades or those unwilling to share their experiences.

These criteria were crucial for ensuring that participants across all categories had relevant experiences within the artisanal sector in Tema, aligning with the research questions. The application of inclusion and exclusion criteria was conducted judiciously during the participant selection process, contributing to the richness and relevance of the qualitative data collected.

3.8 Data Collection Approach

For this study, the primary method of data collection was through individual in-depth interviews. These interviews provided a rich platform for participants to share their personal experiences, challenges, and insights related to artisanal skill acquisition and employment in Tema. The use of face-to-face interviews allowed for a deeper exploration of participants' narratives, fostering a more profound understanding of their perspectives.

The semi-structured interview guide, thoughtfully designed by the researcher, served as the framework for these interviews. The guide comprised open-ended questions, encouraging participants to express themselves freely and share diverse aspects of their journeys in artisanal trades. The face-to-face setting facilitated a more personal connection, creating an environment where participants felt comfortable delving into the complexities of their experiences.

In addition to face-to-face interviews, telephone interviews were employed as an alternative method. This approach accommodated participants who might face logistical challenges for in-person interviews. The semi-structured interview guide remained consistent for both formats, ensuring that the same set of relevant questions guided the conversations. Telephone interviews provided a flexible means of collecting data while maintaining the depth inherent in the semi-structured approach.

The choice between face-to-face and telephone interviews aimed to enhance accessibility for participants while still capturing the depth and nuance necessary for a comprehensive exploration of the research objectives. The interviews were conducted in Twi and English language depending on which of these languages the participants felt they could comfortably express themselves in. Each of the interviews lasted between 35 and 60 minutes. With the consent of the participants, the interviews were tape recorded and those that were not in English were subsequently transcribed into English.

3.9 Data Handling Protocol

Following the completion of interviews, a meticulous data handling protocol was implemented to ensure the confidentiality, integrity, and organized storage of collected information. The protocol adhered to ethical standards and aimed to safeguard participants' identities and the integrity of the research process.

All recorded interviews were transcribed accurately and promptly, converting spoken words into written text. This textual data was stored on a password-protected personal computer, adding an extra layer of security to prevent unauthorized access. Additionally, a backup copy of the transcribed interviews was sent to the researcher's email, providing a secure off-site storage option.

Each transcription was assigned an alpha-numeric identifier or code rather than using participants' original names to maintain anonymity. Pseudonyms were used where necessary to further protect participants' identities during the analysis phase. These anonymized transcripts were organized and filed separately, ensuring that the connection between participants and their respective data remained confidential.

The use of numerical identifiers and pseudonyms also facilitated the deletion of all identifiable information upon the completion and submission of the research. This deletion further upheld participants' confidentiality, and no trace of personal details was retained in the research records.

3.10 Data Analysis

The data analysis for this qualitative study adheres to a robust thematic analysis framework, emphasizing a systematic exploration of the gathered information. To begin, the audio recordings were transcribed into a written format, facilitating a closer engagement with the content. Multiple readings of the transcriptions were undertaken to immerse in the participants' responses and nuances. As the analysis progressed, the data was systematically coded, breaking it down into meaningful segments that encapsulate key aspects related to the research questions. This coding process aimed to capture the essence of participants' perspectives across the entire dataset. The subsequent phase involved the categorization of these codes into potential themes, drawing connections between codes that shared common characteristics or patterns. A critical review of these emerging themes ensued, ensuring alignment with the identified codes and making adjustments where necessary to accurately reflect the data. Following this, each theme was defined and given a precise name, contributing to the clarity and coherence of the overall analysis. The themes were then organized under the study objectives, providing a structured and purposeful presentation of the findings.

Before presenting the results, a thematic map was created to visually represent the interconnectedness of the identified themes, in accord with Braun and Clarke's (2006) approach to thematic content analysis. The process involves a sequential, iterative procedure encompassing six key steps: (1) gaining familiarity with the data, (2) creating

codes, (3) developing themes, (4) reviewing identified themes, (5) defining and labelling these themes, and (6) pinpointing exemplars.

This six-phase thematic analysis, based on Braun and Clarke's (2006) model, enabled a nuanced exploration of the participants' experiences, shedding light on the multifaceted aspects of artisanal skill acquisition and employment in the informal sector in Tema.

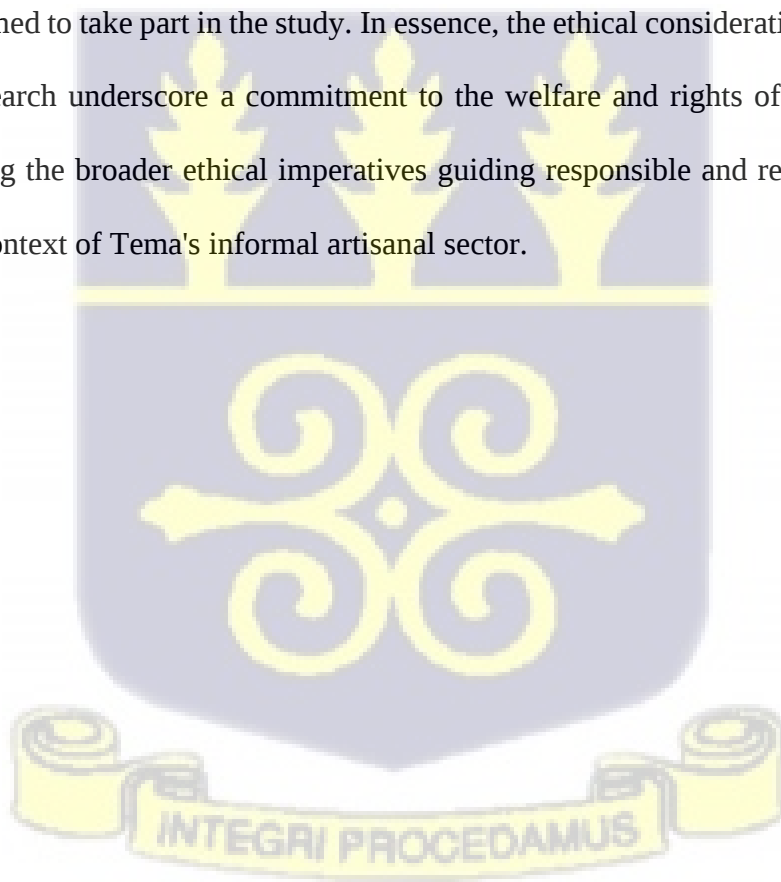
3.11 Ethical Consideration

Ethical considerations are paramount in the design and execution of this research, ensuring the well-being, confidentiality, and autonomy of the participants. Central to the ethical framework is the principle of informed consent, where participants are fully apprised of the research's nature, purpose, and potential implications before voluntarily agreeing to participate (Johnson & Christensen, 2014; Saunders et al., 2013). Additionally, respect for the dignity and rights of the participants remains a cornerstone, with particular attention paid to cultural nuances and sensitivities prevalent within the artisanal communities of Tema. The consent process is approached with transparency, fostering an environment where participants feel empowered to withdraw from the study at any juncture without repercussion.

