A Capability Approach to the Well-Being of Informal Apprentices and Journeypersons in the Automotive Trade in Ghana

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Author's Declaration

I declare that, excerpt where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, that this thesis is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Nottingham or other institution for a degree, diploma or professional qualification.

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Abstract

Informal apprenticeship, although the oldest skills training institution, gained prominence in the education and development policy following the "discovery" of the informal economy in Ghana almost 50 years ago. In the wake of a decline in formal wage employment and high youth unemployment, it has been embraced as an avenue for preparing the youth for work in the informal economy, while serving as an instrument to improve its productivity. On the other hand, the literature suggests apprenticeship is poorly perceived by the youth.

Theoretically, informal apprenticeship sits firmly in the growth model of development as its utility is linked to its contribution to poverty reduction and growth. However, poverty is conceived narrowly, in terms of income. Using the capability approach to conceptualise poverty as capability deprivation, this study seeks to understand why young people enrol in apprenticeship, the capabilities they value and the extent of freedom they have to advance their capabilities.

The study draws on interviews with informal apprentices, journeypersons, and master craftspersons (MCPs) in the automotive trade in Ghana. Also, other stakeholders such as government officials and representatives of the Ghana National Association of Garages (GNAG) are interviewed. Participants are selected from Kumasi (the capital of the Ashanti Region) and Accra, which is the capital city of Ghana and the Greater Accra Region.

The study makes three key contributions to the literature on education and training. First, it brings fresh perspectives to the debate on the vocational aspirations of young people in Africa. A narrative approach adopted helps to understand the structural influences on young people's choices and the extent to which they engage with these, whilst challenging deficit views about them and informal apprenticeship.

Second, the study draws attention to the dimensions of capabilities or well-being freedoms that are valued by informal apprentices and journeypersons. This provides a holistic understanding of the different domains of well-being associated with informal apprenticeship. Also, it helps to focus discussion on the extent to which social arrangements expand the freedoms of apprentices and journeypersons to achieve well-being freedoms.

Lastly, this study contributes to the literature on gender in training. By focusing on male and females in the automotive trade in Ghana, gendered experiences are brought to the fore. The findings show that contrary to the often-structural way in which females' participation in male-dominated trades is perceived, females are critical of gender norms. On the other hand,

conditions of training and an enabling environment that supports their smooth transition from training to self-employment need attention.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

BECE	Basic Education Certificate Examination
CBT	Competency-Based Training
CCA-VET	Critical Capabilities Account of Vocational Education and Training
COTVET	Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training
GNAG	Ghana National Association of Garages
GoG	Government of Ghana
HDR	Human Development Report
ILO	International Labour Organisation
ITA	Informal Trade Associations
JSS	Junior Secondary School (now Junior High School)
MCPs	Master Craftspersons
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoELR	Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations
MoTI	Ministry of Trade and Industry
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
NACVET	National Coordinating Committee for Technical and Vocational Education and Training
NBSSI	National Board for Small-Scale Industries
NDC	National Democratic Congress
NFED	Non-Formal Education Division
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NTVETQF	National TVET Qualifications Framework
NVTI	National Vocational Training Institute
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment

RPL	Recognition of Prior learning
RQ	Research Question
SDF	Skills Development Fund
TUC	Trades Union Congress
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
VSP	Vocational Skills and Informal Sector Support Project, World Bank (1995 – 2001)
VTI	Vocational Training Institute
WEP	World Employment Programme

Chapter One: Introduction

Vocational skills training delivered in informal enterprises, known as informal apprenticeship, is the oldest and largest skills training provider in Sub-Saharan Africa. It is the primary means of labour market insertion for the majority of youths. In Ghana, it caters to the skills needs of about 85 per cent of the workforce (Ghana Statistical Service [GSS], 2019). While it predates the introduction and development of formal Technical and Vocational education and Training (TVET)[1] in Ghana, the latter has been largely pursued to the neglect of informal apprenticeship and its delivery environment.

In the colonial and post-colonial history of Ghana, school-based vocational provision has been central to the academic and policy debate on educational development. In the colonial period, it was seen as a major instrument for rural economic development and a solution to youth unemployment. It was assumed that vocationalised curricula will turn the aspirations of youth away from employment in the small modern sector towards manual and vocational self-employment. While this view has persisted throughout the post-colonial period, in the first two decades after Ghana's independence from British colonial rule in 1957, TVET was also deployed towards industrialisation and modernisation of the economy through manpower planning.

Against the background that schools could be used as instruments for economic development, Foster (1965b) published the most influential work in international and comparative education on the "Vocational School Fallacy in Development Planning". In this work, Foster (1965b) argues that vocational curricula cannot be used to change the aspirations of students towards vocational work, reduce unemployment and drive economic development. In Foster's view, the vocational aspirations of students are modelled after occupational rewards, which are lower for vocational occupations. Proposing a focus on general education at the basic level, Foster (1965b) argues that vocational training needs to take place outside of the formal education system, with support for those "forgotten men" and women in various forms of vocational activities (p. 157).

[1] The meaning of TVET as used in this study is defined in the section on explanation of terminologies

African governments and international development partners, including the World Bank which was the largest financier of vocationalisation were critical of Foster's argument (King, 1991). A case was made for vocationalisation of the curricula as it was believed that it would orient and prepare youths for self-employment, thus reducing unemployment. The World Bank's position on vocationalisation changed in late 1980 following a series of publications that showed very little impact of vocationalisation on the vocational attitudes and employment prospects of students (Psacharopoulos & Loxley, 1985). In addition, concerns were raised over its cost-effectiveness (Haddad, 1990).

Following the critical academic literature on vocationalisation, the World Bank moved to support general primary education (Lockhead, 1990). Among other reasons, this was motivated by evidence that showed a higher rate of return for primary education compared to other levels and forms of education (Psacharopoulos, 1985). Through the Education for All movement, global attention shifted towards primary education from the 1990s. This notwithstanding, vocationalisation remained popular among some African governments, most notably the Ghanaian government, as it pursued it alongside the expansion of basic education. For example, in 1987, the Junior Secondary School system was introduced, and pre-vocational courses such as local crafts, technical drawing and home economics were offered.

The expansion of basic education led to large numbers of school graduates, unemployment and concerns over the destination of these graduates. At the same time, neoliberal reforms including Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) had contributed to the reduction of formal sector jobs and growth of informal economic activities in Ghana. Prior to this, Hart's (1973) publication and the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) World Employment Programme (WEP) in the 1970s had drawn attention to the significance of the informal economy. The revisionist perspective of the informal economy contrasted earlier views that the informal economy is transient and will be absorbed upon increased economic growth or development. Consequently, micro and small enterprises, many of which were informal were conceived as the backbone of Africa's growth (International Labour Organisation [ILO], 1972).

Furthermore, publications by ILO's Vocational Training Branch on skills training in the informal economy and other academic studies drew attention to informal apprenticeship (Fluitman, 1989, 1992; Fluitman & Oudin, 1991; King, 1977; McLaughlin, 1979). These publications highlighted the limited capacity of formal training systems to cater to the needs

of the working population while emphasising the prevalence and relevance of skills gained in informal apprenticeship. On the other hand, a call was made for intervention to address the skills deficit that underpins low productivity work and poor quality of goods and services that are undertaken by skilled persons in the informal economy. These and evidence of the cost-effectiveness of skills gained in informal apprenticeship contributed to international and national policy convergence on the relevance of the informal economy and informal apprenticeship.

At the national level, informal apprenticeship features prominently in Ghana's TVET policy developed in 2004, after years of neglect. The policy is founded on three imperatives namely democratic, poverty and economic (Government of Ghana [GoG], 2004). The democratic imperative lies in expanding vocational education and training opportunities for young people. In the poverty reduction imperative, it is hoped that skills training will reduce income poverty. The economic imperative is underpinned by the need for a skilled workforce that can contribute to the country's industrialisation and global competitiveness. The productivity of the informal economy is linked to the quality of skills training in the economy (GoG, 2004). A review of the 2004 policy in 2012 affirmed the relevance of these goals (Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training [COTVET], 2012).

Amidst the policy interest in skills training in and for the informal economy are two main concerns. The first relates to the incongruity between the policy literature that promotes informal apprenticeship among the youth and academic literature on youths' perceptions of apprenticeship. In the academic literature, informal apprenticeship has a low social standing and is perceived poorly in society and among the youth as a second-best option, training for poor people, school-dropouts, "the less gifted and especially destined for school failures" (Haan, 2006, p. 229; Bortei-Doku et al., 2011). While drawing on more critical perspectives, such as the work of Foster (1965) and Psacharopoulos (1985) in the context of a renewed policy interest in TVET, McGrath (2011) argues for an urgent need for "a new wave of research…that seeks to develop new theoretical, methodological and moral understandings of the role played by VET" (p. 36). This is very important in the context of informal apprenticeship as will be highlighted in the next paragraph.

The second concern is the economic growth orthodoxy within which TVET is embedded. McGrath (2012) argues that this orthodoxy is inadequate for understanding the role of TVET in development. In this orthodoxy, the assumption is that skills training leads to productivity,

youth unemployment, poverty reduction and contributes to economic growth. Writing within this tradition, King and Palmer (2007, 2010) critique these correlations. They argue that skills training can contribute to productivity, poverty reduction and economic growth in the presence of a quality delivery environment and transformative environment for the utilisation of skills. The latter includes the right macro-economic context and enabling labour market that offers employment opportunities relevant for the utilisation of skills. Without consideration of these issues, the TVET for economic development account only mirrors the debate on the role of TVET during the colonial period.

Also, concerned with an increased interest in the poverty-reducing role of TVET, King and Palmer (2007) argue for the need to understand aspects of poverty or well-being associated with skills development from a multi-dimensional perspective. They argue that a multidimensional understanding of poverty means an assessment of the impact of training on income alone is insufficient. This is very important considering that poverty is conceptualised only in terms of income in the Ghanaian skills policy discourse. Besides the policy discourse, few studies on informal apprenticeship focus on the well-being of apprentices (Schraven et al., 2013; Donkor 2012). Most of the literature is interested in the skills needs or human capital development of artisans or apprentices due to associated effects on productivity, income generation and poverty (Haan, 2006; Johanson & Adams, 2004; Ayentimi et al., 2018). While these are very important goals, they provide a partial understanding of the role of informal apprenticeship.

Approaching this orthodoxy from a human development paradigm, McGrath (2012) argues that TVET is "grounded in an outmoded and inadequate development paradigm" (p. 625). Being critical of its economic focus and instrumental view of human lives and training, McGrath (2012) calls for an account of TVET that "draws more consciously on a rich stream of theoretical insights" (p. 625). Following his call, a strand of TVET literature has developed in the last decade that applies the human capability approach to researching TVET. On the other hand, the academic, international and national literature and discourse on skills training in and for the informal economy is out of date with theoretical developments in TVET. It is in response to the two concerns raised, that this study gains its mandate. Before the research questions are outlined, the theoretical framework of the study is introduced as this influences the framing of the study's research questions.

Theoretical Framework

This study is situated in the human development approach to development. It draws on strong structuration theory and the capability approach developed by Amartya Sen. The capability approach serves as the main framework for the study while strong structuration theory is drawn upon to supplement an inadequate account of the relationship between structure and agency in the capability approach.

The capability approach is a normative and evaluative framework for assessing states of affairs such as education and training and well-being. It provides the philosophical grounding for the human development paradigm which was legitimised by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) through its annual Human Development Report (HDR). The human development approach challenges conventional understanding of development as growth in Gross Domestic Product (GDP). While not arguing away the importance of economic growth, the human development approach is people-centred and argues that human beings need to be the primary focus of development. As a result, development is defined as "the process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy" or have reason to value (Sen, 1999, p. 3). Central to this process is the social, political and economic arrangements in society that constrain or expand the freedoms that individuals enjoy.

At the core of the capability approach are the key concepts of capability and functionings. Other normative concepts are discussed in detail in Chapter Four. Functionings describe the various beings and doings that are constitutive of a person's life. (Sen, 1995, p. 39). Functionings that a person manages to achieve provides information about his well-being and constitutes his achievements, whereas those that an individual has reason to value but are not achieved are valued functionings. Examples include being nourished, sheltered, being in training, being able to take part in the life of a community. On the other hand, capability refers to the "alternative combinations of [valued] functionings the person can achieve, and from which he or she can choose one collection" (Sen, 1993, p. 31). Capability is therefore the real freedom or opportunity to achieve well-being or functionings. Sen (2009) further distinguishes between opportunity and process aspect of freedom. Whereas opportunity freedom captures the opportunities that are available to a person, the process aspect pays attention to the process of choice and the agency involved in achieving different combinations of functionings (Sen, 2009).

The capability approach provides an alternative approach to understanding poverty as capability deprivation rather than "lowness of income" (Sen 1999, p. 88). Furthermore, it provides a normative basis for conceptualising the purpose of education and training in development. Whereas in the growth paradigm, TVET's contribution lies in the development of the human capital needed for work and the economy, in the human development approach, its role lies in the expansion of human capabilities, which includes human capital development. This broadens the role of TVET beyond its narrow focus. As an evaluative framework, the approach requires that social arrangements be assessed in the extent to which they expand or constrain the capabilities of individuals. On the other hand, the capability approach is widely critiqued as lacking an adequate account of structure needed to understand how capabilities are constituted socially.

To address this weakness of the capability approach, strong structuration theory has been drawn upon to supplement the capability approach. Strong structuration theory is a revision of Anthony Giddens' structuration theory by Rob Stones. It provides an account of structure and agency that is useful in conceptualising opportunity and agency freedom in the capability approach. At the core of strong structuration theory is the notion of duality of structure which postulates that structures are both the medium and the outcome of practices (Stones, 2005). Analytically, the duality of structure is divided into four aspects namely structural context, internal structures, active agency and outcomes. The structural context consists of external structures or position-practice relations that form the conditions of action of individuals. Internal structures are knowledgeability structures that constitute the frames of reference of individuals and are drawn upon in their practices or actions. Active agency refers to the ways in which agents either "routinely and pre-reflexively, or strategically and critically draw on her [or their] internal structures" into their conduct (Stones, 2005, p. 85). Lastly, outcomes are the effects of actions or practices on structures or other outcomes such as the achievement of capabilities.

Strong structuration theory's theorisation of the structural context shows that individuals are embedded in a network of position-practice relations. Consequently, their opportunity freedom emanates from their social positioning and position-practices of others to whom they are relationally connected. Secondly, the concepts of internal structures and active agency bring unto the capability approach the understanding that the freedom of agency and choice that individuals have to choose between different combinations of functionings are predicated

on the extent to which they either pre-reflexively or critically draw on the internal structures. This helps to account for the structural and agentic influences on conduct enacted towards the achievement of functionings. Figure 4 in Chapter Four presents a framework developed from a synthesis of strong structuration and the capability approach which helps to conceptualise capability as opportunity and agency freedom. The next section presents the study's research questions.

Research Questions

In response to King and Palmer's (2007) call for an understanding of aspects of poverty or well-being that are associated with vocational skills training, this study conceptualises well-being through the capability approach. In view of this, the main question that the study asks is: What freedoms (opportunity and agency freedom) do informal apprentices and journeypersons have to be and to do what they have reason to value (valued functionings)?

This question is approached with two preceding questions. First, to understand freedoms that informal apprentices have, to achieve valued functionings, necessitates an understanding of their valued functionings. As a result, the second research question asks: What freedoms do informal apprentices' and journeypersons' value? This question aims to understand their state of well-being or achieved functionings, the lives they manage to lead, and how this informs the functionings they value to achieve various beings and doings that are important to them and central to human flourishing. Following an established tradition in the education and capability literature, a list of capabilities is developed. This forms the focal point for answering the main research question.

Second, while valued functionings of informal apprentices are central to answering the main research question, an adequate account of their valued functionings also requires an understanding of the background of the apprentices and their reasons for enrolling in informal apprenticeship. This question is premised on the view that behind the characterisation of apprentices as school failures and poor people are complex stories or events that shape those lives and their enrolment in apprenticeship. As a result, it is important to understand these events and how they are mediated agentially. Through this question, the study aims to contribute to the debate on perceptions of young people about informal apprenticeship. The three research questions are outlined below.

RQ1 - Why do young people enrol in informal apprenticeship?

RQ2 - What freedoms do informal apprentices and journeypersons value?

RQ3 - To what extent do they have opportunity and agency freedom to achieve valued functionings?

Methodology

This is a qualitative study whose methodological approach is informed by the ontological and epistemological assumptions embedded in strong structuration theory. The study's data set consist of interviews with a sample of 50 participants. Of this sample, seventeen (17) are stakeholders in the Ghana National Association of Garages, government ministries, departments and agencies whose position-practices bear on the freedoms of informal apprentices.

Also, seventeen (17) are informal apprentices, six (6) are journeypersons and ten (10) are MCPs. Informal apprentices and journeypersons were selected from the automotive trade. Explanation of the choice of this trade is provided in Chapter Five. The initial research design targeted informal apprentices. On the other hand, journeypersons were included due to the difficulties encountered in recruiting female apprentices in the automotive trade. They were allowed to recount their training experiences and reasons for enrolling in the trade. The inclusion of journeypersons generated useful data for the study, especially in the area of transition from training to employment. These participants were recruited from three mechanic clusters and other work sites in Kumasi (the capital of the Ashanti Region) and Accra, which is the capital city of Ghana and the Greater Accra Region.

Data for the study was gathered during two periods. These were preceded by a pilot study which was undertaken in December 2017 in Accra. The first set of data was gathered between 22nd June and 31st August 2018. The second round of data gathering took place between November 2019 and January 2020. The data comprised interviews with officials of the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI), Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations (MoELR) and the Trades Union Congress (TUC). The second round of data gathering was required to obtain further information relevant to understanding the opportunity freedoms of informal apprentices and journeypersons. The interviews were conducted in three languages, English and two Ghanaian languages namely, Twi and Fanti. All the interviews were translated and transcribed into English before analysis.

The motivation to undertake the study was borne out of a personal encounter with informal apprentices at my local hairdresser in Accra. Interactions with the informal apprentices revealed the intimidation they felt in encounters with English speaking clients. As the young ladies expressed the desire to acquire proficiency in English, I pondered on other aspects of their lives that are not known or taken for granted in society. Learning of the capability approach as a student of development and from Powell (2014) and McGrath and Powell's (2015) application of the approach to TVET, I was inspired to undertake this study. As a researcher with no professional experience in TVET, my knowledge of apprenticeship and TVET throughout this study, has been mainly gained through the literature, the data obtained during the fieldwork and from contacts I developed at COTVET during a month's internship. I am therefore deeply grateful to all the research participants and stakeholders who shared their professional work in this area with me. Further details on my positionality, including experiences at research sites in Accra and Kumasi, as a young female researcher, is provided in Chapter Five.

Importance of Research

As highlighted in the context, informal apprenticeship is the largest system of skills training in Sub-Saharan Africa and very prevalent in West Africa. It is very high on the international policy agenda due to its capacity to equip youths with practical skills relevant for self-employment. Since the earlier wave of academic research on informal apprenticeship by anthropologists and consultants, there has been very few academic outputs on informal apprenticeship (Fluitman, 1992; King, 1977; Peil, 1970; Callaway, 1964; McLaughlin, 1979; Lave, 1977; Powell, 1995; Haan, 2006; McGrath et al., 1995). The last comprehensive study was the work of Palmer (2007a). As a result, it is important to bring fresh evidence on informal apprenticeship. In contributing fresh evidence on informal apprenticeship, this study makes an important contribution to the field of education and training, both theoretically and empirically.

Empirically, the evidence generated critically engages with and builds on some of the earlier work on informal apprenticeship. Its main contribution relates to how it draws on the voices of informal apprentices and journeypersons while keeping a focus on the training system. This helps to understand and evaluate the system from the perspective of its main beneficiaries. Drawing on a sample of male and female apprentices and journeypersons in the automotive trade in Ghana, the study contributes to the scant literature on females'

participation and well-being in male-dominated trades. The information generated in this study supports the evidence base for upgrading informal apprenticeship as most of these are based on the perspectives of "experts". It also provides a basis for further academic and policy debate on informal apprenticeship.

Theoretically, the study extends the capability approach, as it has been applied to formal and non-formal contexts to informal apprenticeship. Applying the capability approach to research on informal apprenticeship enriches our understanding of the human development of young people in the largest skills training system in Sub-Saharan Africa. It, therefore, contributes to the growing literature on the capability approach and TVET. Besides its contribution to this literature, it also makes a theoretical contribution to ILO's decent work agenda. For the ILO, decent work in informal apprenticeship is essential to its agenda of promoting decent work in the informal economy. While not drawing explicitly on the capability approach, the principle of decent work aligns with the central tenets of the capability approach. For example, ILO states that "decent work sums up the aspirations of people in their working lives" and it embodies "equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men" (2015, para.1). Given this, Sehnbruch et al. (2015) are right to suggest that the concept of decent work could benefit from being foregrounded in the capability approach, as it has developed institutionally within the ILO.

Outline of the Chapters

The thesis consists of nine chapters, including this chapter (Chapter One) which provides an overview of the rationale for the study, the theoretical framework, the research questions, methodology and importance of the study.

Chapter Two situates the study in its context. It traces the historical development of informal apprenticeship and examines the extent to which the colonial and post-colonial state has engaged with the system of training. The engagement of the state with informal apprenticeship is examined through its development of formal general and vocational education and training as well as economic reforms or developments that impacted the micro and small-scale industry in which informal artisans are located. The chapter is divided into two uneven sections. The first and shorter section focuses on the engagement of the colonial state with informal apprenticeship. The section ends with a description of the features of informal apprenticeship at the end of British Colonial rule in Ghana, formerly known as Gold Coast. The second and longer section examines the post-colonial state's engagement with

informal apprenticeship from the period between 1951 and 2016. The chapter concludes with key messages that emerge from the discussion.

Chapter Three is divided into three sections. The first section provides an overview of events in international education and development that led to the recognition of the informal economy and informal apprenticeship. The second section discusses knowledge that has been generated on informal apprenticeship along four key features of informal apprenticeship. The third section engages with the TVET for economic growth orthodoxy and the human capital theory within which much of the academic and policy literature on informal apprenticeship is framed. The chapter concludes with four key messages from the review that inform the study's research questions.

Chapter Four discusses the two theoretical frameworks within which the study is framed. The discussion begins with the capability approach and associated normative concepts which guide its application in this study. This is followed by a review of the capability approach and TVET literature and its contribution to TVET. The weaknesses of the capability approach are then presented, followed by a discussion of strong structuration theory and its contribution to the operationalisation of the capability approach in this study. The chapter ends with a synthesis of the capability approach and strong structuration theory and the study's research questions.

Chapter Five provides a detailed account of the methodological approach that was used to answer the study's research questions. The chapter is divided into seven sections. The first and second sections address the ontological and epistemological assumptions that underpin the study. This is followed by a discussion of the debate on the selection of capabilities and the position taken in the study. In the fourth section, the study's research design is presented. This includes the pilot study, methods used, stages of data gathering, sample, access to participants, a description of the research sites and ethical considerations. In the fifth section, the data analysis process is discussed. My positionality is presented in the sixth section, followed by data presentation in the seventh. The chapter is then concluded.

Chapter Six presents explanations offered by male and female informal apprentices, journeypersons and master craftswomen for enrolling in informal apprenticeship. It introduces the participants whose narratives are further analysed in subsequent chapters. Drawing on strong structuration theory as an interpretive framework, the chapter analyses both the enabling and constraining conditions of action of the participants, their internal

structures and most importantly their conduct which is based on their critical or pre-reflexive interpretations of these conditions. To highlight their perspectives about informal apprenticeship, the themes along which the discussion of the chapter are focussed puts the light on informal apprenticeship.

Chapter Seven discusses a list of capabilities that are valued by informal apprentices and journeypersons. In all, eight dimensions of capabilities are presented. The list was primarily developed from interviews with informal apprentices and journeypersons. Their data was supplemented with the interviews from other stakeholders, policy texts and information from the skills literature.

Chapter Eight presents an analysis of freedoms that informal apprentices and journeypersons have to achieve valued functionings. The discussion is organised along the dimensions of capabilities identified in Chapter Seven. For each dimension of capability, the structural context which includes the material environment, and the position-practices of networked agents is analysed. This is followed by an analysis of the conduct of informal apprentices and journeypersons as it emanates from the extent to which the pre-reflexively or critically draw on their internal structures.

The study is concluded in Chapter Nine. The chapter discusses the contribution of the study to the skills literature and the capability approach and TVET literature. This is followed by key findings drawn from the study's three research questions. The central argument of the study is then presented as well as its policy implications. Finally, the limitations of the study are outlined.

Explanation of Terminologies

Informal economy – In the academic literature, the widely accepted definition of the informal economy relates to economic activities that are outside of the regulatory framework of the state (Chen, 2012; ILO, 2002). This includes all labour, including informal apprentices, own-account workers in self-employment, casual workers, wage employees and family helpers who are not covered by labour regulations (ILO, 2002). This definition is an extension of the earlier definition of the informal sector which referred to economic activities in unincorporated or unregistered enterprises (ILO, 1993).

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) – There is no single definition of MSMEs, and definitions vary per country. This study adopts the definition of micro, small and medium

enterprises used in Ghana. The definition accounts for the size of the enterprise, its turnover and fixed assets. In view of this, micro-enterprises are enterprises that employ up to five persons, with both turnover and assets that are each below US$10,000. Fixed assets exclude land and buildings. Small enterprises are enterprises that employ between six and thirty people with turnover and assets that are below US$100,000. Medium enterprises are enterprises that employ between 30 to 99 persons with turnover and assets that are below US$1,000,000 (Ministry of Trade & Ministry of Business Development, 2019). MSMEs that operate outside of the regulatory framework of the state are referred to as informal enterprises.

Vocationalisation – Vocationalisation refers to the incorporation of vocational and technical subjects into primary and secondary school curricula. In this study, vocationalisation is used interchangeably with school-based vocational education and diversified education.

TVET – Technical and Vocational Education and Training refers to education and training that is oriented towards the world work. The meaning of TVET varies in different contexts. In this study, TVET is used to refer to post-primary education and training that is delivered in formal and informal settings. The definition encompasses a range of providers namely public and private. The latter includes non-for-profit and profit providers. Where distinctions need to be made about a particular form of provision, specific terminology is used for clarity.

Informal apprenticeship – Informal apprenticeship refers to a system of learning a trade or craft under the guidance of a master craftsperson in a micro or small enterprise in the informal economy.

Formal apprenticeship – Formal apprenticeship refers to on-the-job training that takes place in formal enterprises and is regulated by the state. In Ghana, formal apprenticeships also encompass pre-employment training that is run by the National Vocational Training Institute, and which is guided by a structured curriculum.

Journeyperson – Journeyperson is used in this study to refer to an individual who has completed an informal apprenticeship training and works independently on contract jobs, or alongside a master craftsperson.

Chapter Two: The State and Informal Apprenticeship

This chapter discusses the colonial and post-colonial state's concern for and engagement with informal apprenticeship and the small-scale industry where many artisans are located. It explores the varying levels of support for informal apprenticeship. The chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section discusses the economic and social developments in the Gold Coast before and during the colonial period and the extent to which these shaped the development of Ghana's education and training system, including informal apprenticeship. The section ends with a description of the state of informal apprenticeship at the end of this period (15th century to 1951).

The second section focuses on the post-colonial state's engagement and it is organised around Ghana's political regimes from 1951 to 2016. For the regime analysis, I examine the policies, initiatives and reforms that bear on informal apprenticeship and the training environment. While the focus is on local policies and practices of governments, it is important to note that these are sometimes in-situ applications of international policies and agenda which are discussed in Chapter Three. Conclusions are drawn from these discussions at the end of the chapter.

The Colonial State and Informal Apprenticeship

Informal apprenticeship is a system of training that is centred around production. Learning occurs through observation of and practice with knowledgeable practitioners. Learning is a gradual process and an apprentice is expected to first familiarise him/herself with the social context of learning, tools and equipment used in production, undertake peripheral tasks related to the craft or trade and then master substantive elements of the trade over time.

The features of the apprenticeship system, such as the process of recruiting apprentices, rules and resources, linkage with formal education and the process and object of production have changed along the socio-economic development of Ghana. While these changes have occurred at various stages in the country's development, the period between the 16th and mid-20th century was decisive. In the next section, I briefly discuss key events during this period in a chronological order and the extent to which these shaped informal apprenticeship and the formal education and training system. I begin with the introduction of formal education or schooling in the Gold Coast.

The earliest form of schooling in the Gold Coast is reported to have begun in the Portuguese Castle[2] at Elmina in 1529 (McWilliam & Kwamena-Poh, 1975, p. 17). Other European merchants namely the Danes and English also operated castle schools at Christianborg and Cape Coast from 1644 and 1751 respectively (Foster, 1965b). Educational provision was limited to reading, writing and arithmetic and provided to mixed-race children and some of the children of wealthy African merchants (Kimble, 1963). Expansion of education to other areas of the Gold Coast only began upon the arrival of European missionaries in the mid-nineteenth century. Two missions that were prominent in educational provision were the Basel and Wesleyan Mission. The missions arrived in the Gold Coast in 1828 and 1835 respectively.

While the Wesleyan education was mainly literary consisting of reading, writing and arithmetic, the Basel Mission emphasised character, vocational and agricultural training, in addition to reading, writing and arithmetic. This was different from the education provided by the merchants in the castle schools, which only focussed on reading, writing and arithmetic. In addition, the Basel mission concentrated its activities in the interior part of the country while the Wesleyan mission spread education in the coastal area (McWilliam & Kwamena-Poh, 1975).

Prior to this period, the family was the main socialising unit and education was enmeshed in other forms of social life such as religion, work, and play. Individuals learned about themselves, societal values, and their environment through interactions with others and from participation in the activities of their communities. Education in traditional society permeated all aspects of social life and occurred throughout the life of an individual, from childhood to adulthood. It aimed at developing character, emotional, physical and intellectual abilities of its members (Fafunwa, 1974, p. 20). Vocational training formed an integral part of traditional education and this was organised for some distinct roles, such as drumming, hunting, basket weaving, pottery, goldsmithing and carving (McWilliam & Kwamena-Poh, 1975). Training in these trades was gendered and reflected the gendered division of labour in society. For example, females received training in basketry and pottery

[2] Portuguese merchants were the first Europeans to arrive at the Gold Coast in 1471

while drumming, goldsmithing and carving were reserved for males. The crafts that existed cohered with the stage of development.

Also, in traditional society, social status and mobility were attained through ascription or descent, that is the lineage one hailed from. Opportunities for political and social positions were based on one's age, sex and lineage membership (Foster, 1965a). Education, occupation, and wealth were not criteria for social mobility (Foster, 1965a).

Through missionary education, new trades such as carpentry, masonry, knitting, and sewing were introduced in the Gold Coast (Quartey-Paafio, 1914; Peil, 1970) The trades that existed in the Gold Coast were thought to be inadequate. For example, the Basel missionaries are reported to have stated that "the local women do not know anything about sewing" and "apart from smiths and basket weavers there are no distinct professions in the Gold Coast" (Koonar, 2014, pp. 546-547). The setting in which the Basel Mission delivered its vocational education differed from the indigenous mode of skills training. In the areas where they operated, settlements known as Salem were created on the outskirts of town. It was in these settlements that converts were housed, received religious and skills training (Addo-Fening, 2008). It was believed that separating new converts from their kin relations, roles or social context will enable them to lead Christian lives and save them from participating in traditional activities considered paganist. This approach partly contributed to what became known later as school-based vocational education. Provision of education by the missionaries was however an offshoot of their primary occupation of proselytisation until the emergence of the colonial state[3] in 1900 and its partnership with them in educational provision.

Prior to British colonial rule, formal education had begun to function as a form of social differentiation in the Gold Coast (Foster, 1965a). It offered opportunities for the acquisition of wage-employment in European castles and commercial establishments. Opportunities for wage employment in these establishments became attractive to youths, who aspired to education for this purpose. Education was therefore perceived as a route out of rural

[3] British colonial rule in Gold Coast began in the early twentieth century after the defeat of the Asantes in the 1900 Sagrenti war and annexation of the Northern territories in 1902. However British influence in the Gold Coast dates to the Bond of 1844, an agreement between the British and the Fanti chiefs. This "gave the British the right to administer the first essentials of a constituted community namely the protection of individuals and of property" (Danquah, 1957, p. 23).

agriculture and manual work (Foster, 1965a). Foster notes that this further exacerbated its demand and perceived correlation with occupational mobility or income.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the economy of the Gold Coast consisted mainly of trade in rubber, gold, and palm oil, manufactured imports such as textiles from Manchester, spirits, hardware, provisions, guns and gunpowder, earthenware, clothing, etc. (Ninsin, 1991, p. 10). There were fewer employment opportunities for school graduates in European commercial companies, mission schools and castles. On the other hand, the graduates produced by the schools outnumbered the employment opportunities available. This led to concerns about the type of educational provision in the Colony (McWilliam & Kwamena-Poh, 1975). While several recommendations for the provision of vocational education and training were made by different governors of the Gold Coast, it was in 1923 that efforts to provide vocational education and training increased.

In 1923, an Advisory Committee on Native Education in British Tropical African Dependencies was constituted. Consequently, an education policy, with substantial content on vocational education, for British tropical territories was published in 1925. The development of this policy was influenced by two main reports of the Phelps Stokes Fund. The Fund was an American philanthropic trust involved in the education of blacks in the United States of America (USA). In 1922, the Fund embarked on an investigation of education in Africa, motivated by dissatisfaction with the educational provision in African colonies after the first world war (Jones & Phelps-Stokes Fund, 1922). An education suited to the needs of Africa was recommended based on the model of Tuskegee and Hampton's industrial education for Africans in the South of America. The recommendations reflected Jones' four essentials of education which were (1) knowledge and mastery of hygiene and health; (2) knowledge and mastery of the local physical environment and agriculture; (3) knowledge and mastery of decent and comfortably domestic life and (4) knowledge and mastery of art and recreation (1926). The vision of education in Africa was outlined as follows:

> Education should be adapted to the mentality, aptitudes, occupations and traditions of the various peoples, conserving as far as possible all sound and healthy elements in the fabric of their social life; adapting them where necessary to change circumstances and progressive ideas, as an agent of natural growth and evolution. Its aim should be to render the individual more

> efficient in his or her condition of life, whatever it may be, and to promote the advancement of the community as a whole through the improvement of agriculture, the development of native industries, the improvement of health, the training of the people in the management of their own affairs, and the inculcation of true ideals of citizenship and service… (Advisory Committee on Native Education in British Tropical African Dependencies, 1925, p. 4).

The type of education recommended in the policy generated many reactions. Among these include notions that it was an attempt to keep the African in his place, to provide inferior education to its peoples (Berman, 1971) and to control higher education (D'Souza, 1975). However, Kallaway (2009) argues that "it was a systematic attempt to get community development, medical care and education onto the agenda of the mission churches and the British Colonial Office from the 1920s" (p. 234). This interpretation points to the underdevelopment of the Colony and the extent to which vocational education was seen as a tool for social and economic transformation. Formal education had already structured occupational opportunities and rewards in the Gold Coast by providing access for school graduates to secure wage jobs and status in society. It is therefore difficult to ascertain the extent to which education could have transformed the economy, and changed the vocational aspirations of young people, without concomitant investments in the economy. It was in this context that Foster published the most influential publications in International and Comparative Education on "Education and Social Change in Ghana" and the "Vocational School Fallacy". Foster's thesis will be discussed in Chapter Three.

Following the policy, attempts were made at structural changes in the economy, in addition to the development of TVET. Under the Governorship of Gordon Guggisberg, from 1919 to 1925, a ten-year development plan was devised. Among the developments that took place during this period included the development of infrastructure, namely the Takoradi Harbour, rails and roads and medical facilities. In education and training, he established Achimota College as a model TVET institution in 1927, four trade schools and technical institutes which provided training in engineering, surveying, and other technical courses (Agbodeka, 1972). Apprenticeship schemes were also organised in public works and other departments. These provided opportunities for TVET students to acquire practical experience while also contributing to development.

Expansion of vocational and technical education in the 1920s amounted to large numbers of graduates, leading to graduate unemployment (Foster, 1965a). Unemployment among TVET graduates revealed that the problem was not with the schools and the curriculum but with structural weaknesses in the economy (Foster, 1965a). It also uncovered the belief of the colonialists that TVET by itself is sufficient to drive young people into employment or self-employment in their villages. For example, it was stated in a description of the apprenticeship system of the Gold Coast that "the original idea when the schools were formed was that the boys should go back to their villages and improve conditions there and not necessarily become wage-earners" (Colonial Labour Advisory Committee, 1943, para. 99). On the other hand, the vocational aspirations of school graduates were directed towards wage employment (Foster, 1965a). Demand for general education outpaced vocational education.

Apart from the development of formal TVET, not much is known about informal apprenticeship, the colonial government's engagement with informal apprenticeship and the local crafts industry within which most training occurred. Regarding the latter, Ninsin (1989) and Agbodeka (1972) argue that the extractive nature of colonial development and the Colonial Office's laissez-faire attitude towards indigenous production led to the collapse of small-scale industries. Ingham (2005) argues that colonial support for local industries was absent and there was no deliberate attempt by the colonial government to support local small-scale industries (p. 49).

With respect to training, it could be argued that the majority of it occurred informally, in household productions and craft industries, some of which were linked to the Asante Kingdom. These crafts industries which were nurtured by the wealthy Asante State assembled craftsmen from areas of conquest (Arhin, 1981, 1990). They served both the Asante Kingdom, through the stoolholders' market and the rest of the population through the mass market (Latorre, 1978 as cited in Ball, 1997). Examples of these industries include cloth weaving in Bonwire, cloth dyeing in Ntonso, pottery in Pakrono, woodworking in Ahwia, goldsmithing and metalworking in Breman and Adum (Arhin 1990, p. 528). Remnants of these can still be found in these areas. Occupational training in these trades was restricted to youths of the specialists' kin although outsiders were occasionally allowed to learn. Apprentices who were trained lived and worked alongside their masters during and after completion of their training. As part of the agreement, it was the obligation of the master to accommodate the apprentice and provide all basic necessities such as food, clothing and

shelter. It is plausible that most of the apprentices were not formally educated as education was limited to few areas in the Colony.

Formal education, training, and employment in the Gold Coast led to a diversification of crafts or trades. Some workers in state-owned railways, public works, posts and telegraphs and marine departments of the colonialists and large expatriate firms exited into self-employment (McLaughlin, 1979). These became "the first private wayside mechanics, welders, auto-electricians, and auto body rebuilders" (McLaughlin, 1979, p. 30). These trades were distinguished as modern trades and self-employed tradesmen or craftspersons began to train young people in these trades for a fee (Peil, 1970). Recruitment was not limited to kin-relations. With the payment of fees, masters were not necessarily obliged to accommodate apprentices and be fully responsible for their basic needs even though the majority of them assumed these responsibilities (Peil, 1970). In addition, apprentices were given something little for upkeep, although Peil (1970) notes this was barely sufficient. Training was backed by an oral agreement between the family of the apprentice and the master craftsperson. Completion of training took between three to four years for most of the trades (Peil, 1970). The end of training was marked by a ceremony. Changes or stability of the features of the informal apprenticeship system after decades of post-colonial development and research are examined in Chapters Three and Eight of the thesis.

Having provided an overview of informal apprenticeship in Ghana and the contribution of missionaries and the colonial government to education and training in the Gold Coast, the rest of the chapter examines post-colonial governments' policies and reforms with a focus on the extent of support or neglect of informal apprenticeship and how apprenticeship is conceived within governments' education and training policies. Before I turn onto the post-colonial period, a few points need to be made. First, the issue of vocational versus general education played out throughout the post-colonial period. It was central to almost all educational reforms in the country. While these are discussed, the focus will be on post-colonial governments' engagement or attention to informal apprenticeship.

The Post-Colonial State and Informal Apprenticeship in Ghana

Ghana gained independence from the British in 1957. This was however preceded by power-sharing between Dr Kwame Nkrumah's Convention People's Party (CPP) and the colonial government in 1951. The nationalist movement which was at the fore of the fight for independence had been dissatisfied with the economic and social development pursued by the

colonial government. For the first independent government, there was an urgent need to redress the economic and social injustices and structures that had been created by British colonial rule and centuries of European occupation in the Gold Coast. To confront neo-colonial economic domination, Dr Nkrumah adopted statist policies to compete with foreign capital in the country. He was a socialist who believed in the utilisation of the state machinery for development.

