An Assessment of The Professional Background Of Practitioners
In The Fashion/Clothing Industry In Ghana: A Case Study Of
Selected Male Practitioners In The Cape Coast Metropolis

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Abstract
The study used the descriptive survey design to investigate the professional background of male practitioners in the fashion industry in the Cape Coast metropolis. Twenty eight respondents were purposively sampled for the study. The main instrument used in collecting data was interview guide. The data collected was analysed using percentages, frequencies, Means and standard deviation. The findings of the research revealed that all the respondents had had formal education up to the Basic level and all went through apprenticeship training and again the respondents were able to make different types of clothing lines ranging from men’s wear, ladies’ wear, children’s wear and Muslim’s talabi and embroidery with the exception of jackets. The respondents also were not able to create their own designs. Based on these findings the study recommends that the Ministry of Education should enforce supervision of instructors who train the students.

Key Terms: Apprenticeship; Vocation; Professional Background; Clothing Industry
Background to the Study

Vocational Education is designed to prepare skilled personnel at lower levels of qualification for one or a group of occupations (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation [UNESCO], 1996). Vocational Education has diversified over the 20th century and now exists in industries. With the demand for high level skills by the economies and the labour market becoming more specialised, governments and businesses have increased investment into the future of vocational education.

The Government of Ghana’s realisation of the importance of middle level man-power development in the economy coupled with the high demand for high level skilled labour; constituted the University Rationalisation Committee (URC) to develop proposals for reforming the academic structure, management and the funding of tertiary education in Ghana. Upon the submission of the reports of the URC the Government issued a white paper in 1991 on the reforms of tertiary education system which gave prominence to Polytechnic education. The Polytechnic law 1992 (PNDCL 321), promulgated in 1992, empowered the six (6) polytechnics in Ghana then, among other things to provide technical education at the tertiary level for middle level manpower development so as to reduce youth unemployment.

Fashion can be associated with an ideology of social change and a situation in which change is also possible and desirable (Polhemus, 1996). In societies with ideologies antipathetic to social change and progress, fashion cannot exist. Fashion is conceived as irrational because it changes constantly, has no content, works as an external decoration, and carries no intellectual elements (Kawamura, 2005).

Kawamura (2005) described fashion as an inherent part of the human social interaction and that fashion cannot be controlled without undermining its ultimate purpose, which is the expression of individual identity. If self-identity were never in doubt and social comparison never took place, there would be no demand for fashion and there would be no need or opportunity for style change. Fashion is not only concerned with the outer cover of the human being in dress, jewellery and ornaments but a general social institution which affects and shapes individuals and the society as a whole. Consequently, so far as society continues to exist, there will always be the demand for clothing and workers for the clothing industry.

Statement of the Problem

Both formal and informal institutions (for example, Cape Coast Technical Institute, Cape Coast Polytechnic and Delaqui Sewing and Training Centre) that train students in garment
production and prepare them for the job market in the metropolis also seem to have female dominance. Gender appears not to be balanced for the fashion students in the institutions that train them, although in the field of work, the fashion industry seems to have gender balance, when one attends fashion shows and exhibitions held in Cape Coast. Fashion shows in the municipality show male dominance in all aspects of the industry. The study therefore aimed at finding out where males who produce garments in the fashion industry attained their training, their professional background, at what level of education they entered into the job market and whether they had had any form of skill up-date after entering into the job market.

**Purpose of the Study**
The purpose of the study was to identify the professional background and source of skill training of male producers of garments in the fashion industry in Cape Coast municipality.

**Research Questions**
1. What categories of skill training did the selected men in the fashion industry go through?
2. What types of garment do males in the fashion industry produce?

**Significance of the Study**
This study will help to expose lecturers and students to other sources of professional and skill training and expertise to network and share ideas for improvement in Fashion/Clothing Production Education.

**Review of Related Literature**
The review of literature is organised in two sections. The first section discusses concepts and issues relating to fashion as a vocational education and the second section discusses the theories and models that have been advanced to explain the process of vocational training and the conceptual framework governing vocational training in Ghana.