Confidentiality was rigorously maintained throughout the research journey. Participants' identities were safeguarded through pseudonymization, ensuring that their experiences are shared without compromising their individual privacy. The use of coded identifiers further strengthens the commitment to anonymity, reinforcing the trust established with the participants. Moreover, the research upholds a commitment to equity and justice, striving to avoid harm and exploitation. Sensitivity to power dynamics within the artisanal sector guides the interactions, with an emphasis on preventing any undue influence or coercion. The researcher remained vigilant against

perpetuating stereotypes or reinforcing existing inequalities, hence promoting an inclusive and respectful dialogue.

Also of considerable importance is the fact that a thoughtful approach to data collection and storage was adopted to mitigate potential risks. All recorded interviews were securely stored, accessible only to the researcher and his dissertation supervisor, and were deleted upon the completion of the study. The confidentiality measures extend to the dissemination of findings, where aggregated data devoid of personally identifiable information is shared. Approval from the Tema Metropolitan Assembly was sought and obtained and the various trades associations from which the participants were recruited from were as well informed and their consent was obtained before any member was approached to take part in the study. In essence, the ethical considerations embedded in this research underscore a commitment to the welfare and rights of the participants, reflecting the broader ethical imperatives guiding responsible and respectful research in the context of Tema's informal artisanal sector.



CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This section will present the results from the analysis of the qualitative data obtained from the field. This is preceded by the demographic information of the 26 participants who took part in the study.

4.2 Demographic Information

The demographic makeup of the participants in the study provides a clear understanding of the artisanal skill development and job opportunities in the informal sector of Tema. The study specifically focuses on the youth in Tema, acknowledging their significant contribution to the artisan trade.

Table 1: Demographic Information of Participants

Variable	Category	Frequency(n)/ Percent (%)
Gender	Male	17 (68%)
	Female	8 (32%)
	Total	25 (100%)
Artisanal Status	Apprentice/Trainees	10 (40%)
	Graduate Apprentice	10 (40%)
	Master craft-persons	5 (20%)
	Total	25 (100%)
Trade	Masonry	6 (24%)
	Carpentry	4 (16%)
	Auto-Mechanic	5 (20%)
	Dressmaking	5 (20%)

Hairdressing/Beautician		5 (20%)
Total		25 (100%)
Highest Education	JSS/JHS	12 (49%)
	SSSCE/WASSCE	8 (32%)
	University Degree	0 (0%)
	None	5 (20%)
	Total	25 (100%)
Age Group	Below 20 years	6 (24%)
	21 – 25 years	8 (32%)
	26 - 30 years	4 (16%)
	Above 30 years	7 (28%)
	Total	25 (100%)

Field Data (2023)

An examination of the gender distribution reveals a notable skew, with 68% of respondents being male and 32% female.

This gender imbalance underscores a potential area for exploration concerning gender disparities within the artisanal sector in Tema, emphasizing the need for gender-sensitive interventions. Turning our attention to the artisanal status of respondents, we observe a diverse progression. Forty percent of participants are currently engaged as Apprentice/Trainees, while an equal proportion has graduated from apprenticeships. A smaller yet significant 20% have attained the status of master craft-persons, showcasing a spectrum of experience within the artisanal community.

Trade specialization emerges as another crucial aspect, revealing the diversified skill sets present within the study district. Masonry, Carpentry, Auto-Mechanic,

Dressmaking, and Hairdressing/Beautician are the prominent trades, each constituting 20% of the sample.

The educational background of respondents provides insights into their foundational knowledge. Almost half (49%) have completed Junior Secondary School (JSS) or Junior High School (JHS), while 32% have achieved Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSSCE) or West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE). Remarkably, none of the respondents holds a university degree, and 20% have received no formal education beyond the basic level. This educational breakdown lays the groundwork for understanding the skill levels and potential challenges faced by artisans. A closer look at the age distribution reveals a diverse demographic picture. The 21–25 age group takes precedence, comprising 32% of respondents. This age-centric focus aligns with the study's emphasis on youth, acknowledging their crucial role in shaping the present and future of the artisanal workforce.

In sum, the demographic analysis serves as a comprehensive preamble, setting the stage for a detailed investigation into the barriers to artisanal training, modes of training delivery, and the limiting factors to employment opportunities. The youth-centric lens offers a targeted approach to understanding and addressing challenges within Tema's informal sector, ensuring a holistic exploration of artisanal dynamics.

4.3 Research Question One: What are the Barriers to Artisanal Training in the Informal Sector in Tema?

To answer research question one, the participants were engaged in semi-structured interviews designed to elicit detailed responses regarding their choices to pursue informal artisanal training and the challenges they encountered. The primary question

was open-ended and was in the form "Can you share your journey into artisanal training/apprenticeship? What motivated your choice, and what challenges have you faced?" Probing questions were utilized to deepen the exploration, such as "How did financial constraints impact your decision?" and "Can you elaborate on the how the behaviour/perception of people around you affected your decision?" The themes that emerged from the analysis of the qualitative data are presented below:

4.3.1 Theme 1: Financial Constraints

A recurring theme among the participants was the formidable barrier posed by financial constraints. This theme was particularly poignant in the narratives of the participants who shed light on their journey into the artisanal world. For example, Participant CA-01 21 years old and an apprentice in carpentry shared the following:

"Growing up in a low-income family, I faced a daunting financial challenge entering carpentry. Initially when I agreed with my father to train as a carpenter, there was no money to acquire the needed tools. And although my master was willing to accept me at no cost except the presentation of Schnapps, I could not readily enrol since I lacked the needed tools. I started off as a "by-day" labourer with some masons and would sometimes accept to work as gardener to in homes before raising some money to get a few tools to start. "

Participant CA-01 further hinted that even the decision to go into carpentry was because of his family's financial crisis which was not such as would allow him to further his education beyond the basic level. Even when he was still schooling and had not yet enrolled in artisanal training, he recalled the number of times he would miss school because there was no money for transportation and food. His choice of carpentry was

not merely a career decision but a response to his family's financial crisis, limiting his ability to pursue formal education beyond the basic level.

Participant AM-02, a 28-year-old mechanic also shared a similar story stating that:

"I have every desire to complete the training and also become a master one day. However, the financial challenges i am going through is making it difficult for me to complete in time. This training takes 3 years, but even in my 2 years i feel there is more to learn. I do not come to the workshop everyday because sometimes is difficult to raise get money to eat. sometimes my master gives us something small but it cannot last you the whole day and my parents do cannot always provide so i need to go and look for some other job to raise money and report for training when things are good. this disrupts the training."

Similar sentiments were echoed by Participant HD-03, a 25-year-old hairdresser who emphasized that:

"People underestimate the cost of entering this profession. They think you need nothing to train to become a hairdresser. To afford quality tools, I saved money and took a loan from a family member. The financial struggle was real, but I was determined. It got to I time I nearly gave up. The cost of the weave-on was very expensive and I needed to buy some that I would practice with. The hair, crochet pin, wig cups etc. that I bought for practice alone cost around GHc 1200.00. My madam required that I bought these items before the training started."