Era of Rapid Expansion of Education and Industrialisation (1951-1966)

In 1951, Dr Nkrumah launched an accelerated development plan for the country. In this plan, education was to be expanded at all levels. Primary education was made free in 1952 and compulsory in 1961. More vocational and technical institutes were also established, in addition to a college of technology in Kumasi. The accelerated development plan for education was followed by a seven-year development plan from 1963 to 1970. In this plan, the government laid out its agenda for economic and social development. Economic growth was to be founded on investment in agriculture and industry (GoG, 1964). TVET was considered instrumental to the economic development of the country as it was stated that "education should have the function of teaching the population the specific skills that are required to produce the goods and services needed by the economy" (GoG, 1964, p. 141).

Also, the government sought to organise the different types of training that existed. During this period, there were four main training providers namely traditional trades/craft persons, vocational and technical institutes, and training schools of large private and public companies and departments (ILO, 1962). Each provided training in various trades or crafts considered relevant, with no uniform, standards, and coordination. It is stated that in most cases, contracts were not written, but oral which made their enforcement difficult (ILO, 1962, p. 614). ILO (1962) notes that although there were attempts to improve the training of apprentices, they were "inadequate and wasteful" (p. 614). Dr Nkrumah sought to coordinate all forms of training, including apprenticeship schemes in the country. The government asked for the support of ILO to take stock of all training in the country, training requirements and provide advice on how to systematise and establish an apprenticeship system. The main goals were to establish a legislative and administrative framework that will help develop the skills needed for industries, raise the existing level of skills of apprentices and tradesmen, establish standards for different industries, ensure uniformity of practices within and across different industries and coordinate skills training.

With the advice of ILO, an Advisory Board was set up in 1960. A national apprenticeship committee was also constituted to work out an Order for governing the conditions of apprenticeship for selected industries. In addition, an Apprentices Act 54 was passed in 1961 (ILO, 1962). This was the first legislation on apprenticeship in the country.

It is important to mention that the information that the invited ILO team gathered for its recommendations was obtained from formal firms that were visited. The government's priority was to organise apprenticeship in government departments (ILO, 1962). Training that occurred in small-scale industries in the informal economy was overlooked. I would argue that two factors could have contributed to this neglect. The first is the tenet of the development model that the development of education, agriculture, manufacturing, and increased investment in the country will gradually lead to the modernisation of the entire country. Unsophisticated or traditional ways of production and training will give way to modern ones and massive investment in education will support this development. As a result, the focus was on developing leading industries and the skills that will fuel them. The government's focus on skills for industrialisation meant that traditional trades and skills may not have been suitable for that purpose. Indeed, ILO (1962) stated that:

> Ghana is, however, on the threshold of a large industrial expansion and it may well be that a great increase in the number of skilled workers in certain trades will be required at such short notice that traditional apprenticeship methods would not provide the needed workers quickly enough (p. 621).

This was reiterated in the government's seven-year development plan, which stated that "the types of industries that will be promoted under this and subsequent development plans will in general be on a larger scale than the types that have hitherto characterised industrial activity in Ghana…" (GoG, 1964, p. 90). It was, however, acknowledged that support needed to be given to small-scale enterprises to expand. Despite this acknowledgement, there was not enough support for small-scale enterprises owing to the government's ideological leaning (Ball, 1997). The second factor could be the pressure to follow the path that had been created during colonialism, which is the neglect of small-scale industrialists and the focus on formal education and training. The political cost of reversing this was high as Dr Nkrumah was elected on the promise that he will expand access to formal education and create industrial jobs. This may have contributed to the maintenance of the status quo.

It is not clear how Dr Nkrumah's development strategy would have modernised small-scale industry and traditional ways of training and production, in the context of total neglect. What is clear is that in the period in which this path was pursued, informal apprenticeship thrived, catering to the training needs of primary school graduates and drop-outs as well as those who did not have any formal education (Peil, 1970). Dr Nkrumah was overthrown in 1966, following the economic and educational consequences of his reforms, his leaning towards authoritarianism, ambitious African agenda, and interference in military affairs (Hettne, 1980).

The National Liberation Council and Progress Party (1966 – 1972)

The National Liberation Council (NLC) deposed Dr Nkrumah in a coup d'etat in 1966. The NLC government was a coalition of army and police officers who ruled under the leadership of General Joseph Arthur Ankrah and General Akwasi Afrifa. In 1969, NLC handed over power to a civilian government led by Dr Kofi Busia of the Progress Party (PP). Both the NLC and PP governments pursued liberal economic policies, although NLC was more cautious than PP (Killick, 2010). Both regimes were pro-private sector and therefore pledged to develop the private sector as the engine of growth. Contrary to Nkrumah, Killick (2010) notes that the NLC adopted a pragmatic approach to economic governance and did not bother pursuing an economic ideology.

As part of initiatives to support the private sector, the NLC government, in 1966, constituted a Committee chaired by Mr Harlley to study and submit recommendations for the promotion of Ghanaian businesses (GoG, 1967). The task of the Committee included "investigating problems which impeded the progress of Ghanaian businesses" (GoG, 1967, p. v). It recommended the need to increase the technical and technological skills of entrepreneurs to enable them to compete with non-Ghanaian competitors and "meet the demands of international trade and domestic manufacturing" (GoG, 1967, p. vii). In 1968, the government passed the Ghanaian Enterprises Decree 323. The Decree reserved for Ghanaians some areas such as retail trade and manufacturing activities in which less than thirty people were employed (Ball, 1997).

In 1970 under the administration of the PP government, a Ghanaian Business Promotion Act was passed. This extended the areas of reservation for Ghanaian entrepreneurs. Other reforms included the establishment of credit schemes such as the Bank of Ghana Credit Guarantee scheme and Small Business Credit Scheme (Ball, 1997). The former enabled the Bank of

Ghana to lend to small scale enterprises, while the latter directly offered credit to entrepreneurs in the small-scale enterprises. However, Ball (1997) notes that the Small Business Credit Scheme ended up offering large loans and small entrepreneurs did not benefit much, especially those in the industrial or productive sector. Also, the private sector initiatives of the NLC and PP regimes rather advantaged entrepreneurs in trading (Ball, 1997).

On the education front, the NLC government set up a committee, led by Dr Alexander Kwapong, in 1967 to review the state of education in the country and offer recommendations for the government's attention (Ministry of Education [MoE], 1971). The Committee was constituted out of the regime's critique that educational expansion during the Nkrumah era had compromised on quality and led to low standards. In addition to that was a concern about the academic nature of education. The Committee proposed new education reforms. Elementary education was to remain ten years (six years of primary school and four years of middle school). But in the seventh year, students could sit to write the Common Entrance Examinations to enter secondary school. Those who did not sit for the examinations or did not pass were to proceed to continuation classes for the last two years of middle school. The continuation classes had pre-vocational content and were meant to equip students who exited at the elementary level with practical skills for work.

For those who were inclined towards vocational education, it was meant to prepare them for further education and training. They were to be eligible to sit for the Common Entrance Examinations as well. The continuation schools however were not very successful. Participation in the schools or classes was very low (MoE, 1971). As of 1971, they had not taken ground and the curricula had not been revised in line with the recommendations of the Kwapong Committee (MoE, 1971). The intended purpose of the reforms to alter students' aspirations towards vocational education did not happen. Students saw middle school as an opportunity to pass the Common Entrance Examinations and enter secondary school to pursue grammar education. Their focus was therefore not on the vocational courses taught.

In the same year, 1967, the government with the help of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) set up a National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI) to provide and regulate vocational training in the country. In 1970, NVTI received a legal mandate and replaced the Apprentice Advisory Board of 1960. According to Section 3 of the National

Vocational Training Act, the Institute is mandated to perform the functions below (GoG, 1970b).

a) to organise apprenticeship, in-plant training, and training programmes for industrial and clerical workers, and to train the instructors and training officers required for that purpose.

b) to provide for vocational guidance and career development in industry.

c) to develop training standards and trade testing.

d) to initiate a continuing study of the country's manpower requirements at the skilled worker level.

e) to establish and maintain technical and cultural relations with international organisations and other foreign institutions engaged in activities connected with vocational training.

From the time it was established in 1967 to 1970, there was little engagement between the Institute and informal artisans or apprentices even though the training trends during and after the period within which it was established had changed substantially (Hakam, 1978). The majority of apprenticeships were undertaken in the informal economy. Census data shows that in 1970, in the metal engineering industry alone there were in total 31,000 apprentices (300 -less than 1% of them were female and the rest were male). Out of this figure only about 800 were being trained in the formal sector (Hakam, 1978).

Discussion of the NLC and PP regimes' reforms and initiatives in education and enterprise shows their leaning towards the private sector. On the other hand, enterprise reforms benefited more traders than small-scale industrialists. Regarding education, the Kwapong Committee revisited the issue of school curricula that the colonial government had to confront. In line with the recommendations of the Committee, a two-year continuation school that focused on vocational education was introduced in middle school. Also, NVTI was established to organise apprenticeship, in-plant training, and training programmes among other functions.

National Redemption Council/ Supreme Military Council (1972-1978)

In 1972, the Progress Party was overthrown in a coup d'etat led by a military colonel by the name Ignatius Kutu Acheampong. From 1972 to 1975, his party was known as the National Redemption Council (NRC) and was renamed to Supreme Military Council (SMC) after a

palace coup. Acheampong justified his coup based on a devaluation of the cedi in 1971 which led to inflation, increased external debt and cost of living.

Contrary to the economic ideology of the previous government, Col. Acheampong professed a "departure from the laissez-faire, so-called free market economy and the institution of effective planning in the allocation and utilisation of resources" (Ball, 1997, p. 165). The failure of statist and liberal policies by the Nkrumah and NLC/PP regimes compelled him to turn to economic nationalism (Ninsin, 1989). Aside from this, the SMC government provided some support for small-scale industrialists. Some of these included:

(a) establishment of the Ghana Enterprise Development Commission to offer credit to small-scale industrialists (Ball, 1997),

(b) encouragement of industrialists to form cooperatives to benefit from government support (Ball, 1997),

(c) development of industrial sites for artisans in Kumasi and Koforidua (Ball, 1997).

Initiatives to support small-scale industrialists or artisans were positive steps towards strengthening the organisation of these groups and addressing their credit constraints. But in the education and training space, not much was done except the constitution of an Education Committee and further regulations for NVTI. In 1972, the regime set up a twenty-two-member Committee led by Dr N. K. Dzobo to review the structure and content of education in the country. The Committee noted that its recommendations were not entirely novel in comparison to those of previous committees, but highlighted that certain factors worked against the effective functioning of previous reforms. Among these included the "conservatism of the public colonial attitude to and worship of elitist formal academic education" (MoE, 1972, p. 5).

The Committee highlighted that access to secondary school was just about 13 per cent (MoE, 1972). This meant that the majority of students terminated formal education upon completion of middle school. For these students, only a few undertook further vocational education while the rest entered the workforce or enrolled in informal apprenticeship. The Committee's concern was that majority of the students who terminated at middle school lacked practical skills for the world of work. Also, it was of the view that continuation schools created the perception that vocational courses are for individuals who are not academically inclined and do not pass the Common Entrance in the seventh grade. The Committee, therefore, proposed

that primary education should be nine years. The last three years will be for junior comprehensive secondary education. After nine years of education, students could be separated into different streams. This they noted allows every student to acquire practical skills useful for life or work, without casting a negative image of TVET. It was proposed that implementation should be gradual to enable the development of the human and physical infrastructure that will support system-wide changes. Implementation however did not take off until 1987.

In 1978, the National Vocational Training Board (Apprentice Training) Regulations, Legislative Instrument (L.I.). No. 1151 was enacted (GoG, 1978). The L. I. contained detailed regulations on all aspects of apprenticeship such as criteria for the qualification and registration of apprentices, payment of apprentices, including annual leave and travel allowances, termination of contracts, employers' responsibilities for training, conditions of work and issuance of completion certificates. These regulations were to be implemented by NVTI, in collaboration with labour officers of the Ministry. With regards to training, NVTI did not engage much with informal training during the NRC regime. Of the in-plant training conducted between 1969 and 1977 for example, it is reported that there were only about 513 small -scale industrialists out of the 2029 persons (Ball, 1997, p. 172). Also, few apprentices in the informal sector were registered with the Institute (Ball, 1997)

The reasons for the low engagement between NVTI and small-scale industrialists and apprentices in the informal sector are not clear. Three possible explanations could be offered. First, there could have been limited reach and low capacity of the Institute to engage the large numbers of informal artisans, in addition to arranging apprenticeship for formal firms. Secondly, there could have been difficulties reconciling the formal training approach of the Institute with the training needs of informal artisans. Thirdly, there could have been less interest by artisans and apprentices in the services of the Institute for many reasons such as their low educational background, lack of time to attend classes, perceptions of formal vocational institutions, unwillingness or inability to pay for training among others. These are further explored in Chapter Eight.

In the middle of the SMC regime, inflation soared and was estimated to be over 100 per cent (Rothchild, 1980). In addition, exports declined. This caused balance of payments and budget deficits (Rothchild, 1980). Shortage of foreign exchange and consumer goods led to massive corruption. Also, the living conditions of workers deteriorated (Ninsin, 1989). It was at the

back of these problems that another coup was staged by Flt Lt. Jerry John Rawlings in 1978. After usurping power, he handed over to a civilian government led by Dr Hilla Limann of the Peoples' National Party (PNP). Dr Limann ruled from 1979 to 1981 and was overthrown in a second coup by Rawlings. Rawlings' second coup d'état was made on the back of alleged corruption, poor economic conditions, and mismanagement by the PNP government.

The Period of Neoliberal Reforms (1981 – 2016)

Between 1981 to 2016, there were three democratically elected governments. Rawlings' Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) ruled from 1981 to 1992, after which he transitioned into a democratic government, through the National Democratic Congress (NDC) party after winning the 1992 elections. In 2000, NDC lost the elections to Mr John Agyekum Kufuor of the New Patriotic Party (NPP). Mr Kufuor governed from 2000 to 2008 and his party handed over power to Prof. John Evans Atta-Mills of the National Democratic Congress (NDC). His party also governed from 2008 to 2016. Throughout this period, the underlining problems of the country which previous governments attempted to resolve were the same. Some of these included high foreign debt, balance of payments deficits, low access to formal education, high youth unemployment and budget deficits. From 1981 to 2016, the political regimes largely adopted market reforms to address the country's problems. In the rest of the sections, the economic and education policies and reforms and their relevance or impact on informal apprenticeship are discussed.

Provisional National Defence Council and National Democratic Congress (1981 – 2000)

During the administration of Rawlings, a National Board for Small-Scale Industries (NBSSI) was established in 1981 to replace the Small Business Credit Scheme established in 1978. Ball (1997) argues that compared to the Small Business Credit, NBSSI provided more financial and advisory support for small-scale industrialists. It allowed entrepreneurs to register their businesses with its Business Advisory Committee. This saved them time in undergoing separate registration procedures at the Registrar-General's Department and broadened its clientele (Ball, 1997).

In 1983, Rawlings' government turned to the Bretton Woods Institution for assistance to restore the economy. Ghana entered into a Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) which consisted of a series of macro-economic and trade liberalisation policies. These policies had

to be implemented for government to secure funds to address the country's liquidity and balance of payments deficit. Examples of conditionalities attached to the structural facility included the reduction of government expenditure, adoption of cost recovery measures and measures to enable the export sector to generate more foreign exchange.

In the education sector, the report of the Dzobo Committee was revisited, and its recommendations implemented in 1987. The reforms comprised of changes to school curricula and the structure of education. The old educational structure which was made up of six years of primary education, four years of middle school and seven years of secondary education (6-4-7 structure) was reformed. The new structure comprised of six years of primary education, three years of junior secondary education and three years of senior secondary education (6-3-3 structure). Vocational courses were introduced into the Junior Secondary School (JSS) curriculum to equip students with practical skills, vocational and technical knowledge for the world of work if they terminated at the lower secondary level.

Like previous regimes, this reform was motivated by concerns about the academic nature of education, youth unemployment and the need for the education system to equip students with skills for self-employment. The implementation of the JSS system was however costly as a series of preparations needed to be made. Among these included the building of vocational and technical workshops for practice, training of teachers to deliver the vocational subjects and preparing new textbooks. While the macroeconomic conditions of the country had slightly improved with the implementation of the Economic Recovery Programme in 1983, there were not enough resources to implement the new changes. As a result, the quality of the JSS system in terms of equipping students with practical skills fell short of expectations (Akyeampong, 2010).

Also, the government established a Ghana Regional Appropriate Technology Industrial Service (GRATIS) in 1987 to support the technological needs of small-scale industrialists. GRATIS developed from an initiative of the Technology Consultancy Centre (TCC) of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology. TCC in 1980 created an Intermediate Technology Transfer Centre (ITTC) at Suame Magazine to support the technological needs of artisans (Powell, 1995). ITTC's technological support to small-scale industrialists was very successful and replicated in other regions of the country (Powell, 1995). Other forms of support for artisans included the government's facilitation of access to worksites. It is important to mention that the government's commitment in this area did not

emerge out of a policy but rather a necessity to widen its support in the run-up to the 1992 elections (Ninsin, 2000).

In 1990, an agency called the National Coordinating Committee on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (NACVET) was established to coordinate all aspects of TVET in the country, including informal apprenticeship. It was intended for this agency to replace NVTI as a TVET coordinating body. However, NACVET which was placed under the Ministry of Education lacked legal backing to carry out its mandate. This notwithstanding the agency assumed a coordinating function while NVTI focused on the provision of vocational education and regulation of apprenticeship. NACVET with the support of the World Bank implemented a Vocational Skills and Informal Sector Support Project (VSP), which run from 1995 to 2001. The project aimed to promote the development of the informal sector and provide an enabling environment for employment creation and income generation (World Bank, 2001). Among the objectives included training support for MCPs and informal apprentices.

About 14,565 apprentices and 5,434 MCPs benefited from the programme. While there were many beneficiaries, the project report shows that its impact was unsatisfactory with regard to some of the intended outcomes (World Bank, 2001). These were attributed to the poor programme design, lack of TVET policy and strong institutional framework to guide implementation (World Bank, 2001). Weaknesses in the institutional framework pertained to government structures and those of Informal Trade Associations (ITAs). On the government side were problems with the capacity of NACVET. Regarding ITAs, the World Bank report notes that many of them did not have representation in some of the districts and this affected their capacity to recruit apprentices across the country. The project report also cites other factors such as “access to credit, production sites and post-training support and advice” as constraints to the project’s impact on productivity and self-employment (World Bank, 2001, p. 3). Although these were part of the objectives, the project focused on sponsoring the participation of apprentices and MCPs in Competency-Based Training (CBT) courses offered in selected vocational training institutions in the country. In addition, tools were also provided to the beneficiaries of the Programme. The government’s support towards the skills needs of informal artisans, through this project, was driven by a debate in international education and development regarding the relevance of the informal economy and informal apprenticeship. This will be discussed in Chapter Three.

New Patriotic Party and National Democratic Congress (2000 – 2016)

The New Patriotic Party (NPP) government under the leadership of President Kufuor constituted an educational review committee in 2002. The Committee which was chaired by Prof. Anamuah-Mensah was tasked to assess the country's education system and make recommendations for the government's consideration. The report highlighted the inadequate development of TVET in the country (GoG, 2002). It revealed the exclusionary nature of the education system towards adults and children outside of the formal educational system. Data presented showed that since 1990, only about 72,000 pupils representing 30 per cent of the average number (240,000) of pupils who write the Basic Education Certificate Examinations (BECE) each year gain access to senior secondary schools (GoG, 2002, p. cxiii). An additional 10,000 representing 4 per cent get admitted into vocational and technical institutes. This means that about 66 per cent of those who complete JSS find themselves outside of mainstream education. Many of these individuals end up in informal apprenticeship, or the informal labour market and many more not in education, training, and employment. The report expressed regret at the neglect of TVET, especially informal apprenticeship which caters to the skills needs of many young people. It urged the government to pay attention to informal apprenticeship, to ensure that apprentices have equal opportunities to acquire knowledge and skills relevant for their personal development and future aspirations. This recommendation informed the government's implementation of a National Apprenticeship Programme (NAP). More details about this will be discussed in the last section on NAP.

Among other recommendations, the Committee proposed that the government should develop informal apprenticeship institution as a second cycle institution parallel to secondary vocational and technical institutes in the country. The recommendations of the Committee also included the creation of a National Council for Technical and Vocational Education Training (COTVET) under the Office of the President to coordinate the fragmented nature of TVET provision in the country.

From the recommendations, it is obvious that the Committee was concerned about the neglect of the informal apprenticeship institution. The Committee's recommendations also demonstrated a strong need for opportunities for further education for informal apprentices. Its appreciation of the importance of informal apprenticeship and the education and training needs of apprentices is laudable.

For the first time, a national TVET policy was completed and launched in 2004. The process of drafting the TVET policy began in 1997, as part of the World Bank's VSP. The mission of the TVET system as it appears in the document is "to improve productivity and competitiveness of the skilled workforce and to raise the income earning capacities of people, especially women and low-income groups, through the provision of quality-oriented, industry-focused, competency based, and lifelong learning training programmes and complementary services" (GoG, 2004, p. 7). Subsequently, the document outlines three "imperatives" that the policy seeks to address (GoG, 2004, p. 5). The first is the democratic imperative, which means that "education and training opportunities must be diversified to serve the needs of all sections of the population", in order to secure the stability of the democratic system (GoG, 2004, p. 5). The second is poverty reduction imperative which states that in the context of income poverty, the "challenge of reducing poverty can only be met through a wide-scale provision of relevant productive and entrepreneurial skills" (GoG, 2004, p. 5). The third is the economic imperative which is the need to "produce a highly skilled workforce to support industrialisation and make the country more competitive" in a globalised world (GoG, 2004, p. 5).

The limit of a small, mainly supply-driven formal TVET system to address the three main imperatives above is acknowledged (GoG, 2004). Accordingly, the potential of private training and industry contributions are noted. In relation to this, informal apprenticeship features prominently in the TVET policy. The policy highlighted its accessibility to most youths, in addition to its strong linkages to self-employment.

The TVET policy also highlights the need to streamline the entire TVET system by having a unified National Certification System[4] and National TVET Qualifications Framework (NTVETQF) (GoG, 2004). It is hoped that the National Certification System and NTVETQF will (a) facilitate access to further education and training for individuals in vocational and technical trades, (b) to promote and facilitate access to lifelong learning for all, especially operators in the informal sector, and to improve product and service quality by ensuring uniform standards of practice in the trades and professions (GoG, 2004, p. 19). Reviewing the TVET policy, it can be argued that it is inclusive in so far as it includes informal

[4] This aims to address fragmentation in the certification of skills and in the delivery of TVET in the country.

apprenticeship in TVET reforms. The strategy outlined for informal apprenticeship is as follows:

- Introduce competency-based training into the traditional apprenticeship system
- Link the traditional training system with the formal TVET institutions
- Integrate the traditional apprenticeship system into the National Qualification Framework
- Promote diversification of occupational training across gender lines
- Develop guidelines for Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) activities in the informal sector TVET
- Promote and support trade and professional associations

These objectives are all linked to a grand strategy to "promote productivity in the informal sector through TVET" (p. 8). A review of the 2004 TVET policy in 2012 affirmed the relevance of the goals outlined above (COTVET, 2012).

In 2006, COTVET was established under an Act of Parliament 718 and replaced NACVET which was established in 1990 (GoG, 2006). The Council is mandated by law to coordinate all forms of pre-tertiary TVET including informal apprenticeship.

In 2010, the government launched the NAP in response to the neglect of TVET highlighted in the report of the Anamuah-Mensah Committee. The goal of NAP was two-fold; to modernise apprenticeship and by so doing build on the strengths of informal apprenticeship and address its weaknesses. The objectives were to (a) recognise and modernise the role of traditional apprenticeship, (b) set standards for apprenticeship training, (c) provide a path of progression for the informal TVET learner, (c) give employable skills to the youth for self-employment, and (d) support apprenticeship training by providing basic training tools and payment of allowances to MCPs (Ghana Audit Service, 2016, p. 13).

NAP was a state-controlled programme that modified the informal apprenticeship arrangements in line with the government's envisioned model of apprenticeship. The NAP was meant to be different from the existing apprenticeship arrangement in relation to partners involved in implementation, its target population, the process of recruiting apprentices, duration, pedagogy, content, financial arrangement, assessment, certification, and monitoring of training.

NAP was implemented by COTVET through its National Apprenticeship Committee (NAC) (Ghana Audit Service, 2016). NAC worked with other stakeholders to implement the programme in three phases. The first phase was from 2011 to 2013, the second phase from 2012 to 2013 and the third phase from 2013 to 2014. Each phase aimed to recruit 5000 apprentices. The implementing partners were officials of the Ghana Education Service (GES) Directorates in the regions, Municipal, Metropolitan and District Assemblies (MMDA), ITAs, master craftspersons and parents of apprentices. GES Directorates and MMDAs were asked to discharge the following responsibilities: (a) recruit and select apprentices in collaboration with the District Assemblies, Members of Parliament, and District officers, (b) provide orientation for both apprentices and MCPs, (c) present tools for the apprentices, and (d) monitor and evaluate the programme.

The Programme targeted JSS graduates who did not obtain access to senior secondary school (Ghana Audit Service, 2016). With the support of the collaborators, students were asked to register their interest in the Programme with GES directorates in their districts. This was to enable them to undergo scrutiny to ensure they met the criteria for selection. They were to undergo a one-year apprenticeship that was sponsored by the state using funds from the Ghana Education Trust Fund (GetFund). Sponsorship comprised of apprenticeship fees made to MCPs and procurement of basic tools and equipment for the apprentices. The training was to follow a competency-based curriculum which was developed by COTVET. This is in line with COTVET's goal to develop a demand driven TVET. The newness of the curriculum meant that MCPs selected to partake in the programme had to be trained in the CBT curricula to be able to deliver the programme in the manner required. They were to facilitate the training of the apprentices, keep their records and assess them after the module. Their assessment was to be moderated by internal and external verifiers selected from the Technical Examinations Unit (TEU). After the moderation, apprentices were to be issued certification at Proficiency 1 and 2 on the NTVETQF. These are the two lowest qualifications on the NTVETQF. The NAP is the first attempt of government intervention in informal apprenticeship on this scale.

An evaluation of the Programme reveals that the Programme was poorly planned and many of the outcomes were not achieved. First, the objective to make MCPs adopt CBT failed in that while selected MCPs were given training in CBT, most of them did not use this to train participants due to several reasons (Ghana Audit Service, 2016). These include the late

delivery of the CBT materials, inadequate training, and poor monitoring of training in the workshops (Ghana Audit Service, 2016). Also, participants of the Programme were not assessed and awarded certificates as planned. A government audit report of NAP shows that many of the apprentices stayed on with their masters or continued their training elsewhere. The apprentices felt the one-year training had not prepared them for self-employment. It seems that the government motive was that the CBT mode of training will enable MCPs to deliver the programme in a year, as against the usual training duration of between three to four years (Ghana Audit Service, 2016, p. 12). The approach taken resonates with the underlining assumption of the vocationalisation of the secondary school curricula. The view that a minimum level of skills is sufficient in preparing young people for self-employment may have contributed to the neglect of apprenticeship as an important post-training institution for many young people. In addition, it shows less understanding of the skill reproduction system as it is centred around production and the specific training needs as well as other concerns artisans may have and need support with.

Second, the goal to "decrease gender segregation of both formal and informal trades" was also not met (Ghana Audit Service, 2016, p. 39). The audit of the Programme shows that enrolment in trades was very gendered. This was also reported by Hardy et al. (2019) in their review of the Programme. Dressmaking was the only occupation in which there was a fair balance in male and female enrolment. For the rest of the trades such as cosmetology, auto mechanics, electronics and welding and fabrication, participation was gendered (Ghana Audit Service, 2016). The report also revealed that although COTVET had a TVET gender strategy that aimed to promote guidance and counselling in schools, sensitise MCPs about gender in the workshop, none of these was carried out (Ghana Audit Service, 2016). While a role model programme was developed, it is reported that apprentices did not benefit from these. This gender outcome of the NAP is unsettling considering that one of the strategies under the 2004 TVET policy is to "promote diversification of occupational training across gender lines" (Ghana Audit Service, 2004, p. 12).

As a Programme in response to the neglect of informal apprenticeship, it cannot be concluded that it had any meaningful impact on the apprenticeship system, although some apprentices may have acquired "basic employable skills" in line with the aim of the Programme (Ghana Audit Service, 2016, p. 29). This underpins Palmer's (2009) critique of the Programme's intent to formalise apprenticeship by paying apprentices fees for a year, focusing on JSS

graduates to the neglect of other young people who may have exited formal education before completion of compulsory education and those who are not formally educated.

In 2011, the Government of Ghana established a Skills Development Fund (SDF) to finance the training needs of skilled persons (Skills Development Fund, n.d.). SDF was established with a US$ 50 million loan facility from the International Development Association (IDA) and a grant of US$ 15 million from the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) (Skills Development Fund, n.d.). SDF aims to contribute to financing demand-driven skills and technological development (Skills Development Fund, n.d.). Grants are available for both formal and informal enterprises with special windows of application and quotas for different groups.

Conclusions

In the first part of this chapter, I provided an overview of informal apprenticeship and highlighted key events between the sixteenth and mid-nineteenth century that shaped education and training, including informal apprenticeship. I showed that the development of formal education and training in the Gold Coast contributed to a plural system of education and training: informal apprenticeship, training in formal industrial establishments, and formal technical and vocational education. By the end of colonial rule, informal apprenticeship although shaped by formal education remained the main means of skills training in the Gold Coast.

In the second part of the chapter, I examined the development of education and training and support for micro and small-scale industrialists from 1951 to 2016. Three key points emerge from the discussion. First, vocational education has been an important theme in all pre-tertiary education reforms in the country. Between 1966 and 1990, most education reforms were motivated by the need to orient students towards vocational education while also equipping them with skills for self-employment. On the other hand, the preparatory nature of this education did not generate interest in the training pursuits of many school pupils who exit formal education after JSS and those with no formal education. Informal apprenticeship which caters to the needs of many educated and uneducated young people was not a policy priority during this period. Also, during this period, vocational training authorities (Apprentice Board of 1961, NVTI of 1967 and NACVET of 1990) established were oriented towards the formal sector. While NVTI provided training for both formal and informal skilled persons or trainees, the participation of the latter was very poor.

The period between 1990 and 2016 saw a change in focus towards skills training in the informal economy. Skills reforms during this period aimed at developing a national TVET system and improving TVET governance structures to make TVET delivery demand-driven. For the first time a TVET policy was developed, and the role of informal apprenticeship was recognised. The Policy and associated reforms aimed to link informal apprenticeship to the formal TVET system. Also, training programmes helped to improve the skills of some MCPs and informal apprentices. It is important to mention that the shift in focus towards informal skills training was spurred by an international discourse on education and training. This discourse and the orthodoxy within which TVET is framed will be discussed in the next chapter.

Lastly, across the various political regimes, support for the informal training environment has been inadequate, inconsistent, and not commensurable with the attention devoted to skills development or education reforms. The chapter notes that governments' approaches towards informal apprenticeship have been unidimensional. Given these concluding points, I now turn to examine the literature on informal apprenticeship.

Chapter Three: Literature Review

In the previous chapter, the colonial and post-colonial states' support for informal apprenticeship from the pre-colonial period to 2016 was examined. As highlighted, the period after 1990 saw increased attention to informal apprenticeship. This chapter focuses on the academic and policy literature on informal apprenticeship.

The chapter is divided into three sections. In the first section, I examine the events that led to recognition and attention to informal apprenticeship in the academic and international policy literature. In the second section, I review the features of informal apprenticeship and how these are conceived in the literature. The third section focuses on the growth orthodoxy and the human capital theoretical lens within which informal apprenticeship is situated. The weaknesses of these are then highlighted and conclusions are drawn from the discussion.

Events That Led to the Recognition of Informal Apprenticeship

Whilst it has its origins in the pre-colonial system, international attention was drawn to the informal economy with the publication of two influential outputs nearly 50 years ago, Hart's (1973) paper and the ILO (1972) Kenyan mission's report on the informal sector. The ILO publication was an output of the World Employment Programme (WEP) launched in 1969 as a response to the failure of economic growth to generate employment and alleviate poverty in ways that conventional development theory had predicted. The Programme aimed to understand unemployment problems in developing countries and how ILO could proffer solutions for the action of national governments and the international development community. Some of the countries that were visited by the ILO mission included Kenya, Sri Lanka, and Colombia. Of all the mission reports, the Kenyan one, published in 1972 stood out for its comprehensiveness (Singer & Jolly, 2012). As King and McGrath (2002) note, many of the team had been present at a conference on "Urban Unemployment in Africa" at the University of Sussex in 1971 when Keith Hart reported on his doctoral fieldwork in Ghana.

Drawing on some of Hart's key insights, the report cast a different image of the informal sector, one that contrasted earlier views that the sector is transitory, residual and a refuge for the destitute (Portes & Sassen-Koob, 1987). The report highlighted the "economic efficient and profitmaking" nature of economic activities in the informal sector, albeit being characterised by simple technology, skills, little capital, and low productivity (ILO, 1972, p. 5). ILO (1972) argued that the informal sector is dynamic and "a source to Kenya's future

wealth" (p. 5). With this remark, it noted that the growth potential of the informal sector can only be harnessed under the right conditions and support.

ILO (1972) proposed an approach to development that focused not only on growth but redistribution. This was known as the "redistribution from growth strategy" (p. 6). This strategy, with a strong focus on inequalities and poverty reduction, emphasised the "redistribution of gains in the incomes of the rich to investments which will raise the incomes of the poor, until the latter's income per head is doubled" (ILO, 1972, p. 365). These investments which were to benefit the poor in rural and the urban informal economy include the development of industries for the processing of agricultural products for exports, labour-intensive technology, investment in rural education, the creation of second chance institutions for school dropouts and adults among others.

In 1976, at the World Employment Conference, ILO launched the basic needs approach to development. This approach aimed to take attention off the predominance of income as a measure of well-being to other goods and services. ILO (1976) noted that despite progress made in economic growth, many people live in abject poverty, deprived of the basic necessities of life. Hence, development ought to focus on these basic needs, such as food, shelter, clothing, safe drinking water, sanitation, transport, health, and education. This approach was a broadening of the WEP. While both approaches redirected focus to social development, the WEP helped to generate knowledge on a range of issues including economic policies, informal economic activities, rural development, and their linkages (ILO, 1976). Concerning education and training, ILO implemented many remedial programmes some of which had a skills component (Bangasser, 2000; King, 1991). On the other hand, skills training in the informal economy was not an international policy priority until the late 1980s.

The shift towards skills training in the informal economy first began with growing evidence about the positive effects of primary education on social and economic development compared to other forms and levels of education, including vocational education (Psacharopoulos, 1985, 1987; Colclough, 1982). Although the findings of these studies have been disputed by Bennell (1996), they nonetheless led the World Bank to decry the economic benefit of pre-employment vocational training, although it had earlier supported it and perceived a linkage between this and employment. Consequently, the Bank's focus shifted in favour of primary education as it released a report on primary education for self-employment

and rural development (Lockhead, 1990). The report argued for increased investment in quality general, primary, and secondary education. This was to ensure that the basic foundational skills required by employers are guaranteed. The Bank also released a TVET policy to demonstrate its renewed focus (Middleton et al., 1991).

The TVET policy advanced two main points in addition to the need to strengthen primary and secondary education (Middleton et al., 1991). First, private TVET had to be encouraged by the state through capacity building and the lessening of regulations on curriculum and tuition fees. Second, public TVET had to be market-oriented to improve its efficiency and effectiveness. Among the strategies to achieve these included the establishment of training authorities to oversee the implementation of measures such as competency-based curricula, the generation of funds through increased employer and trainee contributions and the use of training funds to stimulate private and public training towards the needs of students. Also, governments were to remove incentives such as minimum wages for apprentices as these were thought to disincentivise employers' investment in skills training. Lastly, the policy called for the need to strengthen informal apprenticeship through support programmes such as correspondence courses and theory classes.

It is important to mention that these policy guidelines were part of broader neoliberal economic reforms that were being implemented in African and Latin American countries. In line with the reining in of the state, entrepreneurship and self-employment were encouraged to help people cope with the effects of economic restructuring (Middleton et al., 1991). Drawing on De Soto (1989), Landell-Mills et al. (1989), in a world bank publication, hailed the ingenuity of entrepreneurs who operate in the informal economy. The growth of SMEs and the entrepreneurial capacities of individuals were considered central to the growth of African economies and employment creation. State regulations and policies such as registration of enterprises and taxation were criticised as restrictive to the productivity and growth of enterprises. In line with this, proposals advanced to stimulate entrepreneurial capacities and SME development include deregulation, provision of loans to promising businesses or entrepreneurs and technological transfer to enterprises (Landell-Mills et al., 1989, pp. 145 – 147).

It can be observed from the ongoing discussion that whilst the ILO (1972) considers increased state support to be central to the potential of the informal economy to contribute to growth and alleviate poverty, the World Bank advances a reduced role of the state. Contrary

to the ILO, the neoliberal position advanced by the World Bank notes that entrepreneurs and enterprises in the informal sector have thrived without state support and will do better under liberal conditions and economic growth. This neoliberal or liberal orientation underpins much of the apprenticeship literature as will be discussed below.

Moving on, distrust for the state resulted in the channelling of international assistance through NGOs (Mkandawire, 1999). Mkandadwire (1999) argues that this, together with the effects of SAPs, weakened the capacity of African states to play the developmental role envisaged by ILO (1972). Mkandawire (1999) notes that enterprise development requires a strong developmental state, development finance and industrial policy. A state which is incapable of undertaking these tasks, Mkandawire (1999) notes "cannot be expected to be of much use to the private sector, even of the small-scale type" (p. 37). Similarly, Meagher (1995) adds that any support from a "minimal" state "seems unlikely to exceed a few random populist measures" (p. 280).

From the 1990s, the attention of the academic and international development community turned to vocational training in informal enterprises. For example, UNESCO's ''Recommendation Concerning TVET'' states that "TVET in the informal economy should be promoted, including through quality traditional apprenticeships in small, micro and household enterprises by engaging stakeholders in rural and urban areas" (2016a, para. 32).

Three main reasons explain the focus on informal apprenticeship. The first is the need to provide post-basic education opportunities for increased numbers of basic education graduates, to reduce youth unemployment. Second, skills training in the informal economy is seen as the primary medium of training for the informal economy. The third reason relates to its cost-effectiveness and accessibility to many youths as formal educational qualifications are not required to enrol. It is important to mention that the shift towards informal apprenticeship echoes Foster's (1965b) critique about the provision of formal TVET in development planning in the 1950s and 1960s. In his publication on the "Vocational School Fallacy in Development Planning", Foster (1965b) argues:

> when all is said and done, however, vocational education and training must be carried on mainly outside formal institutions…a considerable amount of road transport in West Africa is serviced and maintained not by highly trained operators but by 'bush mechanics' who themselves have very little formal instruction. Upon this basis has developed a burgeoning system of informal

> apprenticeship; though most of the instruction is extremely rudimentary, here is an expanding base which can be built upon (p. 156).

In line with Foster's comments, the rest of the chapter examines informal apprenticeship and knowledge generated on informal apprenticeship since it gained attention. I begin with the literature on the features of informal apprenticeship.

Informal Apprenticeship and Features of the System

Informal apprenticeship is the largest skills training institution in Sub-Saharan Africa (ILO, 2012). While prevalent across the continent, it is more developed in West Africa and to a lesser extent in Central, East and Southern Africa[5] (Haan, 2006). Differences in the development of informal apprenticeship across the continent can be attributed to differences in pre-colonial, colonial and post-independence histories. In pre-colonial West Africa for example, the existence of centralised states, as in the Asante Kingdom of Ghana, which supported craft industries was central to the strong tradition of informal apprenticeship (Arhin, 1981, 1990).