**Fashion as a Concept and a Phenomenon**
The meaning and significance of the word “fashion” have changed to suit the social customs and clothing habits of people in different social structures. Fashion does provide added values to clothing, but the additional elements exist only in people's imaginations and beliefs. Fashion is not visual clothing but is the invisible elements included in clothing. It can also be described as a prevailing usage of dress adopted in society for the time being. It is the result of the acceptance of certain cultural values, all of which are open to relatively rapid influences of change.
Fashion as a concept signifies additional and alluring values attached to clothing, which are enticing to consumers of fashion. Finkelstein (1996) pointed out that consumers imagine they are acquiring these added values when they are purchasing ‘fashionable’ items. As the concept of fashion changed historically, so did the phenomenon of fashion. The concept would not exist if the phenomenon did not exist. Fashion in the fifteenth century is something quite different from fashion in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. In the fifteenth century, fashion was an indicator of class status, a court privilege, practically monopolized by the aristocracy while the commoners would hardly have dared to call themselves fashionable; in the nineteenth century, social life had changed greatly (Boucher, 1987; Perrot, 1994; Roche, 1994). No longer did the aristocracy alone lead fashion, but the wealthy that had the material means were slowly invading into their social place (Perrot, 1994). In the twentieth century, fashion became increasingly democratic, and everyone, regardless of rank or status, had a right to look fashionable.

Culture and Economics of Fashion as a Vocational Education

Fashions change; Styles emerge, become fashionable and are eventually replaced by new fashionable styles (Sproles, 1985). What is obvious is that the demand for new fashions is not reducible simply to material or physical needs. Though one may need a replacement for a pair of jeans when an old pair gets holes from wear or a warmer coat when the weather gets cold, for most people across the socio-economic spectrum, the purchase of clothing is far from limited to these kinds of situations. Nearly all people inevitably participate in fashion, even if they do not try to follow it.

Fashion is one of the world’s most important creative industries. It is the major output of a global business - larger than those of books, movies and music combined (Kawamura, 2005). Everyone wears clothing and inevitably participates in fashion to some degree. Fashion is also a subject of periodically re-discovered fascination in virtually all the social sciences and the humanities. It has provided economic thought with an example in theorizing about consumption and conformity. Social thinkers have long treated fashion as a window upon social class and social change.

The Feminization of Fashion

Men and women of the aristocracy and of the upper bourgeoisie who emulated favored abundant displays of lace, rich velvets, fine silks, wore highly ornamented footwear, coiffures, wigs, and hats of rococo embellishment, and lavishly used scented powders,
rouges and other cosmetics (Davis, 1992). A pink silk suit, gold and silver embroidery, and jewelry were regarded as perfectly masculine (Steele, 1988). Dress was the signifier of class. The more elaborate the dress, the higher its wearer’s apparent social status. In short, fashion was not only a woman's affair. Fashion became feminized in the nineteenth century (Hunt, 1996), and the representation of gender difference in dress became 'stronger than that of social class.

In today's post-industrial societies, the meanings of items of masculine clothing differ in various contexts, such as business and leisure settings, since men are more closely identified with the occupational sphere than women. Crane (2000) argued that today there is an age-segmentation of the clothing behaviour of men while women are categorized as one, and she continued to explain that in contemporary age-graded culture, the postmodern construction of non-occupational identities through clothing appears most strongly among the young and among racial and sexual minorities, whose members view themselves as marginal or exceptional in relation to the dominant culture.

Although, the designer fashion for men attempts to extend the boundaries of acceptable forms of sexual expression for men, there is a gender division between female fashion and male fashion. Female fashion constitutes novelty and change, two important characteristics of fashion (Crane, 2000). The male population however dresses conservatively in the workplace although leisure clothing seems to be gradually replacing traditional business clothing as in the business casual dress code in force in many firms (Kawamura, 2005). Traditional male clothing styles have remained static, a characteristic which has little space in the realm of fashion. Therefore, whilst men tend to be defined by their occupation, women's social roles are often discussed within the framework of women's interests in fashion and their supposed obsession with beauty (Kawamura, 2005).