When I asked how she managed to pay for these items she expressed that

“I was into “Kayayo” or head porterage business for quite some time when I first arrived in Tema from the northern region. So the little savings from that business and the support I received from my boyfriend is what I used to buy the items.”

Adding to the voices emphasizing financial considerations, Participant AM-05 (23 years, Auto-mechanic) shed light on the major consideration of money before enrolling in training. CA-05

"I am training with my uncle and did not have to pay anything like registration fees although some of my colleagues did pay registration fees. However, there are not enough tools and equipment so he asked my parents to try and get some for me and also provide some pocket money since he was only going to provide me money for meals only once a day. He was clear that this is not guaranteed and it would certainly depend on the number of jobs he gets in any particular day. We are four apprentices in all so sometimes the money given for meals is not even enough and there are days when we will not receive anything from him. And you know is not easy to do this work without having to eat. Many a times my mother would give me money but days she is unable to, I would probably not go work."

4.3.2 Theme 2: Social Stigma

Beyond financial constraints, participants discussed the challenges associated with societal judgment and biases against informal artisanal trades. Participant HD-06, 22 years, Hairdresser trainee/apprentice shared the personal journey of facing judgment for choosing hairstyling over formal education. HD-06 emphasized the impact on self-

esteem and the constant need to prove the legitimacy of hairdressing as a legitimate career.

"I faced judgment for choosing hairstyling over formal education. People questioned my decision, and it affected my self-esteem. I had to constantly prove that hairdressing is a legitimate career. My father was not in support of my decision to train to become a hairdresser, He wanted a graduate with university degree, and he felt I have disappointed him telling me that if he knew I would not further my education he would not have wasted his money sending me to school but would have straight away put me into artisanal training and would cite several examples of my classmates who are in the training colleges and universities failing to consider that there are some artisans who are better off than those graduates. For me, dealing with the societal bias is a personal journey of resilience and self-belief."

The struggle against societal norms favouring academic degrees was a common thread in the narratives.

Participant MA-07 (30 years, Masonry) highlighted the disheartening scepticism about vocational skills and the constant battle against societal norms that favour degrees.

"The scepticism about vocational skills is disheartening. I often find myself explaining why I chose masonry over formal education. I have friends my age who even feel I am not being rational because there are quite a number of easy avenues to make money now without having to go into such a long period of apprenticeship training. I've had to explain to them I want something that would always be useful to me and am not looking for easy way out."

Similarly, Participant AM-08 (22 years, Auto-Mechanic) expressed the personal struggle to break free from traditional norms and establish a mark as an artisan. Despite highlighting the potential in auto-mechanics, AM-08 faced judgment for not pursuing formal education.

"Even after highlighting the potential in auto-mechanics, I faced judgment for not pursuing formal education. The social stigma affects how our work is valued. It's a personal struggle to break free from traditional norms and make a mark as an artisan. For example, when people visit the shop and they are talking to you, you can easily tell from their tone and demeanour that they do not respect you and your job. They have a very condescending attitude. There are some customers who when they come with their vehicles, after describing the problem they are experiencing will want to dictate to you what they feel could actually be the problem without letting you diagnose the issue yourself. This clearly show that the person does not respect your skill and experience or knowledge on the job. "

Participant DR-17 a, 28 years, dressmaker, underlined the real bias against vocational skills, noting the trivialization of tailoring as trade.

"There's a prevailing notion that tailoring is a second-rate skill, often dismissed as mere needlework. Society undermines the artistry and precision involved in creating bespoke garments. It's disheartening to see our craft relegated to the sidelines, labelled as a menial trade rather than a refined and intricate profession. Am glad that with the many fashion design schools springing up this is changing and a lot of people now taking interest in polishing their trade the image is now improving"

Highlighting the societal stereotype that vocational training is for the less academically inclined, Participant MA-10 25 years, who has graduate from masonry apprenticeship stressed the ongoing journey of constantly proving one's worth and challenging societal norms.

"There's a stereotype that vocational training is for the less academically inclined. Overcoming this bias involves constantly proving one's worth. It's a personal journey of challenging societal norms and striving for recognition in a society that often undervalues practical skills. For example, someone referred me to a friend of his and the first question this man asked is whether I have a NVTI certificate in building construction because he does not want anyone to come and do shoddy job and waste his materials. Such comments right away is a put off and demoralizing enough and shows how we perceive people in informal artisanal trades."

4.3.3 Theme 3: Lack of Information

Exploring the lack of structured information channels, participants revealed their reliance on word of mouth and the impact of limited formal channels on decision-making.

Participant CA-11 (24 years, Carpentry) stumbled into carpentry without much information, underscoring the need for more awareness about the trade's scope and potential opportunities.

"I stumbled into carpentry without much information. More awareness about the trade's scope and potential opportunities could attract more youth. It's about ensuring that future artisans make informed choices. For example, my master indicates that it is possible to write the NVTI exams and be certified after completing the training but the

challenge is what opportunities are there for employment and other things and how do I know about them. These are some important things I desire to know if am going to stay in this profession way into the future”

Participant AM-13 (29 years, Auto-Mechanic) revealed that he found out about auto-mechanics through friends, underscoring the impact of limited formal channels on their understanding. The narrative suggests that more avenues for information might have led to an earlier start in apprenticeship.

"I found out about auto-mechanics through friends who dropped out at JHS. The lack of reliable or information limited my understanding. If there were more avenues for information, maybe I would have started my apprenticeship earlier. Lack of awareness impacts the choices we make."

Participant HD-14 (26 years, Hairdressing) highlighted the need for better information to dispel misconceptions about their skills. The narrative emphasizes the role of education and awareness in changing perceptions, ensuring that lack of information does not act as a barrier.

"We need better information. The misconceptions about our skills persist because people don't understand the depth of what we do. Education and awareness can change that. You know there is this perception that hairdressers and seamstresses are prostitutes and so when I thought about this, I got discouraged and didn't want to train for any of those skills."

Participant DR-17 (28 years, Dressmaker) echoed a similar sentiment about the lack of structured information channels. The reliance on informal sources posed challenges,

emphasizing the need for more accessible and formal avenues to gather information about artisanal training.

"Getting accurate information is tough. We rely on word of mouth, which may not always be reliable. Having formal channels for information would be beneficial. It's challenging when you can't find clear information about the training you want to pursue. For example, I was told that this training would be completed in two years but is taken longer than that. In addition, my madam normally requires that I carry out additional chores around the house for her which was not initially discussed with my parents but she insists is part of our work. "

These narratives collectively illustrate the dual challenge of lack of information faced by both potential apprentices and those currently undergoing training. The reliance on informal sources, such as word of mouth, emphasizes the need for more structured and accessible information channels to facilitate informed decision-making in the artisanal sector.

4.3.4 Theme 4: Limited Access to Training Opportunities

Geographical constraints emerged as a significant barrier, with participants discussing challenges in accessing training centers concentrated in urban areas. Participant CA-16 a 25-year-old carpenter highlighted the difficulty for those in rural areas, emphasizing the need to overcome geographical constraints to pursue their passion.