Mkandawire's (2010) analysis of tax efforts and colonial heritage in Africa provides insights into differences in indigenous economic activities, including informal apprenticeship across Africa during the colonial period. Following economic historians' division of the continent into three economies, namely cash crop, labour reserve and concession economies, Mkandawire (2010) argues that in cash crop economies[6], there was less control over indigenous labour and informal economic activities although cash crops were highly regulated by the colonial regime (p. 1649). In labour reserve economies[7], labour was more regulated and made to work in white farms or industry. Mkandawire (2010) states that "to ensure low reservation wages for the native population, measures were taken to block alternative sources of income that might compete with the wage economy" (p. 1650). This included making informal economic activities illegal.

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[5] In the Southern African region, informal apprenticeship is reported to exist in Zambia (Ryan, 2015) and Zimbabwe (Haan, 2006).

[6] The cash crop economies are mainly West African. Countries that fall into this category are Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cote D'Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda

[7] Angola, Botswana, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Lastly, in concessionary economies,[8] large plantations and mineral sites were sustained through "forced labour" within and beyond the region (Mkandawire, 2010, p. 1650). Self-employment and informalisation of economic activities were higher in cash crop economies, while the labour reserve economies were more formalised. In the labour reserve economies, Mkandawire (2010) notes that small enterprises which were reserved for the whites were formalised and offered means for the extraction of taxes by the colonial state (p. 1653). In a history of skills acquisition in Kenya for example, King (1977) notes that the first Africans to establish crafts enterprises and offer informal apprenticeship had acquired their skill in employment in small Indian enterprises in the country. As a result, informal apprenticeship as it developed in that context, King (1977) notes "was not based on any traditional model in any of Kenya's communities" (p. 26). Due to the formalised nature of labour relations and the curtailment of informal economic activities such as crafts, King states that some of the Africans who arranged informal apprenticeships with the Indian skilled persons had to forge documentation to prove they received wages.

In the post-colonial period, institutions and structures created through colonialism for the control of labour and the extraction of taxes in labour reserve economies were maintained (Mkandawire, 2010). However, the events highlighted in the first section of this chapter, such as high graduate unemployment and fewer formal jobs contributed to increased demand for and growth of informal apprenticeships across all three economies. Trades in the informal economy in which informal apprenticeship is commonly sought are productive and service trades such as carpentry, auto mechanics, tailoring and catering.

Conditions of Training

Informal apprenticeship is guided by either a verbal agreement or written contract between the family or guardian of an apprentice and master craftsperson responsible for the training of the apprentice. Written agreements are characteristic of apprenticeship in West Africa and such agreement specify the duration of training, boarding and lodging arrangements as well as normative expectations of the parties to the agreement. An example of normative expectations is the duty of masters to instruct apprentices to the best of their ability. On the

[8] Congo Kinshasha, Congo Brazzaville, Gabon, Central African Republic, Rwanda, Burundi.

part of apprentices, they are required to obey their master, be of good behaviour and commit to the training. These expectations are embedded in socio-cultural norms, which can both be supportive of and restrictive of the freedoms of apprentices.

Training does not follow a structured curriculum although the competences that need to be mastered at various stages of the training underpins the distribution of work. Before completion, an apprentice is expected to demonstrate competency in certain tasks, and this becomes a basis upon which to assess his or her readiness to graduate. For auto mechanics, this is the ability to detect vehicular problems, disassemble and assemble engine parts (Haan, 2006, p. 169). Upon completion of training, informal apprentices are issued with certificates or testimonial by their masters and a ceremony held to celebrate their achievement. These aspects of training are representative of apprenticeship in West Africa.

Contrary to the West African variety, studies on apprenticeship in East and Southern Africa show that training is not preceded by codified agreements (King, 1977; Ryan, 2015). Ryan (2015) notes that in Zambia, apprentices begin as causal workers in a workshop, and proceed to apprentices. An individual's transition from a casual worker to an apprentice is based on the business needs of the enterprise, the interest of the apprentice in the trade and that of the master in training the apprentice (Ryan, 2015). There are no oral or written agreements relating to the terms of training and the obligations of the parties involved (Ryan, 2015). The arrangement is flexible, with no commitment to a specified duration as in the case of West Africa. Apprentices are therefore not obligated to train for a specified period and thus are free to leave if they feel they have acquired the skills needed (King, 1977, p. 26; Ryan, 2015). Also, the duration of training is relatively shorter than in West Africa. In the automotive trade, for example, King (1977) notes that in Kenya, the maximum duration is about a year, whereas in West Africa it takes not less than three years. While the flexibility of this system is conceived as advantageous to apprentices due to the lack of restrictions and exploitation of their labour, the quality of skills and competences acquired are limited (King, 1977; Ryan, 2015).

Aside from duration and other normative expectations that differentiate apprenticeship in East, South and West Africa, a key feature that characterises training in all contexts relate to matters such as working hours, safety and health. Informal apprenticeship is characterised by long working hours (ILO, 2011; Lecoufle & Traore, 2015; Haan 2006). Schraven et al. (2013) report that informal apprentices in Ghana work on average eleven hours a day, with

working hours ranging between seven to fourteen hours a day. They do not have the right to vacation or annual leave but may be permitted to attend family events such as funerals, weddings, etc. (Fluitman, 1992).

Safety and health conditions are very poor in informal workshops and this poses a significant risk to the lives of apprentices (Annan et al., 2015; Adei, et al., 2011; Monney et al., 2014; Morton, 2004). Besides safety and health, informal wage employees, such as journeypersons, do not enjoy benefits such as social security and protection. Females who go on maternity, for example, do not benefit from any cover and this increases their vulnerabilities in the labour market. Most training and work in the informal economy do not meet the conditions of decent work as laid down by the ILO. Decent work encompasses rights at work, social protection, social dialogue and employment creation (ILO, 2002). It also includes "equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men" (ILO, 2015, para.1). As will be discussed further in the last section of this chapter, the orthodoxy within which TVET, including informal apprenticeship sits, focuses mainly on the employment dimension and this does not help to focus attention on the other issues that centre on decent work.

Skill Reproduction Process and Training Needs

In informal apprenticeship, learning occurs through practice and is organised along with production. Studies on the skill reproduction process report on deficits in skills acquired in informal workshops. An example is a deficit in the theoretical knowledge of informal artisans. Concerning this, Lave (1977) argues from her study in Liberia that the tailors, through constant practice, develop general problem-solving principles that help them to solve varying work-related problems that they encounter or may encounter. However, when unfamiliar problems are encountered, they face difficulties in applying the general rules learnt from practice to such problems.

Similar findings were reached by McLaughlin (1979) in his study on the wayside mechanics in Ghana. He finds that knowledge apprentices develop to solve problems is experiential and enables them to solve a range of vehicular problems. However, it is difficult for the wayside mechanic to develop "general principles of mechanics" from the general problem-solving principles (McLaughlin, 1979, p. 199). On this basis, he argues that general principles of mechanics acquired through formal theoretical instruction are relevant to the mechanic's work because it enables him to carry out repair work on different vehicle types or models, without limiting himself to the specialisation of just one or two and saves him time from

many trial and errors. These findings show that while vocational learning can occur in the absence of theoretical instruction, theoretical knowledge is complementary to the ability of informal apprentices to solve complex tasks, transpose skills, learn from and work in contexts different from the ones in which their skills are acquired.

Besides the inadequacy of the theoretical knowledge are concerns about other skills needs of artisans. In a comprehensive study of the training needs of informal artisans in Sub-Saharan Africa, Haan (2006) notes a range of training needs which include: (a) upgrading of technical skills in the area of operation, (b) knowledge of recent technological developments in the trade, (c) management practices, (d) product promotion and marketing, (e) basic literacy and numeracy, and (f) simple computer skills (p. 232). Similarly, in a study in Tanzania where MCPs were asked about the skills needs of informal apprentices, the three most important skills identified were technical skills, theoretical knowledge and skills in developing new products (Nübler et al., 2009). Equally, MCPs also acknowledged interest in these skills (Nübler et al., 2009). Specificity regarding these skills or needs however differs across trades. For example, whereas MCPs in mechanics requested knowledge in computer-aided diagnosis, plumbers highlighted the need for skills in "coping with installation in two to three-storey houses and with hot water systems" (Nübler et al., 2009, p. 39). The findings of these studies point to increased interest among artisans in the need for skills upgrading, although Haan (2006) notes that skills needs are mainly expressed upon persistent questioning. In most cases, however, these skills needs are not met.

Meeting the skills needs of informal artisans is accorded high relevance in the policy and academic literature. Interest in the skills needs of craftspersons is linked to increases in the productivity of the informal economy, quality of goods and services, occupational safety and health, poverty reduction, economic competitiveness and economic growth (Fluitman, 1989, 1992; Middleton et al., 1991; Haan, 2006; Ayentimi et al., 2018; Johanson & Adams, 2004). Amidst the importance attached to the upgrade of the skills of artisans, the main contention in the literature relates to how the skills needs of artisans can be met and the role of different stakeholders including the public, private sector and NGOs.

Among these training providers, public TVET systems are critiqued for their ill-preparedness to meet the needs of those who train and work in the informal economy. Due to their pre-employment training or formal sector focus, their curricula are considered to be supply-driven and irrelevant to the needs of informal artisans. Aside from the nature of their

curricula, public TVET institutions had been negatively impacted by the SAPs (King, 1989). Upon reduction of government funding to these public training institutions, they encountered difficulties in securing and equipping their workshops with up-to-date machinery, the tools and equipment needed. King (1989) notes that Ghana and Kenya were among the worst affected African countries. Similar observations have been made in other African countries. For example, Nübler et al. (2009) report on scepticism among informal artisans in Tanzania regarding the quality of the training delivered in formal Vocational Training Institutions (VTIs) as well as the competence of their trainers to offer the required training needed to bridge their skills deficits.

Since the recognition of the relevance of skills training for the informal economy, formal VTI's have faced immense pressure to undergo reforms to meet the training needs of those in the informal economy (King, 1989). At the same time, NGOs and ITAs have been increasingly mobilised by international development agencies to address gaps in the skills and knowledge of artisans (Johanson & Adams, 2004).

Financial Arrangement

The financial arrangement in informal apprenticeship is private. Training is mainly financed by the family of apprentices, with contributions from MCPs. In West Africa, payment for training mainly consists of "commitment fees" paid before training and "graduation fees" paid at the end of training (Breyer, 2007). The commitment fee is intended to keep informal apprentices committed to the training (Breyer, 2007). Payment is either monetary, in-kind or a combination of both. Monetary payments are very common in apprenticeship in urban areas compared to rural areas (Palmer, 2007a). In Zambia, however, apprentices do not pay to be trained (Ryan, 2015). Rather, they receive wages from their employers, and this is consistent with their initial status as casual workers. Payment of apprenticeship fees is flexible, and arrangements differ per country and trade. In-kind payment consists of items such as drinks and foodstuff. In an analysis of financial arrangement in Ghana, Breyer (2007) notes that the average amount of fees charged for the duration of training is about US$ 160 and the total amount of fees ranges from US$ 22 to US$ 616 (p. iii). This amount is lower for apprenticeship in rural areas (Palmer, 2007a).

The fees charged apprentices constitute a major source of funds for micro-enterprises and supplements shortfalls in production sales (Haan, 2006). The amount charged depend on many factors including the relationship between the master and the apprentice, the trade, the

duration of the training, the size of the enterprise, turnover of the enterprises and the ability of informal apprentices to pay (Haan, 2006; Breyer, 2007; Nübler et al., 2009). Fees are usually higher for male trades such as mechanics and carpentry and least for feminine trades such as hairdressing and tailoring (Breyer, 2007, p. 18; Nübler et al., 2009). In a study of the trade choices of young people in Ghana, Bortei-Doku et al. (2013) argue that the cost of apprenticeship fees is a major factor in the choice of trade.

Informal apprentices are not wage earners, although in many cases they are provided with allowance by their masters. In Ghana, this is estimated to be between one third to two-thirds of the minimum wage (Breyer, 2007). Breyer (2007) argues that usually the total amount of allowance provided to apprentices for the duration of their training exceeds the apprenticeship fees, thus making training beneficial to apprentices. This notwithstanding, it is reported that while apprentices do receive allowances from their masters, these are usually inconsistent and depends on the financial state of the enterprises (Ryan, 2015; Nübler et al., 2009; Breyer, 2007). This suggests that the family of apprentices bear most of the cost of training.

Informal apprenticeship is considered cost-effective as the financial cost is shared between the master and the apprentice or his family (ILO, 2012; Axmann & Hoffmann, 2013; Breyer, 2007; Johanson & Adams, 2004; Nübler et al., 2009; Haan, 2006). Given this, it is perceived to be accessible to the poor. As informal apprentices get equipped with a range of skills by the end of their training, Breyer (2007) argues, from a human capital perspective, that this "justifies that apprentices bear the costs of training" (p. 20). Also, informal apprentices are seen to benefit the most from training as their masters do not have control over their labour after the completion of training.

Governance of Informal Apprenticeship

Informal apprenticeship is governed by informal institutions. Key aspects of this governance relate to the process of recruitment of informal apprentices, the setting and payment of apprenticeship fees and the role of ITAs in the regulation or maintenance of occupational standards, settlement of disputes, and facilitation of the self-employment of informal apprentices upon graduation (Fluitman & Oudin, 1992).

Informal Trade Associations are relevant bodies in the governance of informal apprenticeship. Their formation and relevance can be traced to the pre-colonial period

(Osagie & Ikponmwosa, 2015). An example of the organisation of craft among the Yoruba before and after the introduction of modern crafts is reported by Lloyd (1953). Lloyd (1953) notes that guilds were voluntarily constituted by craftsmen with rules enacted to support members and to regulate their activities. These include the registration of all craftspersons with the guild, including journeymen and apprentices, attendance of meetings and the payment of dues (Lloyd, 1953, p. 37). Upon the recruitment of apprentices, they were introduced to the guild and any dispute that arose between the master and his apprentices was settled by the members of the guild. Regarding the governance of the guild, the eldest practising man of the trade was elected as the head. However, anyone who did not meet this criterion was elected upon agreement of the members of the guild. The choice of the members needed to be ratified by the king. Besides the head, a secretary was also elected on the condition of literacy in English or Yoruba and both officials were unpaid.

Key among the functions of the guild was the maintenance of quality standards in the craft. Lloyd (1953) argues that this was difficult to achieve as there was no craft test upon the completion of training and in cases where apprentices left before they had achieved competency, standards of work in the craft suffered. Also, inspections of work in craft shops were not carried out by the guild, although sanctions were meted to craftspersons who carried inferior work upon the complaint of a customer (Lloyd, 1953, p. 39). Lloyd (1953) concluded that guilds could be further strengthened to play a greater role in the governance of informal apprenticeship.

Following the acknowledgement of the relevance of informal apprenticeship in the academic and policy skills literature, there has been increased interest in preserving the role that trade associations play in the governance of informal apprenticeship on the one hand, and in strengthening their capacity to play a greater role in informal apprenticeship. Their role is considered central in upgrading informal apprenticeship (Johanson & Adams, 2004; ILO, 2012). Given this, the goal to strengthen their capacity in apprenticeship is advanced through international donor-funded skills programmes and projects. Examples of such projects include the Bureau d'Appui aux Artisans (BAA) project in Benin, sponsored by the Swiss Development Cooperation (Haan, 2006). The project seeks to strengthen the skills of informal apprentices and MCPs through supplementary training. The project supports ITAs to develop statutes, internal rules, activities, training modules, monitoring systems among others (Haan, 2006, pp. 191 – 192). A similar project that involved ITAs is the World Bank's VSP

Project in Ghana which was highlighted in the previous chapter. ITA's were involved in the selection of MCPs and informal apprentices for training in formal VTIs. Haan (2006) reports that "most of the associations identified by the study team only exist in name and are not functioning as mobilisers of the local artisan corps" (p. 199).

In Kenya and Zimbabwe, the involvement of external agencies in the development of ITAs has raised doubts about their embeddedness in "patterns of local support" and self-sustenance (King, 1996, p. 35). Haan (2006) argues that ITAs' involvement in efforts to upgrade the skills of artisans has been accomplished "under special project conditions", generating further doubts about their efficacy beyond the projects (p. 242). Following the assessment of their performance, Haan (2006) concludes that:

> So far, skills training is not one of the prime areas of [Informal Sector Associations] ISAs in Africa…ISAs are better known for their activities in (hospital and funeral) insurance schemes, joint procurement of raw materials, obtaining plots of land from the government (eg. In Kenya and Ghana), and especially, for their advocacy on behalf of the [Informal Micro-Enterprise] IME sector. While donors would want them to be more active and often invest in building up their capacity, the level of service delivery to their members tends to be low (pp. 241 – 242).

Haan's conclusion on the role of ITAs will be revisited shortly. In view of the themes discussed above relating to the skill reproduction process, conditions of training and employment, financial arrangement and the governance of informal apprenticeship, the features of informal apprenticeship are usually categorised into strengths and weaknesses. This is presented in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: Strengths and Weaknesses of Informal Apprenticeship

Strengths	Weaknesses
Self-regulating – no tradition of government support, control, or supervision	No link with formal technical, vocational education
Self-financing – no need for subsidies, no cost to state or community; costs borne by the apprentice and their families	Lack of supervision can allow the exploitation of cheap labour
Closely tied to employment; youth get acquainted with real work conditions	Accessibility of very poor may be affected in case of high apprenticeship fees and/or significant down-payments
Work-based, therefore practical; what is taught depends on what is produced	More common in male-dominated trades and therefore less access for women or girls
Allows for building up of informal sector business network (eg. contacts with suppliers and clients)	No predetermined training programme with curricula and training materials
Often results in employment in the same workshop	Static, not dynamic; introduction of new product designs and technologies excluded; traditional technologies perpetuated
Well-adapted to conditions in the real world of work	Lack of attention to theoretical aspects
Vocational skills, business skills, customer service and work attitudes are often integrated	Often poor training and working conditions
Serving mainly rural populations and urban poor	Little attention to occupational safety and health issues
Relevant for unemployment in general	Low educational levels of apprentices often limit results

Adapted from Haan, 2006, pp. 183 – 185

Table 3.1 which was adapted from Haan (2006) was reproduced from Johanson & Adams' (2004) influential publication that builds on the World Bank's 1991 TVET policy paper. It also appears in Palmer (2007a) and ILO (2012). Commenting on the categorisation of the features of informal apprenticeship into strengths and weaknesses, Haan (2006) argues that

"some of the strengths of informal apprenticeship training are to some extent nullified by its weaknesses" (p. 182). Contrary to Haan (2006), Johanson and Adams (2004) strongly assert that "the main strengths of traditional apprenticeship are its practical orientation, self-regulation and self-financing" (p. 132). This argument is made despite the acknowledgement that "its disadvantages must be weighed against its strengths" (Johanson & Adams, 2004, p. 132). While these three features are extolled, apprenticeship is equally critiqued as lacking in quality assurance. Underpinning the emphasis on informal apprenticeship as lacking in quality assurance is the message that the role of government does not lie in "stipulating standards for training facilities, equipment, programmes, testing etc" (Johanson & Adams, 2004, p. 143). Likewise, the state's neglect of informal apprenticeship is not acknowledged. Following this, ITAs are expected to fill the gap of ensuring quality assurance, testing and certification of skills (Johanson & Adams, 2004, p. 146).

Considering the centrality of ITA's in the regulation or governance of informal apprenticeship, existing evidence of their role in skills training and expectation among international donors, a key question is: are ITAs effective mechanisms in the regulation of informal apprenticeship in terms of the upgrading of skills of artisans, maintenance of occupational standards, safety and health and supporting the self-employment of informal apprentices? Enthusiasm about the role of ITAs in informal apprenticeship glosses over the political economy of informal associations, their relations with the state and the conditions under which they can be effective in some or all of these functions.

In the post-colonial political history of some African countries, such as Ghana, informal associations, including trade associations have not emerged organically, as in the guilds of the pre-colonial era. In Ghana, for example, their formation was encouraged, supported and sponsored by the National Democratic Congress administration under the leadership of former President Jerry John Rawlings in a period of an economic crisis in which it sought an expanded electoral base (Ninsin, 2000). The nature and circumstances of their emergence make them vulnerable, susceptible to political capture and internal divisions. Besides these, Meagher (2005) cautions that "social networks are not defined by their autonomy from the state" (p. 226). In an insightful paper on social capitalist perspectives in which she critiques the "popular agency" notion of social networks, Meagher (2005) argues that an understanding of the developmental role of social networks need to account for "how the regulatory capacities of networks are shaped by the institutional practices embedded in particular

networks and the nature of their linkages with the wider society and state" (p. 224). ILO's (2012) approach to informal apprenticeship resonates with this approach.

While the ILO (2012) and Axmann and Hoffmann (2013), present a similar categorisation of the self-regulatory and cost-effectiveness of informal apprenticeship as some of its strengths, they approach informal apprenticeship differently. From an institutional and critical political economy perspective, the emphasis is placed on creating positive relations between the formal and informal economy and the gradual formalisation of the informal economy, through attention to growth and employment generation that supports decent work (ILO, 2002). As informal apprenticeship is situated in the informal economy, it is hoped that formalisation of the informal economy and aspects of apprenticeship such as apprenticeship agreement and recognition of skills will enable it to contribute to decent work. ILO's approach is human development centred, although Sehnbruch et al. (2015) argue that the concept of decent work could benefit from being foregrounded in the capability approach which underpins the human development paradigm.

The next section of the chapter examines the dominant orthodoxy within which TVET, including informal apprenticeship and its role in development, is conceptualised, critiques of this orthodoxy and implications for understanding the well-being of informal apprentices and journeypersons. The section engages with the work of Palmer (2007a) and King and Palmer (2007) as it has emerged from a critical engagement with the literature on the role of skills development in development.

Informal Apprenticeship and the TVET for Economic Growth Orthodoxy

The recognition of informal apprenticeship in the academic and policy literature has been accompanied by increased attention to its role in development. Conceived through the human capital theory, skills training is considered central to the productivity of the informal economy, economic competitiveness, poverty reduction and growth.

Palmer (2007a) problematises the linear relationship between skills training and economic competitiveness and growth. He asks if skills are enough to generate employment, increase productivity and reduce poverty[9]. Using Ghana as a case study, he shows how national

[9] A similar question – "will skills save us?" has been asked by Allais (2012) in the South African context.

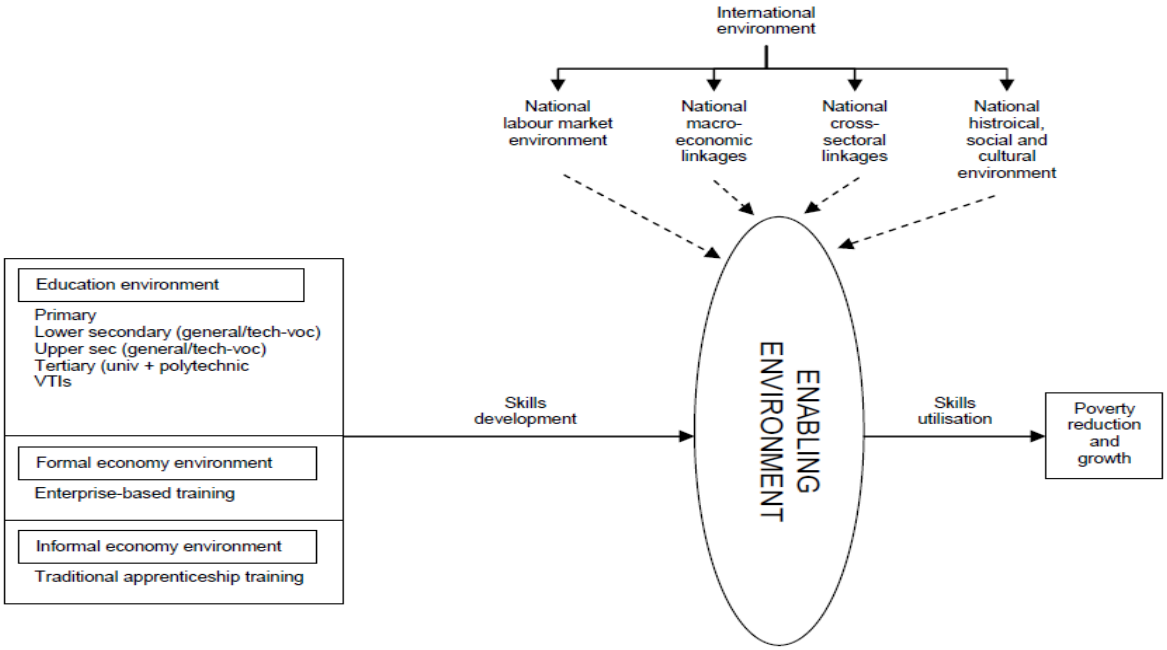
governments constantly rework skills development as a solution to youth unemployment, poverty reduction and economic growth. Concerning this, he argues that an enabling environment for the utilisation of skills is key for skills training to translate into productivity, poverty reduction and other labour market outcomes.

Palmer (2007a) categorises the enabling environment into two namely the delivery environment for skill acquisition and the transformative environment for the utilisation of skills. The delivery environment relates to the material environment such as the quality of workshop infrastructure and skills that are transferred in training. The transformative environment is conceived more broadly as the labour market environment, the macro-economic environment, cross-sectoral linkages, historical, social, and cultural environment, and the international environment. The labour market environment refers to:

> growth in the economy and availability of more and better employment opportunities; the advancement, accessibility and adoption of technological capabilities; the development of an equitable infrastructure for formal and informal enterprises; the presence of meritocratic access to both the formal and informal labour markets; and the availability of financial capital (Palmer, 2007a, p.77)

The macro-economic environment includes "civil service reform; good governance and action on corruption; poverty reduction and inclusion; social inclusion; decentralisation; political economy of reform; knowledge economy goals; resource mobilisation and utilisation" (Palmer, 2007a, p. 77). The historical, social and cultural environment relate to "the development of social capital; cultural values; and attitudes; social values and norms" (Palmer, 2007a, p. 81). Also, cross-sectoral linkages comprise of physical and social infrastructure such as water, sanitation, transport, social protection etc. Lastly, the international environment includes "open markets and international trade regulations; international aid policy and framework; global geopolitics; and debt" (Palmer, 2007a, p. 81). These are illustrated in Figure 3.1 below.

Figure 3.1: Skills Development and Development Nexus



Source: (King & Palmer, 2007)[10]

Palmer's conceptual framework for analysing the relationship between skills training and its instrumental outcomes builds on Foster's (1965a, b) work in Ghana almost 60 years ago. Foster's study was a reaction to arguments in international education and development regarding the role of school-based vocational education in changing the aspirations of school children towards vocational occupations, such as rural self-employment. He argues that vocational education and training alone cannot be used as an instrument for social and economic development. Foster (1965a) backs his argument by showing that secondary school children in Ghana do not desire vocational education and employment as their occupational aspirations are modelled after labour market opportunities that are financially rewarding and these happen to be white-collar jobs. He notes that academic education and not vocational education is desired because of the opportunities it provides in accessing prestigious occupations and achieving social mobility in society.

[10] In another version of this model in Palmer (2007a), linkages are drawn between the transformative environment and the delivery environment.

Almost 40 years after Foster's study, King and Martin (2002) replicate Foster's study and argue that vocationalised curricula play some role in the occupational aspirations of secondary school students in Ghana. Contrary to Foster's finding, they note that secondary school students prefer to be self-employed and work in private firms more than to secure wage employment in civil service. On the other hand, they perceived and ranked blue-collar occupations such as motorcar fitter and carpentry very poorly, in terms of importance, economic reward and status. This concurs with other studies on the poor societal perception of such occupations which are mostly delivered in apprenticeship (Haan, 2006, Bortei-Doku et al., 2011; Billett, 2018). For example, Haan (2006) states:

> Blue-collar work generally enjoys a low social standing in many African countries, which is reflected in a low level of appreciation for vocational training by the youth. As a result, the best and brightest students choose whenever possible to follow academic education; vocational education is generally viewed to be meant for the less gifted and especially destined for school failures (p. 229).

Similarly, Bortei-Doku et al. (2011) argue that apprenticeship is perceived by apprentices as training for those who are unable to continue their formal education due to financial constraints and poor academic ability. In view of these findings Bortei-Doku et al. (2011) remark that "this is a particularly stark finding coming from trainees themselves and could serve to reinforce [poor] societal perspectives [about apprenticeship]" (p. 24). These suggest that economic or financial conditions and academic ability primarily determine vocational choices. Also, they raise questions regarding the enthusiasm about apprenticeship and its role in the academic and policy literature on one hand, and poor perceptions about this form of training on the other.

Moving back to Palmer's conceptual framework, it is the most comprehensive in the TVET literature in showing the relationship between skills development, employment outcomes and poverty reduction. The model encourages consideration of the delivery environment as well as the environment for the utilisation of skills. Also, poverty is understood to be multi-dimensional and concerning this, King and Palmer (2007) argue that "the multidimensional character of poverty means that an assessment of training impact on income alone will not be satisfactory" (p. 4). On the other hand, there are a couple of issues about the model that needs to be confronted. These relate to the conceptualisation of poverty, the orthodoxy that

underpins it and the extent to which the narrow focus on skills reduces the analytical value of the enabling or transformative environment. These are discussed below, alongside their implications for apprenticeship research.

To begin with, the conceptualisation of the multidimensional nature of poverty against which training needs to be assessed is quite vague. Poverty is not well defined. King and Palmer (2007) argue that "when conceptualising poverty, we need to consider vulnerability, inequality, the poverty categories of people, and collective poverty" (p. 6). Second, they move to focus on poverty reduction and call for attention to three kinds of poverty reduction in assessing the impact of training. These are poverty alleviation, lifting people out of poverty and poverty prevention. The baseline for undertaking such an assessment is income.

This contradicts the earlier assertion of the inadequacy of income as a measure of poverty. Also, it ignores earlier attempts by the ILO (1976) to move beyond income assessment of poverty or well-being. Furthermore, it shows no concern for the human development conception of poverty as capability deprivation. As a result, it decreases the poverty reduction role of skills training to income as well as the end to which people acquire and utilise skills. This does not help in investigating a key question they pose regarding "what aspects of poverty or well-being are said to be causally linked with skills development?" (King & Palmer, 2007, p. 9).

Second, the model which builds on conceptions in the literature regarding education and training's role in development is locked in an "outmoded and inadequate development paradigm" which conceptualises development as economic growth (McGrath, 2012, p. 625). Within this orthodoxy, the role of skills development is conceived narrowly as developing human capital for productivity in (self) employment in the informal economy and growth. This perspective decentres the individual and his broader well-being as it emphasises his skills as an important factor of production. While the role of skills training in increasing productivity, reducing income poverty, and fostering economic growth is essential and undisputed, this orthodoxy has been widely critiqued in the TVET literature as espoused below.

First, McGrath and Powell (2015) argue that it rules out any discussion of the role of TVET, as the orthodoxy has already defined the role of TVET, that is TVET for human capital development, productivity, and economic growth. In relation to this, McGrath and Powell (2015) note that voices of trainees are silenced and the voices of employers and TVET

experts regarding the skills needs of the economy are prioritised. This limits the accountability of the system to learners (Marope et al., 2015). Also, other concerns that are important to learners besides the acquisition of skills are not known and prioritised. Very few studies, for example, focus on the experiences or aspirations of informal apprentices. These include the work of Schraven et al. (2013) which adopts a livelihood approach to understanding the experiences of poor youths in apprenticeship, Donkor (2012) which explores the reasons for non-completion of apprenticeship, Bortei-Doku et al. (2011, 2013) on perspectives of apprenticeship by youths and Ryan (2015) on the perceptions of apprenticeship in Zambia.

Second, Tikly (2013) asserts that "it lacks an overt normative framework for engaging with issues such as inequality and marginalisation" (p. 12). Citing gender inequality in TVET as an example, he notes that economic instead of normative concerns usually justify a focus on gender equality. Linked to this are concerns of the neglect of care work and the aspirations of females in training (Suart, 2019; McGrath & Powell, 2015; Powell & McGrath, 2019). In the informal apprenticeship literature, while less participation of females in male-dominated trades is often acknowledged, very few studies focus on gender or gender inequalities in training (Lowe, 2019; Pereznieto et al., 2018).

Reporting on a training programme for young people in construction trades, Lowe (2019) highlights the difficulties encountered in attracting female trainees. She notes that these are due to gender norms, concerns about health and safety, sexual harassment, cost of training and self-esteem. In another skills training programme, Pereznieto et al. (2018) extend the list to include care responsibilities, barriers to self-employment, insecurity, and violence. Some of the challenges highlighted were mitigated through the programme design. Among the strategies adopted include the creation of safe spaces for females, provision of mentorship, monetary incentives, absorption of childcare costs, flexible training schedule, gender training for all programme participants and trainers (Lowe, 2019, Pereznieto et al, 2018). These findings are very illuminative. However, there is no clarity regarding the normative framework that underpins these studies and how this can inform the theorisation of gender inequalities in skills training. Also, while solutions to the identified problems were addressed through project support, it is important to understand how these solutions can be fed into the wider system for the benefits of more females.

Third, McGrath (2012), citing Anderson (2009) argues that the orthodoxy is "impoverished in its view of skills, work and life" (p. 624). Only the income and production aspect of work is acknowledged leaving out other aspects such as the recognition dimension (McGrath et al., 2020). The latter focuses on "self-identity, self-worth and meaning that comes from being engaged in something worthwhile" (Sen 1975 as cited in McGrath et al., 2020, p. 7).

Also, on work, McGrath and Powell (2015) argue that issues relating to decent work are largely ignored. In the apprenticeship literature for example, whilst decent work deficits are acknowledged, it is sometimes perceived to be constitutive of the development process (Callaway, 1964; Johanson & Adams, 2004). There is the assumption that these could be resolved through a focus on improved skills which will enhance productivity, economic growth, and the capacity of enterprises to afford the cost of ensuring decent work. While this is true to some extent, these, by themselves will not lead to decent work unless it is accorded relevance in the theorisation of TVET. This will be essential to approaches aimed at addressing these issues. To illustrate, the current framing of these issues in the apprenticeship literature feeds into recommendations for policymakers.

In recommendations, there is usually more concern for state regulations that seek to address decent work deficits in apprenticeship due to anticipated effects on employment and the uptake of apprentices. An example of these is: "care is needed to ensure that attempts at formalisation do not undermine the strengths and sustainability of this informal system" (Palmer, 2009, p. 74). Formalisation means "bureaucratic regulations on type, duration and conditions of training" (Johanson & Adams, 2004, p. 135). The apprenticeship literature is replete with similar recommendations (King 1996; Palmer, 2007a; Callaway, 1964; Haan, 2006; Middleton et al., 1991).

Aside from the theoretical underpinning, these recommendations also stem from few programmatic interventions by national governments such as the National Apprenticeship

Programme in Ghana, the National Open Apprenticeship Scheme (NOAS)[11] in Nigeria and apprenticeship regulations that are not enforced as in the case of Ghana. State interventions or regulations and their effects or potential effects on training is a cause for concern. But, of more concern is the logic that underpins these recommendations. There is an uneasiness about the implications of interventions on employment, the training system, and the economy more than the views or well-being of those in training. Most importantly, alternative proposals are not made regarding how the weaknesses of the system could be redressed beyond the need to upgrade the skills of artisans. Before this task can be undertaken, there is the need for a re-examination of a question asked by Palmer (2007b) about "training for what? And what kind of training for whom?" using an alternative theoretical lens (p. 404).

Lastly, the sole focus on skills acquisition and utilisation limit the analytical value of the enabling environment. This is because all the elements that feed into the enabling environment are analysed in relation to their effects on skills acquisition and utilisation. On the other hand, ascertaining aspects of poverty or well-being associated with training as King and Palmer (2007) earlier remarked leads to an investigation of the role of skills training and associated social arrangements in reducing poverty or enhancing well-being. This study takes the work of King and Palmer (2007) forward in this regard.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the chapter began with an overview of the events that led to the recognition of the informal economy and informal apprenticeship in the academic and policy literature. This was followed with a discussion of key features of informal apprenticeship and how these are conceived in the literature. The dominant orthodoxy and the human capital theory within which TVET, including informal apprenticeship is framed was then evaluated. Based on the discussion, four points are raised that underpin the study's importance and inform its research questions, which will be presented in the next chapter.

[11] NOAS was an apprenticeship programme that was implemented by the Nigerian government in the early 1990s. It is similar to NAP in Ghana. It included the payment of stipends to participating apprentices, apprenticeship fees to MCPs, Saturday classes for the apprentices, regulation of the working hours of the apprentices, shorter duration of training (Haan, 2006). The lessons that emerged from the programme are similar to the NAP. These are inadequate support for the trainees in transitioning to self-employment and ill-preparedness of the trainees due to the short period of training, the non-involvement of MCPs in the selection of apprentices which affected their commitment towards the apprentices (Haan, 2006).

First, whilst informal apprenticeship is the oldest skills training institution, it came to the limelight following the discovery of the informal economy and the realisation that it provides skills training and income-earning opportunities for millions of people outside of the formal labour market, education and training system. Concerns over youth unemployment, disillusionment with formal TVET, its cost and the extent to which it adequately prepares students for the labour market has led to increased attention to informal apprenticeship. It has been embraced as an avenue for preparing youth for work in the informal economy while serving as an instrument to reduce poverty and improve the productivity of the informal economy.

Second, academic and policy research on informal apprenticeship concludes that it is accessible to many youths, a cost-effective way of acquiring skills training and its autonomy from the state is commendable. Given these, its self-financing and self-regulatory features, including its practical orientation are classified as the three main strengths of the system. At the same time, the weaknesses of the system such as poor conditions of training, little to no linkages with the formal education and training system stem from the state's long-standing disengagement with the training system. While the weaknesses are acknowledged, the academic skills literature, policy guidance of the World Bank and efforts to upgrade apprenticeship sometimes downplay the critical role of the state in informal apprenticeship. This does not help in understanding the limitations of ITAs as key regulatory bodies in informal apprenticeship, the nature of relations between the state and informal apprenticeship and the extent to which these impact on the role of ITAs, opportunities available for MCPs, informal apprentices and journeypersons.

Third, while informal apprenticeship is promoted as an important skills training route for the youth, especially the poor and disadvantaged who cannot afford the cost of formal education and training, it is perceived poorly among the youths and other members of society. At the level of policy, this has implications for efforts to reduce youth unemployment by increasing access to informal apprenticeship. At the academic level, it halts further debate about informal apprenticeship regarding perspectives about the training system, prospects it offers and how it could contribute to the aspirations and well-being of apprentices.

Fourth, as a result of the human capital theory and growth paradigm within which informal apprenticeship is embedded, the emphasis is placed on skills gained in informal apprenticeship and how these can contribute to the productivity of informal economy,

economic competitiveness, poverty reduction and growth. Discussion in the last section of the chapter revealed the limitations of the human capital theory and the growth paradigm that defines the role of skills training. Examples include the reductive view of the role of training, the poor conceptualisation of poverty against which TVET ought to be evaluated, lack of normative underpinning for understanding inequality and marginalisation, inadequate attention to the experiences of trainees and decent work deficits. Considering these limitations, this study draws on the capability approach and strong structuration theory in response to King and Palmer's (2007) call for an investigation of aspects of poverty or well-being that are causally linked with skills development or informal apprenticeship. The next chapter introduces the theoretical framework of the study.

Chapter Four: Theoretical Framework

This study is framed within the capability approach and strong structuration theory. The capability approach serves as a normative and evaluative framework for conceptualising the well-being and freedoms of informal apprentices and journeypersons in the automotive trade in Ghana. Strong structuration theory is used to supplement the capability approach in evaluating the opportunities and constraints to the freedoms of informal apprentices and journeypersons. The theory helps to address criticisms regarding the account of structure and agency in the capability approach as will be discussed later in the chapter.

The capability approach was pioneered by Nobel Laureate economist and political philosopher Amartya Sen and has had contributions from many authors in different fields of study. Notable among them is Martha Nussbaum, a political philosopher who has developed the approach into a theory of justice. While both Sen and Nussbaum share a fundamental belief in the value of the approach in quality-of-life assessments, Nussbaum's version specifies a list of ten central human capabilities that all governments need to guarantee their citizens. The discussion of the capability approach in this study draws on Sen's version of the approach as it provides conceptual tools for evaluating well-being in and through education. The debate on the selection of capabilities is examined in the methodology chapter as it intertwines with issues of epistemology.