**Fashion Designers**

Designers are undoubtedly key figures in the production of fashion and play an important role in the maintenance, reproduction and dissemination of fashion. They are at the forefront in the field since their participation in the fashion system determines their status and reputation. Without designers, clothes do not become fashion. Designers personify fashion and their designs objectify fashion. Thus designers and clothing are inseparable from the notion of fashion (Kawamura, 2005).
Many are involved in the production processes in creating the finished product, that is the finished item of clothing, and produce the label of fashion. Their job is to design clothes but that is only the manifest function of the designer. The designers personify 'fashion' that is timely, up-to-date and considered desirable. Because designing fashion is not a licensed occupation and designers can be self-claimed, legitimating in one way or another becomes crucial (Kawamura, 2005).

**Methods of Training Fashion Designers**

Fashion being a vocation, has two broad types of training available: apprenticeship and vocation training school at the secondary level (College.lattc.edu.catalog/fashion-2015). Individual circumstances and the "who," "what" and "why" of a training program determine which method to use.

**Apprenticeships**

Apprenticeships develop employees who can do many different tasks. They usually involve several related groups of skills that allow the apprentice to practice a particular trade, and they take place over a long period of time in which the apprentice works for, and with, the senior skilled worker. Apprenticeships are especially appropriate for jobs requiring production skills (nas.apprenticeships.org.uk-2014). A survey of the apprenticeship system by Monk *et al.* (2008) as cited by Sonneenberg (2012) concluded that apprenticeship is by far the most important institution for training and is undertaken primarily by those with junior high school or lower levels of education.

**Advantage of Apprenticeship in the Fashion Industry**

Apprenticeships give one the opportunity to work for a real employer, earn a real salary and gain a real qualification whilst gaining valuable workplace skills and experience. In fashion, quality is key to apprenticeships. All apprenticeships must be at least 12 months long and lead to a national qualification that is respected by employers around the world (nas.apprenticeships.org.uk-2014).

**Apprenticeship in Ghana**

Ghana has a highly developed apprenticeship system where young men and women undertake sector-specific private training in skills that are generally utilised in the informal sector. Presently, non-formal apprenticeship training accounts for 80-90% of all skill training in Ghana, compared with 5-10% from public training institutes and 10-15% from Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO’s) (Palmer, 2009). Apprenticeship contracts differ from
ordinary employment contracts in at least three respects: firstly there is a long fixed period of time during which it can be terminated by mutual consent only; secondly, it contains promises, at least of a kind, to teach and to learn; lastly, apprenticeship contracts have a high propensity to involve children (Smits & Stromback, 2001).

**Vocational Education**

Vocational and Technical education were introduced in Ghana almost a century ago. By 1922, four technical and vocational schools had been established in the Ashanti, Eastern, Greater Accra, and Central regions. Courses offered at that time were woodwork, metal work, and brick work which were considered essential for improving the quality of life of the people. According to Foster (1965), the aim of these schools was to encourage the development of habits of steady industry leading to a settled and thriving peasantry.

The desire to improve the socio-economic life of the people through vocational and technical education continued to engage the attention of colonial government.

**Reforms**

The major reforms the government has put in place to revitalise Vocational and Technical education concern the setting up of national training bodies and the enactment of laws to strengthen national vocational training programmes. The need to link training to employment (either self or paid employment) is at the root of the best practice and strategy. Ghana has recently passed an Act of Parliament that establishes a council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (COTVET) which has overall responsibility for skills development in the country (Palmer, 2009).