"In my carpentry journey, skills passed down from my father and grandfather form my foundation. The absence of formal training leaves me reliant on personal experience

and creativity. Despite a desire for new techniques and tools, constraints of time and finances hinder such advancements."

Participant AM-18, a 24-year-old, auto-mechanic asserted that:

"With over a decade as an auto-mechanic, adapting to evolving technology and customer demands poses significant challenges. The complexity of modern cars requires constant knowledge and skill updates. However, the absence of formal training or certification in the country compels me to seek learning through online resources and informal networks. There are some few private training institutions that I am aware I can register with to go for further training but the registration fee alone is over GHC 7000.00 cedis and they are not prepared to have me work for them in exchange for the training which is why I have to use this strategy for now."

Participant HD-09 (27 years, Hairdresser) also stated that:

"Operating a small salon in my neighbourhood as a hairdresser, building a diverse clientele and offering enhanced services is a goal. However, the lack of local training or education for hairdressers hinders my ability to learn new styles, techniques, and products. There are some schools that I can go for certification but the cost of just a 3 months program is GHC 6000 cedis which is more than what I make in a year."

Participant DR-20 (23 years, Dressmaker) related the following:

"As a dressmaker crafting attire for various occasions, the challenges in this trade are formidable. Coping with competition from mass-produced clothing and staying abreast

of changing trends and customer preferences demand continuous efforts. The absence of tailored training and support for dressmakers leaves me to navigate the intricacies of fashion, fabrics, and marketing independently, causing feelings of isolation and frustration."

This detailed thematic content analysis provides a deeper understanding of the personal stories of informal sector trainee artisans, allowing for a more profound exploration of the challenges they face in their journey of acquiring artisanal skills.

4.3.5 Theme 5: Exploitation and Abuse

Exploitation and abuse within informal artisanal training are starkly evident through the narratives of trainee artisans who face harsh working conditions, unequal treatment, and various forms of mistreatment. Participant CA-05 (23 years, Auto-Mechanic Apprentice) shared the exploitation he endures:

"Like I told you before, although I knew money for meals are not guaranteed, little did I know this meant no money for meals at all from my uncle. We can go many days without receiving a penny from him while still working for him in the name of learning a trade. Sometimes when you reflect on this, the temptation to quit is high."

However, exploitation extends beyond financial aspects. The experiences of trainees reveal instances of physical and emotional abuse. For instance, participant DR-23 (21 years, Dressmaking Apprentice) expressed her ordeal:

"I am a dressmaker apprentice, and I work with a master who is very strict and greedy. He makes me work on his orders, but he does not pay me or give me any credit. He also

does not teach me anything new or let me use his machines or materials. He says I have to learn by watching, but I feel used and exploited.”

Another hairdresser apprentice, HD-13 indicated that:

“When we say we are abused sometimes people think is a lie. How can a program I am supposed to complete in two years now am in my 3 years and my madam still says she feels am not ready yet when in all of this she is the one who fails to teach me all the aspects in a timely manner. Is like she literally fails does commit to what she needs to teach you but will rather have you carry out activities that are unrelated to the training such as menial jobs around the home.”

The issue of gender-based exploitation and abuse within informal artisanal training becomes evident through the distressing experiences shared by a female mason trainee, Participant MA-22:

“My brother, being a female mason trainee is not a joke because there are a lot of crazy things you have to deal with on daily basis working on a construction site with other masons. They are all men, and they treat me very badly sometimes because I am a woman. They harass me, mock me, and exclude me from their activities. They also give me the hardest and most dangerous tasks perhaps to discourage me and get me to quit; and they do not teach me anything useful. They say I do not belong in this trade, but I want to prove them wrong.”

These narratives underscore the vulnerability of trainees to various forms of exploitation, ranging from financial manipulation to physical and emotional abuse. This

highlights the urgent need for protective measures, proper regulations, and awareness campaigns to safeguard the rights and well-being of individuals within the informal artisanal training sector.

4.5 Research Question Two: What are the Modes of Artisanal Training in the Informal Sector

Major themes uncovered with respect to the second research question include the following

4.5.1 The Traditional Apprenticeship Model

The apprenticeship model encapsulates the essence of hands-on, experiential learning. The analysis of the qualitative data reveals that this is one of the major pathways for artisanal skill training offered to, and received by many of the artisans who participated in the study. For example, when I asked the participants to share with me some of the common approaches adopted to provide training, this is what one of the apprentices in carpentry said.

"Starting as a 'by-day' labourer with carpenters, I observed their craft closely. It took months before I got my hands on actual carpentry tasks. My master, though strict, allowed me to progress gradually, ensuring I mastered each skill before moving on. Before I started working on complex task, he would let me do basic activities such as, providing a helping hand to hold and position a wood/plank, sanding off rough edges on a wood, cutting after he has done the markings etc, stuff like that. I was also introduced to the basics of measurement subsequently and after he saw I could do most of what he has taught me, some activities were left to me to complete independently "

Another artisan and a master craft-person MC-01 explained how he goes about training apprentices under him following the apprenticeship model

"In training apprentices, I follow a structured progression. They start by observing, then move on to simple tasks. It's crucial to build a strong foundation before tackling complex projects. I assign specific projects tailored to their skill level, ensuring they grasp each aspect thoroughly before advancing. Take for example the whole process of building a house, it would be better for an apprentice to help lay the blocks for the foundation but their task should be limited to that aspect where they have to carry and place the block on the foundation if they are new and not made to take part in activities such as bonding the blocks with cement, plastering or chiselling without supervision"

A similar observation was made in respect of auto-mechanic apprentice training, MC-02, a master craft-person in the auto-mechanic trade said:

"Auto-mechanics apprentices learn through observation and hands-on experience. I encourage them to start with basic engine components and progress gradually. This ensures a comprehensive understanding of the trade. Apprentices often appreciate this structured approach, mastering one aspect before moving on to the next."

MC-03, also a master craft-person in hairdressing collaborated this to be true of hairdressing apprentices as well:

"Regarding hairdressing, apprentices transition from observation to hands-on tasks. I introduce them to basic styles and progressively advance to intricate designs. This step-by-step approach ensures a strong foundation. Sometimes if the procedure involves the application of certain hair creams/products, because we do not want them to waste the

product and also not cause harm to the customer, the apprentice is made to go through and initial process of observation as I carry out the task for a typical client. At some point in time, I would ask her to then repeat the process for another customer for me to observe and then intervene where necessary."