This chapter first begins with an introduction of the capability approach, with a focus on its emergence as a critique of other approaches. This is followed by a discussion of the key concepts that underpin the approach. The extent to which the capability approach has been taken up in TVET research is examined followed by sociological weaknesses of the approach. This provides the bases for introducing strong structuration theory. The chapter concludes with the research questions and a conceptual framework that depicts how the capability approach and strong structuration are going to be used in this study.

Capability Approach: An Overview of its Critique of Other Approaches

Amartya Sen's capability approach is rooted in welfare economics and political philosophy and emerged through his critical engagement with utilitarian, resourcist, and Rawlsian theory of equality and justice.

In a seminal lecture on "Equality of what?" Sen (1980) challenged the normative underpinning of utilitarianism and Rawlsian conceptions of equality. Regarding utilitarianism[12], Sen (1980) criticised its narrow focus arguing that equality of utility is insensitive to human diversity and needs. This is because it leads to the neglect of other relevant information that is important in maximising utility (Sen, 1980, 1985). These include non-utility information such as personal characteristics of people and other social conditions that are important in judging states of affairs, the well-being and advantage of individuals. Practical examples include gender, disability status of persons, among others.

On Rawls' theory of justice as fairness, Sen (1980, 2009) first commends his critique and extension of utilitarian equality by developing the notion of equality of primary social goods. Primary social goods "are things every rational man is presumed to want, including rights, liberties, and opportunities, income and wealth, and the social bases of self-respect" (Sen, 1980, p. 214). However, in the analysis of economic and social justice, Rawls focuses on the primary goods of income and wealth (Sugden, 1993, p. 1956). Similar to the utilitarian critique, Sen (1980) argues that equality of primary goods does not take into consideration the diversity of people and how they make use of goods to achieve outcomes. Sen (1980) states that "judging advantage purely in terms of primary goods leads to partially blind morality" (p. 216).

The second issue Sen takes with Rawls' notion of primary goods relate to the question of equality of primary goods for what? (Cohen, 1993). Sen (1980) argues that "Rawls take primary goods to be an embodiment of advantage rather than taking advantage to be a

[12] Utilitarianism is a moral and economic theory that argues that social states ought to be judged based on the maximisation of utility or welfare. Utility is a metric of happiness or pleasure. It also holds that distribution ought to be made in the context of welfare (Cohen, 1993). This places welfare or utility at the centre of all normative issues. In its economic application, utility or welfare is translated into income, which becomes an end in itself rather than means to some end (Robeyns, 2005). Relying on welfare or income in distributive concerns leads to injustices.

relationship between goods and persons" (p. 216). He highlights the fact that goods are important as much as "what these good things do to human beings" (Sen, 1980, p. 218). In Sen's view, primary goods are the means to human ends, which are capabilities. It is important to mention that Sen's critique of Rawls' primary goods applies to other resource-based theories such as Dworkin's (Cohen, 1993). In view of these criticisms, Sen (1980) proposes equality of basic capabilities as the informational space for assessing equality and well-being.

In the most influential book of "Development as Freedom", Sen (1999) extrapolates his Rawlsian and utilitarian critique to the conventional understanding of development as growth in Gross National Income (GNI) or personal incomes. He argues that these measures do not provide sufficient information about the lives that people lead and the freedoms that they have. Sen (1999) shows through empirical work that while proponents of the growth paradigm justify growth from the perspective of increased freedoms and quality of life of members of society, the relationship between growth and quality of life is not linear. He notes that high GNP and personal incomes do not guarantee quality of life as these are dependent on the social, political, and economic arrangements of society. Sen (1999) argues that development ought to be defined as "the process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy" or have reason to value (p. 3).

Similar to the inadequacy of GDP and income-based approaches to development, Sen (1999) argues that poverty should be conceptualised and judged as capability deprivation, rather than "lowness of income" (p. 88). Sen (1999) acknowledges that income deprivation can be a major cause of one's impoverishment. On the other hand, income is not the only means of deprivations. While some deprivations may require income to resolve, others are not income dependent. In addition, income is instrumental to some other ends and it is important to focus on these ends, which are "intrinsically important" as well as the various means to these ends (Sen, 1999, p. 87). This shifts the analysis from income as an end and the only means often prioritised to other ends. Sen (1999) makes an important point about the linkage between the income definition of poverty and education. Sen (1999) writes:

> There is a danger in seeing poverty in the narrow terms of income deprivation, and then justifying investment in education, health care and so forth on the ground that they are good means to the end of reducing income poverty. This will be a confounding of ends with means (p. 90).

In the above quote, Sen takes issue with the narrow conception of poverty and its influence on the role of education. In Sen's view, education is a basic capability that contributes to the various things people value being and doing. This aligns with critiques of the TVET for economic growth orthodoxy that was discussed in the previous chapter.

The capability approach and its critique of utilitarianism, poverty and conventional understanding of development underpinned the human development paradigm. The human development paradigm was legitimised by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) through its annual Human Development Report (HDR). Haq (1995) who pioneered the HDR states that "the human dimension of development is not just another addition in the development dialogue. It is an entirely new perspective, a revolutionary way to recast our conventional approach to development" (p. 11). The contribution of the capability approach to the human development paradigm was timely considering the failure of economic growth to improve the lives of people and the basic needs approach to dethrone the growth paradigm.

The human development approach to development is people-centred as it puts the lives and freedoms of humans at the forefront of analysis. The Human Development Report Office has been highly successful in focusing the attention of development planning and policy towards other dimensions of development besides economic growth. This has been achieved through its comparative assessment of the progress of countries in three key dimensions namely long and healthy life, knowledge, and decent standard of living. Attention to education in the HDR is however reductive as the emphasis is placed on years of schooling.

On the other hand, there is a broad education literature that applies the capability approach to normative questions such as: what are the purposes of education? Are the purposes of education to be judged based on other people's goals, human capital development, incomes, productivity, and growth? What does equality in education mean? What does it mean for education to reduce poverty? The literature on the capability approach in education, specifically TVET is discussed later after the key concepts that underpin the capability approach are discussed.

The Capability Approach: A Framework of Thought

As a normative framework, the capability approach is underpinned by four distinct, yet interrelated concepts. These are functionings and capability, agency, and well-being. These, in addition to the concept of conversion factors, guide how the approach can be used to evaluate poverty, equality, well-being, and social arrangements, including vocational education and training institutions or systems.

Functionings and Capability

Functionings describe the various beings and doings that are constitutive of a person's life. (Sen, 1995, p. 39). Examples include being nourished, sheltered, being in training, being able to take part in the life of a community, being in good health, being respected, being happy etc. Functionings that a person manages to achieve provides information about his well-being and constitutes his achievements, whereas those that an individual has reason to value but not achieved are valued functionings. To illustrate, the well-being of informal apprentices and journeypersons are to be judged from their functionings or the life they manage to lead such as where they lodge and the vocational skills they have as part of their training. While functionings are important in understanding a person's quality of life, Sen attaches great relevance to a person's capability.

Capability refers to the "alternative combinations of [valued] functionings the person can achieve, and from which he or she can choose one collection" (Sen, 1993, p. 31). Capability is therefore the real freedom to achieve well-being or functionings. In other words, it denotes what a person is able to do or be. Sen (1999) cites this example to illustrate the distinction between functionings and capability. Two people, an affluent and a destitute both fast. Both can be said to have the same level of functioning in terms of nourishment. On the other hand, their capability sets are different in that the affluent person has opportunities to be well-nourished but chooses to fast, whereas the destitute fasts for lack of opportunities to achieve nourishment (Sen, 1999, p. 75). In this example, both individuals exercise choice, but the choice of the destitute to fast denotes capability deprivation. As a result, while focusing on their functionings may provide some information about these two people's state of well-being, it masks the freedoms or opportunities both have, to choose to be well-nourished.

To illustrate with a different example, two income deprived trainees, a formal sector apprentice and an informal apprentice both enrol in a National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI) to acquire knowledge and certification. The formal apprentice's fees get paid by his

employer as entitlement due to him. However, the informal apprentice self-finances himself with his year's savings, obtained from selling oranges at night after training. By looking at their functioning (enrolment) and not the conditions of choice, the advantage of both trainees will not be noticed, and underlying inequalities will not be addressed.

These examples point to two sets of information relevant to understanding capability. These are opportunity and choice. Sen captures these through the notions of opportunity freedom and process aspect of freedom, respectively. Opportunity freedom captures the opportunities that are available to a person while the process aspect pays attention to the process of choice and the agency involved in achieving different combinations of functionings (Sen, 2009). Freedom of choice or "acting freely" is seen as an important capability as one's functionings are the outcome of choices that are made and freedoms (opportunities) a person has, from which he chooses (Sen, 1995, p. 51; Sen 1985). Given this, Sen (1995) notes that "there is no difference as far as the space is concerned between focusing on functionings or on capabilities" (p. 50). The capability approach places emphasis on individual freedoms and as such it argues that people should have opportunities, although the decision to take up those opportunities should be left to them (Robeyns, 2005a).

Agency and Well-Being

In relation to the notion of freedom, agency has an intrinsic role in the valuation of capability. The centrality of agency emerged from Sen's critique of the reductive way in which individuals are viewed in welfare economics. In response to utilitarianism, Sen (1985) argues that "people have aspects other than well-being" (p. 186). As a result, "not all their activities are aimed at maximizing well-being, nor do their activities always contribute to it" (Sen, 1985, p. 186). This leads Sen to distinguish between agency and well-being goals on the one hand and the freedom to achieve these goals. Well-being and agency goals could be seen as further specification of functionings (Robeyns, 2005a), whereas the freedom to achieve one's well-being or agency goals is part of one's capability set. Well-being freedom represents the freedom a person has to achieve those things that are constitutive of her well-being. On the other hand, agency freedom refers to the "freedom to bring about achievement one values and attempts to produce" (Sen, 1995, p. 57).

Beyond the need to have a broader view of human motivation and commitment, the distinction also points to the need for more freedoms so that individuals do not trade-off some functionings to fulfil others. This is evident in Sen's (1995) acknowledgement of the

possibility that one's agency goals may conflict with one's well-being goals. For example, a trainee may have only one meal in a day and sacrifice the money he could have used to acquire three square meals to support a younger sibling in school. In this example, he pursues his agency goals at the expense of or regardless of the impact on his personal well-being. Given this, Sen (1999) argues that "greater freedoms enhance the ability of people to help themselves and to also influence the world, and these matters are central to the process of development" (p. 18). The table below presents the key concepts that have been explained.

Table 4.1: Informational Space for Assessing Justice

	Achievement (functionings)	Freedom to achieve (capability)
Promotion of individual well-being	Well-being achievement	Well-being freedom
Pursuit of individual agency goals	Agency achievement	Agency freedom

Source: (McGrath & Powell, 2015, p. 280)

It is important to mention that the concept of agency freedom rests on a liberal conception of an individual. Individuals are seen to have their own conception of the good, are free to choose and need to be treated as "persons who act and bring about change and whose achievement can be judged in terms of her own values and objectives, whether or not we assess them in terms of some external criteria as well" (Sen, 1999, p. 19; Sen 2009, p. 252; Sen 1985, p. 186). In view of this, the goal of "development consists of the removal of various types of unfreedoms that leave people with little choice and little opportunity of exercising their reasoned agency" (Sen 1999, p. xii). Sen conceives individual agency as "central to addressing deprivations" and "the freedom of individuals as the basic building blocks of development" (1999, pp xi, 18). The conception of the individual and the centrality of individual freedoms and agency in the capability approach is one area in which the capability approach has been critiqued, particularly by sociologists. These critiques are discussed in the last section of the discussion of the capability approach.

Conversion Factors

The last aspect of the normative concepts is conversion factors. As highlighted earlier in the critique of other approaches, Sen regards the diversity of humans and their social conditions

as central to understanding their advantage, that is what they are able to be and to do with goods. As a result of this, conversion factors are the "interpersonal variables between means and the actual freedom to achieve" (Sen, 1995, p. 27). They capture the relationship between goods and functionings. Examples of conversion factors in Sen's writings are presented below.

a) Personal diversities – physical differences or characteristics related to disability, illness, age and gender, differences in intellectual abilities, predispositions (Sen, 1995, 1999, p. 70)
b) Group diversities – for example, between women and men in specific respects such as the possibility of pregnancy and neonatal care of infants (Sen, 1995, p. 27).
c) Environmental diversities – variations in environmental conditions, such as climatic circumstances (temperature ranges, rainfall and so on) (Sen, 1999, p. 70)
d) Variations in social climate – social conditions including public educational arrangements, the prevalence of crime and violence in a particular location, the nature of community relationships (Sen, 1999, p. 70)
e) Differences in relational perspectives – differences in commodity requirements of established patterns and behaviour due to differences in conventions and customs. For example, being relatively poor in a rich community can prevent a person from achieving some elementary functionings such as taking part in the life of a community. Also, personal resources required for achieving self-respect may vary between societies (Sen, 1999, p. 71).
f) Distribution within the family – household income may not reflect the freedoms or achievements of individual members due to differences in intrahousehold distribution. Distribution may be based on some criteria such as gender, age, or perceived needs (Sen, 1999, p. 71).

Based on the above examples, Robeyns (2005a) categorises conversion factors into social, personal, and environmental factors. Conversion factors draw attention to differences in human needs that stem from physiological makeup, social and environmental conditions and which affect how they convert goods into capabilities. In view of this, it shows that equality of resources or primary goods is not sufficient in understanding what people are able to be and to do with those goods. An example is how gender differences might affect how informal apprentices convert equal facilities at the workplace into functionings. Another example is

how differences in reproductive roles affect how trainees convert a training opportunity into desired outcomes. In the examples cited, conversion factors operate in the context of equal distribution of resources and useful for comparative analysis of advantage. In the context of unequal distribution of resources, they are nonetheless useful in drawing attention to differences in people's conditions and how these may inform the distribution of resources or arrangements to address inequalities or enhance well-being.

It is important to mention that conversion factors' influence on capabilities intersect with social, economic and political arrangements and the nature of these arrangements to the extent to which they guarantee primary goods or means. In the example cited earlier, for example, differences in reproductive roles will affect the capabilities of people depending on care arrangements that exist. Also, the conditions of trainees in the formal and informal economy and the resultant impact on their capabilities will depend on differences in institutional arrangement. In view of this, Robeyns (2005a) argues that "we need to scrutinize the context in which economic production and social interactions take place, and whether the circumstances in which people choose from their opportunity sets are enabling and just" (p. 99). This shows the importance of social context in capability analysis. Besides the influence of the context on capabilities, functionings that individuals have reason to value are also impacted by the context.

While the capability approach draws attention to multiple variables and sets of information needed to understand and evaluate inequalities and well-being in the space of capabilities, it is criticised for its inability to critically engage with the nature of social and political arrangements or context in which capabilities are constituted (Hvinden & Halvorsen, 2018; Dejaeghere, 2020, 2019 a,b; Tikly, 2019). For example, Goerne (2010) argues that "within the CA, structures are dealt with under the heading of [social] conversion factors" (p. 10). Similarly, Smith and Seward (2009) argue that "the exact nature of these social factors and how they interact to form and influence capabilities is contested and unclear" (p. 213). Further criticisms regarding the inadequacy of structural account in the capability approach are discussed in the last section under sociological limitations of the capability approach.

In relation to education, Unterhalter (2007) argues that "for Sen education is an unqualified good for human capability expansion and freedom" (p. 9). While education has both intrinsic and instrumental benefits, it can lead to inequalities or constrain the capabilities of people due to arrangements that society makes for education. In view of this, scholars using the

capability approach are expected to be critical of the varied ways in which education, educational processes and institutional arrangements can expand or constrain capabilities by supplementing the capability approach with social theories. Social theories that are supplemented with studies that use the capability approach are also discussed in the last section.

Adaptive Preference

The problem of adaptive preference accounts for one of the reasons Sen rejects the utilitarian metric of well-being[13] Adaptive preference is described as the condition in which an individual in a deprived environment adjusts his/her desires or preferences to suit those conditions (Sen, 1999, p. 62). Sen shows an example of adaptive preference in the statement that "a person who is ill-fed, undernourished, unsheltered, and ill can still be high up in the scale of happiness or desire-fulfilment if he or she has learned to have desires and to take pleasure in little mercies" (1985, p. 21). In such conditions, reliance on subjective assessment of well-being may mask deprivations. The inability of welfare approaches to detect adapted preferences makes them unsuitable for assessing well-being, discovering, and addressing injustices (Sen, 1999).

Sen's rejection of mental states of well-being, however, does not imply that they are not important (Robeyns, 2005a). It is the sole focus on these that he cautions against. In contrast to welfare approaches, the capability approach partly deals with adaptive preference by focusing on capabilities, that is beings and doings which are valuable in themselves and "not just *because* they may yield utility, nor just to the *extent* that they yield utility" (Sen 1995, p. 43). An example is being healthy. This notwithstanding, adaptive preference is considered a concern in the selection of capabilities and the choices of individuals (Robeyns, 2017). In view of this, there are different perspectives regarding how adaptive preferences may be eliminated in selecting capabilities. These are discussed in the methodology.

In relation to the understanding of the influence of adaptive preferences on individuals' freedom of choice, Walker (2019) points to the relevance of exploring the conditions within

[13] This applies to other subjective or preference-based assessments of well-being, besides utilitarianism.

which individuals act. This is very important in addressing deprivations that lead to preference formation in the first place.

The Human Development Paradigm and TVET

In the overview of the capability approach, the influence of Sen's ideas on the human development paradigm was broached. The human development paradigm has informed an account of TVET for human development which draws on the normative concepts of the capability approach. The TVET for human development account challenges the growth paradigm within which TVET is situated and which defines its role in poverty reduction and development. In relation to the dominant orthodoxy, TVET's contribution lies in its human capital role, which is developing "human qualities that can be employed as 'capital' in production" (Sen, 1997, p. 1959). This flows into the former role in that the utilisation of one's skills leads to the generation of income and an escape or reduction of income poverty. While these are very important, the capability approach necessitates a broader role of TVET. This suggests taking more seriously many aspects of the lives, education and work of TVET students and graduates that are either not known or ignored in the dominant TVET orthodoxy which is underpinned by the human capital theory.

In the past decade, a body of literature has emerged that apply the capability approach to the evaluation of TVET. Most of these studies emerge from different contexts. However, they express similar concerns about TVET and its orthodoxy. These centre on the neoliberal employability focus of TVET on the one hand and its failure to comprehend the experiences, valued functionings and concerns of students and graduates (Moodie, et al., 2018; Wheelahan & Moodie, 2011; López Fogués, 2014; Suart, 2019; Powell & McGrath, 2019; Hilal, 2018, 2019; Ngcwangu, 2019; Thorne, 2020; Dejaeghere & Baxter, 2014; Dejaeghere, Wiger & Willemsen, 2016; Tikly, 2013, 2019; Dejaeghere, 2020). Of the authors who write within this tradition, McGrath et al. (2020) develop a Critical Capabilities Account of VET (CCA-VET) which draws on sociological theories to supplement the weaknesses of the capability approach as will be discussed in the next section. Five key themes emerge from the literature on the capability approach and TVET and these are discussed below.

The first is the capability for work. Bonvin and Farvaque (2006) define this as "the real freedom to choose the work one has reason to value" (p. 126). This implies "being equipped to escape from the constraint of valueless work" and the "possibility of transforming it into something one has reason to value" (Bonvin & Farvaque, 2006, p. 126). Building on this

point, Moodie et al. (2018) develop the notion of productive capabilities. This emphasises vocational knowledge beyond the narrow set of competences that are taught in VET institutions and practised in workplaces. They argue that the focus on competences restricts individuals' choices and agency to achieve a range of outcomes in education, their career and work. They note that vocational knowledge is essential for individuals to engage with the changing nature of work, to innovate and respond to the varied needs of society.

The above point is further extended by Tikly (2013). He notes that bringing back vocational knowledge as an important function of TVET institutions encourages discussion about forms of knowledge, including indigenous knowledge that is responsive to the needs of different societies. This is essential to the transformative role of education in "developing people's agency to achieve sustainable livelihoods, sustainable cities and communities and address climate change" (Tikly et al., 2020, p. 2). This also feeds into the broader debate in the South regarding the decolonisation of knowledge or the curriculum in a context where TVET is expected to respond to the demands of the knowledge economy and the skills needs of capitalist employers (Ngcwangu, 2019; Tikly et al., 2020; Tikly, 2019).

Second and linked to the capability for work is an emphasis on the transition from training to work and the nature of work that TVET students and graduates undertake. Dejaeghere and Baxter (2014) highlight the insidious way in which the neoliberal employability discourse valorises young people as job creators while making them bear the risks involved. Framing entrepreneurial programmes in Sub-Saharan Africa within the capability approach, they argue that attention needs to be paid to the factors that enable young people to convert their training into valued and sustainable livelihoods. Critiquing the employability discourse in Spain, López Fogués (2014) reports on the exploitative nature of work undertaken by VET graduates in Spain. From a South African perspective, Powell and McGrath (2019) also argue that young people are found in precarious employment due to the lack of opportunities to choose work they have reason to value. They note that while statisticians capture these young people as employed, the young people do not consider themselves to be in employment. In Palestine, Hilal (2018) also states that some TVET graduates undertake unskilled, voluntary and precarious jobs in the informal economy.

Third and again linked to the capability for work is the capability for voice. The capability for voice is the "ability to express one's opinions and thoughts and to make them count" (Bonvin & Farvaque, 2006, p. 126; McGrath & Powell, 2015). This capability embodies democratic

processes or freedoms at the heart of Sen's (2009) idea of justice. Democratic participation is seen as a means and an end of development (Sen, 1999). McGrath and Powell (2015) add that like development, the purpose of TVET "is not about what is decided, but at least equally importantly about how it is decided and who decides" (p. 282). This requires an inclusive participatory process where students and trainees are regarded as equal partners in deliberations and negotiations about issues that concern them. This suggests the need to address relations of power and normative structures that hinder the capability for voice. Equally, it draws attention to the rights, opportunities or arrangements needed to bolster this capability, lest it becomes "wishful thinking" (Bonvin & Farvaque, 2006). As the capability approach is very sensitive to context, the right form of arrangement would depend on and have to emerge from the context.

The fourth theme that emerges from the TVET and capability literature relates to the identification of various beings and doings that young and adult learners have reason to value, seek and gain in education, training, and work. These include active citizenship, confidence and personal empowerment, bodily integrity, senses and imagination, domestic skills, recognition and respect and community care among others (Powell, 2014; Hilal, 2018, Suart, 2019, Dejaeghere 2019b; Thorne, 2020). From a gendered perspective, Suart (2019) finds that beyond gaining skills for meaningful employment and income, female adult learners' participation in further education in England helped them to escape domestic abuse, gain confidence, self-esteem and were able to better support their children.

Similar findings emerged from Hilal's (2018) study in Palestine. Reporting on a skills development programme for women in Jordan, Thorne (2020) also states that women value functionings such as confidence, domestic skills, communication skills and the opportunity to build relationships with other women in their community. Thorne (2020) notes that the latter was very important to the Syrian refugee women who participated in the programme as it helped them to feel included and recognised by others in their community. These valued functionings and achievements gained through TVET are usually absent in studies or policies framed in human capital theory. As a result, the decision to invest in TVET is justified from an economic perspective, whereas these other freedoms are also essential.

The fifth theme is the broadening of the evaluative space of TVET. The capability approach to TVET insists that evaluation of vocational success needs to go beyond conventional evaluation measures such as numbers of young people trained, or who have access to skills

training, exams pass rates, employment rates, rates of return and inputs provided (McGrath et al., 2020). It is argued that while these are important, the evaluative space should focus on people's capabilities and functionings and how TVET providers expand and constrain these. It is also acknowledged that TVET providers as well as students and graduates are embedded in a complex set of social structures, which affect both the capabilities of the institutional providers and the students (McGrath et al., 2020). As a result, it is important to understand the complex set of relations or social context and how they influence capabilities.

Before concluding this section, it is important to mention that the existing literature on the capability approach and TVET have focused on formal and non-formal delivery. My study contributes to the discussion from the perspective of informal apprenticeship.

Sociological Limitations of the Capability Approach

As highlighted earlier, social context plays a very important role in understanding and investigating capabilities. As a normative and evaluative framework, the approach is however criticised as too individualistic.

At the ontological level, the approach is said to be methodologically individualistic (Gore, 1997; Stewart & Deneulin, 2002). Stewart and Deneulin (2002) argue that the capability approach is methodologically individualistic in that "all social phenomenon must be accounted for in terms of what individuals think, choose and do" (p. 66). Sen (2002) refutes this claim and argues that "the presence of individuals who choose, think and act does not make an approach methodologically individualistic" (p. 81). Sen (2009) continues that "it is the illegitimate invoking of any presumption of independence of the thoughts and actions of persons from the society around them that would bring the feared beast into the living room" (p. 245). He further explains that individuals' thoughts, choices, and actions are influenced by society, but that does not deny the agency of individuals engaged in the act of choosing.

Following Sen, Robeyns (2017) argues that the capability approach is not methodologically or ontologically individualistic in that it does not presuppose the inexistence of society or claim that only individual properties exist. On the other hand, she argues that the approach is ethically individualistic, which means that individuals are the primary units of moral concern in evaluative exercises. In making this point, Robeyns (2017) notes that the capability approach is compatible with other theories. However, as different theories have different ontological and epistemological assumptions, these assumptions need to be made explicit (Robeyns, 2017, p. 67).

The notion of ethical individualism has however been taken on in the capability literature. It is argued that collectives ranging from the family to the community and voluntary groups are units of moral concern as well. As a result, they need to be included in the evaluative space of the capability approach (D'Amato, 2020; Stewart, 2005; Stewart & Denuelin 2002; Deneulin 2008). However, there are different views about whether collectives and collective freedoms need to take an instrumental or intrinsic role in the capability approach.

In relation to the latter, Miller (2018) cites the example of food sovereignty as the "right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods and their right to define their own food and agricultural systems" as a collective capability (p. 147). This capability, he argues, belongs to the group and cannot be reduced to individuals' valuation of it as it is for the group to decide how to produce food in a way that they as a collective have reason to value. This communitarian perspective is incompatible with ethical individualism as the focus of the individual in the capability approach forecloses the possibility of undertaking such an analysis or capturing these communitarian values and capabilities (D'Amato, 2020). Ethical individualism, therefore, opens up the space for some forms of analysis while foreclosing others.

From an ethical individualistic perspective, other authors incorporate into their capability analysis collectives, collective action, and processes of groups to secure freedoms that each cannot secure alone (Ibrahim, 2006). The capabilities that ensue are also known as collective capabilities defined as "newly generated functioning bundles a person obtains by virtue of his or her engagement in a collectivity that help him or her to achieve the life he or she has reason to value" (Ibrahim, 2006, p. 398). In this perspective, the value of the group and its actions are perceived as instrumental to the freedoms of its individual members. This analysis, while focusing on the group, is undertaken within ethical individualism and responds to criticisms regarding the exclusive focus of individual freedoms to the neglect or relative neglect of collectives and collective actions or agency (Evans, 2002). It also helps to understand the role of the collective in fostering individual freedoms.

This study takes the view that collectives and the collective action of groups are very important in securing rights and opportunities, including those that are denied. The capabilities secured, although important at a collective level, is instrumental to each member's valued functionings. An instrumental view to collective capability helps to analyse the freedoms of individual members and capture heterogeneities and differences within

collectives. For example, the Ghana National Association of Garages (GNAG) is an important group because it can mobilise to secure freedoms that individual members cannot through their agency. Also, there are capabilities like affiliation that members can enjoy through their membership. On the other hand, the focus of the evaluation is not on the group as an end, but the individual members as the group may not always advance the interest of all of its members. These tensions within groups are acknowledged in the capability literature (Stewart, 2005).

Second, the conception of agent or agency in the capability approach has been criticised. Gasper (2002) for example argues that the approach sees "people as choosers, their formulation only lightly treated" (p. 451). Gasper further notes that Sen talks about the "generalised human" rather than the "situated social" (2002, p. 451). Denuelin (2008) also argues that Sen's explication of agency ignores the structures that underpin agency, either enabling or constraining it. Similarly, Zimmerman (2006) states that there is an inadequate sociological grounding of Sen's use of agents who are embedded in a social context (p. 474).

The third criticism relates to the limited nature in which the capability approach explicates the relationship between individuals and their social context, and individual capabilities and social, economic, and political arrangements. Concerning this, Tikly (2019) draws attention to the "post-colonial condition" and the varied forms in which colonial legacies perpetuates inequalities and inhibits opportunities for individuals to achieve valued functionings in education. For example, he notes that the post-colonial condition can be defined in three distinct yet interrelated domains namely economic, cultural, and political. He argues that understanding regimes of inequalities that work in these domains is relevant in conceptualising how individuals convert resources into valued functionings. Following from this, Dejaeghere (2020) adds that the capability approach does not address issues of power, which often manifest in social relations. She further notes that social relations are key to explaining the opportunities and constraints to individual capabilities.

The inadequacy of the capability approach in explaining and revealing inequalities is taken further by feminists. They emphasise how social relations and forms of power in these relations are important in understanding intersectional inequalities that constrain the capabilities of individuals (Dejaeghere 2020, Unterhalter, Heslop & Mamedu, 2013). All these criticisms point to the fact that the capability approach needs theoretical

supplementation to capture these varied concerns. This is widely acknowledged in the capability literature.

In the TVET literature, as well as the broader capability literature, there have been many theoretical syntheses to understand how capabilities are constituted, expanded, and constrained socially. For example, Smith and Seward (2009) provide a critical realist framework as a "structure upon which to advance the social theory component of the capability approach" (p. 214). Arguing that Sen's capability approach implies an ontological conception of a relational society, Smith and Seward (2009) state that capabilities result from the combination and interaction of individual mechanisms and structural mechanisms (p. 214). Structural and individual mechanisms are framed within a critical realist ontology of emergence, where social structure and individuals are ontologically distinct and possess causal powers capable of producing an outcome like a capability of democratic citizenship. Smith and Seward (2009) argue that the ontological assumptions underpinning their use of critical realism suggest a form of methodological individualism and this is defended as useful in understanding capabilities (p. 227).

Following Smith and Seward (2009), Powell (2014) situates her study on the capabilities of FET College students in South Africa in a critical realist ontology. She draws on Archer's social realist theory to theorise the structures that impact students' life projects on the one hand and students' agential mediation of these structures on the other. Employing Archer's analytic dualism as an empirical tool, she investigates how FET college as a structure provides opportunities for students to achieve their valued functionings.

Departing from critical realism, Hart (2019) finds Bourdieu's theory of habitus, field, and forms of capital useful in theorising the aspirations of students. She argues that to understand equality, it is important to understand the different overlapping fields such as family, education, work, and social life within which individuals are located. These fields influence their habitus and access to capital required to transform their aspirations into capabilities. Forms of capital are used to supplement the notion of commodities in the capability approach.

Concerned with how the capability approach can be used to deepen understanding of inequalities, López Fogués (2014) uses Young's "five faces of oppression" namely exploitation, marginalisation, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence to conceptualise the forces or structures that limit opportunities of TVET students within

education and in the labour market. Using these concepts, she shows how injustices manifest in Spanish society and affect the freedoms of students.

From a gendered perspective, Hilal (2018) supplements the capability approach with Gender and Development (GAD) theories, including Kabeer's empowerment framework to measure the empowerment of TVET students. Drawing on feminist perspectives, she explains how gender intersects with other inequalities stemming from location, class, race, ethnicity, and religion to impact the freedoms of TVET students in Palestine.

Also, Dejaeghere (2020) underscores the importance of postcolonial and feminist perspectives in challenging the universalisation of gender experiences in education research that applies the capability approach. She points to the need to account for the ways in which some individuals are "othered" in the social relations within which their capabilities are constituted. She argues that a relational approach to understanding capabilities is important in revealing and addressing material, psychological and discursive forms of power and inequalities in and through education.

To sum the discussion, the various theories discussed above offer unique perspectives that help to understand capabilities as socially constituted and also counter the individualistic focus of the capability approach. From a structural perspective, they point to the importance of understanding the social relations within which individuals are embedded and how these affect their capabilities. This study draws on the duality of structure in strong structuration theory as an explanatory framework to evaluate the capabilities of informal apprentices and journeypersons. Like the theoretical syntheses above, the importance of social relations as enablement or constraints to capabilities is emphasised. However, the distinctiveness of strong structuration theory lies in the notion of duality of structure, which is rejected by critical realists, including Archer (1995). The critique that underpins this rejection will be briefly discussed in the introduction of structuration theory. Strong structuration theory also accommodates Bourdieu's habitus. On the other hand, the ontological conception of habitus is equally rejected by critical realists as a conflation of structure and agency.

While neither Giddens, who developed structuration theory, nor Rob Stones, who has refined the theory, relate structuration theory directly to gender, few feminists draw on the notion of duality in gender studies (Kabeer, 2000; Kahlert, 2012; Felski, 1989; Davis, 1991; Thompson, 2018). For example, Kahlert (2012) notes that structuration theory helps "to understand gender and gender relations as …structured in social practice… engendered

structures are not given, but also actively made, and can be changed through different process of social production and reproduction" (p. 65). I do not draw explicitly on post-colonial theories. However, I am cognisant of the post-colonial condition and using structuration theory, I examine the extent of opportunities available to individuals or groups of individuals who are marginalised partly due to Ghana's colonial history.

In the sections that follow, structuration theory as developed by Giddens is first introduced, in addition to key criticisms of the theory. A full discussion of structuration theory is beyond the scope of this thesis and as a result, only aspects that Stones builds on are discussed. This is followed by Stones' revision of the theory into strong structuration and key concepts of strong structuration that are drawn upon to supplement the capability approach. The penultimate section discusses the weaknesses of strong structuration theory and the last section presents the conceptual framework and research questions of the study.

Strong Structuration Theory

Structuration theory was developed by Anthony Giddens as a contribution to the sociological debate of structure and agency. The theory was developed to surmount determinism in functionalist theories and voluntarism or subjectivism in action theories in sociology. Giddens drew on a range of social traditions such as hermeneutics and structuralism in developing structuration theory.

Structuration theory is concerned with the ontology of agents and society as well as their relationship (Giddens, 1984). Central to the theory is the duality of structure. The duality of structure postulates that society, known as a social system in structuration theory "comprises of situated activities of human agents reproduced across time and space" (Giddens, 1984, p. 25). The recursive activities of differently situated agents lead to "the structuring of social relations across time and space, understood as reproduced practices" (Giddens, 1984, p. 377). This process is known as structuration. In explaining society this way, Giddens (1984) acknowledges that society is not the creation of agents, but rather are sustained and changed by them through their practices. As a result, social practice is the focal point in his account of society and agency.

Giddens (1984) further argues that the properties of social systems are known as structure. Departing from the conventional notion of structure, Giddens (1984) defines structure as "rules and resources" (p. 17). Rules are defined as "generalisable procedures applied in the enactment or reproduction of social life" while resources are conceived as power over people and things (Giddens, 1984, p. 21). These rules and resources (structure) are virtual in that they "exist as time-space presence only in its instantiations in such practices and as memory traces orienting the conduct of knowledgeable agents" (Giddens, 1984, p. 21)). Structure, as conceived here, includes institutions which are the most enduring features of practices as well as knowledge of these structures, which are implicated in the practices of agents. In theorising structure as virtual, Giddens emphasises that structure is generative and only becomes actual when agents draw on their knowledge of them in their practices or conduct. Structure thus becomes the medium of action and also the outcome of the practices of agents. Theorising structure as virtual enables Giddens (1984) to avoid the deterministic conception of structure vis-à-vis human action while emphasising the social nature of agency.

Structuration theory has been heavily critiqued in the literature. Among these include the criticism that it is very abstract and inadequately specified in a manner in which it can be

applied to substantive issues in research (Pozzebon & Pinsonneault, 2005; Gregson, 1987; den Hond et al., 2012). Sewell (1992) for example argues that Giddens does not specify what is meant by structure as rules and resources. He notes that resources cannot be virtual but actual and material. The second critique, which emanates from critical realists relate to the mutual constitution of structure and agency. This is labelled a "conflation" or "elision" as it is argued that structure and agents are mutually constituted leading to difficulties in understanding their distinct properties (Archer, 1995). Archer (1995) argues that duality of structure neglects the temporal moment between structure and agency which is useful in investigating structure as a precondition of action, action undertaken within the limits of structures and structural elaboration or reproduction.

Furthermore, Cohen (1989) argues that the contribution of structure to the system (structuring of social relations) is not laid out in structuration theory. Similarly, Thrift (1985) argues that while Giddens makes a distinction between system (s), structure, and agency, he pays insufficient attention to institutions as the linkage between all three elements. Cohen (1989) agrees with Thrift that Giddens' attempt to establish the "missing institutional link" is weak (p. 207). Cohen (1989) identifies Roy Bhaskar's notion of position-practice relations as a useful concept to understand the extent to which structure as rules and resources become reproduced and constitute the structuring of social relations. He proposes this ontological concept of position-practice relations as a conceptual frame that can be used to further theorise the relationship between structure and agency or structure and system in structuration theory.

In view of all these criticisms and contributions, Stones (2005) revises structuration theory into strong structuration theory. He retains the duality of structure as the core of structuration theory. On the other hand, Stones (2005) builds on the notion of position-practice relations suggested by Cohen as a frame to theorise structure as a precondition of action and the relationship between structure and agency. In addition, he introduces meso-level ontological concepts as a bridge between ontology and the ontic. This makes it possible to direct ontological concepts such as knowledgeability to understand the degrees of knowledgeability of agents in an empirical study. Furthermore, he provides clarity of the duality of structure by analytically distinguishing between four aspects of the process of structuration. This is referred to as the quadripartite nature of structuration (Stones, 2005). Lastly, he outlines methodological tools to aid the application of structuration's concepts to research.

The first aspect of the quadripartite nature of structuration is structural context. The second and third aspects are internal structures and active agency or agent's practices. The fourth aspect is outcomes. Stones (2005) notes that all or any of these aspects can be drawn on in an empirical study. In this study, I draw on the quadripartite nature of structuration to conceptualise the capabilities of informal apprentices and journeypersons. Internal structures and active agency are used to show the situatedness of agency. This addresses the critique of the generalised and sociologically underspecified nature of agency in the capability approach. The structural context provides a frame for understanding the conditions of action and position-practices of informal apprentices, journeypersons, and other agents in the context. It is important to mention that while Stones provides clarity of the process of structuration by elaborating on the ontological categories of strong structuration theory, the theory is still abstract and ontological and as a result, I have provided further specification into the nature of relations and structures that are relevant to this study's concerns.

The next section discusses the elements of the quadripartite nature of structuration beginning with the structural context.

Structural Context

The structural context consists of external structures which have an autonomous existence from agents, and which conditions their actions (Stones, 2005, p. 84). Stones (2005) argues that external structures can be conceived at the "abstract ontological level, as with relevant networked position-practices at the abstract level or they can be considered at the in-situ conjunctural level of particular agents and structures against a substantively more concrete framework of position-practices" (p. 84). In this study, the concept of position-practice relations is first employed as a conceptual frame to conceptualise the structural context against which the capabilities of informal apprentices and journeypersons are understood. The context characterises their opportunity and agency freedom to achieve valued functionings. Second, the concept is directed towards the ontic to examine the position-practices of networked agents to the extent to which their practices expand or constrain the freedoms of informal apprentices and journeypersons.

The concept of position-practice relations refers to social positions, associated practices and relations in which people in various positions engage (Cohen, 1989, p. 230). The concept which was suggested by Cohen (1989) rests on the argument that the structuring of social relations across space and time is only possible through the act of position-taking, whereby

agents either reproduce the conditions of their action or transform them (Stones, 2005; Cohen, 1989). Cohen (1989) states that position-practices "establish the basic units of institutionalised systems which agents encounter and reproduce (through the duality of structure) as they contribute to the structuration of that system" (p. 210). Position-practices consists of four features.

The first is positional identities associated with social positions and related prerogatives and obligations that an individual accorded that identity may carry out (Giddens, 1979; Cohen, 1989; Stones, 2005). These prerogatives and obligations associated with social positions pre-exist the moment in which any individual occupies the position. As a result, it is possible to distinguish between structure (role), an agent who occupies the position and the practices that are either expected to be or enacted by that incumbent.