**Higher National Diploma Fashion Programme in Ghana Polytechnics**

The Higher National Diploma (HND) Fashion is a current programme in the polytechnics which is being run in Kumasi, Accra, Ho, Takoradi and Cape Coast Polytechnics. The programme was introduced in accordance with the education reforms in 1987 as the elevation of Polytechnics to Tertiary level in 1992 to cater for growth in the government industry. This rationalisation of programme in the polytechnic shows an improvement in polytechnic education, especially in the field of fashion (Executive summary, 2002). It has provided an opportunity for upgrading especially for students with Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSSCE) certificates and the Intermediate and Advanced certificates in Fashion which would be at dead end.
The Rationale of HND Fashion Programme

The rationale for setting up the new programme as stated in the syllabus for programme implementation is that the development of Science and Studies in the field of Fashion Design and Textiles has begun to gather momentum in Ghana and Africa and there is a witness of an upsurge in Fashion or the mode of dress for both young and old. There is a growing awareness of the behavioural attitude of the Ghanaian and the role of clothes as a medium of expression (Revised Syllabus, 2001).

For the nation to experience growth in the industry the programme is also concerned not only with meeting Ghana’s domestic needs but also to opening up export opportunities for the Fashion Design and Textile sector of the economy. There is therefore the need to train a new degeneration of more forward looking professionals to meet the international challenges, cultures and standards, hence, the need for Higher National Diploma in Fashion Design and Textile Technology (Competency Based Training Syllabus, 2009).

This fundamental reason for setting up the programme is very laudable in this era of graduate unemployment and has as a solution to the challenges of education which would respond to the national development goal of poverty alleviation and wealth creation (Executive Summary, 2002). The report of the executive summary is of the view that the philosophy underlying the education system in Ghana should be the creation of well-balanced individuals with the requisite knowledge, skills, values and aptitudes for self-actualization and socio-economic and political transformation of the nation which is in full support of the introduction of the HND Fashion programme as a panacea and a goal of self-reliance.

3.1 Research Design

The research design for the study was the descriptive survey. Due to the nature of the research, the choice of descriptive survey design which has a number of advantages was the best option for the study, as the researcher was enabled to interview those respondents who were willing and ready to cooperate with the researcher. Interview schedule was the main instrument used in collecting data. The use of interview gave the researcher the opportunity to ask follow up questions to probe issues further.

3.2 Population

The targeted population for the study was male practitioners in the fashion industry in the Central region of Ghana. This population was chosen because they had the characteristics of the population needed to provide information to help answer the research questions. Though
there were many male fashion practitioners in the metropolis, it was difficult knowing their number to facilitate decision on sample size selection method that would allow for generalisation of findings.

3.3 Sample and Sampling Technique
The sample size targeted for the interview was thirty (30) male fashion practitioners but only twenty-eight (28) was accessible to the researcher because the remaining two of the respondents had relocated to different places a week before the date scheduled for the interview thereby making it impossible for the researcher to gain access to them. The techniques which were used in selecting the sample were purposive and convenience sampling because these allowed the researcher to select the sample needed to provide the necessary data that the researcher had access to, and who were willing and ready to give the relevant information to answer the research questions. The researcher purposively identified respondents who were men and into garment production and willing and ready to assist the researcher in the study. The respondents selected were all located in the Cape Coast metropolis and were easily accessible to the researcher. In all, a total of 28 Ghanaian male fashion designers who ply their trade in the Cape Coast Metropolis were involved in the study.

3.4 Instrument for Data Collection
The research instrument which was used to collect data for the study was interview guide. The interview guide was designed to engage the respondents in dialogue so that they were able to express themselves beyond Yes or No responses. Schedules for the interview that were devised comprised semi-structured items. This approach allowed interesting responses to follow up immediately as the researcher was able to ask probing questions for clarity.

4.0 Data Analysis
Based on the questions raised, multiple methodological approaches were adopted in the analysis of data that were collected. Descriptive statistics and content analysis were employed to analyse the data. The descriptive statistics that were used included frequency and percentage distribution tables. These helped to give clarity and understanding to the findings of the study. Descriptive statistical analysis involves the description of a particular group. No conclusions are extended beyond the group and any similarity to those outside the group cannot be assumed. Descriptive statistical analysis limits generalisation to the particular group of individuals observed (Best & Kahn, 1998). Interview data from open-ended
questions were transcribed and analysed based on emerging themes. In addition, verbatim expressions of respondents were used where applicable.