4.5.2 Informal Observational Learning

Just like the apprenticeship model, this technique was reported by at least two participants as constituting the medium through which they acquired their artisanal skills. One auto-mechanic (AM-13) also a master craft-person intimated that:

"I did not have to go through apprenticeship training since my dad and uncle were already in this trade. Because they worked from home, I used to observe them and of course sometimes helped them so the skill came naturally and although I admit that most of the time, I also watch YouTube videos on how mechanics resolve many of the challenges modern vehicles present. However, there was no formal training involved"

Informal observation learning was not confined to only master craft-persons. DR-13, also an experienced dressmaker who recently graduated from apprenticeship training, articulates the influence of community-based learning: *"Tailoring skills were passed down in my family. Observing my mother and older relatives, I learned the basics. Over time, I transitioned from observer to active participant although I later had to learn more by watching videos on YouTube. It's a continuous journey, refining techniques with every project."*

Mastercraft Person also an experienced mason, provides a unique perspective:

“As for me, I learned the craft from my friends, who were also masons. We did not have any formal training or certification, but we learned from each other working together. There were moments that it was difficult to deal with foundation cracks and preventing penetrating damp and I called on my friend who eagerly offered to help. Looking at how he went about it alone was enough for me to get it right the next time. We also learned from the internet, where we found videos, articles, and forums about masonry. We learned by sharing, not by following.”

A hairdresser also mentioned *“I learned the skill from my sister, who was a hairdresser. She did not teach me any formal techniques or methods, but she taught me how to cut, style, colour, and treat hair. She also taught me how to listen to the customers and understand their needs and preferences. I learned by experimenting, not by copying as most people do.”*

4.5.3 Self-directed Learning

In the realm of carpentry, Participant CA-28 unravels a unique facet of self-directed learning, shifting from a perspective of limited knowledge in tools and equipment: *“Entering carpentry with minimal exposure to the vast array of tools, I encountered hurdles in comprehending their applications. Turning to local magazines and posters showcasing carpentry techniques, I undertook a self-directed journey. This not only broadened my understanding but provided tangible visual aids to navigate the intricate world of carpentry tools.”*

Mastercraft Person MC-28, a seasoned carpenter, contextualizes CA-28's approach, shedding light on the significance of diverse learning sources: *"Apprentices often grapple with the intricacies of carpentry tools. CA-28's exploration of magazines and posters highlights a localized and resourceful approach to self-directed learning. Beyond online resources, this avenue ensures apprentices, even in limited internet access scenarios, can enhance their understanding of tools and equipment."*

Turning to the domain of dressmaking, Participant DR-29 unveils her self-directed journey, overcoming challenges in tool knowledge through alternative means: *"Limited exposure to advanced sewing machines during my apprenticeship fuelled a quest for knowledge. Venturing beyond online platforms, I procured sewing machine manuals, studied fashion magazines, and attended local workshops. This diversified self-directed approach not only addressed tool-related gaps but enriched my repertoire with practical insights."*

Mastercraft Person MC-29, an experienced dressmaker, provides insights into DR-29's unique approach, emphasizing the varied channels available for self-directed learning: *"Dressmaking apprentices often face challenges in mastering diverse sewing machines. DR-29's utilization of manuals, magazines, and local workshops showcases a multifaceted approach to self-directed learning. It aligns with the reality of diverse learning resources, ensuring apprentices can enhance their knowledge of tools and equipment without exclusive reliance on the internet."*

In the realm of auto-mechanics, Participant AM-30 offers a perspective on limited knowledge of tools and equipment and how self-directed learning bridged the gap: *"Entering auto-mechanics with rudimentary knowledge of diagnostic tools, I sought alternatives to online resources. Engaging with automobile magazines, local workshops, and seeking advice from experienced mechanics, I transformed my understanding. This self-directed path not only addressed gaps in tool knowledge but exposed me to practical insights from seasoned professionals."*

Mastercraft Person MC-30, an experienced auto-mechanic, contextualizes AM-30's approach, underlining the importance of diverse learning avenues:

"Auto-mechanics apprentices often encounter challenges in comprehending diagnostic tools. AM-30's utilization of magazines, local workshops, and mentor advice is a pragmatic approach to self-directed learning. It ensures apprentices, even in settings with limited internet access, can broaden their knowledge of tools and equipment through accessible means."

4.5.4 Experiential Learning

Experiential learning is a cornerstone in the journey of artisans, where hands-on engagement and practical experiences form the bedrock of skill development. Participant CA-21, a carpenter, shares his profound experience: *"I acquired carpentry skills through hands-on experience on various projects under the guidance of my mentor. Rather than simply instructing me, he demonstrated the proper techniques and provided constructive feedback and suggestions for improvement. My learning process was based on practical application rather than passive listening."*

This sentiment echoes in the narrative of Mastercraft Person MC-21, an experienced carpenter:

“As a mentor, I strongly advocate for the value of experiential learning. Carpentry involves the creation of tangible pieces. I anticipate apprentices to grow and develop by fully engaging in real projects. It's not solely about providing instructions; it's about the profound change that takes place through active and practical experiences.”

Transitioning to the world of masonry, Participant MA-22 reflects on the essence of experiential learning:

“I acquired the skill of being a mason by becoming a part of a construction crew. Despite lacking formal education, I gained knowledge through hands-on experience on various construction sites and with different building materials. Additionally, I learned valuable lessons from the obstacles and difficulties I encountered and successfully overcame. My learning was largely practical rather than theoretical.”

Another hairdresser, HD-23 highlighted the significance of experiential learning:

“As a hairdresser, I acquired my skills through hands-on experience at a salon rather than formal training. Through the process of cutting, styling, colouring, and treating various types of hair and attending to different customers, I gradually developed my expertise. Feedback and client satisfaction played a crucial role in my learning journey. Rather than simply observing, I learned through experimentation and practical application”

Mastercraft Person MC-23, an experienced hairdresser, adds depth to this narrative:

“Hairdressing is an art perfected through hands-on experimentation. Apprentices delve into

the dynamic world of styles and colours, learning not just techniques but the nuances of customer satisfaction. Experiential learning isn't just about doing; it's about understanding the diverse preferences of clients and adapting creatively. I always encourage them to take part in the process and outdo themselves each time."

Participant DR-24 who recently graduated from apprenticeship training in dressmaking emphasizes the role of experiential learning:

"I am a dressmaker, and I learned the art from the market. I did not have any formal guidance, but I learned from the experience of designing, sewing, fitting, and altering different types of clothes and fabrics. I also learned from the creativity and originality that I expressed and admired. I learned by expressing, not by repeating what others have done but with enhancements and improvements to come out with unique styles

A master craft-person MC-24, also an experienced dressmaker, provides insights into this artistic journey:

"Dressmaking transcends the conventional path. Although we are sometimes presented with calico to cut out patterns from and sew out, apprentice evolve into artists by immersing themselves in the vibrant tapestry of fabrics and designs by expressing individuality and creativity, hence shaping unique garments rather than replicating established patterns."

Thus, in the context of artisanal skill development, experiential learning stands as a testament to the transformative power of hands-on engagement as exemplified in the quotations above.

4.6 Research Question Three: What are the factors hindering the employment prospects of informal sector artisans in Tema?

The thematic content analysis of the qualitative data brought to light five major barriers that threaten to diminish any opportunities for stable employment in the artisanal sector in Tema.