The second feature of position-practices is "the cluster of practices through which identifying criteria, prerogatives, and obligations are made manifest in ways that others can and do acknowledge in institutionalised modes of interaction" (Cohen, 1989, p. 210). An example is the cluster of practices associated with formality or those associated with patriarchy such as gender roles or sexual division of labour which are sustained through gender role socialisation.

Third, position-practices are conceived relationally, and Cohen (1989) argues that for every position-practice, there is a range of position-practices that "must be, or contingently may be, interrelated as incumbents enact their prerogatives and obligations" (p. 210). For example, through the position-practices of officials of the Ministry of Finance in allocating resources, they are linked to others in other state bureaucracies such as COTVET. Similarly, the position-practices of officials of COTVET in coordinating TVET links them to artisans and formal vocational training institutes. The relations could be extended and all the position-practices relations within which informal apprentices and journeypersons are embedded could be mapped as objects of investigation.

The last feature of position-practice relations is the "range of institutionalised reciprocities, including asymmetrical power relations, through which position-practice relations occur" (Stones, 2005, p. 62; Cohen 1989, p. 210). In relation to the position-practice relations cited above, institutionalised reciprocities between individuals and collective actors could operate on many levels. For example, one could think of institutionalised reciprocities between

parents and children, masters and apprentices, the state and informal actors, or formal organisations and clients. Central to these relations and associated reciprocities is power.

Giddens (1984) highlights the fact that power is fundamental to all relations and therefore relational. This is captured in the notion of the dialectic of control, which means that "all forms of dependence offer some resources whereby those who are subordinate can influence the activities of their supervisors" (p. 16). For example, informal actors and the state both have power in the sense that while the state depends on informal actors to comply with regulations, they also depend on the state for the provision of infrastructure. This notwithstanding, Giddens (1984) acknowledges the asymmetrical nature of power relations. This emanates from individuals' or collective actors' positioning in the social system and the differential resources involved in securing outcomes. These resources which include status, knowledge, skills, wealth, legitimacy among others are unevenly distributed in society (Wrong, 2017). Following from this, Wrong (2017) argues that it is important to see power "not as a separate resource possessed by individuals or groups additional to the resources of wealth, status, skills etc." (p. xxii). This points to the fact that power is embedded in social positions as Giddens (1979) equally notes that "all social positions within social systems are power positions" (p. 119).

Adopting the concept of position-practice relations as a conceptual frame for understanding the capabilities of apprentices and journeypersons and the actions of networked agents, it is "presumed that a set of highly structured practices and unequal relations exist between and among differently situated agents in the family, workplace and state bureaucracies" (Cohen, 1989, p. 207). In the praxis ontology of structuration theory, inequalities exist in so far as all agents in society, including informal apprentices and journeypersons, contribute to these by drawing on their knowledge of these features in the reproduction of practices (Cohen, 1989). However, as agents are unequally placed in the social system, some incumbents are able to mobilise role-relevant resources which are both material and normative towards certain outcomes (Stones, 2005). Example of such agents includes state officials who enact policies and legislation that impact the conditions of action of many people. Likewise, their inactions regarding expected obligations have consequences on the range of options that agents have (Meagher, 1995). This makes it important to understand the distribution of structural options that enable apprentices to be and to do what they have reason to value (Cohen, 1989).

Against this background, the concept of position-practices is directed towards the ontic to empirically investigate the extent to which the practices of agents to whom informal apprentices and journeypersons are in position-practice relations with help to provide them with opportunities for achieving valued functionings. This aligns with the remark of Zimmerman (2006) that "freedoms need to be empirically anchored in the structuring, but changing, interactions [or practices] between [and among positioned] people" (p. 477).

Internal Structures

Internal structures are knowledgeability structures that form the medium of an agent's practices or actions. Analytically, Stones (2005) divides them into two, namely conjuncturally-specific internal structures and general-dispositional structures. The terminology of general-dispositional structures is adapted from Sewell's (1992) reinterpretation of Giddens' (1984) notion of rules as generalisable procedure. General-dispositional structures are the institutionalised features of social life that exist in the minds of individuals, as memory traces (Stones, 2005, p. 92). It is conceived as:

> Encompassing transposable skills and dispositions, including generalised worldviews, and cultural schema, classifications, typifications of things, people and networks, principles of action, deep binary frameworks of signification, associative chains and connotations of discourse, habits of speech and gesture and methodologies for adapting this generalised knowledge to a range of particular practices in locations in time and space (Stones, 2005, p. 88).

To unpack, general-dispositional structures capture shared meanings through which the social and physical world is perceived and made sense of by a group of people. These operate at the unconscious level and are taken for granted (Stones, 2005, p. 88). Stones (2005) links it with Bourdieu's notion of "doxa, the universe of the undiscussed and undisputed" and uses the general-dispositional interchangeably with habitus (p. 88). On the other hand, he does not rely on habitus as he wishes to distance himself from the deterministic connotations that authors associate with habitus. In addition, he is of the view that habitus is too closely related to praxis to capture "general worldview incorporating dimensions of culture as discourse" which the notion seeks to capture (Stones, 2005, p. 87). I agree with this position.

In view of the latter point, general-dispositional structures include cultural belief systems eminent in oral traditions such as proverbs as elucidated by cultural anthropologists and African feminists (Asimeng-Boahene, 2013; Diabah & Amfo, 2015; Van der Geest, 1997). Proverbs for example are used as tools to ensure social control and stability of relations in society, including gender relations as well as those between the young and old. They are also intended to shape the identities, roles, and statuses of members of society and can be seen as the "absences" that appear as objective "presences" through discourse (Wolffensperger, 1991, p. 93). Researching women in feminised trades in Ghana, for example, Kusi-Mensah (2017) shows that the trade choices of females are shaped by gendered constructions of femininity which spill into the economic domain. Similarly, imageries of motherhood and marriage in African proverbs are well documented and these equally impact females' participation in education and the labour market (Dipio, 2019; Overå, 2005). These help to understand the structural influences upon peoples' subjectivity and in the case of females, the "potential for critical activity within given constraints" (Felski, 1989, p. 227).

Besides oral traditions, one could also think of binaries such as the formal-informal economy[14] and how informal apprenticeship is typified as inferior and education and training for school-dropouts and poor people stemming from the effects of colonialism as discussed in Chapter Two and highlighted in the apprenticeship literature (Haan, 2006). These work as schema through which young people understand apprenticeship and themselves as highlighted in the literature on poor perceptions of apprenticeship.

The second type of internal structures, conjuncturally-specific knowledge is knowledge "directed towards the specific context of action" and position-practices of agents in the context (Stones, 2005, p. 90). It is similar to Giddens notion of reflexive monitoring, a process in which an actor reflexively monitors (interprets) the conduct of others and her social and material context to arrive at conclusions about specific courses of action. Unlike

[14] This point is made in full recognition of the history and importance of relations between the formal and the informal economy, as highlighted in the informal economy and education and training literature (ILO, 1972; King, 1977, 2020; Meagher, 1995). On the other hand, one's positioning in either the formal or informal economy, whether in training or employment can be distinguished. In relation to employment for example, formality is associated with social protection, access to credit among others. In education and training, advantages gained include the recognition of one's qualifications and skills. The binary is drawn upon analytically due to its utility as highlighted in Ibsch's (2010) caption that "We need binarism to go beyond it".

general-dispositional structures, conjuncturally-specific structures capture each individual's understanding, interpretation and experience of the social world, the structural context and general-dispositional structures. This encourages an understanding of and "a reflex questioning of simple stereotypes and typifications" (Stones, 2005, p. 191). This process of interpretation intersects or occurs in line with elements of active agency.

Active Agency and Agents' Conduct

Active agency is the dynamic aspect of human conduct and it helps to understand agents' engagement with structures. It refers to how agents either "routinely and pre-reflexively, or strategically and critically draw on her [or their] internal structures" into their conduct (Stones, 2005, p. 85). Stones (2005) highlights five analytically distinct aspects of active agency that can be drawn upon to explain the conduct of agents. These are (a) shifting horizons of action, (b) conscious and unconscious motivations, (c) rationalisation of action, (d) creativity, improvisation and innovation, and (e) degrees of critical distance and reflection. These are explained below.

First, shifting horizons of action is defined as "aspects of the virtual, latent, structures" that are "animated" based on the context of action (Stones, 2005, p. 101).

Second, conscious and unconscious motivation of action refers to "actions that are motivated by wants and desires, whether conscious or unconscious" (Stones, 1996, p. 44). In explaining unconscious motivations, Giddens (1984) draws on psychoanalysis and links unconscious motives to ontological security. Ontological security is explained as individuals' continual engagement in routinised practices due to the need to maintain a sense of safety and trust while avoiding anxiety. This has been critiqued as overly simplistic and non-reflective of the "complexity and internally conflictual nature of the agent" (Stones, 2005, p. 102). Given this, Stones (2005) notes that structuration theory is compatible with any theory of the unconscious, even though he does not engage with the unconscious. In this study, I sidestep the notion of unconscious motives and take the simple view that individuals have desires and wants that prompt action (Giddens, 1984). These wants and desires are grounded in their knowledge of themselves and their context of action.

Third, rationalisation of action is understood against the background that individuals occupy multiple social positions, with several associated obligations and expectations (Stones, 2005; Cohen 1989, p. 231). In attending to the ongoing flow of social life, an individual integrates

the obligations and expectations associated with her social positions into some hierarchy of purposes (Stones, 2005, p. 103). Stones (2005) states that the integration may be done in a taken-for-granted manner or reflectively and may not necessarily "imply harmony and the lack of tension" (p. 103). The process of integrating concerns and orienting one's conduct is informed by general-dispositional structures and conjuncturally-specific internal structures. The latter involves one's assessment of the "substantive terrain of action" and "perceptions about the chances of success, and about the probable attendant costs, associated with particular projected projects, together with a sense of which of these projects are judged as mutually exclusive or mutually attainable" (Stones, 2005, p. 103). This takes us to the structural context, the constraints it imposes on a range of choices, actions as well or opportunities that individuals have in pursuing multiple goals. It brings to fore Sen's acknowledgement of the possibility of conflict between one's agency or well-being goals and the need for more freedoms.

Following from the latter point on structural context is the fourth aspect of agency namely creativity, improvisation, and innovation. This refers to how agents respond to the "demands of the conjuncture" by drawing on a range of skills and dispositions that have been acquired in a social setting (Stones, 2005, p. 102).

The last aspect of agency is degrees of critical distance and reflection. Stones (2005) acknowledges that individuals are capable of reflexivity or critically distancing themselves from constraining structures. On the other hand, the varying degrees to which they can do this calls for an understanding of the reasons that underpin their reflexivity and the conditions essential for them to be critical of conditions that may constrain action.

Outcomes

Outcomes are "the differential effects of actions and interactions on both external and internal structures, as well as other kinds of outcomes" (Stones, 2005, p. 85). Among other kinds of outcomes include capabilities or functionings. Effects of actions on internal structures and external structures occur at the last stage in the process of structuration. This leads to change and elaboration or reproduction and preservation (Stones, 2005, p. 85). In this study, I do not examine the effects of the practices of agents on structural change or preservation. On the other hand, the extent to which their practices have the potential to transform or preserve the status quo is examined.

Weaknesses of Strong Structuration Theory

While there are several criticisms against Giddens' structuration theory, fewer criticisms have been directed at strong structuration theory. One of these is Parker's (2006). First, Parker (2006, p. 130) argues that Stones' revision of structuration theory for empirical research limits the suitability of the theory for studies in historical sociology. This is due to the focus on the intermediate temporality which emphasises the hermeneutics and action horizons of agents in position-practice relations. Considering Parker's criticism, it is important to state that this study is not focused on historical processes. Strong structuration theory is used to understand the structural context within which informal apprenticeship and journeypersons operate and its impact on their capabilities.

Second, in an attempt to develop a stronger version of structuration theory, Stones incorporates the contributions of sympathisers as well as fierce critics of strong structuration theory. This culminates in an extensive elaboration and development of additional concepts. He however does not show how all of these concepts are linked to each other. For example, while he carefully highlights the linkage between conjuncturally-specific knowledge structures and the structural context, less attention is paid to the linkage between internal structures and the elements of active agency. Likewise, the interaction between the different elements of active agency is left underdeveloped. In view of these, many of the researchers who have applied strong structuration to their research do not make use of the elements of agency. In this study, I find them useful and as a result, draw on them selectively in interpreting the study's data.

Summary: The Capability Approach and Strong Structuration Synthesis

The capability approach provides a conceptual framework for evaluating the well-being of informal apprentices and journeypersons. The approach helps to transcend the reductive assessment of the impact of training by emphasising what trainees and journeypersons have reason to value (valued functionings) and their capabilities (what they are able to be and to do). While Sen (2009) argues that capabilities could be understood in terms of opportunity and agency freedom, these are insufficiently specified at the theoretical level and conceived from a welfare economics perspective.

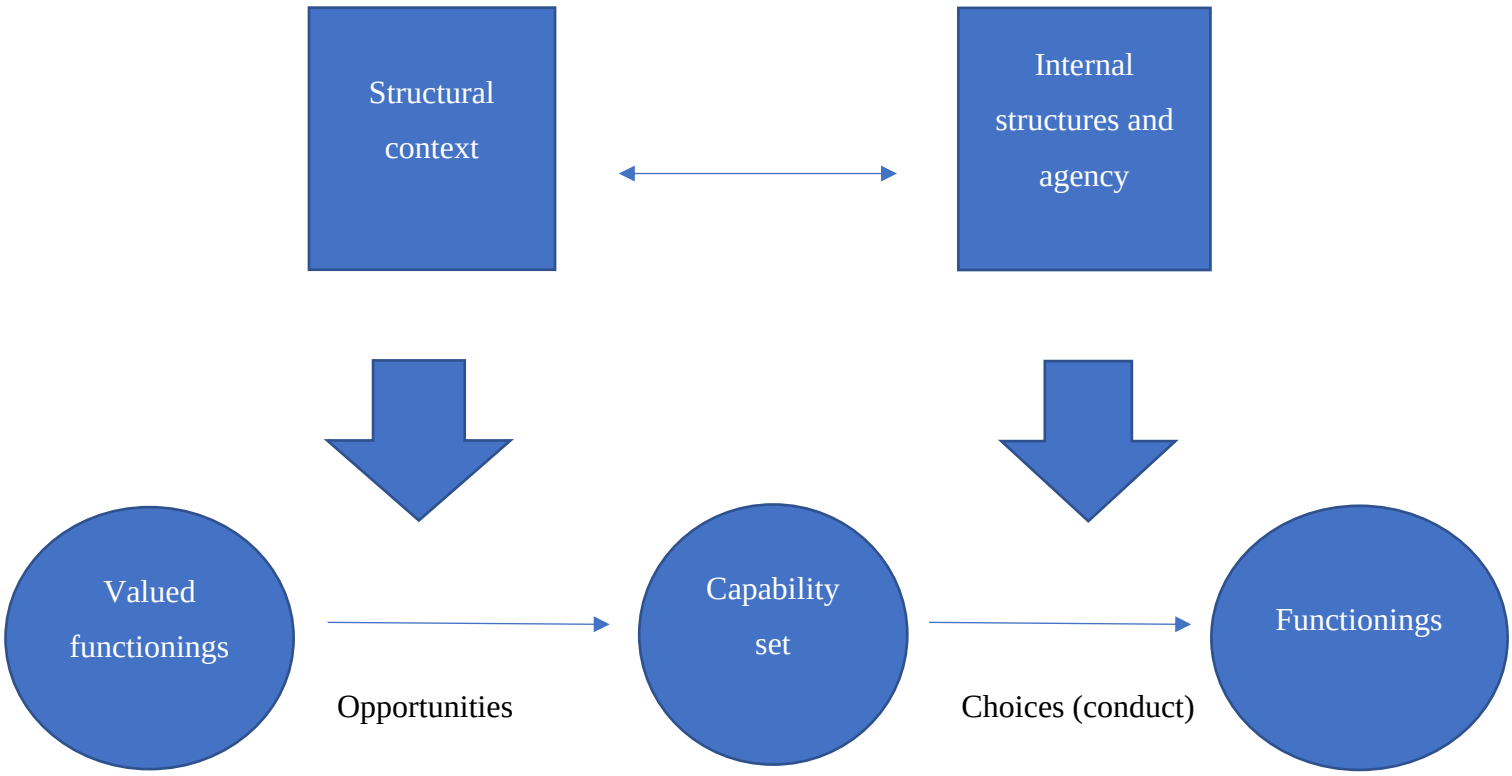
Strong structuration theory provides a sociological account for conceptualising opportunity and agency freedom of informal apprentices and journeypersons. From the perspective of opportunity freedom, the concept of external structures (which constitutes the structural

context) shows that opportunities stem from one's social positioning in a system of institutionalised social relations, which are also open to change through the position-practices of agents. The institutionalised features of the system and the position-practices of networked others constitute the capability set of informal apprentices and journeypersons. The position-practices of networked others provide a range of options to and limit to the possible. For example, the position-practices of parents, the GNAG and government officials provide opportunities for informal apprentices and journeypersons to achieve valued functionings or limit the opportunities at their disposal for the exercise of agency.

Also, the notion of external structures helps to move beyond goods or commodities as the starting point of analysis in the capability approach. In the capability approach, distributional concerns are taken for granted and thus emphasis is placed on factors that enable individuals to convert goods into beings and doings. On the other hand, position-practice relations help to conceptualise and investigate the structural options through which individuals gain access to opportunities and resources, such as knowledge, and income among others to achieve functionings.

Second, internal structures and active agency supplements the capability approach's conception of agency. These concepts depict what is involved in agents' capacity to act to bring about change in their circumstances and their wider environment. They provide a rich account for understanding the choices that agents make and the degrees of freedom they have to advance their valued functionings. A visual representation of the synthesis of strong structuration theory and the capability approach is presented in the conceptual framework below.

Figure 4.1: Framework for conceptualising opportunity and agency freedom



The framework above is adapted from Dejaeghere and Baxter (2014). Dejaeghere and Baxter (2014) developed it to conceptualise and analyse a livelihood programme in Uganda and Tanzania. In their framework, they acknowledge opportunities and choices as relevant in understanding the capabilities of individuals. Their framework begins with household and individual endowments, resources or assets of young people. The transformation of endowments (skills) into capabilities is seen to be influenced by structures of constraints operating within and beyond the household. Structural constraints cited include negative social perceptions of the youths and lack of adult support. Also, choices that influence functionings are conceptualised as being affected by individual values and agency which influence how young people make use of available endowments. In the entrepreneurship programme that was evaluated, for example, choices such as wasting earnings from livelihoods on leisure were considered inimical to the young people's economic well-being.

The difference between the framework developed in this study and Dejaeghere and Baxter's (2014) centres on the sociological conceptualisation of the structural context that affects opportunities and the relationship between structure and agency in the choices and conduct of

individuals. This is important in addressing critiques about the inadequate sociological account of the constitution of capabilities highlighted in the previous chapter.

In this study's framework, valued functionings, capability set and functionings as represented on the horizontal axis exist on a continuum rather than discrete elements. Valued functionings are the various beings and doings that informal apprentices and journeypersons have reason to value. The methodology used to select the valued functionings is discussed in the next chapter. The valued functionings are rooted in their functionings, which are also representative of their capability set.

The above representation is consistent with Sen's explanation of capabilities and functionings. For example, Sen (1995) writes: "there is no difference as far as the space is concerned between focusing on functionings or on capabilities" (p. 50). He further notes that "the capability set contains *inter alia* information about the actual functioning combination chosen since it too is obviously among the feasible combination" (Sen, 1995, p. 50). In view of this, Sen (1995) argues that the "achievement of well-being [functionings] must be seen as being influenced by the freedoms reflected in the capability set' (p. 52). On the other hand, he makes room for the examination of agency or choices individuals make from the options in their capability set. This is important in understanding the agency of individuals.

The space of choices as represented in the framework is influenced by how individuals mediate their internal structures or understanding of the context of action. This includes but not limited to their desires and wants. Theorising choices that influence functionings in this way helps to move beyond Sen's conception of free choice to understand the conditions within which choices are made and agency enacted. The understanding gained is essential to addressing deprivations and structural limitations to the agency freedom of individuals.

Having discussed the capability approach and strong structuration as the framework that influences this study's research questions, the next section outlines the research questions as it emerges from the discussion so far and gaps in the apprenticeship literature.

Research Questions

To summarise the discussion, it was identified in the literature review that while informal apprenticeship is promoted as an accessible form of training for the youth, it is poorly perceived by the youth. Also, informal apprenticeship is perceived as an avenue for preparing youth for work in the informal economy, while serving as an instrument to reduce income

poverty and improve the productivity of the informal economy. Increased interest in the poverty reducing role of informal apprenticeship led to a call by King and Palmer (2007) for an evaluation of the poverty reducing role or aspects of poverty associated with skills training. Following from the limitations of an income assessment of poverty, the capability approach serves as a useful framework due to its emphasis on the lives that individuals manage to lead, freedoms they value and their capabilities to achieve well-being.

Framed within the capability approach and strong structuration theory, the research is guided by three main questions. These are:

1. Why do young people enrol in informal apprenticeship?
2. What freedoms do informal apprentices and journeypersons value?
3. To what extent do they have opportunity and agency freedom to achieve valued functionings?

While strong structuration theory and the framework developed is aimed at the operationalisation of the capability approach, the concepts of strong structuration theory are also drawn upon to interpret the findings of the first research question on the reasons why young people enrol in informal apprenticeship. Details of the methodological approach adopted to investigate the research questions are discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter Five: Methodology

In the previous chapter, I discussed the capability approach and strong structuration theory as the two main approaches within which this study is framed. In the discussion of the capability approach, I highlighted its origin in welfare economics and how it has been taken up in other disciplines including education. As an interdisciplinary approach, its application is underpinned by different ontological assumptions, methodologies and methods. Given this, Robeyns (2017) notes the importance of making explicit one's ontological and epistemological assumptions as these are implicated in the methods and data sets that are generated. The ontological, epistemological assumptions and methods used in the study are informed by strong structuration theory as well as the research questions. In this chapter, the methodological approach that was used to answer the study's research questions which were highlighted at the end of the previous chapter is discussed.

The chapter is divided into seven sections. In the first and second sections, the ontological and epistemological assumptions that underpin the study are discussed. The debate on the selection of capabilities and the position taken in this study are discussed in the third section. In the fourth section, I discuss the study's research design. This includes the pilot study, methods used, stages of data gathering, sample, access to participants, a description of the research sites, ethical considerations, language considerations, data translation and transcription. In the fifth section of the chapter, I discuss the data analysis. My positionality is presented in the sixth section, followed by the data presentation in the seventh. The chapter is then concluded.

Ontological Assumptions

This study is situated in an interpretivist paradigm. Contrary to some interpretivist approaches (for example in postmodernism) that hold that reality is subjective and multiple, structuration theory upholds a realist ontology (Stones, 1996). This ontology postulates that the natural and social world (structures, practices, events, and processes) have a reality independent of our knowledge of it (Stones, 1996; Giddens 1979). For example, the process of structuration, as it occurs through position-practice relations takes place irrespective of any individual or collective agents' knowledge or role in it. Associated events or outcomes are therefore real and have real consequences. This realist view, however, departs from the positivist philosophy of reality in both the natural and social sciences that is predicated on empiricism. Empiricism is concerned with establishing regular conjunctions of events

ascertained through deduction and direct observation of phenomenon (Stones, 1996). This leads to the formulation of causal laws that can be used to explain phenomenon.

Stones (1996) notes that in the ontology of structuration theory, the social world is an open system in which the explanation of events is contingent on many factors including the understandings that individuals bring to the constitution of social life. For example, the materialisation of a central government's decision to relocate artisans by securing worksites for them will be contingent on many factors including the understanding of all relevant parties involved, such as local government, chiefs and artisans. These understandings do not lend themselves to regular conjunctions (Stones, 1996).

Stones (1996) further notes that more can be said about reality than can be grasped and gathered through our ontological concepts, epistemology and methods. In view of this, the ontological concepts of strong structuration theory offer only a partial view or one way of understanding social reality. Structuration theory is a "hermeneutically informed social theory" (Giddens, 1982, p. 5). Hermeneutics refers to the interpretation of meaning and was traditionally conceived as a method of interpreting texts. However, Giddens (1993) critiques this view of hermeneutics as narrow and I quote at length his view on this below:

> In the tradition of the *Geisteswissenschaften* in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, *vestehen* was regarded above all as a method, a means of studying human activity, and as such depending upon the 'reliving' or 'reenactment' of the experiences of others… but what these writers [Weber and Dilthey] called 'understanding' is not merely a method for making sense of what others do… (p. 24).

Following from the above critique, Giddens draws on the hermeneutics of Gadamer in his construction of the ontology of structuration theory. From Gadamer, Giddens (1993) takes the notion of understanding as an ontological condition of human existence (p. 24). In philosophical hermeneutics, understanding is a fundamental aspect of human existence as it is the means through which human beings make sense of themselves and the world in which they live. It is therefore a universal condition and constitutive of our being. To exist in the world is to experience it and have an understanding of that world. This underpins the ontological notion of knowledgeability that is central to the duality of structure. Individuals take their understanding and interpretation of the world into their practices as they intervene in the course of events. On the other hand, their "self-understanding is connected integrally to

the understanding of others" (Giddens, 1993, p. 24). For structuration theory, reflexivity as the property of humans is not "individualistic" but social (Giddens,1993, p. 25).

Stones (1996) argues that while understanding is universal, people's distantiation in time and space means that their understanding of the world is contextually situated and mediated by their culture and language. Also, human knowledgeability is bounded partly due to unacknowledged conditions of action (Giddens, 1993). Likewise, the knowledge claims of researchers are "provisional, fallible, incomplete and extendable" (Stones, 1996, p. 38). The ontology of strong structuration theory, which is adopted in this study has epistemological implications in relation to the phenomenon being studied and claims to knowledge. This is examined in the next section.

Epistemological Approach

The epistemological stance adopted in this study is influenced by the ontology of structuration theory. The study adopts a subjectivist epistemology and draws on hermeneutics. This is in line with Giddens' (1979) assertion that "sociology unlike natural sciences, stands in a subject-subject relation to its field of study, not a subject-object relation; it deals with a pre-interpreted world…" (p. 154). He argues that the task of sociologists involves a double hermeneutic, which refers to researchers' interpretation of research participants' knowledge, understanding or interpretations of their social world.

While Giddens (1984) underscores the importance of hermeneutics in epistemic claims, he is equally aware of the need to methodologically distinguish between structure and agency. In view of this, he introduces two forms of brackets, strategic conduct analysis and institutional analysis for the investigation of structure and agency. A methodological bracket is a conceptual practical tool that guides research underpinned by the ontology of structuration theory (Giddens, 1984; Stones, 2005). They "provide sets of regulative and selective guidelines that can direct the researcher to some dimensions of the social object rather than others" (Stones, 2005, p. 120). Institutional analysis focuses on structure as it "places in suspension the skills and awareness of actors, treating institutions as chronically reproduced rules and resources" (Giddens, 1984, p. 375). On the other hand, strategic conduct analysis which emphasises agency and the hermeneutics of agents "places in suspension institutions as socially reproduced, concentrating upon how actors reflexively monitor what they do; how they draw upon rules and resources" in the enactment of practices (Giddens, 1984, p. 378).

In strong structuration theory, Stones (2005) replaces the bracket of institutional analysis with agent's context analysis, while retaining conduct analysis. Within conduct analysis, the emphasis is upon the situated activities of agents, their motives, desires, intentions, concerns, projects, values and plans. The ontological concept of knowledgeability (conjuncturally specific internal structures) is drawn upon as a kind of hinge between external structures on the one hand, and the hermeneutic frames and practices or actions of agents on the other (Stones, 2005, pp. 111 – 123). As a result, conduct analysis involves:

> looking inward into the actor…and concentrating on how that actor you are focusing on, deals with that whole process of understanding the context out there in relation to their own values, duties, obligations, [interests, desires], orientations to the world and *how they have come to act in one way and not another* [emphasis added] (Stones & Lisa, 2016, p. 1149).

In view of this, conjuncturally-specific internal structures point both outwards and inwards and are useful for understanding the context or conditions that are encountered by an agent as well as her interpretation and conduct within those conditions (Stones & Lisa, 2016). To focus on the agents' conjuncturally-specific internal structures is not to retrieve into subjectivism as far as structures are concerned. This is because agents' hermeneutic frames "mediate perceptions of external reality…This departs from many forms of social constructionism" (Greenhaulgh, et al., 2014, p. 123). This view underscores the existence and reality of structures that are external to agents and the relevance of taking this into consideration in understanding agents' conduct as well as motivations.

Context analysis captures the "terrain that faces an agent, the terrain that constitutes the range of possibilities and limits to the possible" (Stones, 2005, p. 122). The advantage of context analysis over institutional analysis is that it takes into account institutionalised practices and features of the system as well as the hermeneutic frames of agents whose actions help to constitute those structures and the freedoms of informal apprentices (Stones, 2001, p. 188). Position-practice relations that provide opportunities and constraints to the freedoms of informal apprentices and journeypersons are not taken as a given but are treated as objects of investigation (Stones, 2005, p. 123). Stones (2001) argues:

> It will involve those agents' [masters, state officials etc.] motivations and desires, and also their perceptions of appropriate normative and interpretive

> codes… together with their knowledgeability of context, including a sense of their own power to 'make a difference' to that context (p. 188).

Epistemologically, the structural context that provides opportunities or conditions action can be identified by drawing on the conjuncturally-specific internal structures of agents. An example is drawing on the knowledge or understanding of an apprentice about the conduct of his parent or master. Also, it can be identified by the social researcher (Stones, 2005, p. 122). The role of the researcher is important for two reasons. First, there are bounds to agents' knowledge about all the position-practice relations within which they are embedded. Given this, the researcher has the vantage point of perceiving and mapping position-practice relations that may not be recognised by agents. For example, an apprentice may not be aware of the existence of COTVET or its role in ensuring gender equality as important to her freedom to choose a trade of her choice and escape restrictive gender norms. On the other hand, the researcher who has interviewed an official of COTVET may be able to analyse the terrain of the apprentice.

Having examined the study's epistemology, I turn to a discussion of the debate on the selection of capabilities or valued functionings in the capability literature and how the position taken fits into the study's epistemological and ontological assumptions.

Selection of Dimensions of Capabilities

Methodologically, the main contention in the capability literature relates to the procedure for selecting capabilities. Two main perspectives exist regarding the selection of capabilities. Following Claassen (2011), Byskov (2017) labels these democratic and philosophical positions. With the philosophical position, capabilities are selected through reasoning at a theoretical level, supplemented with some empirical data (Byskov, 2017). It is argued that selection at this level helps to deal with adaptive preference which occurs when the deprived conditions of people deform their assessment of their well-being or preferences. Nussbaum's work fits into the philosophical position.

Nussbaum (2011) has developed a general list of ten central human capabilities that are basic entitlement of human beings that states are to guarantee their citizens up to certain thresholds (p. 1315). These are (1) life, (2) bodily health, (3) bodily integrity, (4) senses, imagination and thought, (5) emotions, (6) practical reason, (7) affiliation, (8) other species, (9) play, (10) control over one's environment. The methods used include a combination of intuition, argumentative strategy, and reflective equilibrium (Classen & Düwell, 2013). While these

methods are thought to be paternalistic, Nussbaum (2000) argues that the list which is universal and developed at a theoretical level can be debated and contextualised as relevant for each context. Byskov (2017) notes that this position puts outcome (the list developed by the philosopher) over procedural matters.

In the democratic position, the problem of adaptive preference in the selection of capabilities is equally acknowledged (Robeyns, 2018). On the other hand, the philosophical selection of capabilities is questioned on grounds of legitimacy, epistemology, and context. On grounds of legitimacy, it is argued that the list should emerge from a democratic process. Proponents of the view underscore the relevance of participatory processes, public reasoning, or debate in the selection of capabilities. This is because of the element of choice, freedom and agency involved in doing this (Alkire, 2002; Sen 1999). Public deliberation is constitutive of freedoms (Sen, 1999). Failure to do this renders the list illegitimate as it is devoid of the perspectives of the people for whom the list is developed (Robeyns, 2005b). In relation to this, Alkire (2002) using Finnis' basic reason for action to select capabilities through ongoing deliberative participation argues:

> Reasons [for action], basic values can be identified by a mature person of any culture or socioeconomic class or educational level who asks herself, ''why do I do what I do?'' and ''why do other people do what they do?'' In reflecting on ''why do I/others do what we do?'' a person is reflecting on her life experiences, her historical situation, relationships, projects, tastes, beliefs, and the lives of others she knows to try to see the ''point'' or the ''value'' of different activities (p. 185)

This view demonstrates that every mature adult can decide what capabilities are valuable to her. Alkire (2002) notes that this method helps to overcome epistemological problems and metaphysical claims evident in Nussbaum's approach. On this basis, Alkire defends Finnis' approach as ethically just as it respects the views of individuals for whom a list is selected. This feeds into the epistemological critique of the philosophical position. Regarding epistemology, the concern is that different traditions hold different views about knowledge and how to acquire this (Robeyns, 2017). I support the democratic view as it is consistent with this study's ontological notion of knowledgeability and contextuality as well as the epistemological position that this understanding needs to be gained through the perspectives of the concerned agents, who in this study are informal apprentices and journeypersons. On

the democratic position in the selection of capabilities, it is important to mention that although private reasoning, that is presenting the reasons of others, on their behalf is acceptable, it does not substitute the role of public reasoning or deliberation (Sen, 1999, 2009). The method that is used depends on the research or study purpose and constraints.

Lastly, the democratic position advances the view that a list of capabilities will vary depending on the purpose of a study and the context within which the list is generated. In relation to this debate, Robeyns (2005b, pp. 205-206) proffers five criteria that should be met in the selection of capabilities. These are:

a) The criterion of explicit formulation: the list should be made explicit, discussed, and defended.
b) The criterion of methodological justification: the method used in selecting capabilities need to be clarified and justified as appropriate for the issue at hand
c) The criterion of sensitivity to the context: this criterion thus proposes a pragmatic approach towards drawing up a list by acknowledging that it is important to speak the language of the debate in which we want to get involved.
d) The criterion of different levels of generality: if a selection aims at an empirical application or implementable policy proposals, then the list needs to be drawn in two stages and at different levels. There is the need for an ideal list at the first level and a pragmatic list at the second level where constrains with the data collection or with implementation will have to be acknowledged.
e) The criterion of exhaustion and non-reduction: the capabilities on the list should include all elements that are important: no relevant dimensions should be left out.

Robeyns (2005b) criteria seek a middle path between the philosophical and democratic positions, while also helping researchers in the selection of capabilities. Her guideline suggests that there is value in both positions. And the balance that is needed depends on the purpose of a study. This supports Byskov's (2017) view that both positions are mutually reinforcing (p. 11). Also, Robeyns (2005b) notes that these guidelines help to deal with selection bias in the process of selecting capabilities. Selection bias occurs when some capabilities are selected to the detriment of others due to the social position of the researcher or when the field of research is unfamiliar to the researcher (Robeyns, 2005b, p. 203). A discussion of how capability lists in education have been selected and the procedure adopted

in this study will be presented later. In the meantime, I examine below the issue of adaptive preference in the democratic position as it is not addressed in Robeyns' guidelines.

Methodologically, Robeyns (2017) argues that the methods for dealing with this will differ depending on how the capability approach is applied in a study. In relation to small-scale projects or qualitative work, informed by subjectivist epistemology, Robeyns (2017) argues that "what is required above all is deliberation and interaction with people whom one may be worried that their preferences may show signs of adaption" (p. 141). This approach has been used in the study of Conradie & Robeyns (2013). Other studies that have dealt with adaptive preference similarly include Ibrahim (2017). In this study, I found a projective technique useful in eliciting further responses or interaction from participants regarding statements that were thought to be adaptive. I illustrate this below with an extract from the data.

> Interviewer: What do you think about the environment?
>
> Participant: As for the environment I think it is normal as we are in Africa.
>
> Interviewer: Are you sure?
>
> Participant: It is not good that there are no dustbins here so there are always litter here. So, we need dustbins here….

In the dialogue above, the participant goes on to express his thought about the environment and how that affects his capability. While this technique is useful in dealing with adaptive preferences, findings presented in Chapter Eight of this thesis examines the structural context that shapes preferences. This is important in efforts to address structural injustices and constraints to the freedoms of apprentices and journeypersons.

Research Design

In this part of the chapter, I discuss the piloting of the study that was undertaken before the main fieldwork and the lessons learnt that guided changes to the research design. The stages of data gathering, sample, methods, research sites, ethical considerations, language considerations, translation and transcription of data are also discussed. The research process discussed corresponds to Cunliffe's (2011) statement that doing research is a craft… which involves "being open and responsive to the possibilities of experience, people, ideas, materials and processes and understanding and enacting the relationship between our

metatheoretical position, our methods, our theorizing, and their practical consequences" (p. 667). In the section below, I discuss the pilot study.

Pilot Study

A pilot study enables a researcher to gain access to useful contacts, test her questions, methods of data gathering, identify and resolve problems that may affect the study (Gudmundsdottir & Brock-Utne, 2010; Sampson, 2004). In December 2017, I undertook a pilot study in Accra. The pilot study aimed to understand more about the TVET system in Ghana, establish useful contacts, ascertain the possibility of recruiting male and female apprentices in the same trade and to test the interview questions, particularly the selection of capabilities. In the section below, I outline the original intent I had, the outcomes of the pilot study and the lessons learnt.

First, I was interested in the experiences of informal apprentices. One of the reasons includes the inadequate understanding of their experiences as discussed in Chapter Three. The second reason is discussed in the penultimate section of this chapter on my positionality. While the target population of the study was clear, a decision had to be made regarding the trades from which apprentices could be recruited as there are so many trades in the informal economy. The goal was to have male and female representation in the sample. As a result, two trade areas, hairdressing and the automotive trade were initially selected. These two trades were selected due to an understanding I had of the mechanic trade being a male-dominated trade and hairdressing a predominantly feminine trade. I was therefore unsure of the possibility of recruiting both male and female in either trades. Upon reaching the research sites, this was altered to a focus on the automotive trade because a female was identified in this trade. This was not without some difficulty.

Hairdressing was dropped because of the difficulty involved in identifying the few males who were in the trade. Also, hairdressers are not clustered like the auto-mechanics and resource constraints informed the decision to focus on the automotive trade. Six persons in the automotive trade were interviewed: three informal apprentices (two male and a female) and three master craftsmen. These persons were recruited from two different clusters namely Odawna and Ofankor clusters in Accra. Description of the research sites is provided in a later section. In line with ethical procedures, informal apprentices were recruited through their masters. Also, clearance was sought from representatives of the Ghana National Association of Garages (GNAG) before gaining access to the research sites.

Second, I observed from the pilot study, two potential problems in recruiting apprentices through their masters. One related to the pressure to participate and the other was an issue of trust. The issue of trust emanated from their uncertainty regarding my relationship with their master and confidentiality of the shared information. This meant a constant reassuring of my position, the confidentiality of any shared information and ethical procedures that needed to be followed.

Third, a life story method was adopted as an interviewing method for understanding the experiences of informal apprentices as it was considered to be the appropriate method to investigate the relationship between structure and agency. This method is elaborated in the section on methods. It was observed during the interviews that it was quite difficult building rapport with the informal apprentices, as very brief responses were given to questions asked. This observation informed a decision to use a life grid in the main study as it is considered useful in facilitating engagement between researchers and participants (Abbas et al., 2013; Wilson et al, 2007; Berney & Blane, 2003).

Fourth, in identifying dimensions of capabilities of informal apprentices, I realised that direct questions such as what they would like to be were too vague. On the other hand, it was realised that dimensions of capabilities could be extracted from responses to the areas which were explored. These included broad areas such as the nature or structure of work in apprenticeship, their plans after training and challenges and opportunities in apprenticeship. This was useful in reinforcing the procedure used in the selection of capabilities in the main study.

Fifth, the pilot study informed the transcription software that was selected to transcribe the interviews. As the interviews were conducted in the workshop, there was a lot of background noise that needed to be removed. Express Scribe transcription software proved useful as it had a feature for minimising background noise.

While the pilot study was useful, other challenges could not be identified through the pilot study. This meant I had to be open to the possibilities and constraints that may be encountered and adjust without compromising the quality of the research. Some of these would be outlined in the subsequent sections. In the section below, I discuss the data gathering process beginning with the stages involved, followed by the sample.