4.1 Results and Discussions

This begins with an analysis of the biographical data of respondents and then follows with the analysis of responses to the research questions. In all, a total of 28 Ghanaian male fashion designers who ply their trade in the Cape Coast Metropolis were involved in the study.

4.2 Demographic Information of Respondents

Information for this section includes age, level of educational qualification, years of experience in the fashion industry and the types of garment produced by the respondents.

Table 1: Mean Age of Respondents in Years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>34.24</td>
<td>8.288</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field survey, 2015

From the table, there was an indication that the average age of the respondents was about 34 years with a standard deviation of 8.29. The results imply that the males in the fashion industry were dominated by young adults. The youth have the strength and capacity to produce more and improve their production skills and standards.

Table 2: Educational Background of the Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Freq</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Junior Secondary</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>39.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Sch.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior High School</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field survey, 2015

According to the result in Table 2, 39.3 % of the respondents which is 11 out of 28 were JHS graduates, seven (25%) had their highest education at the Senior Secondary Level. Eight (28.6%) out of the 28 respondents had their formal education to the middle school level. However, all the 28 (100%) respondents indicated that they went through apprenticeship
training. During the interview the respondents complained that the apprenticeship training takes too long, that is, three (3) years before one graduates. This result agrees with Sonneenberg (2012) findings’ in a survey on apprenticeship system which disclosed that the system is the most important institution for training and is undertaken primarily by those with JHS or lower levels of education.

With regards to professional qualifications of the respondents, 25 (89.3%) of the respondents said they had not attained any professional qualification after the establishment of their business or shop. This is in agreement with the finding of Palmer (2009) that Ghana has a highly developed apprenticeship system where young men and women undertake sector-specific private training in skills that are generally utilised in the informal sector. Presently, non-formal apprenticeship training accounts for 80-90% of all skill training in Ghana compared with 5-10% from public training institutes and 10-15% from Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO’s).

Two (7.1%) of the respondents had attained Secondary School Examination Certificate through worker’s college, whiles one (3.6%) of the respondents had attained the NVTI Intermediate and Advanced Certificates in Fashion. This agrees with what Palmer (2009) said that the initial NVTI’s apprenticeship training programme was focused on people who are already employed in the industry; these industry employees came for centre training and went back to their employers.

Table 3: Respondents Years of Work Experience in the Fashion Industry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>12.38</td>
<td>8.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field survey, 2015

Table 3 shows the years the respondents had spent working in the fashion industry. From the Table, it can be observed that on the average, years of work experience the respondents had spent in the fashion industry was about 12.4 years with a standard deviation of 8.61. Their years of experience were found to range from 3 to 35 years. This shows that the respondents were well experienced in the industry.

Table 4: Types of Garments Produced by the Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Garment Types</th>
<th>Freq</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Garments for both Sexes</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>42.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In terms of types of garments produced by the respondents, it was found that the respondents specialized in the making of different clothing ranging from men’s wear, ladies’ wear to children’s wear, Muslim’s Talabi and embroidery (Table 4) and concentrated on the production of garments they specialized on. It was observed that 12(42.6%) of the respondents specialized in the making of garments for both sexes (ladies and gentlemen’s wear). All the 12 respondents who specialized in the making of clothes for both sexes expressed that they could not make jackets. Eight of the respondents were experts in men’s wear only, with four being experts in children’s clothing. In addition, three of the respondents were identified to be experts in embroidery, while one was an expertise in Muslim’s Talabi.