4.6.1 Financial Barriers

The qualitative data analysis revealed the significant financial hurdles faced by artisans, hindering their business expansion and competitiveness. Participant MC-01, a seasoned auto-mechanic, eloquently expressed,

"Expanding my carpentry business is a daunting task due to financial constraints that prevent me from purchasing new tools, machines, and materials. Even more important, I wish to get a shop or land close to the roadside where I can operate from and also make a small showroom to display my crafts but my brother, Tema here is not easy! I have tried Madina and the cost there is such that even if I work four years I cannot afford. Because of things like this all I do now is to sit home when I receive a call for me to come and fix some door or window or any menial task then I go. Is not my hope for my dreams to remain this small but what can I do when there is no help anywhere?"

Another perspective was shared by a dressmaker who operates a shop with 4 apprentices training under her, highlighting the struggle with low payment and high taxes:

"As seamstress, I get a number of contracts; however, my earnings are not satisfactory due to constant price negotiations by clients. Additionally, I am burdened

with high and unjust taxes and fees imposed by the government and association. This situation leaves me with no savings or financial stability for the future.

When I asked her whether this has had any negative impact on her job, she explained that

“Some of my senior apprentices are even threatening to stop working for me because they do not earn much, and they complain is affecting their marriage because their husbands keep asking them to quit since they have nothing to show by way of their contribution to the family but they spend almost their entire week here”

Another master auto-mechanic, AM-03, shared a poignant journey:

"Despite inheriting my workshop from my father, I have been unable to expand beyond these walls due to financial limitations. I want to obtain a loan for expansion but I am afraid maybe I cannot pay the inheritance I could leave to my children would be taken away by the Bank. This has posed challenges in terms of expanding the business, hiring apprentices, and competing for contracts. At times, the income generated is insufficient to cover the expenses incurred"

4.6.2 Urban Planning Pressures

Urban planning decisions have posed challenges to artisans' stability and growth. A long-time hairdresser expressed the turmoil caused by urban development:

“After working as a hairstylist at this salon for more than a decade, I find myself in a predicament as the landlord intends to demolish the building and sell the property. According to the landlord, this action is in line with the urban development plan, but I

perceive it as pure greed. I am uncertain about my future whereabouts and how I will manage to sustain myself.”

Similarly, a dressmaker shared the struggles in a crowded market:

"As a dressmaker, I operate a small shop in a bustling market. Unfortunately, the market is consistently overcrowded and noisy, lacking sufficient space and ventilation. Regrettably, the authorities show little concern for our well-being, prioritizing rent and tax collection over our needs. Moreover, they frequently issue eviction threats unless we strictly adhere to their rules and regulations.”

4.6.3 Bureaucratic Hurdles

Not only that the bureaucratic hurdles in running a business were vividly portrayed by an auto-mechanic:

"I am an auto-mechanic, and I have a garage in the industrial area. But I have to deal with a lot of bureaucracy and corruption to run my business. I have to get permits, licenses, and inspections from different agencies and departments, which are very complicated and expensive. I also have to bribe some officials to avoid harassment and fines.”

Additionally, a mason trainee expressed the complexity of obtaining certification:

"I am a mason trainee, and I want to become a professional mason. But I have to go through a lot of paperwork and procedures to get a certificate from the National Vocational Training Institute. They have a lot of requirements and criteria, which are very difficult and confusing. I also have to pay a lot of fees and charges, which I can't afford.”

Responding to my question on whether or not it is really necessary to have that certification, he responded that:

"It is not necessary if you want to work on your own after your apprenticeship but if you desire to work with companies and contractors, the NVTI certificate is very important without which they may not employ you. It gives them assurance that you qualify to work."

4.6.4 Limited Access to Startup Capital

The challenge of limited access to startup capital emerged as a recurrent theme. A carpenter apprentice shared his aspirations and struggles:

"I have been working as a carpenter apprentice for over 5 years, and I want to start my own business. But I don't have enough money to buy or rent a workshop or to buy tools and equipment. I also don't have access to any formal loans or credit because I don't have any collateral or guarantor. I have to rely on my family and friends, who are also poor."

Similarly, a dressmaker apprentice highlighted financial constraints:

"I am a dressmaker apprentice, and I have a talent for sewing and designing clothes. But I don't have enough money to buy a sewing machine or to buy fabrics and materials. I also don't have access to any formal loans or credit because I don't have any bank account or credit history. I have to rely on my master, who is also greedy and exploitative."

4.6.5 Limited Market Access

Limited market access was also illuminated through participants' experiences. A dedicated mechanic shared his plight shared his plight:

"If you own a car, am very certain that before you decide which mechanic to send it to you look at the workshop and the type of cars that are parked there. Now most people only send their cars to us if the cars are old or when they feel that the problem can easily be diagnosed without the need to work on it or they are in critical emergency before, else they will send it to big shops such as Toyota Ghana, Mechanical Elloyed etc. where they end up paying sometimes 100 times more than what you would have charged them. They want companies that have reputation and visibility and not some queer mechanic somewhere."

Even in masonry this challenge persists as recounted by an artisan who recently completed his training:

"I aspire to enhance my skillset by participating in various construction projects. However, the lack of opportunities poses a challenge as I must contend with more experienced and certified masons. Additionally, the absence of a portfolio or references diminishes my visibility, leaving me reliant on unpredictable luck."

When I suggested to him that I find that masons especially tend to have jobs all year round so why is he saying he does not get opportunity to train with construction firms or contractors he explained that although that is true with by-day labourers he prefers to work with major contractors in the industry particularly those into real estate projects but is not easy to get those.

4.7 Discussion of Findings

This section explores the findings from the thematic content analysis by integrating the literature and the theoretical foundations of the study reviewed in the second chapter.

Addressing Research Question One

With respect to the first research question, “what are the barriers to artisanal training in the informal sector in Tema?”, the thematic content analysis of the qualitative data sheds light on the intricate challenges faced by youths in the informal artisanal sector, providing a nuanced understanding beyond what is captured in existing literature. Financial constraints emerged as a recurring theme, echoing findings from studies by Alla-Mensah and McGrath (2021), Larbi and Gyedu (2021), and Damasah (2016) as well as Schraven et al (2013). The personal narratives shared by participants underscore the tangible impact of these constraints, revealing the complex web of challenges individuals face in accessing tools, materials, and even sustenance during their apprenticeship.

Even more formidable, social stigma, a pervasive barrier highlighted in Larbi and Gyedu (2021) and Onokala and Banwo (2015), resonates in the participants' stories. The qualitative insights go beyond acknowledging societal biases against vocational skills, providing a vivid portrayal of the emotional toll on individuals who constantly grapple with judgment, undermining their choices, and impacting their self-esteem. The depth of personal experiences enriches our understanding, highlighting the need for interventions that address not only structural barriers but also the psychological impact of societal norms.

Lack of information, another barrier identified in Alla-Mensah and McGrath (2021), Larbi and Gyedu (2021), and Ngyah-Etchutambe et al (2022), is vividly illustrated in the participants' narratives. The reliance on word of mouth and informal sources becomes a significant hurdle, emphasizing the necessity for more structured and accessible information channels. While existing studies acknowledge this lack, the qualitative insights provide a granular view of the

challenges individuals face when navigating the intricacies of artisanal training without clear guidance.