Stages of Data Gathering

Data for the study was gathered in two periods. The first round of data gathering took place between 22nd June and 31st August 2018. Interviews with all participants in Table 5.1 below were conducted during this period. Also, all officials of the Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (COTVET), Ghana National Association of Garages (GNAG), a head of one of the branches of the National Vocational Training Institute and an official of the Regulatory Board of NVTI were interviewed during this period. All the stakeholders whose perspectives were important to the study's research questions could not be interviewed during this period. The main reason included the short period of time I spent in the field. Also, the data of informal apprentices and journeypersons had not all been transcribed and analysed. As a result, the exact questions to ask the relevant officials were not clear. This informed the second stage of data gathering.

The second stage of data was gathered between November 2019 and January 2020. The data comprised of interviews with two officials of the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI), two from the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations (MoELR), an official of the Trades Union Congress (TUC), National Board for Small-Scale Industries (NBSSI) and the Non-Formal Education Division (NFED) of the Ministry of Education. The second round of data gathering was required to obtain information about the position-practices of persons in these government ministries, agencies and the TUC. The data was important in evaluating the freedoms of informal apprentices and journeypersons.

The Sample

The study's sample comprises informal apprentices and journeypersons, master craftspersons (MCPs) and other stakeholders. The full list of all the participants selected and interviewed is presented in Tables 5.1 and 5.2 below. Further biographical information about the informal apprentices, journeypersons and masters are provided in Appendices B.1 and Appendix B.2. Details of the other officials are withheld. The total number of sample is 50. As mentioned earlier, the automotive trade was chosen as the trade to recruit informal apprentices. The original intent was to recruit informal apprentices who had spent at least two years in training. However, upon reaching the research sites, it was difficult to locate female informal apprentices, although this was not the case for the male apprentices. Also, two of the participants (a male and a female) selected for the pilot study were included in the selection. Attempts to reach the third person failed.

The initial females who could be identified were journeypersons. In view of this, a decision was made to include them and allow them to recount their training experiences and reasons for enrolling in the trade. This decision changed the focal agents of the study from informal apprentices to both informal apprentices and journeypersons. However, the inclusion of journeypersons generated useful data for the study, especially in the area of transition from training to employment. The participants of the study are presented in Tables 5.1 and 5.2 below.

Table 5.1: Number of Apprentices, Journeypersons and MCPs Interviewed (n=33)

Number of apprentices (17)	Gender	Trade
5	Female	Auto-spraying (4) and auto air-condition repair (1)
12	Male	Mechanics (11) and air-conditioning (1)

Number of journeypersons (6)	Gender	Trade
5	Female	Auto-spraying
1	Male	Mechanics

Number of MCPs (10)	Gender	Trade
3	Female	Auto-spraying
7	Male	Mechanics (5), auto-spraying (4) and air-conditioning (1)

Table 5.2: Other Stakeholders Interviewed (n=17)

Institution	Number of interviewees (17)
Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI)	2
National Board for Small-Scale Industries (NBSSI)	1
Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations (MoELR)	2
National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI)	1
Council for Technical and Vocational Education (COTVET)	3
Ghana National Association of Garages (GNAG)	4
Head of a Branch of the National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI)	1
Trades Union Congress	1
Ministry of Education (Non-Formal Education Division)	1
Skills Development Fund (SDF)	1

The Selection Process and Access to Participants

The selection of participants in Table 5.1 was done by first seeking consent from the offices of the GNAG in the areas that the study was conducted. This involved introducing myself, the research, its aims and outcomes. Details of these research sites are provided later in the chapter and the participant information sheet is presented in Appendix A.1. Verbal consent was then given to access the research sites and apprentices, masters and journeypersons. In Suame Magazine, which is one of the sites visited, the officials of the GNAG elected an automotive shop keeper to assist me to recruit participants as the cluster is very big and I was new to the area.

Convenience sampling was used to recruit informal apprentices, journeypersons and MCPs. Access to informal apprentices and some of the journeypersons were gained through the

verbal consent of their masters. Consent from masters to interview journeypersons was necessary where journeypersons worked alongside their masters. There were few cases where journeypersons worked independently and, in such cases, I had direct access to them. The selection was informed by the availability and willingness of masters, apprentices and journeypersons to participate in the study. As it was difficult identifying and selecting female apprentices and journeypersons, snowball sampling was used in selecting female participants. The initial females selected helped to recruit other females in the trade and where they were personally acquainted with the person, I had the opportunity of being introduced to them.

Informal apprentices and journeypersons were recruited from different workshops. For each apprentice that was interviewed, an effort was made to also interview their master. The goal was to identify differences or similarities in the hermeneutic frames of apprentices and masters concerning the capabilities of informal apprentices and journeypersons. On the other hand, this was not achieved with every apprentice interviewed. This did not affect the data and analysis made because not all the issues that came up with informal apprentices needed to be followed up with masters. In addition, there were practical concerns for not following up on all issues with masters. This was important as apprentices were informed that the information shared during the interviews was not going to be relayed to their masters. This was an important protocol needed to not mar the relationship between apprentices and their masters regarding sensitive issues such as treatment and respect of masters for apprentices. In all, ten MCPs were interviewed. These were the masters of fifteen of the informal apprentices and journeypersons who were interviewed.

At COTVET, a letter of recommendation was sent, and I was invited to the Office. This enabled me to gain access to officials. Access to officials at the other government ministries was gained through personal contact. Also, an official of the MoELR put me through to an official of TUC as she felt they could provide information that will be useful for my work.

Methods Used

Data for this study were generated through interviews, participant observation and documents. Two types of interviews were used. These are semi-structured interviews and focused life story interviews.

Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with master craftsmen and all the interviewees in Table 5.2. The interview guide used to generate data from these participants are attached in the appendices (D). This method was chosen for this group of participants because detailed information about their life experiences was not needed. These interviews lasted between twenty minutes to an hour.

Focused Life Story Interviews

Focused life story interviews were conducted with informal apprentices, journeypersons and master craftswomen (interview guide attached in Appendices C and D.1). Also, the master craftswomen were asked the questions that were administered to the master craftsmen. Life story interview was chosen as a method for gathering data from informal apprentices and journeypersons as they are the focal persons in this study. As a result, it was important to gain an in-depth understanding of their experiences. The decision to conduct focused life history interviews with the master craftswomen stemmed from the interest in understanding their enrolment in the automotive trade, which is male-dominated. The interviews lasted between thirty minutes to an hour and a half. The longest interview lasted two hours.

The decision to use a life grid method was jettisoned due to observations made at the research sites, which made this impracticable. Most of the sites did not have a proper seating place where life grid sheets could be placed and completed with the participants. Also, there were many occasions where interviews with informal apprentices were conducted while they worked. Some of the interviews were done standing or squatting. As the life grid method could not be used, other strategies were used to establish rapport with participants before the interviews. Some of these included showing interest in their work and the usage of ice breakers. As Goodson and Gill (2011) note, establishing trust and rapport is a "question of working with human chemistry and there is no procedural formula" (p. 39). In the section below, I discuss the justification for choosing focused life story interviews, the limitations of this method and any issues these posed for the study.

Life history and life story are used interchangeably in the literature. However, Harrison (2008) argues that while life history focuses on a lived life, life story focuses on the told story about a life (p. xxxv). The approach used in this study is life story interviews and the narratives are not total life stories but rather focused life stories. At the outset of this study, I

was interested in informal apprentices' previous schooling and family experiences. On the other hand, an exploration into these areas was not feasible as it would have required more time. As a result, a focused life story approach was adopted. The focus was on the period right before their training, their training experiences and for journeypersons, their experiences after training.

Life story approach is an interdisciplinary method of inquiry that has its roots in sociology and social psychology (Harrison, 2008). It is also widely used in education research. Within the sociology discipline, this method is used for different inquiries. Among these include the investigation of individuals' subjective understandings and social relationships of which individuals may or may not be aware of (Bertaux & Kohli, 1984). Between the two uses, it is usually used as a method to understand the relationship between the individual and social structure (Harrison, 2008).

In this study, narratives are used as a resource to understand the lives of individuals and the structures that have shaped or shape those lives. Hubbard (2000) argues that "life histories [or stories] may focus on individual experiences, but that focus does not preclude an examination of social structure" (p. 5). This is because individuals are embedded in a social context and therefore their thoughts and actions are shaped by their structural context. This method, therefore, helps to understand the influence of structures in individual lives and their actions, while simultaneously revealing the actions that individuals take amidst these structural influences.

I found the life story approach a flexible method which allowed interviews to be adapted to the experiences of each individual. All the interviews did not have the same format as each person's experience differed. The "open" nature of the interviews was useful as themes critical to the study, but which were not anticipated emerged in the interviews. Some of the interviews started with the reasons for enrolment while others began with individuals' experiences in training. The starting point of each interview depended on the statement or question that opened up an opportunity for conversation. For example, the opening question of, how are you? elicited different responses. Whereas some just responded and waited for the next question, others used that opportunity to share their thoughts about their day or obligations. For conversational individuals, one of the challenges associated with a life story interview is the possibility that some relevant areas of exploration may be missed. This

occurred in some of my interviews. However, at the end of each interview, I quickly glanced through the interview guide to ensure that the required areas had been covered.

Besides the format, it is argued that a life story method does not allow narrative comparison because of the variations in individual experiences. In this study, some of the interviewees had more to say on areas of interest to me whereas others had nothing or little to say. This was understandable and puts into perspective the ontological notion of knowledgeability which shows that each person's understanding and experience of the world and phenomenon is different. This did not pose any problem as the purpose was to acquire an in-depth understanding of aspects of their lives and their experiences in training.

Furthermore, it is argued that life stories tend to benefit the researcher who collects people's stories for their research. Goodson and Gill (2011) note that this process does not benefit the participants as their consciousness remains the same after the interview. As a result, they underscore the need for a "progressive reflexive understanding to emerge from the exchange" (Goodson & Gill, 2011, p. 43). In my interviews with participants, there were opportunities for "reciprocity of knowledge" (Goodson & Gill, 2011, p. 42). I shared my knowledge about the TVET context with participants as some themes emerged in the interviews. Also, some of them used the opportunity to ask questions and seek clarification on opportunities in the TVET field. As a result, there was some level of engagement that benefited participants.

Lastly, while the interviews were focused, the narratives served as a link to different events in the participants lives so that the "significance of each event [could] be understood through its relation to the whole" (Lewis, 2008, p. 561). Participants moved backwards and forwards between different events in their lives, including projections of the future. In relation to this, Bertaux and Kohli (2008) note that narratives are "constructions by which individuals constitute a defined presence within the specific horizons of the past (retentions) and future (protentions)". This was helpful as the nature of the interview questions required participants to make projections into the future such as their plans after training.

Observational Method

Observational method, particularly participant observation is usually associated with ethnographic work. It is a method through which a researcher immerses herself in the setting of research to understand the way of life of the people or the phenomenon under study. Participant observation is undertaken over an extensive period of not less than a year if the

data generated is to be considered trustworthy (Kawulich, 2005). During the period, detailed notes are taken and the researcher participates in the activities of the group.

The observational method used in this study cannot be classified as participant observation as undertaken in ethnographic work. I did not participate in the activities of the mechanics. The observation that was undertaken involved being observant of the research sites when visits were made to conduct interviews. These observations were very important in contextualising the narratives of participants. For example, in interviews, constant reference was made to the physical environment to illustrate points made. These physical environments are involved in the enactment of trade practices and descriptions of them are included in the data analysis. The section on research sites also includes descriptions of the observations made about the environment.

Also, as some interviews were conducted while participants worked, questions were asked to gain an understanding of the practices observed such as the tools used, and safety and health measures adopted. Care was taken not to slide into an object-subject relationship with participants as this is at odds with the subject-subject relationship that Giddens (1979) emphasises as the domain of structuration studies (p. 194). The observation that was undertaken is consistent with the interpretivist epistemology of the study. Lastly, permission was sought to take pictures of the worksites for reference and details were written down as some of these could not have been captured on tape.

Documents Gathered

Three main documents that were gathered which guided the analysis and my understanding of the context are apprenticeship agreement where this was available, the membership form of the GNAG and their constitution. These were used to supplement the information gained through interviews. The apprenticeship agreement is attached in Appendix E.

Ethical Considerations

In the section on selection and access to participants, some of the ethical procedures followed were discussed. This section provides further details of ethical considerations made before the research was undertaken and during the interviews.

Prior to the pilot study and the main fieldwork, ethical approval was sought from the Ethics Committee of the University of Nottingham. In the application, issues relating to

anonymity/confidentiality, potential risk of research to participants, informed consent and how the data was going to be stored and used were discussed.

In the field, approval to access the research sites was sought from the office of the GNAG, after the research was introduced to them. All the participants in Tables 5.1. and 5.2 were briefed about the purpose of the research and the importance of their participation. The information needed was contained in the participant information sheets which were in English (a copy is attached in Appendix A.1.). However, a further step was taken to verbally explain the contents in the information sheet in either English or the local language in which participants preferred. Ghana is a multilingual country and English is the official language. There are over fifty spoken languages. However, Akan languages, particularly Twi is the most widely spoken and understood language in the country. As a result, participants who preferred to speak in the local language chose Twi and a few Fanti and the information was communicated using these languages.

Participants were assured anonymity regarding their identities and the information given as contained in the participant information sheet. For informal apprentices, this was very important as some were careful providing information about practices in the workplace. This was expected as they were uncertain about my relationship with their masters. However, I allayed these fears and explained that while the information was not going to be communicated to their master, they were going to be analysed, with their identities anonymised. Pseudonyms are therefore used to anonymise the identity of apprentices and journeypersons. Likewise, the real names of masters and other officials interviewed have been withheld and besides the masters whose biographical information are provided in Appendix B.2, the positions of other officials have been withheld.

Participants were then allowed to consider if they wanted to be part of the study or not and if they did, to withdraw at any point in time. On a few occasions, I realised that apprentices felt obliged to participate because their master had asked them to. However, I explained to them they were not obliged to and with this explanation, some withdrew their participation. However, this did not negatively affect the study, as others voluntarily decided to participate.

The participant information sheet contained information regarding the need to record the interviews. However, some participants (apprentices, masters and government officials) did not allow interviews to be recorded. This was acceptable in line with the ethical protocols. On such occasions, I made effort to write down everything that was said and asked for

clarification when a statement was missed. In interviews that were conducted in Twi, this meant I had to translate and transcribe at the same time. While this was not a challenge, the challenging part related to interviews that were conducted with informal apprentices while standing. The process of writing while standing was a difficult one, although it did not impact the information that was written.

All the interviews took place in the places of work of the participants. For officials in formal establishments, interviews were held in their offices. In the mechanic clusters, they took place in the workshops. In interviews with informal apprentices, the exact location for the interviews in the workshop was negotiated. It was important that their master was not close to the chosen location. As a female researcher, I was concerned about safety while in the cluster. In Kumasi and one of the clusters in Accra, I had someone with me whenever I visited the workshops. However, the persons whom I visited the sites with did not sit in the interviews. This was important to enable the participants to speak freely.

After participants gained an understanding of the purpose of the research and what was required of their participation, they were handed the consent form to provide their consent. Again, as the consent forms were in English, the information was translated to them where needed. Participants appended their signature to give their consent for the interviews to be conducted. Few of them preferred to give verbal consent instead.

Language Considerations, Translation and Transcription of Data

The interviews with the research participants were conducted in Twi, Fanti and English. As English is the official language of Ghana, in formal establishments like institutes, and government organisations, English was the preferred medium of communication. As a result, all the interviews with officials in government ministries and agencies were in English as well as some of the interviews with the representatives of the GNAG. In informal workshops, participants were asked which language they preferred to communicate in, and the majority opted for Twi, few chose Fanti and English, and some used a combination of English and Twi or Fanti. Switching between Twi and English when communicating is very common in Ghana. The opportunity given to participants to choose which language they were more comfortable speaking in, was necessary because language is a powerful medium for the expression of thoughts (Temple & Young, 2004). Also, it helped to mediate any power relationship between me and the research participants due to my fluency in English.

All the interviews were transcribed from the local languages into English. I did translation and transcription concurrently. I did not conduct back translation or employ the service of a translator. While back translation is known to guarantee accuracy, achieving semantic equivalence with this process is difficult. In addition to this, it is a costly and time-consuming process. In view of the difficulties, Birbili (2000) argues that researchers can strive to achieve conceptual equivalence. Birbili further notes that this can easily be achieved if the researcher understands or has knowledge of the culture very well. My cultural knowledge and fluency in all the local languages used in the interviews helped to maintain accuracy and meaning in the translation and transcription. In cases where the meaning of a terminology, phrase or statement required further elaboration, this is provided in the footnote or interpretation of the narratives.

Besides my fluency, I have acquired through socialisation in a multi-lingual context, the process of translating from one local language to another. This was useful in the transcription of the interviews. Also, to ensure accuracy of the translation and transcription, I carefully and slowly listened to all the audiotapes while I transcribed. Using Express Scribe for this exercise was very useful because it has a feature that enables the pace of a speech to be adjusted. Furthermore, editing was kept to a minimum and the transcripts are "literal" translations of the languages used in the interviews. The form in which the transcripts or excerpts appear is what a Ghanaian will refer to as a direct translation of the local language to English. As the interviewer, it was useful that I conducted the transcription. This is because there were non-verbal expressions that denoted feelings which were significant in interpreting the interviews. In view of this, I switched between the aural tapes and the transcripts in analysing the findings. Data analysis began with the transcription of the recorded interviews.

The Automotive Trade and Research Sites

The automotive trade is one of the "modern" trades that emerged in Ghana during the colonial period. It a trade that mainly involves repair works, retrofitting and refurbishing of broken down or faulty vehicles. Within the automotive trade are sub-specialities namely welding and fabrication, mechanic (engine repairers), vehicle interior upholstery, vehicle electricians and automobile body straightening and spraying. The specialities are listed in the apprenticeship agreement presented in Appendix E.

In Ghana, the automotive trade is a vibrant and burgeoning business because increasing numbers of people import used vehicles. Its popularity is also due to the fact that a lot of

automobile companies do not have service centres in Ghana and are usually more expensive. This creates an economic gap that is filled by automotive artisans. Those engaged in this trade are loosely referred to as mechanics, irrespective of the kind of service they render on the vehicle. Across the country, these mechanics operate in clusters and there are numerous mechanic clusters (light industrial areas). Aside from those who work in the clusters, there are many more who operate in workshops outside the cluster. The latter are classified as wayside mechanics (Mclaughlin, 1979), an allusion to the fact that these mechanics are often located on the side of roads and highways. However, with respect to the conditions of workshops and services rendered, there are no differences between the wayside mechanics and those who operate in the industrial clusters.

This study was conducted in two major cities in Ghana, namely Accra (which is the country's capital) in the Greater Accra Region and Kumasi, the capital of the Ashanti Region. In Accra, participants were recruited from the wayside and two of the main industrial areas, namely Odawna Light Industrial Area and Ofankor Light Industrial Area. Most of the master craftswomen and journeywomen in Accra were selected from workshops outside the industrial clusters. In Kumasi, participants were recruited from the main industrial cluster in a suburb of the city known as Suame Magazine. I describe these sites below.

Odawna Light Industrial Area

The Odawna light industrial area is located in the township of Odawna, a suburb of Accra. The town derived its name from the river Odaw in Accra, the longest river running through the city of Accra. In Ga, which is the native language of the people of Accra, Odawna means "at the bank of the Odaw river". The town is located in the South-western part of the Accra metropolis. In 1962, the first president of Ghana, Dr Kwame Nkrumah acquired the area for mechanics in the city to use for their activities. Prior to that, mechanics were operating on various wayside, in different areas in the city. The original area secured for the mechanics was larger than the area that is currently inhabited. Some portion of the land has been encroached upon by other people, with only about 36 plots of land (about 9 acres) left for mechanics (official of GNAG, personal communication, 16th July, 2018).

On these plots of land are makeshift wooden structures and shacks that serve as service centres or workshops for the mechanics. They also serve as storage facilities for the tools and equipment that are used by mechanics in their trade. There are no official estimates of the inhabitants in this area. However, most of the occupants are MCPs, their apprentices,

journeypersons, and petty traders. The dominant activities that take place in the cluster are repair works and the sale of auto spare parts.

Ofankor Light Industrial Area

The Ofankor Light Industrial Area was secured by the government for the operation of wayside mechanics and artisans in early 1990. It is located on the outskirt of the city, North of Accra. Like Odawna, it is unclear how many people inhabit this cluster. However, compared to the cluster at Odawna, this is relatively small in size and population. The cluster is, however, better planned, quite spacious with well-demarcated plots and roads.

Achimota

Achimota is a town in the Greater Accra metropolitan area. It is one of the oldest towns in Accra with both residential and commercial areas. While some of the automotive workers operated from workshops, others worked in open spaces. Except for a group of automotive workers who clustered on a school field, automotive workers in Achimota are not clustered.

Suame Magazine

Suame Magazine is one of the biggest automotive clusters in West Africa. The name Magazine was derived from a former mechanic site that used to be an Army depot. As the mechanics moved to a new area called Suame, they retained the name Magazine. The site became known as Suame Magazine (Arhin & Afari-Gyan, 1992). Mechanics have been operating from Suame Magazine since the 1950s.

At Suame Magazine, it is reported that there are about 400,000 inhabitants. These comprise mechanics, apprentices, and journeypersons as well as spare parts dealers and petty traders. Activities that take place in Suame Magazine include light manufacturing, spare parts dealership, and auto repairs. Suame Magazine covers an area of about 75 acres (Arhin & Afari-Gyan, 1992). Mechanic clusters in Kumasi are categorised into 21 zones. Suame Magazine covers the areas of Zones 1-7, 11, 12, 13, 18 and 19 (Adu-Gyamfi & Adjei, 2018). Zoning of the clusters are mainly for administrative purposes and plots of lands are not clearly demarcated. Workshops are not organised in any clear order, and they sometimes do spill over into the road. The Suame Magazine area is poorly developed with poor access roads.

The mechanic workshops in the area are mainly wooden structures roofed with aluminium sheets. These workshops are used for storing tools and equipment. Work is usually carried in an open space where vehicles to be worked on are parked. The Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), and the Kumasi Vocational Training Institute are some major educational institutions that are close to the Suame Magazine.

Data Analysis

In analysing the data obtained, I drew on the methodological bracket of conduct and context analysis as a guide. Analysis of the data proceeded according to the study's research questions. Research question one fell within the bracket of conduct analysis. The data of informal apprentices, journeypersons and master craftswomen were analysed for their explanations or motivations for enrolling in informal apprenticeship. Conjuncturally-specific knowledge of the participants was drawn upon to understand and present their conditions of action. These are events in their lives that motivated or led to the choice for informal apprenticeship and females, the mechanic trade over other trade choices (feminine trades for example). In most of the cases, there was not a single event that led to the choice, but a combination of several conditions (both enabling and constraining) which were intersecting.

All the events were coded, and participants grouped along these conditions. Themes were generated from these conditions around which the discussion of each person's narrative was focused. This is presented in the next chapter in Table 6.1. In generating the themes, I put the highlight on informal apprenticeship. The exception was the condition of "inability to continue with formal education" due to financial constraint. As conjuncturally-specific knowledge directs one towards individuals' conditions of action, general-dispositional structures as well as their agency or conduct arising from those conditions, the narratives were analysed for individuals' reactions to their conditions and how these intersected with elements of active agency such as degrees of critical distance, motivation of action and shifting horizons of action. General-dispositional structures that inhabit the frame of reference of individuals were drawn out as they emerged from the data or perceived independently by the researcher.

In analysing the data in relation to the second research question, I drew on practices of others in the education literature. In education, Robeyns (2005b) criteria discussed earlier has been used by Walker (2007) in selecting capabilities for gender equality in education and by Powell (2014) in selecting dimensions of capabilities of VET students. Also, Wilson-Strydom

(2016) applied these criteria in selecting a list of capabilities for equitable transitions to university in South Africa.

Walker's selection was first informed by a consideration of the specificity of the capability approach for education. She then examined education policy in South Africa with a focus on gender equality and extrapolated capabilities from the policy. The list generated was grounded in the narratives of schoolgirls. It was then compared with other lists of capabilities in education to identify areas of overlap. The last process of debating the list with others was achieved through the publication of the study. Similarly, Wilson-Strydom (2016) developed a list using a top-down approach. She first developed an ideal-theoretical list through a review of literature on higher education. After a second list was developed from a mixed-method study with students in high school and first year of university. She notes that the first list did not inform the questions that were asked students in the mixed-method study to prevent privileging the ideal-theoretical list. The results obtained formed the basis for refinement to arrive at the final list of capabilities.

Contrary to Wilson-Strydom (2016) and Walker (2007), Powell (2014) first extracted dimensions of capabilities from interviews with FET college students. These interviews were analysed for well-being themes which were marked as "broad dimensions of well-being". In addition, the well-being themes were supplemented with the life goals of the students (Powell, 2014, p. 204). The dimensions were discussed in detail using "thick" descriptions of the students' experiences. Powell (2014) derived these thick descriptions from the interviews with the students and not from policy documents. A summary of specific valued functionings from the descriptions was provided or listed at the end of each dimension. Lastly, she supplemented the narratives of the students with relevant capabilities in the education and training literature. In the analysis, the perspectives of the students were contrasted with texts in policy documents. Her list has been published to engage the attention of the academic and non-academic community.

In my analysis, I adopted the methodology used by Powell (2014) in identifying capabilities of TVET students. Dimensions of capabilities were first identified from the interviews undertaken with informal apprentices and journeypersons. This was important to reflect the circumstances of informal apprentices in Ghana and their knowledge of their context. It involved identifying and coding their valued functionings (beings and doings that are valued but not achieved). Experiences that represent their functionings (state of being in the period

of their training and prior to the interviews) were drawn on to contextualise the valued functionings. These served as thick descriptions. The thick descriptions were supplemented with the views of MCPs. The supplementation included insights in the literature as well as policy texts. Fourth, these descriptions were compared with dimensions of capabilities of TVET students that have been developed by other authors in the section on discussion. Among these include Powell (2014) and Hilal (2018). For stylistic purposes, the presentation does not strictly follow this order.

Regarding Robeyns' (2005b) criterion (5), I included all dimensions of capabilities that were identified in the data, thereby achieving exhaustion. The implication of adhering to this procedure meant that some dimensions of capabilities were representations of the freedoms of a few apprentices and journeypersons. An example is the dimension of capability of English literacy. But I thought it wise to include these as they may reflect the capabilities of other informal apprentices or journeypersons who were not included in this study. Also, it is possible that the dimensions of capabilities that were expressed by a few may be valued by other apprentices and journeypersons, but at the time of the interviews were not on their horizon. This may not have occurred if a focus group discussion was used but the situation in the field did not allow this method. First, there were time constraints as apprentices' work schedule dictated when interviews had to be conducted. Secondly, resource constraints and other commitments they had would have made it difficult to bring them together and negotiate a time for the interviews.

Also, the criterion of non-reduction was achieved. By non-reduction Robeyns (2005b) means that there should not be overlaps in the dimensions of the capabilities. This is similar to what Alkire (2002) refers to as "incommensurability which means that all of the desirable qualities of one are not present in the other" (p. 185). While this is possible to achieve, Leßmann, (2012) argues that the interdependency or relatedness of dimensions of capabilities in suggesting this criterion is not considered. She suggests that the interdependency of dimensions of capabilities need to be discussed where evident.

Following Walker and Powell, I conclude the analysis of research question two by noting that the list of capabilities of informal apprentices is not definitive. It is based on data from a small number of informal apprentices and journeypersons in the automotive trade. The list serves as a guide to investigating the freedoms they have, to achieve their valued functionings. Also, it seeks to focus a wider discussion or debate on the freedoms of informal

apprentices and journeypersons. It is hoped that through further engagement at national and international forums, it will generate awareness and be the basis for deliberation and refinement.

Analysis of the data for the third research question proceeded in two main steps. The first step involved analysing the structural context of informal apprentices and journeypersons along each dimension of capability. I drew on the bracket of context analysis in doing this. For each dimension of capability, I mapped the institutionalised features of the system and relations within which informal apprentices and journeypersons are embedded which could explain their opportunity freedoms. A second-order analysis (without recourse to the knowledgeability of individuals) was undertaken. This involved analysing the role that these factors play in the opportunity freedoms of informal apprentices and journeypersons. The analysis that was undertaken was supplemented with the perspectives of positioned agents in Table 5.2 whose practices contribute to or help to explain the institutionalised features of the system. In addition, the perspectives or knowledge of informal apprentices about their context was also drawn on to supplement the analysis undertaken.

The second step involved analysis of the conduct of informal apprentices and journeypersons regarding their dimensions of capability. The data was analysed for the choices that contribute to the achievement of their valued functionings. The focus was on the varied ways, either routinely or reflectively in which they integrate their knowledge or understanding of the context into their conduct.

Challenges Working with Theory and Empirical Data

Strong structuration theory was chosen as a supplementary theory to the capability approach due to its theorisation of the relationship between structure and agency. However, working with strong structuration was not without challenges. Among these included the operationalisation of the theory and achieving the right balance between theory and empirical data. These are explained below.

First, while structuration theory has been further refined by Stones, in line with critiques of its abstractness and difficulty applying to research, the theory is still quite abstract and its operationalisation, including concepts of the quadripartite nature of structuration, depends on the context of application. As the capability approach was the main framework of the study, the research questions and interview guide for informal apprentices and journeypersons were

driven by the capability approach. There was a particular focus on formulating questions that will enable an understanding of the functionings and valued functionings of informal apprentices and journeypersons. In gathering and analysing the data, strong structuration theory served as a sensitising device and was not applied a priori. The concepts took shape after data was obtained and the initial analysis completed. In the initial drafts of the data chapters, the theory was very implicit, and the data was later reinterpreted in light of the theory. In the presentation and analysis of some of the data, therefore, there was some difficulty achieving the right balance between theory and empirical issues.

Second, the methodological bracket of conduct and context analysis is a useful analytical tool for examining the conduct and context of an agent or group of agents. With conjuncturally-specific internal structures serving as a hinge for the examination of both the conduct and context of an agent, Parker (2006) questions the relevance of bracketing in the sense of what is being bracketed. Parker's comment is informed by the distinction between institutional analysis and conduct analysis in Giddens' version of the theory. His critique centres on the fact that conduct analysis involves context analysis while context analysis also involves conduct analysis of agents whose actions help to constitute structures. Given this, Parker (2006) notes that strong structuration can do without bracketing. He is right to observe that one can proceed to ask questions and undertake analysis without brackets. This notwithstanding it is useful as a guide to the analysis of conduct and context and it is the core of the duality of structure and agency as developed by Stones (2005).

Positionality

Corlett and Mavin (2018) encourage researchers to think about reflexivity as questioning in two main areas. One is "questioning our understanding of reality…, how alternative paradigms and perspectives can open up new ways of thinking about phenomena" (Corlett & Marvin, 2018, p. 3). The second involves "questioning our relationships with the research context, the research subjects/participants and the research data" (Corlett & Marvin, 2018, p. 3). In this section, I first present my positioning and its influence on the objectives of this study. This is followed by my experience in the field as a female, educational researcher researching a male-dominated trade.

I grew up in Ghana knowing about informal apprenticeship. On the other hand, I had a distal engagement with informal apprentices. While I knew about the skills reproduction process, I had less understanding of why persons enrolled in training. In 2014, my engagement with

apprentices changed after I communicated with a group of apprentices at my local hairdresser. In the discussion, they revealed the intimidation they felt in encounters with English speaking clients and the desire to achieve proficiency in English[15]. This aspect of their experience led me to reflect on other aspects of their experiences that are taken for granted by society. Shortly after, I learned about the work of Amartya Sen as a student of development and realised the capability approach had been applied to the study of TVET by Powell (2014). Inspired by the work of Powell (2014) and reflecting on my engagement with the informal apprentices, I decided to study informal apprenticeship through the capability lens. I was particularly drawn to the potential of the approach to enable understanding of the different domains of well-being or freedoms.

I started this study with the quest to know. As Stones and Lisa (2016) argue "it is important to know what we don't know as it is to know what we think we know" (p. 1147). In relation to this, I did not rely on my familiarity with the context. I was so keen to know all that could be known about informal apprenticeship and its place in the education system. While my encounter with the young females at my local hairdresser raised my interest in the well-being of apprentices and the institution, I was not fully reflexive of my privilege as a middle-class person and unconscious belief in formal education over other kinds of pathways like informal apprenticeship. Upon reflection, I admit I had embodied the view that persons who enrol in training are either not formally educated or have very little formal education. This was revealed in my first interview in Kumasi, where I met a young man who had completed senior high school, with good grades to enrol in higher education. It was at that moment I became conscious of my taken for granted view and began to question them.

Subsequently, I met others who had equally completed senior high school and a female who completed midwifery but rejected it to learn a trade in automotive. These young people perceived apprenticeship as an alternative educational pathway to formal education, although they yearned to have some of the benefits associated with formality like formal recognition of skills, certification and respect that comes with being formally educated. Their narratives

[15] In 2015, I began teaching them English language until I had to leave for master's study in the UK

changed my taken for granted perceptions about apprenticeship and challenged the deficit view about apprentices in society and the academic literature.

The second aspect of reflexivity relates to our relationship with our research participants. In the literature, the power of the researcher vis-à-vis research participants is often cited with suggestions regarding how this can be bridged. However, Raheim et al. (2016) underscore the possibility of "shifts in superior and inferior positions in the researched-researcher relationship" (p. 2). In relation to knowledge relations and power, they note that "the community being researched is not a passive... The informants [are] also agents in the shaping of the data, the data-collecting opportunities, and the course of the fieldwork" (p. 8). In the field, I was conscious of my position and power imbalances as a young female researcher with no professional experience in the trade I was researching. This may have led to my experience of a less powerful position vis-à-vis my research participants. This experience, however, varied depending on who was interviewed. With the support of personal contacts I developed, during a month's internship at COTVET's Project Support Unit (PSU), before the start of my PhD in 2016, I had access to representatives of the Garages. This access would have been difficult without the support I had. The officials of the Garages were extremely helpful in furnishing me with information about the trade and helping me gain access to the mechanic clusters and masters.

In other settings, I received reactions from interviewees that reflected the idiosyncratic features of individuals as well as the wider educational and gendered system within which I worked. These are illustrated with two experiences. First, some of the elites who were interviewed expressed surprise at my research focus, that is informal apprenticeship. While some of these reactions were covert, others were overt. There was the assumption that as an education research, the topic will be on formal education. In one of the settings, for example, an official asked about the possibility of changing my research topic as he suggested a different area in TVET that he thinks needs researching. This brought to bear the position of apprenticeship in the education and training system. The second experience relates to how my area of focus was automatically perceived through my gender. Upon meeting and introducing my topic to one of the interviewees, for example, he remarked: "Oh when you said vocational education at first, I thought it was cooking". This remark is indicative of the gendered nature of the vocational field, where males may be expected to research male trades while females research feminine trades.

Through the research process, my knowledge and understanding of the informal apprenticeship system and specifically informal apprentices have deepened. While this is important, the most important goal relates to the benefit of this work to informal apprentices, journeypersons and the training system. These are concerns that some of the apprentices and MCPs raised in the field. On one occasion, a master craftswoman reluctantly granted an interview as she felt that society did not care about them and questioned the impact of this study on their lives and livelihood. Similarly, others questioned the relevance of research beyond seeking information from them and complained that the process usually ended after researchers obtained the information they needed. In relation to these concerns, I plan to share the findings of this study at national forums in Ghana and with the Garages. In the spirit of the capability approach, it is hoped that sharing the findings of the research will generate a larger discussion about the capabilities of informal apprentices in Ghana, the structural enablement and constraints to their capabilities and how their capabilities could be expanded.

Data Presentation

The presentation of the findings is organised along the study's research questions. In Chapter Six, I discuss the explanations offered by informal apprentices and journeypersons for enrolling in apprenticeship. Chapter Seven focuses on their dimensions of capabilities and Chapter Eight discusses the extent to which they have the opportunity and agency freedom to achieve valued functionings. The discussion in chapter Eight is organised along the dimensions of capabilities. Chapter Nine presents the study's conclusions. The presentation of findings in Chapters Six and Seven was influenced by the structure of Powell and McGrath's (2019) work on the capabilities of FET college students in South Africa.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the research aims to understand the reasons why young people enrol in informal apprenticeship, their dimensions of capabilities and their freedoms to achieve these. The methodology that was used to address these research questions have been discussed in this chapter. I have made transparent the epistemological assumptions that underpin the study, the study's participants, ethical procedures, the stages of data gathering, the methods that were used to gather data from research participants, translation and transcription, the challenges and how they were managed.

The chapter has demonstrated consistency between the epistemology, theory and methods used. To understand the structure-agency nexus, life story interviews and semi-structured interviews were undertaken with persons whose perspectives were relevant in assessing these issues.

The discussion shows the various choices that were made in the research process and explanations for the choices that were made. Decisions were based on many factors. However, the goal was to obtain a good balance between the realities or challenges in the field and addressing the study's research questions.

Chapter Six: Empirical Explanations for Enrolling in Informal Apprenticeship

The discovery of the informal economy in the 1970s, the expansion of access to basic education in the 1990s through the "Education for All" movement, increased concerns about post-school training opportunities for school graduates and a neoliberal environment that emphasised private over public TVET led to the promotion of informal apprenticeship as a post-school training pathway for the youth (Middleton et al., 1991; Fluitman, 1989; ILO, 2012; UNESCO, 2016a). On the other hand, the academic literature demonstrates that it is poorly perceived in society and the least desired among the youth (Bortei-Doku et al., 2011; Foster, 1965a; Haan, 2006). It is argued that financial constraints that prevent young people from continuing with their formal education and academic ability push them into informal apprenticeship. This presents a deficit view of informal apprentices, perpetuates poor perspectives about apprenticeship and limits understanding of apprenticeship and young people's motivations for enrolling in training.

This chapter contributes to an understanding of young people's motivations for enrolling in informal apprenticeship. I examine the explanations offered by apprentices, journeypersons, and master craftswomen for enrolling in informal apprenticeship and their perspectives about apprenticeship. Drawing on structuration theory's emphasis that structures do not determine the actions of agents, but rather act as conditions within which actions or practices are enacted, the chapter focuses on how structural conditions are interpreted and the degrees to which these are mediated by young people.

The chapter is divided into three uneven sections. The first and longer section explores the reasons for enrolling in apprenticeship. The perspectives from which apprenticeship is approached are presented thematically across five themes. These are (a) apprenticeship as the most effective route for acquiring practical skills, (b) preference for apprenticeship over continuing with formal education, (c) apprenticeship as a means to sustainable livelihood, (d) inability to continue with formal education and (e) informal apprenticeship as an institution for attitudinal reformation. Each theme discusses the narratives that best reflect it including parallel discussions on commonalities and differences in experiences. A summary of participants' pseudonyms and reasons for enrolment is provided at the end of the discussion in Table 6.1. The second section examines some of the perceived advantages of being in apprenticeship as articulated by the apprentices, journeypersons and master craftswomen. In the last section, I discuss the findings and conclude the chapter.

Apprenticeship as the Most Effective Route for Acquiring Practical Skills

As highlighted earlier in Table 3.1, the practical orientation of informal apprenticeship is one of its strengths (McLaughlin, 1979; Peil, 1970; King 1977; Haan, 2006; Johanson & Adams, 2004). This was the primary reason for all the participants whose narratives are presented in this chapter. However, this came out strongly in the narratives of Jojo and Aba. Their explanation for enrolling in informal apprenticeship depict apprenticeship as the most effective route for the acquisition of practical skills. I present their narratives below.

Jojo, a 25-year-old, developed an interest in technical education after he completed Junior High School (JHS). Before completion, his love for football led him to choose a football academy. However, he decided not to further that dream and as a result, stayed home for a while. During the period, he enrolled as an apprentice in an informal mechanic workshop in his area. He trained for nine months and then enrolled in a private technical institute for his secondary education to study automobile engineering. He stated, "I was not challenged enough" and quit to enrol in another institute, a very good one in his region.