Table 5: Reasons for the Respondents’ Choice of Career

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Freq</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal interest and admiration of works of others</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>57.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attracted by designs worn by others</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family business</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-motivated</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial difficulty</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inability to continue education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 28 100.0

Source: Field survey, 2015

From table 5, it was found that 57.1% of the respondents chose the garment production career because of personal interest and admiration of the profession and fashion designers. Five (17.9%) of the respondents stated that they were motivated by the works of others. Three (10.7%) of the respondents said that garment production was their family business hence they
took the career to ensure continuity. Two (7.1%) of the respondents were self-motivated, since they wanted to establish their own businesses. One of the respondents indicated that he chose the career as a result of financial difficulty, whiles another respondent explained that his reason was due to his inability to further his education.

4.3 Respondents’ Source of Skill Training

This part deals with the source of skill training for males in the fashion industry. The information sought under this section included reasons for their choice of career, factors influencing choice, source of skill training, and years the respondents spent in skill training.

Table 6: Respondents’ Choices of Place for Apprenticeship Training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Freq</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cape Coast</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>89.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accra</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nkwakwa</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field survey, 2015

It came out from Table 6 that majority of the respondents, 89.3% studied the fashion profession at Cape Coast. One of the respondents (3.6%) mentioned that he learnt his profession in Accra; another (3.6%) stated that he learnt the profession at Nkwakwa in the Eastern Region; whiles another one also stated Nigeria as where he learnt his trade.

Table 7: Factors that Influenced the Respondents’ Choices of Place for Apprenticeship Training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Freq</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experience and popularity of the master</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>53.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disciplinary measures taken by the master</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to ensure quality training</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family influence</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of machines at the training workshop</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field survey, 2015

It came out in this study that all the respondents learnt how to make clothes through apprenticeship training, it would be important to identify their reasons for choosing their
places of training. This agrees with Sonneenberg’s (2012) findings in a survey on apprenticeship system which disclosed that the system is the most important institution for training and is undertaken primarily by those with JHS or lower levels of education. From Table 7 shows that fifteen (53.6%) of the respondents mentioned that they chose their place of training because of the experience and popularity of their masters. Six (21.4%) of the respondents chose their place of training because of the disciplinary measures taken by the master tradesmen in the training, six (21.4%) other respondents said they chose their place of training because of family influence, while, one of the respondents explained that he chose his place of training because of the machines available at his master’s place. From the above reasons it could be said that the respondents considered availability of equipment and personal qualities such as skillfulness, and ability of the master tradesmen to ensure workplace discipline which all enhance their training before choosing where to train.

This is in accordance with the recommendation of Kwami (Executive summary, 2002) that the government should ensure that academic and physical infrastructure in the polytechnics be expanded and improved to enable them discharge their role for which they have been set up. Workshop and laboratory facilities and equipment necessary for practical work should be provided.

Table 8: Factors that Influenced the Respondents’ Choices for form of skill Training

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Freq</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers at vocational institutes not skilful</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduates from vocational institutes not being able to establish after completion</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of equipment in vocational schools</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of financial support</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational schools being centres for women</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The need to maintain</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8 discloses respondents’ reasons for their choice of form of skill training. Eight (28.6%) of the respondents said they chose apprenticeship because the teachers at the vocational institutes were not skilful enough to handle practical lessons. These explained that “some of the students of the vocational institutions within the vicinity do bring their school work or practical assignments to us to be done”. One of them expressed the view that services of the established tailors and seamstresses should be employed at the vocational institutions to handle practical lessons while the trained instructors handle the theoretical lessons. The students graduate and enrol as apprentices before they could establish themselves in the business was expressed by seven (25%) of the respondents. The training institutions also lacked specialised machines like the embroidery and other machines needed for proper training as disclosed by four (14.3%) of the respondents. Four (14.3%) other respondents said they chose this form of training because of financial problems. Three (10.7%) of the respondents said they chose apprenticeship training because vocational institutions at their time were classified as “training centres for women”, whiles two (7.14%) of them also chose apprenticeship training with the explanation that they had family members who were master craftsmen in the clothing production business and could therefore train them for continuity of their family business. This clearly shows that male apprentices expect their master craftsmen to be skilful and knowledgeable before teaching or imparting onto others. The trainers at the institutes that train teachers for vocational schools should themselves be skilful and knowledgeable enough in order to train competent teachers in their areas of vocation, to enable the teachers train students for the industry. These results affirm Afeti’s (1991) findings that inadequate instructor training, obsolete training equipment and lack of instructional materials are some of the factors that combine to reduce the effectiveness of training in meeting the required knowledge and skills objectives. It also agrees with GNAT (2007), suggesting that the expansion of technical vocational education be translated into concrete action through the expansion of infrastructure, equipping the Technical Vocational Education Training Workshops and incorporation of entrepreneurial skills training through the collaboration of the industry, and that staff development should also be encouraged within the polytechnics.
5.1 Summary