Geographical constraints and limited access to training opportunities, as explored by Larbi and Gyedu (2021) and Ngyah-Etchutambe et al (2022), are further illuminated in the content analysis. The personal stories expose the difficulties individuals encounter in pursuing their passion due to unequal distribution of training centers and geographical barriers. The narratives reinforce the need for interventions that address these structural inequalities, ensuring equitable access to training opportunities for aspiring artisans.

Exploitation and abuse within informal artisanal training, a stark reality highlighted by Alla-Mensah and McGrath (2021), also becomes palpable through the participants' experiences. The content analysis goes beyond acknowledging risks and vulnerabilities, offering a visceral account of the mistreatment faced by trainee artisans. This exposes the urgency for protective measures, regulations, and awareness campaigns to safeguard the rights and well-being of individuals within the informal artisanal training sector.

Research Question Two

The thematic content analysis of artisanal training modes in the informal sector resonates with established theories and empirical findings, showcasing both alignment and potential divergence. The Apprenticeship Model discussed in the literature review finds support in the qualitative data. The structured progression and tailored skill development reported by participants are in line with studies that emphasize the effectiveness of apprenticeship models such as Obadara and Obatan, (2014). This alignment reinforces the sociocultural theories underpinning informal artisanal skill training in Teman as a dynamic process involving hands-on learning.

Similarly, Informal Observational Learning, as evidenced in the qualitative data, aligns with the sociocultural and community learning models discussed in the literature. The stories of individuals learning from family members and community-based learning resonate with the notion that learning is situated in social and cultural contexts as observed by Wallis (2008).

Not only that theme of Self-directed Learning in the qualitative data also aligns with the autonomy emphasized in sociocultural theories as conceptualized by Deci et al., (2017). The challenges faced by participants and the strategies they employed to seek knowledge beyond formal training validate the importance of varied learning resources, supporting the literature's perspective on the diverse nature of self-directed learning particularly in light of Webb, (2014).

Further, experiential Learning, a central concept in the literature's discussion (Dewey, 1938; Kolb, 2009), finds robust support in the thematic content analysis of the qualitative data. The transformative power of hands-on engagement and practical experiences reported by participants reinforces the literature's emphasis on the continuous learning process through experience.

Research Question Three

The thematic content analysis of the qualitative data on research question three, reveals a nuanced perspective that both aligns with and deviates from the existing literature.

In consonance with literature, the findings resonate with the emphasis on financial challenges faced by artisans established in studies by Hedidor and Bondinuba, (2017), Garcia et al., (2019). The artisans in Tema articulate difficulties in expanding their businesses due to financial constraints, hindering their ability to purchase tools, materials, or secure suitable locations for operations. This aligns with studies

highlighting the crucial role of financial barriers in impeding the growth and competitiveness of informal enterprises (Korang, 2021; Ollivaud, 2021).

Similarly, the challenges posed by urban planning decisions echo the literature's concerns regarding the impact of spatial dynamics on artisans' visibility and customer reach (Kim and Singh, 2018). The qualitative data reveals the struggles of artisans facing eviction threats and uncertainties due to urban development plans, reinforcing the notion that urban planning decisions can adversely affect the stability and growth of artisanal businesses.

Moreover, the portrayal of bureaucratic hurdles aligns with existing literature emphasizing the complexities artisans face in navigating bureaucratic processes (Harris and Turner, 2021). The need for permits, licenses, and inspections, coupled with challenges in obtaining certification, resonates with studies discussing the bureaucratic challenges that disproportionately affect informal artisans.

The recurrent theme of limited access to startup capital corresponds with the literature's emphasis on the importance of capital for the performance and growth of informal enterprises (Aggarwal et al., 2019). The apprentices and artisans in Tema articulate their struggles to secure funds for starting or expanding their businesses, reflecting the broader challenge faced by informal sector artisans in accessing formal financial institutions.

However, the nuanced perspectives uncovered in the qualitative data, such as the mason trainee's viewpoint on certification, add depth beyond the existing literature. The portrayal of struggles related to eviction threats due to urban planning decisions and the nuanced perspectives on certifications highlight areas where the empirical findings provide additional depth or deviate from the existing literature.

In summary, while the thematic content analysis findings align closely with the literature on hindrances to employment prospects in Tema's artisanal sector, the nuanced perspectives uncovered in the qualitative data enhance the appreciation of these challenges and provide empirical support for the existing scholarly work on informal sector artisans.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

As I conclude this research on the informal artisanal sector in Tema, Ghana, it is imperative to consolidate the key findings, draw meaningful conclusions, and offer strategic recommendations. This final chapter serves as the synthesis of the entire research journey, providing a cohesive overview of the study's insights and their implications.

5.2 Summary and Contribution to Knowledge

Commencing with Chapter One, the research groundwork was laid, outlining the background, problem statement, and research objectives. This chapter framed the study, and provided the roadmap for subsequent chapters.

In Chapter Two, the literature review synthesized existing knowledge on barriers to artisanal training in the informal sector highlighting factors such as financial constraints, societal biases, lack of information, and geographical challenges within the informal artisanal sector. Also, established theories, including apprenticeship models, informal observational learning, self-directed learning, and experiential learning, were woven into the fabric of the study.

Chapter Three detailed the chosen methodology. Phenomenology, as a qualitative research design was chosen to help capture the lived experiences of the participants. I also explained the choice of thematic content analysis as the analytical approach for the exploration and explained the target population, study population, and the sample.

Chapter Four, the pinnacle of this journey, presented the results from the qualitative data analysis and with respect to the first research question, the thematic content analysis of participants' narratives unearthed significant barriers to artisanal skill acquisition. Financial constraints, social stigma, lack of information, geographical challenges, and exploitation within training emerged as tangible challenges.

Addressing the second research question, alignment with established theories on apprenticeship models, informal observational learning, self-directed learning, and experiential learning was explicit. The narratives provided enriched the theoretical framework, offering real-life perspectives that resonate with existing literature.

Turning to the third research question, the study affirmed literature-supported challenges while unearthing nuanced perspectives. Struggles related to eviction threats due to urban planning decisions and diverse viewpoints on certifications provided depth, enhancing the understanding of challenges faced by informal sector artisans.

In a nutshell, this study seamlessly progressed from establishing context and objectives to reviewing existing knowledge, selecting a robust methodology, and presenting insightful findings. The achievement of each objective is clearly evident in the explicit identification and examination of barriers, the alignment with theories, and the revelation of nuanced perspectives within the informal artisanal sector of Tema.

This study's findings contribute significant insights to the existing literature on artisanal skill acquisition and employment in the informal sector. Notably, the study identified plethora of approaches to artisanal training in Tema, Ghana, which vary from those typically discussed in general studies on informal skill development. For example, the apprenticeship and self-directed learning methods observed align with Obadara and Abatan's (2014) general findings on informal training, yet the distinctive integration of observational learning, which emerged strongly in the Tema context, highlights a local

adaptation not fully explored in previous studies. This finding underscores the importance of regional specificity in informal training approaches, illustrating that while common methods exist, local socio-economic contexts can influence the application and effectiveness of these methods.