In his second year, he started interning in an informal mechanic workshop located in one of the mechanic clusters in his area. However, he was not a full- time apprentice as many of his colleagues were at the workshop. During school vacations, he spent the whole day at the workshop. The desire to acquire practical experience to complement the knowledge he was acquiring in school was Jojo's main reason for enrolling in informal apprenticeship. Interacting with other apprentices and masters at the mechanic cluster revealed that just like Jojo, many others who are schooling full-time, intern at informal workshops in the cluster. With an experience of mechanics in school and training at the informal workshop, Jojo remarked:

> Over there [formal technical institute] they were not doing many practicals and the engines there were outmoded. But every day and every time there are new car models that you need to come here [the informal mechanic workshop] to learn about. I couldn't rely on only what was taught there. You know the theory; they can show you in the book or on the field, but you cannot touch something and say you are doing this or that. Even though there is a car with an engine, it is outmoded.

In the above statement, Jojo points out that the hands-on experience he was getting at the technical institute was inadequate. Also, the formal educational environment did not encourage ingenuity through opportunities to practice or try hands at problems to learn, as it happens in informal apprenticeship. He continued to intern at the informal mechanic workshop till he completed school in 2016 and thereafter transitioned to a full-time apprentice. Two years on, he is one of the senior apprentices at his master's workshop.

Moving on from Jojo, Aba, also 25 years had just completed her first year of training as an auto-sprayer at the time of the interview. She pursued visual arts in Senior High School (SHS) and undertakes pencil drawing and decorative painting. She decided to enrol in apprenticeship because she observed a rise in requests for spraying in some of the decorative tasks she undertook. Aba chose to acquire the spraying skills in informal apprenticeship because she found the delivery of the training to be good. She stated:

> I want to go to a polytechnic or technical university to further the painting, sculpturing, or spraying. The only difference with this one [apprenticeship] is that you don't get a certificate, but you get a lot of experience so the best thing to do is to come here for the experience and there for the certificate. The hands-on practical you do at the National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI) is not enough, but my master was good at doing his job.

The narratives of Aba and Jojo bring to the fore features of formal TVET and informal apprenticeship as evident in the literature. While formal TVET equips one with theoretical knowledge and the opportunity to acquire certification, informal apprenticeship enables one to gain practical experience that cannot be acquired in the formal TVET institutions. Also, formal TVET institutions do not have well-equipped workshops where students could gain hands-on experience and students are encouraged to undergo industrial attachment. While formal automobile companies are well-equipped compared to informal workshops, there are few of those in the country and as a result, the latter is easily accessible. For these two individuals, the general-dispositional structure regarding apprenticeship's low standing in society compared to formal TVET was transcended as their knowledge of the features of both systems was interpreted in line with their interest and the skilled experience that apprenticeship enables one to acquire.

Preference for Apprenticeship Over Continuing with Formal Education

Almost half of the participants whose reasons for enrolling in apprenticeship were explored mentioned they preferred to learn a trade to furthering their education. Their preference for apprenticeship and the mechanic trade was engendered by their exposure to the trade, the presence of role models, coupled with their desire to acquire skilled training. I present five of these narratives below, beginning with the narrative of Fiifi.

Fiifi is a 28-year old senior apprentice, who works in his uncle's informal mechanic workshop. He started apprenticing at age 18 and has spent ten years in the workshop. He pursued General Science in SHS. Like Jojo, while he was in secondary school, he was helping his uncle with work in his mechanic workshop. Through his participation in the activities of the workshop, he developed an interest in mechanics. Fiifi then decided to quit his education to enrol in apprenticeship. He said: "I got to Form 3 but I didn't continue because I like the work more than school. When it was time for the final exams I was still coming to work". He continued: "I went to good schools; my mother was forcing me to…". However, it got to a point where he discontinued, and his mother took him to another school to continue.

In his final year, he discontinued again and told his mother he wanted to learn a trade. He said: "My mum didn't say anything when I told her I was coming to Magazine. She said if that is what I want to do then that is fine, I should make sure I learn". He enrolled as a full-time apprentice in his uncle's workshop. He felt it was more useful to become an informal apprentice if he wanted to be a mechanic. He mentioned: "Some of them go to vocational or technical school and still come here to train, so even if I went, I would have still come here, hence it is the same thing".

Like Fiifi, Akuba gained interest in auto spraying through her exposure to the trade. She narrated:

> When I completed school [JHS], I told my father I will come to work with him, he was a fitter[16]. So, when I came, I saw people were spraying then I told him that I am interested in this work and will do it.

Akuba continued:

> That same day I said I will learn we went to see a master and he was sceptical knowing that I am a female. But he said that if I want to learn then he should bring me the following day. But considering that there were only males, I thought he would not accept me. But he took me and then asked us to buy the things I will need. My father bought all the things. And when I started it was true that there were only males and no female. So, I joined them…

Akuba is a journeywoman at the workplace where she trained twenty years ago. Esi's story is similar to Akuba's. She recalled:

> It was when I finished JHS in 1994. I was with my elder sister and her husband was here [in the informal cluster]. I used to come with him and that was when I became interested in the job. There used to be one lady here, so when I asked, they said a female can also do it. So, my sister's husband took me to a master to be trained.

She is also practising the trade as a journeywoman in the same workshop where she trained. The story of Baaba also attests to the relevance of role models. She noted: "I knew two sisters in Asafo who were sprayers, and so I aspired to do this". She continued: "So while I was in school, I had made up my mind that this was what I wanted to do". She informed her uncle who said: "It is a good idea". He paid her apprenticeship fee, and she began her training.

Contrary to Esi, Baaba and Akuba who trained in their city of residence, Araba, also a journeyperson, travelled from her hometown in the Western Region to Kumasi to learn auto-spraying. She narrated:

> I was motivated or I aspired to come and learn spraying when I was in JHS. I saw a lady who was a sprayer and it was beautiful. I told my father I wanted

[16] Locally, mechanics are referred to as fitters, although they prefer to be called mechanics.

> to do this, and he asked me if I can and I said yes. They wanted me to learn at [in my hometown], but I didn't want to train there because the place was small, unlike Magazine. I had heard a lot about Magazine, so I asked to be trained here.

Araba also commented about the dominance of males in the trade and the cluster. She said: "When I started my training, I was alone, so I was not happy most of the time. It was later that I adjusted to the environment, made some friends and started enjoying the work".

The stories of Esi, Akuba, Baaba and Araba show how free they were to choose auto-spraying because their families were supportive of their choice. In the section below, I present the story of Ami, who, like Esi, Akuba, Araba and Baaba preferred to be an auto-sprayer but faced a lot of resistance.

Ami developed an interest in auto-spraying when she was in SHS. She recounted:

> First, I didn't have any intention to be a mechanic or to learn the trade. But when I was in secondary school, there was a nearby workshop where I saw two female sprayers and they influenced me. This is because I admired them. I was inspired when I saw them.

After SHS, she told her father she wanted to learn auto-spraying, but her father did not like the idea. She narrated:

> …he didn't even ask me of my choice or what I wanted to do, he just went and bought the forms for midwifery for me and paid the fees as well. But I don't like women stuff, my lifestyle is like a guy. My parents didn't like my dislike for midwifery training. They told me that as a woman you can't do guys jobs. I think that parents shouldn't force kids into fields or professions that they are interested in.

Ami added that she liked football, but her father stopped her from playing because he perceived it to be a male activity. Her father made an occupational choice for her, instead of allowing her to do what she wanted. She continued:

> I then did midwifery for 3 years. After that, I stayed at home for a while, while I waited to be posted. I was then posted to … government hospital. I

> didn't have an interest in midwifery or want to be a midwife, but my parents wanted me to. I had a vision of what I wanted to become.

Ami explained that her father misunderstood why she wanted to do spraying as he was only concerned about what he wanted for her. She also added: "He feared what people will say, that he couldn't take care of me". His father's comment is indicative of the view that apprenticeship is for people from poorer backgrounds. Ami accepted the midwifery posting and realised when she began work that she could not do it. This realisation led her to leave home to live with a friend for about three months and with her brother for a while.

Ami stated: "it was when I rejected practising midwifery that my dad realised that I was serious to learn a trade". She returned home and her father asked her what she wanted to do. She informed him of her interest to learn a trade, specifically spraying. Her father was still not convinced about her decision and took her to an uncle to discourage her. She said: "He asked again if I can learn the trade and I said yes I can". At this point, he knew she was serious and took her to a master to be trained. Ami continued:

> When we went to the master who was to teach me the trade, he doubted I could do it. He also asked if I was sure of my decision and I said yes. I told him that I have admired the job for long. But he still didn't want me to try.

After convincing the master she could learn the trade, she was accepted and enrolled in auto-spraying. The main message that this theme conveys relates to the importance of role models in inspiring young people's occupational choices. The influence of role models intersected with the desire for skilled training in apprenticeship. This led Fiifi to quit his formal education to pursue his interest, against his mother's preference for him to complete his secondary education. Likewise, all the females critically distanced themselves from their knowledge of gender norms, the dominance of male in the automotive trade and the case of Ami, her father's view that apprenticeship is for poor people. Through the actions of the female sprayers, other young females may be inspired to pursue the trade.

Apprenticeship as a Means to Sustainable Livelihood

The narratives of six out of ten young people whose explanations fall under this theme are presented in this section. Most of them chose apprenticeship due to parental "pressure" and advice. Apprenticeship was not on their horizon, on the other hand, the advice given was considered in line with their own experience of work in other areas and concern for their

future. Three of these young people were footballers, while the rest undertook casual work in the informal economy. Starting with Abena, I first present the narratives of the young people who engaged in casual work followed by those who played football.

Abena could not complete her senior secondary education due to financial difficulties with paying the school fees. She did not enrol in apprenticeship right after withdrawing from school. She narrated:

> It took me about 8 years after the completion of SHS to start apprenticeship. I was just home not doing anything. I tried work at different places for example being a salesgirl in a shop, but I stopped because it wasn't good. The treatment was not good; the income was also not good…

Abena continued:

> Life was not okay. I came to Accra from Kumasi. I came to meet one family and they decided to take care of me. They asked what I wanted to do. She said I cannot be home like that because I have a life, I have to do something. They suggested trades like hairdressing and others. But I was not interested in those trades. I preferred mechanics. They discussed it with my grandpa… [who said] I should opt for the car air conditioning. So, I said okay, I will try. But it was not in my mind that I will do the AC, I thought I would learn mechanic.

Abena enrolled in training with the advice and support of the family she lived with in Accra. She mentioned that skills training is better than just staying at home or doing casual work. She added:

> When I was coming, I did not know that I could do something like that so when I came at first my master saw that I can do it and said I should try. So that day that I came I started working. They took me through a lot. I am happy here because I am doing something better than being at home and not doing anything!

Moving on from Abena, Nana, 31 years, completed JHS and travelled to one of the border towns that Ghana shares with a neighbouring country and worked at the border for four years. He said: "I didn't really like school as I wanted to be a soldier, so I travelled to …after JHS in 2004". He continued: "I was like a middleman who charged people to help them pass through

the border". Following the death of his grandmother, he came back to his hometown, and his family refused to let him go back after the funeral. They suggested he considered learning a trade as that was useful than what he was doing. He agreed with his family's suggestion as he explained: "Where I had gotten to, I didn't go to school, and I couldn't do what I was doing for life so I felt it was good to get skills and so I enrolled in apprenticeship". Nana is a senior apprentice in his master's workshop.

Also, Timothy began apprenticeship at 19 years. He is one of three informal apprentices and journeypersons who did not complete JHS before enrolling in informal apprenticeship. He explained:

> I didn't go to school because the school in our village wasn't good. I started, to about 14 years. We used to go to school for months with no teachers. And then I realised that I was not learning anything even a, b, c, d.., it was difficult.

Like Abena, he left his hometown in the Northern Region to Kumasi to undertake casual work. He stated: "I worked, hustled[17], I used to carry wood in a sawmill. But I thought learning a trade is better than that. Because it will get to a time, I wouldn't get the strength to be doing that". It was at that time he informed his uncle of his decision to learn the mechanic trade and they took him to a mechanic in one of the mechanic clusters in Accra to be trained.

Contrary to Timothy, Yaw completed JHS and while waiting for his results, he decided to look for casual work to keep him engaged while also earning some income. He told his brother to help him get a job. Later his brother informed him that he had gotten work for him. He stated: "I thought it was a work and pay[18], but I realised when I came here that it was apprenticeship. He then advised me to learn the trade as it is good". Yaw mentioned that he was a bit hesitant, but his mother and other family relatives also advised him to consider the trade. He explained his hesitation: "I was waiting for my results, so I continue my education". However, he was advised that even in apprenticeship, he could still pursue further education. Reluctantly, he agreed as he explained: "It is not everyone who can go to school or even

[17] Hustle in this context means undertaking strenuous, low paid jobs to make ends meet
[18] "Work and pay" is a term used in Ghana to refer to contract jobs in the informal sector.

when you complete formal education, you will still work anyway, and it made me decide I will learn the trade".

Moving on, Serwaa, Maame Efua and Abigail liked football, but their parents disliked their choice. Unlike Ami, their parents could not stop them from pursuing football. I begin with the story of Serwaa (an SHS graduate) and her parents' influence on her interests. Serwaa narrated:

> I was into my football career. I started playing football at 7 years, my parents tried stopping me, but it didn't work, as that was my passion. I focused on my football career more than my education, so it was a challenge for me learning and playing football at the same time. But all the same, I kept pushing.

Serwaa began playing in a football academy after SHS. She said she played for several small teams, but it was difficult getting signed onto a bigger team. At the same time, her mother wanted her to learn a trade instead of playing football. She initially did not consider it till she was advised by a colleague in the football academy. The excerpt below shows what happened:

> There was this young guy who was also playing football at …but he was a mechanic as well and he advised me. He told me that Serwaa, I know you are a very good footballer but as a lady, you cannot focus on this only, so go and get some skills as that will be helpful. I preferred fitting but he advised spraying... Aside from that my mum was also pressuring me to go and learn a trade. She said I should think of something that I want to do. I was thinking about what my mum was saying. So, I had to make a decision… and he said he knows a man who is a very good sprayer so he will take me there…So I told the coach that I want to go home and don't know when I will be coming back.

The narrative shows the events that contributed to Serwaa's retreat from football. Serwaa interpreted the advice given as: "You need some skills for life so that if one thing does not work for you, you can try another". After she left the football academy, her parents paid her apprenticeship fee, and she began training at an informal vehicle spraying workshop. Serwaa mentioned that her parents were very supportive of her decision to learn a trade. She stated:

“The decision was up to me and it was a difficult decision to make as it meant leaving my football career”.

Unlike Serwaa, Maame Afua discontinued her senior secondary education to play football for an academy in Accra. After some years playing football, she realised that she was not progressing in her career, she decided to rather learn a trade. This is how she put it: “…but because of bribery and partiality, I couldn’t progress with the football”. She continued: “My dad had already told me to learn spraying, but I did not listen to him”. She added: “But it was when I stopped playing football that my mind came to the trade. So, I called him and told him I was interested”. She said he gladly supported her to enrol in auto-spraying. She trained for four and a half years and has been a journeywoman for about a year.

The third female who was also interested in becoming a professional footballer is Abigail. Abigail mentioned that she did not complete JHS because of financial reasons. She mentioned: “I decided to play football, but my mother insisted that I should come and learn a trade because it is better than football”. However, she played football for about two years. It did not go as she wanted. At the same time, her mother pressured her to learn a trade. She recalled her mum’s reaction: “If you will not learn the trade then I will sack you from the house!”. She considered her mum’s advice to learn a trade. Regarding her trade choice, she stated: “When I was in school, I saw some females in spraying. There was even one who had graduated and wanted me to train with her…”. But she chose a master whom she felt was good at his job and said: “When I came here, I was enthused and excited to learn”.

In this theme, the main message that emerges from the narratives of the participants is that informal apprenticeship is a means to a sustainable livelihood, compared to other forms of work. This finding also emerged from the work of Schraven et al. (2013) as they stated that while apprenticeship is perceived poorly, “pursuing an apprenticeship attracts more social recognition than low-skilled occupations…” (p. 25). Regarding football, Esson (2013) reports in his study that the football aspirations of male youths in Accra stemmed from their perceptions of the material and economic success that being a successful football player bestows. He argues that there are more risks and uncertainties to the view that one can be successful in football, although many youths in Accra do not perceive these risks. The precariousness and uncertainty with becoming a successful footballer is even more grave for females than it is for men. This was realised by Maame Afua, Serwaa and Abigail as it informed their decision to learn a trade. Serwaa, for instance, stated: “some of them [the

football clubs] don't pay you anything but they can help you with their networks where you can get to play and make money. I don't get paid". Maame Afua cited a similar reason. This underpinned their parents' preference for them to learn a trade instead of playing football.

Apprenticeship would not have been considered in the absence of advice from family and friends. The role of others points to the importance of guidance in young people's career choices. For example, Serwaa noted that as her parents asked her to consider a trade to pursue, she did not know what to do. She added: "All I knew was hairdressing and dressmaking, but I knew those were not for me". The discussion with her friend, however, helped her to decide on a trade choice. This was the same for Abena and both ladies chose auto-spraying upon advice, considering their interest in mechanics instead. The general-dispositional structure that mechanics is for males and auto-spraying or air-conditioning for females can be identified from the advice given to Serwaa and Abena. While the young women critically distanced themselves and rejected feminine trades such as hairdressing, such distancing was not exercised in relation to the advice for auto-spraying in the case of Serwaa and air conditioning in the case of Abena.

Inability to Continue with Formal Education

In this section, the young people's choice of informal apprenticeship resulted from their inability to continue with formal education due to financial constraint. While this condition was the main explanatory factor for the choice, the important thing was the extent to which they interpreted this as an opportunity to explore other pathways that will enable them to pursue a vocational career. They perceived that apprenticeship, like formal TVET, will help them acquire the needed skills. As a result, they did not overemphasise the constraint. I begin with the story of Kwasi.

Kwasi completed JHS in a rural district in Ghana. Sharing his interest in mechanics, he stated:

> Before I completed JHS, I was interested in mechanics and music. But for the music, I did not have much interest in it, and I was in a village as well which will make it difficult for you to pursue a career in music...

He noted that financial difficulties at home made it difficult for him to continue his education. Although his mother wanted him to continue his education, he said he did not want to see her struggle again to see him through senior secondary education. His brother who was in a

teacher's training college suggested he waited for him to complete and start working so he could sponsor his education. But he decided to rather enrol in apprenticeship as he saw apprenticeship as a pathway to employment, similar to schooling.

He started his training in an informal mechanic workshop in his village after he had worked at a palm wine brewery for a year and his mother's farm for 2 years, to gather some funds some of which was used to pay for his apprenticeship fee. After his training in the village, he served his master for a year and decided to top up the training he had acquired in a mechanic workshop in Accra. The excerpt below summarises his thought at the time.

> In the village, the cars were old manual cars which were not very difficult to work on. As time went on, I realised new trends had come and new cars were in the system and I couldn't stay there like that. This is because I couldn't have achieved my aims, so I decided to move, and my brother also advised I come here.

Kwasi is currently in his third year of training at the mechanic workshop in Accra. Like Kwasi, Kobby who is 25 years, completed JHS and had a placement in a secondary technical school. He was raised by his grandmother who struggled to see him through JHS. Kobby stated:

> When the results came, I had already started my apprenticeship training. I knew it was the same technical course I would have gone to do in the technical institute so for me it was the same as coming here and I saw it as normal. I wanted the hands-on experience. Over there [in the technical institute], it is mainly book knowledge with little practicals and then you get a certificate. So, if you don't come here to even do attachment you don't get enough experience and knowledge of the job.

Moving on from Kwasi, Adwenpa is also an informal apprentice who completed SHS with good grades for tertiary education. However, due to his parents' separation, his mum struggled to provide for him and his siblings, one of whom had just started work as a nurse. As he realised, he would not be able to continue his education due to financial constraints, he decided to enrol in apprenticeship. He said: "All the people that I went to school with were progressing and going on to do other things". Therefore,

> I reasoned that there are so many ways that each individual can become successful in life. So, I said that if those that I completed with are going to polytechnic, nursing, the university then I have to go and learn a trade so that in future we all meet at a point.

Adwenpa continued:

> I decided that I have to get some hands-on experience even though I will acquire formal educational qualifications. But education you know is the process of helping persons to acquire knowledge and skills, attitudes needed for work and living. So, you see in the end you will work with the knowledge you have acquired. So, if I come into apprenticeship and acquire the skills with which I can work then I thought it is a wise decision to make.

Adwenpa mentioned that after informing her mother about his decision to enrol in apprenticeship, she did not agree with his choice. The excerpt below sums his reaction to his mother:

> But I knew that it was the right decision. Although she wishes to help, she does not have the financial resources to do that. And I can't put it in my head that because my mother couldn't help me then I will just be there… Because if your parents can't help, what can you also do as a human being to help yourself? You have to fight for yourself. When you get to some point in life you have to realise that life is a struggle, so you have to struggle too, to get somewhere in life.

Aside from the motivation to do well in life, Adwenpa's decision to enrol in apprenticeship was also reinforced by the things he learned in secondary school regarding the relevance of technical education. This made him see apprenticeship not as a last resort, but as an alternative route like tertiary education. He stated: "It's like a university. When people ask me where I am, I say I am in Magazine University because to me this is a university…. I know I wouldn't finish and be a boy!". Adwenpa believes that the skills that he will acquire will enable him to be a responsible adult, as he will do well in life through the utilisation of those skills. Also, Adwenpa's response to people who ask about him is meant to inform them that he does not regard apprenticeship as poorly as they do. And contrary to the perception

that apprenticeship is for school dropouts or those not formally educated, it is an alternative educational pathway.

Moving on from Adwenpa, Ebo aspires to be a soldier. He decided to enrol in apprenticeship when he realised, he could not continue his education due to financial constraints at home. Acquiring skills was seen as a better alternative to staying at home, so he moved from his hometown to live with his uncle who sold spare parts in one of the mechanic clusters. He said: “I chose mechanic because my uncle was selling spare parts and I knew if I came here, I would get some support from him”. Truly, Ebo was supported by his uncle to enrol and also through the initial stages of his training.

The narratives presented in this section show that while financial constraint shaped the young people’s choice of apprenticeship, it did not determine their actions. They drew critically on their knowledge of the features of the education system as highlighted in the first theme in line with their condition. Contrary to the expected sequence of educational trajectory, they decided to acquire skilled experience, after which they can pursue formal qualifications or vocational knowledge in the formal education system. Their reasoning puts into perspective the experience of Jojo, who pursued technical education and returned to the informal workshop to acquire practical experience. Also, their reasoning enabled them to be critical of their parents’ (in the case of Adwenpa and Kwasi) insistence that they pursue formal education. The parents’ preference needs to be understood within the broader context of the role of formal education in Ghana and the perception of apprenticeship. As was described in Chapter Two, the introduction of formal education in Ghana rendered it a tool for social differentiation and mobility (Foster, 1965a).

With a few exceptions, the respect one earns from members of society is dependent on one’s level of formal education and English Language proficiency. Formal education structures access to opportunities in the formal labour market. Due to this, parents strive to put their children through formal education and many young people aspire to formal education for the opportunities it provides. On the other hand, Kwasi, Kobby, Adwenpa and Ebo chose to enrol in informal apprenticeship. They could have chosen to stay at home, engage in informal work or wait until their parents could afford to put them through school. But they mediated all the constraining structures (perception of apprenticeship and financial constraints) in line with their aspirations to be successful in life. Even as they wished they continued their education; they recognised apprenticeship for the skills it could help them to acquire. Like Adwenpa

compared with his colleagues in other educational streams: “We are all taking different pathways and will come together at some point”. The main message that this theme therefore conveys is that the inability to continue with formal education due to financial constraint does not make apprenticeship a last resort. On the other hand, it opens up the opportunity to consider it as an alternative education and training pathway.

Informal Apprenticeship as an Institution for Attitudinal Reformation

In this section, I present the stories of two informal apprentices, Oheneba and Paul, whose parents suggested apprenticeship to them because of their conduct. They are the only two whose narratives fall under this category. I begin with Paul.

Paul completed SHS and enrolled in apprenticeship. He said at school, he was a “bad boy” and “did not enjoy school”. He mentioned that because of his bad behaviour his father told him: “If you don’t change, I will put you in apprenticeship!”. It was thought the apprenticeship will enable him to acquire useful skills and make him matured. But Paul said, “[at that time I] didn’t have that [apprenticeship] in mind”. Since he didn’t have any ambition then nor plans to continue his education, he didn’t care much about his father’s remarks. After school, he stayed at home for a while not doing anything and rolling with friends, he said were a bad influence on his life. He put it this way: “I used to drink[19] and do all sort of bad things”. He narrated:

> As time went on, I developed a passion and interest for the [mechanic] work. Once I decided not to continue my education, I needed some skills with which I could live. I wanted to get money from this job, the state that I was in and the boys that I used to roll with, they were their own bosses, able to afford things. I didn’t think I will be at Magazine, but my passion changed.

From the excerpt above, Paul went into apprenticeship with the view that he could make money with the skills he will acquire. But he got more. He narrated the influence that being in training has had on his life, as he said:

[19] In the Ghanaian context, young people who drink alcohol are not perceived favourably

> Now I have changed, I am a good boy. I changed when I started apprenticeship. The environment you live in show how matured you will be. In Magazine, you want to learn and also become somebody in the future. You don't get the chance to live some kind of lifestyle like those outside. The people here are level-headed. When you converse with the masters, and other people here, and you get to hear their stories of how they were able to make it here in Magazine, it encourages you to also do better or want to do better or be a better person.

His statement shows the important role that informal apprenticeship plays in the aspirations of young people. Paul also acknowledged: "the environment can be a bad influence on you as there are bad nuts also amongst them, however, your ability as an individual to know what you want for your life is key to surviving in the mechanic cluster". Paul's narrative shows that his enrolment in informal apprenticeship was not accidental. His aspiration to acquire skills to generate wealth underpinned his choice. In the next section, I introduce Oheneba.

"I was Forced into Apprenticeship"

Oheneba is 19 years and started apprenticeship at 16 years. He is the youngest participant in this study. He recounted a painful childhood where he did not feel loved and valued by his parents. Also, he had a negative educational experience where he didn't have enough support from his parents and thinks that if he had received the support that he needed he would have excelled in school.

He left compulsory education in his first year of JHS. But before apprenticeship, he had also left home for a year, at age 15, following friends he described as recalcitrant. He helped some of them sell game CDs in a shop in his area. He, however, decided to return home after the friend he was staying with passed away. Two days after he returned, he was asked to get ready as his uncle will be taking him to learn a trade. He told his family that he should be given time to think about it, but he was not given that opportunity. He also said he wanted to either play football or be a soldier, but those options were ruled out as he was told there was no way he can achieve those as he didn't go to school. His parents told him that whether he liked it or not, he had to learn a trade because he didn't go to school. He mentioned that he did not know anything about apprenticeship and did not have an interest in it. While his enrolment was not directly motivated, his interest changed after he enrolled, and he has spent almost four years in training. Oheneba remarked that observing others perform tasks, made

him more eager to learn the trade. Also, the more he was made to perform tasks, his excitement about the trade increased and made him appreciate his parents for exposing him to apprenticeship. He also commented that he is respected by his friends and parents because of how changed and responsible he has become.

The message that the narratives of Paul and Oheneba convey is that exposure to apprenticeship or vocational training, as well as career guidance and counselling, is important to the occupational choices of young people. While apprenticeship was not on the horizon of both of them, their exposure to it and in the case of Paul, his belief that it will help him make money, motivated them to consider trade training, which in turn shaped their behaviour and aspirations.

In all, the explanations offered by informal apprentices, journeypersons and the master craftswomen have been presented under five themes. These themes are apprenticeship as the most effective route for acquiring practical skills, preference for apprenticeship over continuing with formal education, apprenticeship as means to a sustainable livelihood, inability to continue with formal education and informal apprenticeship as an institution for attitudinal reformation. These themes and the narratives of participants as they fall into these categories are presented in Table 6.1 below. The table shows that for most of the participants, the decision to enrol is informed by their preference to learn a trade over furthering their formal education, the understanding of apprenticeship as a means to sustainable livelihood and the inability to continue with formal education.

Before drawing further conclusions from the narratives, the next section presents two of the benefits of apprenticeship that emerged from the data. These complement the explanations offered above.

Table 6.1: The background of Informal Apprentices, Journeypersons, and Master Craftswomen and Reasons for Enrolling in Informal Apprenticeship

Pseudonym	Highest Qualification or educational level at the time of enrolment	Status	Apprenticeship as the most effective route for acquiring practical skills	Preference for learning in apprenticeship over continuing with formal education	Apprenticeship as means to sustainable livelihood	Inability to continue with formal education	Informal apprenticeship as an institution for attitudinal reformation
Jojo	WASSCE	Apprentice	Y				
Aba	WASSCE	Apprentice	Y				
Fiifi	BECE	Apprentice		Y			
Kwasi	BECE	Apprentice				Y	
Kobby	BECE	Apprentice				Y	
Adwenpa	WASSCE	Apprentice				Y	
Abena	BECE	Apprentice			Y	Y	
Kwame	BECE	Apprentice				Y	
Ebo	BECE	Apprentice				Y	
Timothy	JHS 1	Apprentice			Y		
Serwaa	WASSCE	Apprentice			Y		
Abigail	JHS 2	Apprentice			Y		
Paul	WASSCE	Apprentice		Y	Y		Y
Oheneba	JHS 1	Apprentice				Y	Y
Yaw	BECE	Apprentice			Y	Y	
Baaba	BECE	Apprentice		Y			
Yoofi	BECE	Apprentice		Y	Y	Y	
Akuba	BECE	Journeywoman		Y			
Esi	BECE	Journeywoman		Y			
Ama	BECE	Journeywoman		Y			
Araba	BECE	Journeywoman		Y			
Maame Afua	BECE	Journeywoman		Y	Y		
Nana	BECE	Journeyman			Y		
Christabel	P5	MCP			Y		
Ami	Diploma	MCP	Y	Y			
Ohemaa	BECE	MCP		Y			

Perceived Advantages of Apprenticeship

Two advantages that emerged from the data when participants talked about their training experiences are the opportunity to meet influential people in society and self-confidence.

The Opportunity to Meet Influential People in Society

Paul, Nana and Akuba commented that their training in the automotive trade allows them to meet influential people in society. The excerpt below shows Paul's excitement about this advantage.

> I met Mr Armah[20] [a renowned Ghanaian diplomat and former government minister]. He had this land cruiser that I used to go and pick from Accra [to service]. He entrusted his car to me. It was my master who sent me and meeting him I was very happy and said that with this kind of work I can meet very important people that I wouldn't meet if not for this work. And if we are not good, we wouldn't have been recommended to him as he can pay to take his car to a company. We travel to Cote D'Ivoire, Niger and other African countries to service cars.

In this excerpt, Paul is excited that through his work he was able to meet Mr Armah. Aside from the opportunity to meet Mr Armah, he was happy to be trusted by both Mr Armah and his master. For an apprentice, it is a great honour to be trusted to deal with their master's customers. This is due to masters' fears that their apprentices may undercut them or compete with them for customers upon graduation. Also, the trust to deal with customers signify one's competence and endorsement by his/her master. These moments are valued by apprentices as it presents them with the opportunity to build their networks and establish relationships with influential people in society. It is within this context that Paul shared his excitement about this experience. Like Paul, Nana also remarked:

> I get these customers from recommendations of other jobs that my master sends me to do… Recently I went to Tema and to many big companies. I travel to the mining companies as well. I service so many cars and that of

[20] The real name of the diplomat has been withheld

> politicians too. I have travelled around the country and to other countries in Africa.

In the above statement, Nana spoke humbly about some of his achievements and his remarks also show the confidence he has gained through the opportunity to work in formal firms, travel across the continent and meet influential people. Similarly, Akuba also commented:

> The work gives me the opportunity to go to places and to meet important people. But had it not been for this job, I don't think I will be worthy or deserve to speak to those high-profile people, but the job opens such opportunities for me and I even chat with them when I see them at other times.

These craftspersons' experiences of meeting influential people through their work are significant when viewed from the position of apprenticeship in society and the perception of apprentices. It opens up opportunities to engage with people they would otherwise not come into contact with or earn respect from because of their levels of education and occupation. In this context, it can be argued that through training, apprentices and journeypersons gain recognition and respect from members of society.

Self-Confidence

In Lave and Wenger's (1991) seminal work on legitimate peripheral participation, they argue that individuals develop their identity from being part of a community of practice, which is "both a result of and motivation for participation" (p. 72). The process of identity development starts with participation in peripheral activities and ends with mastery (Lave & Wenger, 1991). As alluded to by informal apprentices and discussed in the next chapter, achieving mastery is a lifelong process. However, all of the participants expressed excitement about moments when they were able to complete tasks. This ranged from simple to complex tasks depending on the stage of training. For those in their final year of auto-mechanic training, this is the moment when they work independently on an engine. The excerpts below depict some of these experiences. Yaw stated:

> I used to admire ongoing work and wondered when I will also be able to complete tasks or work on an engine. So, I was very excited when I was able to first work on an engine. The most important part of the work is the engine so once you know how to dismantle and arrange it, it's exciting.

Similarly, Jojo remarked: “My best experiences were the times I had the opportunity to arrange an engine…” Kwasi also stated:

> I used to be scared of engines. These engines [of electronic cars] are different, it’s so complex it can scare you once you see it. Now I feel comfortable seeing those engines as I can identify anything I am asked to remove, and this is different from when I used to be at the village.

He continued:

> It has really helped me because if you come for the first time and they open the engine to you, there will be a lot on your mind, wondering if you can do this job, but with time you get familiar with it and you become happy about the job.

Other apprentices and journeypersons also expressed similar sentiments about being able to complete tasks. Serwaa, for instance, stated: “My first day at work, I was so happy. I said wow, as for these skills it will help me in so many ways. Once you have the skills, it is yours forever”. Akuba also commented: “There isn’t any work that I cannot do on spraying…I have the knowledge and the experience”. She pointed to a bus that was being worked on and said: “This bus for instance if you come and we are done you will think it’s brand new and not used”. Lastly, Abena shared with joy the confidence she has gained: “When I was coming to this place, I never thought I would be able to learn and do something like this, but I am able to work on cars”.

Informal apprentices and journeypersons found these experiences empowering, as it boosted their confidence and made them believe their choice of and investment in the trade has been worth it. Most importantly, the skills gained changed their identities, from being newcomers to old timers not by their duration in the trade but by the knowledgeable skill they had acquired which contributes to their mastery and legitimacy. It is, however, worth mentioning that the process from peripherality to legitimacy or mastery is highly contested and depends on one’s access to and demonstration of competence. It is marked by power relations and conflicts in ways that sometimes constrain apprentices’ quest for mastery (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Goody, 1989). Knowledge relations between one who knows (master) and one who aspires to know (apprentice) acts as a form of social control in the community of practice.

Discussion

Following Powell (2014), the key point this chapter makes is that there is value in knowing about the stories of persons who enrol in informal apprenticeship. Drawing on strong structuration theory to interpret the findings first helps to understand events in the lives of young people that serve as the conditions within which apprenticeship is chosen. These conditions include their financial situation, the presence of role models and significant others who offer guidance and counselling, the inadequacy of skills gained in formal vocational institutions and unsatisfying casual work. Second, it draws attention to general-dispositional structures such as gender norms or expectations, distinctions between formal TVET and informal apprenticeship that serve as frames of reference. Third and most importantly, it helps to understand how young people make sense of and critically or pre-reflexively interpret their conditions of action and general-dispositional structures. The third dimension helps to understand apprentices as agents who can assess their situation and act per their interests. In relation to these, six messages are drawn from the findings.

First, informal apprenticeship is not perceived by young people as a last resort but chosen by most of them as an alternative educational pathway. They do not perceive apprenticeship poorly. As the narratives show, young people enrol in apprenticeship, not always out of necessity, but for its potential to nurture their life goals and interests. This includes but not limited to the potential of training to enable them to pursue a sustainable livelihood compared to informal casual work or unskilled work in the informal economy. A similar finding was reached by Ryan (2015), as apprentices in Zambia felt training provides a means to a sustainable livelihood. The practical or hands-on focus of apprenticeship which was central to the explanations of all the participants in this study is not a novel revelation. On the other hand, it needs emphasising as it serves as a key distinguishing factor between those who are perceived as academically able and respected in society (Bortei-Doku et al., 2011; Hans, 2006). As Powell's (2012) study shows, Further Education and Training (FET) college students in South Africa do not perceive intelligence as a reason for pursuing vocational education. Given this, it is important to move beyond the dichotomy between general and vocational education or apprenticeship and formal education based on academic strength or weakness. Interest in vocational education needs not to be considered a weakness.

Second, contrary to the view that apprenticeship is for school dropouts and illiterates, the biographical information of the apprentices presented in Appendix B.1 show that

apprenticeship caters to the skills needs of people with varying levels of formal education (Bortei-Doku et al., 2011). One-third of the sample of participants whose narratives are presented in this chapter enrolled in apprenticeship because of their inability to continue with their formal education due to financial constraints. On the other hand, their critical reasoning that apprenticeship is an alternative education and training pathway opens up a discussion about capabilities that are valued and available opportunities for them to pursue further education during the period of or after their training. This is very important in challenging a deficit view of apprentices and in changing perspectives about apprenticeship as could be observed from the reactions of some of the parents to their children's decision to enrol in apprenticeship.

The third point, which is linked to the second relates to the presence of role models and significant others through whom young people had exposure to apprenticeship and obtained guidance in making decisions. For most of them, apprenticeship entered into their horizon of action upon the advice or observation of friends and family. This leads to an examination of the vocationalisation of secondary education in Ghana. As discussed in Chapter Two, the main rationale for introducing vocational courses into the school curricula is to orient students towards vocational trades and prepare them for self-employment. In Foster's (1965a) study, it did not influence the occupational aspirations or destination of students. While this study's data does not allow for such claims or counterclaims to be made, it could be argued that while it may generally be useful in enabling individuals to identify their interest, it is limited in its function. The findings, therefore, point to the relevance of guidance and counselling in identifying all the vocational trades that are offered both in the formal educational pathway and in informal apprenticeship, the features of each system and opportunities available to persons regardless of the pathway pursued. As Serwaa remarked, she did not know which trade to pursue when she was asked by her parents to get hands-on-experience in informal apprenticeship and for Yaw, the advice that he could still pursue formal courses while in apprenticeship informed his decision to enrol.

Fourth, evidence in the recent Ghana Living Standards Survey regarding the gendered distribution of persons in the automotive trade shows that male representation is about 18 per cent compared to less than one per cent female representation (GSS, 2019). However, the report does not provide information regarding the distribution of gender across the different specialities in the automotive trade (GSS, 2019). In this study, the profile of participants

(Appendix B.1) and anecdotal evidence from the research sites point to more female representation in auto-spraying compared to mechanics. This is progress as far as females' participation in this male-dominated trade is concerned. It shows that females are enacting gender differently amidst the general-dispositional structure or expectations required of their social position.

The findings further point to the influence of female role models in auto-spraying, the support of their family and the agreement of master craftsmen to train the females. The only instance of family resistance was the case of Ami. While this conclusion emerges from data from a small sample, it speaks to an overemphasis in the literature that informal apprenticeship restricts opportunities for females to participate in male trades and thus perpetuates occupational segregation (King & Palmer, 2010; Palmer, 2007b; ILO 2012; Haan, 2006; Schraven et al., 2013; Johanson & Adams, 2004). This portrays females as conformists to gender norms and precludes examination of any critical reflection on their part regarding their general-dispositional structures (Bortei-Doku et al., 2013). The issue that needs serious attention and as will be further discussed in Chapters Seven and Eight relates to the conditions of work in male-dominated trades. This underpinned the advice given to three of the females, Serwaa, Abena and Christabel to opt for auto-spraying and air-conditioning even though all three ladies preferred mechanics. While they pre-reflexively drew on this advice in their choice of trade, their conduct can nonetheless be described as agentic as the advice was taken in relation to an assessment of their capacity to undertake work under those conditions.

Fifth, the narratives point to the need to account for inequalities in educational provision as it deprives some young people of opportunities to build a good foundation for their future. As Timothy noted, he could not complete compulsory education because of the poor-quality education he had. The school that he attended was the only one in his village and as a result, his options were limited. Paying attention to these structural issues will ensure that youths who enrol in apprenticeship have a good foundation to build on. Also, it may help to redress the deficit view about these young people.