The study revealed the following findings:

- Under the demographical information it was realized that the minimum age of the respondents was 24 years (7.1%), maximum age was 55 years (3.6%) while the mean age of the respondents was 34.2 years denoting a very youthful age for the respondents. Respondents who had mostly schooled up to the basic school level (67.9%).

- On the level of skill training the respondents had, the research revealed that all the respondents went through apprenticeship training and had attained the proficiency test certificates. However two (7.1%) of them in addition had gone through technical education while one (3.6%) had the NVTI certificate.

- Their reasons for choosing apprenticeship training were that: vocational schools were classified as training centres for girls (10.7%); training institutions lacked appropriate types and adequate number of equipment for proper training (14.3%); teachers in the vocational institutions were not skilful enough to handle practical lessons (8%); lack of funds for formal training (14.3%); family members were master craftsmen in the clothing production business and were capable of training them to sustain their family businesses (7.14%).

- Areas of specialization for the respondents were; the making of men’s wear (28.6%); ladies’ wear and children’s wear (14.3%), Muslim’s tablabi (3.6%); and embroidery (10.7%). Jacket making was a skill all of them lacked.

- That majority (89.3%) of the respondents had their apprenticeship training in Cape Coast and only one (3.6%) of them was trained outside Ghana in Nigeria.

- Factors considered by the respondents before they selected a master for apprenticeship training were: competency in the trade (53.6%); ability to maintain discipline (21.4%); and or availability of appropriate equipment in the workshop (3.6%).

5.2 Conclusions

The ages of the respondents were between 24 and 55 years which fall within the working class in Ghana. This shows an active group which contributes to the economic growth of the country. It was also found out that all the respondents had had formal education, which means they could have gone through Vocational Education for their skill training but decided...
to go through apprenticeship training due to various reasons. Their reasons were that the vocational schools and institutes were generally perceived to be training centres for women; they lacked resources such as equipment and qualified efficient teachers which the respondents considered to be important for skill training; thus apprenticeship was the most popular form of skill training among the male in the fashion industry. Though the respondents had specialized in the making of different clothing ranging from men’s wear, ladies’ wear to children’s wear, Muslim’s talabi and embroidery, they were unable to create new designs and make jackets but to remain in business and make money, in the fashion industry, practitioners have to be creative and be able to produce garments needed by clients. Nowadays, many working class men and women wear jackets. Hence having the skill for jacket making will be an advantage to these male garment producers.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions the researcher recommends the following:

- COVET and NVTI should come out with curriculum for apprenticeship training in fashion and run capacity building programmes for master craftsmen and women in order to make designing easier for those who acquire their skill through apprenticeship training.

- Conscious efforts should be made by the government and the Ministry in charge of Technical and Vocational institution to supply the Vocational institutions with appropriate and adequate equipment to make formal skill training attractive to the youth, especially men.

- The Ministry of Education and the COVET should ensure that instructors employed to train students in vocational institutions have the required skills to impact and help develop the skills of their students. COVET should put in place mechanisms to supervise the work of the instructors in vocational institutions.

- The polytechnics and other tertiary institutions offering Vocational Education should find means of running short courses for tailors and dressmakers to help up-grade their skills in designing and the making of tailored garments such as jackets.
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