Additionally, the study expands on the barriers to artisanal skill acquisition, particularly the compounded effects of financial constraints, social stigma, and geographic limitations. This study confirms Alla-Mensah and McGrath's (2021) findings that financial barriers significantly limit entry into artisanal training; however, the psychological impact of social stigma observed in Tema—where individuals internalize low social status associated with artisanal skills—adds a new dimension to this barrier. Larbi and Gyedu's (2021) work on stigma generally lacks this psychological perspective, which the current study suggests plays a critical role in discouraging youth from pursuing artisanal paths. Furthermore, the study's focus on geographic limitations enriches existing literature, which often emphasizes financial constraints but overlooks how location-based access challenges can hinder artisanal training opportunities in urban centers.

In exploring employment barriers, the study identified challenges that go beyond limited market access and certification, as discussed by Hedidor and Bondinuba (2017) and Korang (2021). Specifically, urban planning decisions and spatial constraints within Tema emerged as critical factors influencing artisans' employment prospects. These findings demonstrate that regulatory and spatial barriers are not merely logistical but actively shape artisans' employment outcomes, particularly for those operating without formal recognition. Such insights illuminate a gap in the literature, suggesting that studies focusing solely on market or capital access may fail to capture the

multifaceted employment barriers faced by informal artisans in densely populated urban areas.

The study also revealed some unexpected findings when comparing sub-samples within the dataset. For instance, artisans with greater access to mentorship or support networks experienced fewer negative effects from financial or social constraints, a dynamic less pronounced in comparable studies focused on African or broader developing country contexts. This suggests that the effectiveness of certain support structures in Tema may differ from other regions, potentially due to the specific socio-cultural dynamics at play. While the literature generally highlights the value of mentorship (e.g., Damasah, 2016), the degree to which it mitigates barriers may vary significantly based on localized social structures, a topic deserving further exploration.

Through these findings, the study not only affirms certain established literature but also provides critical extensions and new perspectives, particularly in understanding how the unique socio-economic and urban context of Tema shapes artisanal skill acquisition and employment outcomes. These insights underscore the need for region-specific studies in understanding the informal sector in developing countries, where generalized findings may overlook important local variables that affect artisanal training and employment sustainability.

The table below provides a summary of the contribution to knowledge from this study:

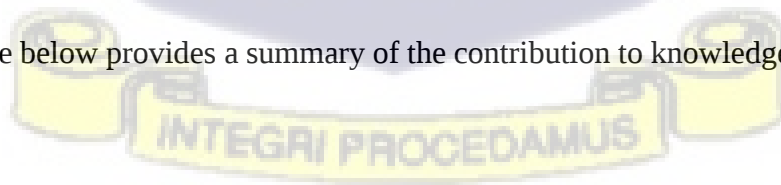


Table 2: Contributions of the Study

Objective	Gaps Identified	Study Findings Addressing Gaps/ Contribution to Knowledge
To examine approaches to informal artisanal training	Studies like Obadara and Abatan (2014) and Damasah (2016) highlight general approaches to artisanal training but lack detailed insights into specific, context-driven training methods in Ghana's Tema region. These works often generalized informal training methods without focusing on local variances like self-directed learning and apprenticeship.	This study identified specific artisanal training methods in Tema, including apprenticeship, observational learning, and experiential learning. It detailed how these approaches differ contextually within Ghana's informal sector, providing empirical data on the localized nature of training practices. By focusing on methods used within the Tema region, the study fills the contextual gap in existing research on artisanal training approaches.
To explore barriers to artisanal skill acquisition	Prior studies, such as those by Alla-Mensah and McGrath (2021) and Larbi and Gyedu (2021), recognize barriers like financial constraints and social stigma, but overlook the compounded psychological effects of these barriers and the role of geographic isolation in limiting artisanal opportunities.	This study illuminated barriers including financial limitations, social stigmatization, lack of accessible information, and geographical challenges in Tema. Participants' narratives showed how these factors uniquely interact, impacting motivation and persistence in artisanal training. The study's focus on the psychological impacts, such as reduced self-esteem due to stigma, contributes additional depth to the literature.
To determine factors hindering employment prospects	Existing literature, such as studies by Hedidor and Bondinuba (2017) and Korang (2021), emphasizes challenges like limited access to markets and certification but does not thoroughly examine urban planning and	The findings from this study reveal specific employment challenges faced by artisans in Tema, including issues related to market access, urban planning, and the complexities of certification processes. The study highlights how factors such as eviction threats and limited visibility due to spatial planning impact artisans' employability,

	visibility barriers, which can prevent artisans from securing stable employment.	thereby providing new insights into the interplay of urban planning and employment outcomes.
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Source: Developed by Author (2024).

5.4 Conclusion and Recommendations

The results of the study shed light on the complex mix of obstacles and prospects in the informal artisanal sector of Tema. The presence of financial constraints among participants highlights the immediate necessity for focused interventions aimed at improving economic accessibility. This necessitates the implementation of initiatives that enable aspiring artisans to access financial resources, tools, and materials in order to empower them.

Beyond economic challenges, the study unveils the profound impact of social stigma on individuals pursuing artisanal skills. This necessitates a multifaceted approach, combining structural support with awareness campaigns to alter societal perceptions. Fostering a positive narrative around vocational skills becomes crucial to alleviate the psychological toll on aspiring artisans.

The reliance on informal sources for information highlights a critical gap in accessibility. The establishment of formal platforms disseminating information about artisanal training opportunities, resources, and support services is imperative. Such initiatives would empower individuals navigating the complexities of skill acquisition in the informal sector.

The stark reality of exploitation and abuse within informal artisanal training demands immediate protective measures. Regulations, awareness campaigns, and advocacy are imperative to safeguard the rights and well-being of individuals within the sector.

Particularly regarding the Tema municipal assembly, creating an environment that discourages exploitative practices is essential for sustainable and ethical skill development.

The study affirms the effectiveness of diverse approaches to informal artisanal training, including apprenticeship models, informal observational learning, self-directed learning, and experiential learning. Policymakers and educators should recognize the dynamic nature of skill development and tailor interventions to accommodate various learning styles.

Urban planning decisions significantly impact the stability and growth of artisanal businesses. Eviction threats and uncertainties due to urban development plans highlight the need for comprehensive urban policies. Striking a balance between development goals and the preservation of artisanal livelihoods is crucial.

The portrayal of bureaucratic hurdles and varied perspectives on certification underscores the need for streamlined processes. Simplifying bureaucratic requirements and enhancing accessibility to permits, licenses, and certifications can foster a more conducive environment for business growth.

To restate, the findings offer deeper insights into the challenges and opportunities within Tema's informal artisanal sector. These conclusions provide a foundation for informed policymaking, intervention design, and further research, aiming to enhance the overall landscape of informal artisanal skill development and employment in the municipality.

Future research efforts could be directed at investigating the effectiveness of skills development programs in the informal artisanal sector. This research could focus on analysing the outcomes of training initiatives, apprenticeship programs, and skills

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enhancement efforts to understand their impact on skill acquisition, employment opportunities, and overall socio-economic advancement among individuals in the artisanal community.



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