Sixth, this chapter shows that apprenticeship offers more beyond its practical orientation or equipping people with skills for productivity and employment. In an analysis of the economic value of apprenticeship, for example, Teal (2016) finds that those who undertake apprenticeship do not earn higher than those who do not. Given this, he questions "why people pay for apprenticeship training that does not benefit them?" (p.1). While the economic

benefit of apprenticeship is important and the issues contributing to low returns of apprenticeship need to be attended to, the usefulness of apprenticeship needs not be reduced to the economic. And as McGrath (2011) rightly argues, “other motivations are important” (p. 39). I would add that other benefits, which are sometimes not anticipated at the time of enrolment need emphasising. In this study, these include the opportunities to engage with influential people that apprentices would otherwise not have met or earned respect from.

Also, the competence they acquire to provide services for members of society is important to changing poor perceptions about them. The confidence they build from these relationships contributes to their feeling of inclusion in society, as others also engage with them positively. Furthermore, once the apprentices start the training, they become transformed, focused, and tend to be more achievement-oriented and aspire to be counted among valued and responsible people in their families and society. The benefits of apprenticeship as described here are similar to the role that FET college plays in the lives of students in South Africa (Powell, 2012). Powell notes that the students “spoke longer and with greater passion and emotion about the empowerment role played by college in enabling respect, self-confidence and personal pride” (p. 21). Also, Dejaeghere (2020) reports similar findings regarding marginalised youths of an entrepreneurial programme in Uganda and Tanzania. These are important values that need to be emphasised in the TVET literature to show the role of vocational education in the lives of young people. This needs to be done alongside highlighting other constraining structures, as will be discussed in Chapters Seven and Eight of this thesis.

In conclusion, the findings of the chapter help to bridge the contradiction regarding the importance of informal apprenticeship in the international policy literature on the one hand, and young people’s poor perception of such training on the other. Contrary to poor societal perceptions about apprenticeship, especially among the youth, including informal apprentices, this chapter demonstrates that informal apprenticeship is valued as an important skills training institution. Most importantly, it is perceived as an alternative educational pathway like formal TVET and a means of sustainable livelihood among the youth.

Chapter Seven: Functionings and Dimensions of Capabilities of Informal Apprentices and Journeypersons

In the previous chapter, I examined the explanations offered by informal apprentices and journeypersons for enrolling in informal apprenticeship. This chapter discusses the freedoms that they have reason to value. For each dimension of capability discussed, commonalities and differences in expressions of the capability are illustrated. In all, eight dimensions of capabilities are discussed and summarised in Table 7.I. These are basic requirements of life and training, independence, increased demand for services of enterprises, opportunities for formal recognition of skills, opportunities for further learning within apprenticeship, occupational safety and health, bodily integrity and respect, and English literacy. The table includes a summary of the valued functionings for each dimension of capability. I begin with their capability for the basic requirements of life and training.

Dimension of Capability 1: Basic Requirements of Life and Training

The narratives of informal apprentices and journeypersons presented in the previous chapter showed the reasons why they enrolled in apprenticeship. The primary motivation for most of them is the desire to acquire practical skills. As a result, enrolment in training is an achievement that they are content with as was expressed by Timothy: “I am happy about this stage of my life and what I have achieved so far, that is being in training”.

Beyond enrolment, there are basic needs that must be met for informal apprentices to live decently, learn, and complete their training successfully. The ones that emerged from the data are food, shelter, transportation, and tools for training. Basic needs such as food and shelter are captured in several lists of basic needs or dimensions of human development (Alkire, 2002). Sen regards them as “centrally important functionings” (Sen, 1995, p.44). These are also acknowledged by the Government of Ghana. In the initial National Apprenticeship Programme (NAP) proposal, the government proposed to provide stipends and tools and equipment for apprentices. On the other hand, the provision of stipends was withdrawn as it increased the budget in relation to the available funds (Palmer, 2009).

Most informal apprentices expressed these basic needs as freedoms that are valued. For example, Kobby stated:

> If you start an apprenticeship and you do not get anyone who can at least give you some chop money or support you to some level, you cannot, and you will quit. You cannot come and sit here hungry and lift all this heavy equipment.

> Even the walking in the sun that you will do…so you cannot come and stay here with hunger like that.

In the above statement, Kobby explained that being adequately nourished is important for staying in training and working efficiently. Kwame also added: "we need to be financially sound, when you become too hungry and have to work you become confused". The statements of the apprentices are substantiated by Donkor (2012) and Hardy et al. (2019) who report financial constraint as the major factor for the non-completion of training. While these basic needs are essential, there were differential levels of attainment based on the family background of apprentices and other kinds of support they have. Some of them had no problems with transportation to work, satisfying their needs for food and shelter, or acquiring tools for their training but others struggled. For example, four apprentices who participated in this study lodged in the workshop. This is because their family homes are distanced from their training workshop and they could not afford to rent a house close to the workshop.

Aside from the apprentices who lodged in the workshop, five apprentices who lived in family homes far from their workplaces expressed difficulties obtaining money for transportation and food. Abena stated: "sometimes coming from the house is a problem, that is when I do not have the transportation, I walk [about 5 km]. It is a very big challenge because sometimes I just feel like giving up…". Nana, recounted a similar experience during his training as he narrated:

> I was living in a family house so I didn't rent a house but the money you will use to buy food is your own responsibility. I used to walk from there [about 7km] to this place…I used only GHS 1[21] to buy food. You have all your three daily meals in that GHS 1.

In addition to requirements for food, shelter, and transportation, all the informal apprentices mentioned they are required to acquire tools for their training. On the other hand, some of

[21] During the period in which he acquired his training, which is between 2009 and 2014, this amount was below the annual lower poverty line which was GHS 792. This translates to about GHS 2.2 per day. At this poverty line, the basic nutritional requirement cannot be met (GLSS, 2018). In dollar terms, this is about US$1.5. An average dollar exchange rate was about US$1 = GHS 1.5 during that period (Bank of Ghana exchange rate).

them have not been able to secure these for two different reasons. One relates to financial constraints. Concerning this, Abena noted:

> I am supposed to buy my tools, but I have not bought them yet. I was supposed to buy them before starting and buy the rest later but because of financial constraints, I have not bought them. But they [masters] have been asking us to bring it to help us to learn.

Similarly, Kwame mentioned: "I was also told to buy tools and I have bought some and not all because of money issues". Difficulties acquiring tools for training was more of a concern for those in mechanics more than those in auto-spraying. This is because fewer and less expensive tools are required for auto-spraying than in mechanics. Other apprentices who did not have their tools mentioned they had not bought them for fear they will be stolen or because they have not been able to replace stolen tools. For example, Adwenpa stated: "For the tools, we were told that we should get them and I bought mine, like ring etc., but all of them have been stolen. So, I am still looking for the tools and not found them yet". Also, Paul explained: "At the start, I didn't buy all the tools, but with time I bought some. Even if you buy them, they will steal it. It's not a matter of resources". The issue of theft mentioned by Adwenpa and Paul will be discussed in the seventh dimension of capability.

Personal possession of tools helps one to develop essential values such as responsibility and independence. As a result, MCPs insist apprentices purchase their tools before training. In explaining the relevance of the tools, an official of the GNAG questioned: "If they don't have their own tools how can they be acquainted with the work they are doing?". He further elaborated:

> For me if you come here to learn the job, I will make sure you are provided with your tools. The reason being that if I ask you to go and remove this radiator on this car and you are using your own tools to go and do the work after the work is done, you make sure you retrieve all the tools after. But when you are using your master's tools you don't take good care of it. So, me, I make sure that you have your own tools.

The official's statement underscores the importance of personal ownership of tools. While this and money for upkeep is important to the lives and training of apprentices, a key question remains regarding the position-practices of networked agents that are central to the

achievement of this dimension of capability. The valued functionings extrapolated from the discussion are listed below.

Valued Functionings

- To satisfy basic needs like food, shelter, and transportation
- To secure tools for training

Dimension of Capability 2: Independence

Informal apprenticeship is known for preparing youths for self-employment (Haan, 2006). In this study, most of the informal apprentices and journeypersons expressed the desire to be independent, that is, to be self-employed. Only a few desired to be employed by others in the formal sector. Independence for the apprentices and journeypersons means owning their workshop and having control over when and how they choose to deploy their skills. In addition, they value this for the respect it attracts in society, the opportunity to train others, be empowered and be able to maintain a family and work-life balance. I present extracts of their narratives regarding these below.

In relation to the freedom to demonstrate skills acquired, Nana who has working experience in both formal and informal work environments stated:

> You know they don't do repairs there [in the formal sector firms]. I mean they don't repair engines; all they do is to remove old stuff and change or replace them. They don't know much about repairing engines. The mechanics there have made themselves like they are the real technical people…

In the excerpt above, Nana marvels at products of formal TVET in formal firms who are held in high esteem, yet cannot undertake the core aspect of mechanic work, which is repairing engines. Moving on, Paul valued independence because it "shows maturity and attracts respect in society". This explanation is consistent with his main reason for enrolling in apprenticeship discussed in Chapter Five. He was inspired by the lives of MCPs whom he described as "responsible, independent adults, who train others and also make money to take care of themselves and their families". The respect that being independent attracts was also echoed by Ama (a journeyperson) through her statement below:

> I am about 40 years and a married woman. Because I am with the master, he [master] thinks I am a ''boy-boy[22], so they don't respect you… I hope to get a place of my own so that I can also be independent and earn more.

For others, the opportunity to train other people as independent skilled persons was more appealing than being employees in a formal firm. Regarding this, Adwenpa stated:

> …Imagine you have higher education qualifications as an engineer, with office work and you can't train other people what is your use? But imagine my master with a very low educational background, the number of young boys that he is training!

Through this statement, Adwenpa demonstrated how being independent enables one to train other young people to acquire skills. The female auto-sprayers also valued this greatly. For instance, Akuba noted:

> … I want to help other people to take over if I am not there. If women can do this, then we need many of them. What a man can do, a woman can do as well. Why can't women do it? Look at the work I have done [points to a coach parked on the compound] and am doing now!

The females perceived being independent as empowering and wanted to be examples for other young women. Maame Efua also mentioned:

> I want to come on TV to encourage other females into this trade. In Ghana, I haven't seen any female like that on TV. As a woman, it is nice to be seen doing this, when someone sees the [video] clip, they will be happy and be encouraged to also enrol in this trade.

Also, for the females, being independent was perceived as useful for work and family life balance. Some of the female auto-sprayers expressed concerns about this. For example, Maame Efua stated: "As a female, you must have your own shop rather than roaming or using other peoples. This is because someday when you are not around those in your shop can still work for you". This statement was made considering the vulnerabilities associated

[22] Boy-boy is a derogatory term used in Ghana for servanthood

with being a wage worker in the informal economy, some of which includes lack of maternal benefits and security. A master craftswoman confirmed the relevance of this freedom as she expressed her plans to save and purchase a spraying oven before she gets married. She explained:

> I manage my finances very well because it is the spraying oven that I want to get. If I am able to do that before I get married that will really be helpful. Because with the oven, I can quit spraying and oversee it.

This statement means that should she conceive after marriage, owning a spraying oven will help her to avoid hazardous aspects of the work and oversee other people use the oven for a fee. This she believes will enable her to earn some income to take care of herself until she returns to work full-time. In addition to securing some income, ownership of the means of capital affords females the flexibility to combine work with caring responsibilities. Unlike feminised trades such as catering and dressmaking where most people work from home and thus combine caring responsibilities with work, those in the automotive trade are not able to do this (Kusi-Mensah, 2017). This is mainly due to the nature of work and workshop location. As a result, being independent, in the sense of owning a spraying oven and workshop and employing others is more valuable.

Lastly, informal apprentices see themselves as young entrepreneurs who need to establish their business to employ other people. This is more important to them than looking for employment after their training. Kwasi sums this as follows:

> I don't desire company work. I prefer my own rather than working with some company. All the companies started from somewhere to become the big companies they are so I can also start little and build a big company one day. You get more by being self-employed than at the company.

The desire to be self-employed as expressed by most of the informal apprentices and journeypersons is consistent with Peil's (1979) finding of the "popularity of self-employment in West Africa" (p. 79). Besides the popularity, this is characteristic of informal apprenticeship (Haan, 2006; Palmer, 2007a). While Peil (1979) attributes this to society's value for it and its financial rewards, the narratives of informal apprentices and journeypersons in this study show that there is more to being independent than the financial

rewards associated with it. The valued functionings summarised from the narratives presented are listed below.

Valued functionings

- To train others
- To be role models and encourage females into the automotive trade
- To have a family and work-life balance
- To own ones firm, expand and employ others

Dimension of Capability 3: Increased Demand for Services of Training Enterprise

Informal apprentices and journeypersons considered essential, increased demand for the services of their training enterprise. They linked their training experience to the performance of their enterprise, as workshop production affects their opportunities to learn and to get an allowance. On the other hand, the demand for services in some informal micro-enterprises are often low and sometimes inconsistent. In the excerpt below, Yoofi described the effect of this on his learning experience. He narrated:

> In my first year, the work was very slow, and we didn't do much. In the second year more cars used to come here so I got to know a lot of things that I didn't know in my first year and my third year, the work is slow again so not much is done. It worries me that there isn't much work to be done… It affects my tips and my learning…

Similarly, Serwaa speaking at the end of the week stated:

> Since Monday there hasn't been much work. So, we stay there like that but at the end of the day, you would make expenses. Also, we don't learn as it's through the work we can practice. We get other jobs like painting cylinders etc. But these are not major jobs.

Serwaa continued: "I stayed away from work for a while as any time I went there was nothing to do". She added that she considered returning to the football academy due to this. Also, Timothy mentioned: "Sometimes we don't get work to do which is not helpful because when it happens like that we are just here".

The narratives of the informal apprentices were substantiated by some of their MCPs who also complained about poor demand for their services and attendant effects on their finances

and support to apprentices. For example, Christabel who does not have an apprentice yet stated: “but when there is no work for about a month you can get into hardship”. In this statement, she meant that there could be long periods of low to no demand for services and those moments are challenging. Another MCP added: “If we get work, that is helpful for the apprentices’ learning. Without the job, there is nothing to be learnt”.

Informal apprentices’ concerns about the effects of the levels of production on their training raise issues about the sole reliance on learning through production, with no other mechanism for knowledge acquisition. This contributes to their desire for opportunities for further learning as will be discussed shortly. The valued functioning under this dimension is presented below.

Valued Functioning

- Having enough work to incrementally improve skills and knowledge

Dimension of Capability 4: Opportunities for Formal Recognition of Skills

In Ghana, informal apprentices receive a certificate of testimonial from their master or respective trade association to certify their successful completion of training. While this certificate can be used to access wage employment in the informal economy, it is not recognised formally. Lack of recognition of skills gained in informal apprenticeship impedes opportunities for further learning, labour market mobility and access to credit from financial institutions (ILO, 2012). This was highlighted by MCP 2 who remarked: “Even with NVTI certificate it is difficult to get a job, how much more a testimonial!”. The difficulties stem from the complications involved in verifying competencies acquired in training.

In view of the above, ILO has been instrumental in supporting countries to develop Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) systems to increase the employability of informal apprentices and their access to lifelong learning. However, Akoojee (2019) argues that the case for certification needs to be examined “with the proviso of its utility in this sector” (p. 111). While it may not be directly relevant for work in the informal economy, some of the informal apprentices and journeypersons in this study acknowledged the importance of certification or recognition of skills. As a result, they value the freedom to have their skills recognised and to gain equal opportunities like their colleagues in the formal educational system. Some of the motivations that underpinned their quest to have their skills recognised

include opportunities for work, further education and training and labour mobility between the formal and informal sector, home and abroad.

All of these possibilities were outlined by Yaw who narrated:

> I will need a certificate to get a job in a company. I now have the proficiency 1 certificate from NVTI. Yes, so for example if I don't want to work in the informal sector again, I can go into the Army. So, with the skills and certificate, I can go on to do other things or maybe do my masters to be an engineer. If I want to travel as well, it can help me acquire meaningful work.

The opportunity to begin a certification programme with NVTI was an important achievement for Yaw as he reluctantly enrolled in apprenticeship upon the advice that he could still further his education in apprenticeship. On travel opportunities, Paul also mentioned: "That [certificate] will help me if I want to travel". Similarly, Nana highlighted the relevance of certification in recalling a travel opportunity he missed. He stated:

> I once had a deal to go to Canada, but I couldn't go because I didn't have the certificate. It was to be a contract of 4 years. They asked for any certificate and if I had it, I would have gone

Other apprentices desire certification to enable them to transition from the informal sector to the formal sector. For instance, Abena, Kwame and Ebo all aspire to work in the army after their training in the informal sector. Abena stated: "The plan was to come and learn [here in apprenticeship] and go do the theory too so that I can get the certificate. But something popped up, so I am still waiting". Similarly, Kwame mentioned:

> I want to be a soldier so if I had gone to technical [secondary school] rather than apprenticeship then I would have gone straight into the Army, but they said we will start the school this year, so I am looking forward to it.

As skills gained in informal training is not formally recognised, Abena and Kwame hope to participate in the certification programmes of formal VTIs to achieve their dreams. Similar to Yaw, Ebo has also begun a certification programme at NVTI. He has acquired Proficiency 1 and 2 certificates which are the lowest qualifications on the National TVET Qualifications Framework (NTVETQF). He used the certificate to apply for entry into the Army, but his

application was not successful because higher qualifications are needed for an entry-level position.

In addition to the narratives of the apprentices, MCP 6 also confirmed the relevance of certificates for working in the formal sector. He noted:

> Those who learn here and have been to school as well leave so early to look for company work. I had about 10 apprentices who are now with a company. They spend about five or six years here and they leave. But the ones who do not have qualifications do not…so it's good if you at least get some technical qualifications on the side.

Also, MCP 5 added:

> [With certification], you [an apprentice] can meet those who just started from the classroom, but you will be far better than them because practically you are good… Not that we assume but we are sure… if you are able to establish yourself or someone asks you to come and manage his shop you can do it without supervision. But then if you want to move ahead, you can also work with the government… the sky will be your limit.

The statements of the MCPs support the importance of RPL or certification for informal apprentices. The desire of the apprentices and journeypersons to have their skills recognised sharply contrasts the findings of Bortei-Doku et al. (2011) that this is not a concern for informal apprentices. On the other hand, the findings presented in this section brings to the fore a question raised by the authors regarding "how to enable informal apprentices to move into formal TVET certification systems if they so desire" (Bortei-Doku et al., 2011, p. 29). The structures that enable this capability will be examined in the next chapter. Before presenting the valued functionings for this dimension of capability, it is important to mention that while informal apprentices and journeypersons knew about the value and possibilities that certificates engender, there was less clarity about the qualification levels that are needed for different outcomes. Education on this is important to keep them informed.

Valued Functioning

The valued functioning for this dimension of capability is:

- To have skills gained in informal apprenticeship recognised

Dimension of Capability 5: Opportunities for Further Learning Within Apprenticeship

Learning in informal apprenticeship is structured around production. The structure of learning around production is one of the strengths of the apprenticeship system because it enables apprentices to gain practical or hands-on experience. However, as the only means through which informal apprentices learn, it is constraining. This is a key concern expressed about apprenticeship in the literature (Haan, 2006). Some informal apprentices shared their thoughts on this. Ebo, having acquired further learning at NVTI, narrated his experience as follows:

> I knew most of the things that they were teaching me [at NVTI] but when they went into details, I realised the limit of my knowledge and understanding. They taught me about safety measures which I was not taught here. I think that was very useful and I also learned about the cooling system. I also learnt about how to jack a car with the right equipment so that when it comes down it wouldn't fall on you. The right equipment to use we don't have it [in the informal workshop].

Ebo's narrative shows that his knowledge about vehicles was deepened through the external training he acquired at NVTI. Likewise, it was at NVTI he learned more about safety and health. Also, Jojo expressed concern about the lack of thoroughness in servicing cars as he desires to acquire deep knowledge about the cause of vehicular problems. He complained:

> Here we do a lot of try your luck. For instance, when a customer mentions that there is noise in his car, they (masters) will check the noise and sort it out but will not check for the cause of the noise and to work on it, so the problem doesn't recur.

The excerpt above was extracted from Jojo's description of the problem of knocking in vehicles and how they struggle to resolve it. In the example cited, experiential knowledge is applied to tackle the problem and without theoretical knowledge of the mechanics of the vehicle, it is difficult to resolve the underlying cause. This echoes McLaughlin's (1979) findings of how vehicular repairs are undertaken by wayside mechanics in Ghana. He painstakingly notes:

> It is in such situations that one begins to see signs of inefficient and inferior quality work from these artisans: the excessive amount of time spent trying to

> diagnose a fault or even the return of a vehicle to its owner without the fault being corrected; the creation of a completely new problem in the process of 'fixing' the old one… (p. 203).

McLaughlin's concern was shared by some of the apprentices as they described the humiliating experience of customers returning their vehicle with the same problem, they had spent a lot of time fixing. For example, Kwame shared his worst experience in training as, "when we get a return job. That is the person brings back the same problem". Also, Kwasi stated:

> one thing is that when I work on a car and it doesn't work it really hurts me… that is disappointing as some can really stretch you… For this BMW X6 [he pointed to me] we have tried several times to work on the engine and my boss is figuring out what the problem is. Sometimes the sound of the engine shows that there is a problem…

Difficulties resolving vehicular problems, like the one described by Jojo and Kwasi, come at a cost to the customer, affects the productivity of artisans, quality service delivery and societal perceptions about them. While theoretical knowledge has a role to play, Jojo also added another factor that results in the shallow approach to repairs. He noted:

> …But working here is not like abroad. So, I don't blame the masters because you can spend all your time to work on a car and when you charge, the customer wouldn't pay but rather pay what they want to. So, when it happens our people too are reluctant to go all out... customers don't place value on the time we use to work so sometimes I understand them a little.

In the informal economy, there is less transparency around service charges. As a result, customers do not trust artisans costing and always bargain the charges. To maintain a financially viable business, artisans balance the efforts spent on repair work with the expected reward. This impacts the process and quality of work and subsequently apprentices learning. This was confirmed by MCP 6, as he narrated the differences in work carried out in formal companies and informal workshops. He stated: "…At Neoplan we painted three times with three coatings but here we don't do it because the customers don't pay much. So …we do just one coating". In these circumstances, an apprentice whose knowledge about auto-spraying is only acquired in the workshop may be exposed to sub-standard practices, with implications

on the reproduction of skills, as he becomes independent and takes on apprentices. This coheres with King and McGrath's (2002) observation that "quality-driven purchases", among other factors such as "market saturation combine to push skills levels down" (p. 165).

In relation to these problems, some informal apprentices and journeypersons expressed the desire for opportunities to gain more knowledge about their trade. Abena who is in her third year of training expressed the desire to have access to learning resources that she can use during low production periods. Aside from low production periods where little to no learning occurs, she is dissatisfied with explanations that are given during practice. She, therefore, stated: "Sometimes, I need to get more explanation for the things that we do…" Similarly, Kwasi also stated:

> It is not everything that you are going to be taught here…You always have to find a way no matter how difficult it is…. for the knowledge at least, I have some, but I need to know more. And I look for the opportunity to learn more, the theory is my challenge.

The desire to acquire more knowledge about the trade was more of a concern for informal apprentices and journeypersons in mechanics and air-conditioning than those in auto-spraying. This has to do with the technical nature of these specialities. It is important to mention that there are different ways in which apprentices acquire further knowledge. Aside from two apprentices, Ebo and Yaw, who have been to NVTI, others mentioned they obtain knowledge from the internet. About this, Abena narrated:

> …So I go to the [internet] café to do some more research and then some of the things I am not able to get clear from my master. So, when I go there, I use the time to look at the A/C system, how it works and since I am not doing the theory now, I go there, and they provide you with the principles and explanations, so I go through them to add to what I know.

In addition to seeking knowledge from the internet, she expressed the desire to have access to trade books. She said: "Sometimes I think if I am able to get help, with a book that I can go through to help me get more explanations for my work I think it will be helpful". Similarly, Kwasi also outlined how he supplements the knowledge gained through practice. He explained:

> If your master gives you some details of something like a tyre you also need to go and research more on it, like the function of that tyre your master mentioned. That is how I learn. So, if you know how to read it is helpful.

The narratives of the apprentices show how they supplement knowledge gained in apprenticeship. These include pursuing formal courses at NVTI and conducting internet searches. Two apprentices proposed an arrangement that might make up for this weakness in informal apprenticeship. For example, Ebo suggested: "it will also be good if we can have some formal instruction or theoretical instruction here while we are also doing the practical". Similarly, Jojo added:

> What we need to do is that we need someone [master] who has a technical mind who has gone to school, even if it is the theory that the person knows and not enough practical experience at the workshop here, there is a time that we should work and then for him to advise we break at some point and be taught or learn some theory and after that come to the field to learn the practical side. If that person has the knowledge to teach the technical terms that will help us.

The arrangement proposed by the apprentices involves having theoretical instruction at the workshop alongside observation and practice. It will require their master to have theoretical knowledge of the trade and devote time to such instruction. Past skills development initiatives to improve informal apprenticeship have included components for the skills upgrading of MCPs. Examples include the Training-of-Trainers (TOT) approach that was utilised in the NAP. Selected masters received training in competency-based curricula and appropriate teaching methodologies to be able to instruct apprentices. While this approach is less costly, it requires the commitment of masters to effective instruction and a system of constant monitoring of practices in the workshops. Regarding the NAP, COTVET was unable to deliver the teaching materials on time and many of the masters failed to undertake the responsibilities charged them due to poor monitoring (Ghana Audit Service, 2016). The arrangement that is commonly used is granting both masters and apprentices the opportunity to access further knowledge of their trade in formal Vocational Training Institutes (VTI's) through a voucher scheme. This approach reduces apprentices' dependency on masters for theoretical aspects of their trade. On the other hand, it raises more questions relating to

funding and a suitable arrangement for apprentices to access such opportunities. This will be discussed in Chapter Seven. The valued functionings are summarised below.

Valued functionings

- To acquire theoretical knowledge of the trade
- To have theoretical training embedded in the structure of apprenticeship
- To have access to learning resources for use in the absence of real tasks

Dimension of Capability 6: Occupational Safety and Health

Article 24, Section 1 of the 1992 constitution of Ghana, which was amended in 1996, states that "every person has the right to work under satisfactory, safe and healthy conditions…" (GoG, 1992). On the other hand, most people who train and work in the informal economy do not enjoy this right. Statistics on occupational safety and health injuries and accidents are mainly available for the formal and not the informal economy. Informal apprentices in this study spoke about many occupational accidents and injuries and this informed their desire to achieve safety and health at the workplace. Adwenpa who is in his second year recalled an accident that nearly killed him on his second day at work as he worked on a car with some of his colleagues. The excerpt below describes the incident.

> We had parked the car and I was under it. I could see the car slip, so I told those I was working with that the car is slipping. They said, oh it is because you are new that is why you see things that way. So, I said, let me get up and see and once I came out, the car came down, so they all thought I was under the car. They all rushed to use some wood to raise and support it. I shouted that I was out. They were all shocked and quiet and I was also shocked throughout the whole day. That day, I considered quitting the training.

In the experience illustrated above, Adwenpa stated that it would have been his end. He narrated a similar incident that involved his colleague, Jojo. Jojo narrated the same incident without being asked because of the impact it had on him. These were his words:

> I once had an accident. You see that place slopes, so I was under the car working and because the place was not levelled and there was oil on the ground, the thing under it busted because the car was heavy. So, the car fell on

> me and those there screamed for people to come and get me from under the car. A similar accident killed someone in this area. It kills people a lot.

In this incident, a car that was being worked on had been jacked, but with an inappropriate tool. This coupled with an unsafe working floor led to the accident. Adwenpa noted sadly:

> When you die you die what can be done? We don't have any forklift machine that can be used to lift the car to rescue you. The best is to scream for everyone to come and help. But by the time we finish, you can be dead and if not then we take you to the hospital…

Turning away from Jojo and Adwenpa who are male apprentices in mechanics, some of the females in auto-spraying also had negative experiences to share regarding their safety and health at work. For example, Maame Efua narrated:

> When I spray a car I cannot sleep, the lacquer gets into my body. It can affect my heart, kidney etc and for me when I spray one car, I can get heartburns, cough and feel very uncomfortable.

She added: "Even as I speak now, I am sick". Similarly, Aba mentioned that when she started her training, she got severe headaches and she was told that she was going to get used to it. She said: "the headache stopped but for the body cramps I get it all the time. The job is very tiring". In addition to the headaches, she also recounted an experience she had when she went with her master to spray a vehicle in an oven. The excerpt below shows what happened.

> …I could not even stay there for more than 1 min. But he was in it [the oven], he had to put a wet rag on his nose. He himself, he didn't like covering his nose with a rag. That job too, in the end, I expected it to be neater because it was done in the oven, but I didn't like the job, as it didn't look good. But I think because of the chemicals he was in a hurry to finish and leave the oven so the lacquer on the car was very thick.

In this excerpt, Aba and her master could not bear inhaling chemicals from a non-functional oven. Aside from Aba and Sarah, most of the females in auto-spraying reported headaches and cold when they sprayed. The freedom for occupational safety and health were expressed within this context. On this, I quote Jojo at length below.

> Our master or seniors have to understand the importance of health and safety, to allow us to wear safety wears. We also need the hoist here otherwise we will always have problems here. My masters went to buy some but that was a second-hand one and was spoilt. The thieves here have also come to steal the motor. But over here, it is not possible to set the hoist here as it needs a levelled ground. In Ghana, environmental protection agencies don't take these seriously. If you come and the workplace does not meet the required standards and you cease the shop and not allow them to work, or fine them they will understand and obey regulations or do the right thing. At times, the tools that we use to work, foreign or other African countries have tools and equipment that make the work easier. For example, there is a machine for removing the tyres but over here you have to use your hands and your legs to remove it and you can slip and get hurt.

In this statement Jojo was very explicit about what he thinks can make the environment supportive of his safety and health. Most of the issues he highlighted relate to the workplace environment. Others border on the responsibilities of other stakeholders. A similar point was made by Abena about the relevance for supervision and inspection in informal training workshops. These will be further discussed in the next chapter. Continuing the narratives on valued functionings, Adwenpa also stated:

> We don't have anything like insurance too, that you will be compensated with should you die at work… Over here when you get ill you don't get to be taken proper care of. Just a week of giving you some money and checking up on you. So, if it's a big accident you become a burden on your family. So, you should know that it is your life and need to be extra careful. Otherwise, you will be in trouble.

Aside from the insurance, Timothy added: "Clothes or shoes for working are some of the things we require but don't have". Aba also mentioned:

> There is this spraying shop over here where they have a little bit of safety precaution. When I was here, I used to pass there, and I wished that was the place I was training instead. The place is very clean. When they are spraying they have the mask…But over here we don't have that…

Aba finds herself in a place where she does not have the freedoms that others have. While she could have chosen a different training workshop, her choice of the training workshop was partly influenced by the waiving off of her apprenticeship fee. The choice of where to train is determined by many factors some of which include differences in apprenticeship fees at different workplaces, the relationship between master and apprentice or his family and the experience of a master craftsperson.

The narratives of the informal apprentices show the risks they encounter in training. Decent work deficits in apprenticeship, such as occupational safety and health are characteristics of work in the informal economy. While this is not central in the skills literature, a small body of work contributes to our understanding of the poor OSH practices in informal workshops (Annan et al., 2015; Adei et al., 2011; Monney et al., 2014; Morton, 2004). However, these studies are on the fringes of academic and policy literature on informal apprenticeship as they do not sit very well within the dominant TVET orthodoxy. On the other hand, these are important functionings that need to be addressed to safeguard the well-being of trainees.

Valued Functionings

- To have tools and equipment that make work easier and ensure safety at work.
- To have our health and safety rather than the job prioritised in assigned tasks
- To have insurance against injuries and death at the workplace
- To have safety and health measures enforced here
- To be safe from all the pollution and environmental risks to health caused by frequent burning, poor sanitation and workplace practices
- To have organised workshops and facilities like washrooms
- To have bigger ovens in order to avoid the effects of spraying cars in the open
- To have set times for resting, closing and leisure
- To have a working culture that supports the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- To have a shed under which work can be done without being exposed to the vagaries of the weather.

Dimension of Capability 7: Bodily Integrity and Respect

Article 15 of the 1992 Ghanaian constitution states that “the State shall cultivate among all Ghanaians respect for fundamental human rights and freedoms and the dignity of the human

person" (GoG, 1992). In line with this directive of state principle, the labour law protects the rights of workers, including apprentices in the formal sector. On the other hand, the rights, and freedoms of apprentices in informal workshops are not guaranteed. Informal apprentices in this study reported incidents of maltreatment, labour exploitation, and verbal abuse by their masters and customers. The experiences however differed among male and female apprentices and journeypersons.

To begin with the female apprentices, it was highlighted in the previous chapter, the positive support of masters and parents towards their occupational choices. From a business point of view, Forkuor et al. (2020) argue that the occupational choices of females are endorsed by customers who prefer to patronise their services, compared to their male colleagues in the same trade. Findings in this study as will be discussed in the next chapter also show positive feedback from the public towards females in the automotive trade. On the other hand, a few of the females in this study shared experiences of verbal abuse. For example, Akuba narrated:

> Eh as for those [abuse], some even say you should go and look for pepper to sell. Some very rich customers who come here make such remarks. They say how can you learn this as a woman. But over the years they realise you are still here, and you run errands for them and work for them. With time they forget they are the same people who discouraged you about the work…. Some of them give you tips and after some time they ask you do substantial work…That is when you also establish good working relations with them.

Similarly, Maame Efua narrated:

> We get insulted sometimes… some say why do you do this as a female, that you can't give birth. Me, I don't believe in those. Some say they haven't seen females doing this before. This is what I want, everyone and their interest. Ghanaians think that it's not good for females to learn male trades so when they see it like that, they talk a lot but me I don't mind them. If it worries me, I wouldn't even be adding welding to it, is it not even difficult than spraying?

These remarks signal disrespect of their occupational choice and shows that more needs to be done to change gender perceptions about females in male-dominated trades. Among the male apprentices, a report on labour exploitation emerged from Oheneba's narrative. He recounted the experience of being taken to his master's building site to work as follows:

> Sometimes I used to be there [at the site] the whole day. You carry sand, cement and water and get everything ready before the mason comes. It is hard work. Something that four people need to do, I do it myself. And he will give me GHS 10[23] but that is even just for transportation. Only a little will be left for food.

Apart from Oheneba, other male informal apprentices reported being subjected to painful ordeals anytime there was a theft case in the workshop. In the excerpt below, Kobby narrated one of those ordeals. He mentioned:

> Some of the apprentices are thieves so it disturbs us. When they steal, we are all summoned. Me, I don't know how to steal so it hurts to be accused of theft. There was this time they took us all to the police station and we were threatened. That was not a good experience.

For Kobby it is disrespectful to them as young adults learning a trade to be subjected to those ordeals and be accused of theft. Other forms of disrespect were evident in verbal insults. In relation to this, Adwenpa highlighted that it is worrying that "they [masters and customers] think those of us here are from poorer backgrounds who are learning here so they talk to us in a harsh way and insult us". Similarly, Jojo mentioned: "They [masters] don't respect us as apprentices, but in life everyone is important". Lastly, Oheneba added: "We are all humans, yet when you [master] go home that is not how you treat your children".

The desire to be respected as expressed by the male apprentices in this study differs from those expressed by informal apprentices in the study of Bortei-Doku et al. (2011). In their study apprentices attributed the lack of respect society has for them to their inability to speak English. In this study it emanates from the hierarchical relationship between masters and apprentices and as will be discussed later parents' disengagement with the welfare of their wards. This is partly sustained through the compliance of apprentices. There are a couple of factors that contribute to this. One relates to the fear of their masters withholding knowledge of the trade or threatening to sack them should they challenge their authority. Also, the embeddedness of the informal apprenticeship in socio-cultural norms renders apprentices

[23] The amount quoted is just below the 2018 daily minimum wage in Ghana which was GHS 9.68.

powerless in such contexts. For example, Oheneba complained about his master's conduct to his mother, and she responded: "He is your uncle". The remark of his mother supports Hanson's (2005) argument that parents, or families and the community at large condone the poor treatment of apprentices. On the other hand, apprentices desire to be respected and be treated with dignity at work. Apprenticeship needs to foster this freedom.

Valued Functionings

- To be free from verbal insults or abuses at work
- To have one's occupational choice respected irrespective of gender

Dimension of Capability 8: English Proficiency

English is the official language of Ghana. One's level of English proficiency is determined, to a large extent, by his or her level of formal education, although there are other factors like ethnicity or family background that influences one's proficiency (Blunch, 2011). On the other hand, one's level of education may not be a reflection of his/her English proficiency due to the quality of education. The Ghana National Education Assessment (NEA) report, which outlines the competency and literacy of Primary 4 and 6 pupils in mathematics and English biennially, shows that in 2016, 36 per cent of P6 pupils achieved proficiency in English[24] (MoE, 2016). This poor result reflects the levels of English proficiency that pupils possess. This means that for pupils who terminate at either primary 6 or JHS and enter the informal labour market, there is a high tendency that the majority may have poor English proficiency and may not improve upon this unless there are opportunities for them to pursue adult literacy classes.

This study did not assess apprentices' English language proficiency but captured the views of two individuals who expressed the capability for English literacy. Akuba, who is a journeyperson stated her concern for not being able to read and write, although she completed basic education before enrolling in apprenticeship. She noted: "It worries me sometimes…imagine if I was able to speak English, I could have spoken to you". She recalled past moments when she called on other apprentices who speak English to help her

[24] Proficiency as used in the study means a score of 55 or more in the assessment given pupils. This is low compared to international standards, where a score of 70 per cent will signify proficiency.

communicate with clients. Even though Akuba mentioned that she is happy asking for help when she needs it, she wishes she will be able to read and write so she can do things for herself.

Likewise, Timothy narrated: “I am not able to read and write and if I get that opportunity I will learn”. He further stated:

> It worries me that I didn’t go to school as I may get to a point where I will need it as everything now is about pen and book. So, when I get someone who will teach me or a school I will go. I had someone who was teaching me, but the person stopped.

Timothy’s statement that “everything is about pen and book” shows the importance of English literacy as means to an end, but also as an end in itself. Being literate can enhance his business as he will be able to communicate with clients, increase his client base and keep proper records. Also, English literacy is useful for further learning as evident in the varied ways in which some of the informal apprentices supplement the knowledge they acquire in training. This was confirmed by MCP 2 who noted: “if you are an auto apprentice, you have to know about ICT, read and understand…auto computer is complex, and you need this to understand it”. Without written English proficiency, one will not be able to conduct internet searches and understand manuals. Lastly, this is relevant in a country where most external training and assessments are conducted in English. The extent to which opportunities are available for informal apprentices to access English literacy classes will be discussed in the next chapter. Their valued functionings under this dimension of capability are summarised below.

Valued Functionings

- To be able to read, write and communicate in English
- To be able to apply English literacy skills to record-keeping and good financial management

Table 7.1: Summary of Dimensions of Capabilities and Valued Functionings

Dimensions of Capabilities	Valued Functionings

1. Basic Requirements of Life and Training	• To satisfy basic needs like food, shelter, and transportation during • To secure tools for training
2. Independence	• To train others • To be role models and encourage females into the automotive trade • To have a family and work life balance • To own ones firm, expand and employ others
3. Increased Demand for Services of Enterprise	• To witness increment in levels of production in training enterprises
4. Opportunities for Formal Recognition of Skills	• To have skills gained in informal apprenticeship recognised
5. Opportunities for Further Learning Within Apprenticeship	• To acquire theoretical knowledge of the trade • To have theoretical training embedded in the structure of apprenticeship • To have access to learning resources for use in the absence of real tasks
6. Occupational Safety and Health (OSH)	• To have tools and equipment that makes work easier and ensure safety at work. • To have our health and safety rather than the job prioritised in assigned tasks • To have insurance against injuries and death at the workplace • To have safety and health measures enforced here • To be safe from all the pollution and environmental risks to health caused by frequent burning, poor sanitation and workplace practices

	• To have organised workshops and facilities like washrooms • To have bigger ovens to avoid the effects of spraying cars in the open • To have set times for resting, closing and leisure • To have a working culture that supports the use of PPE • To have a shed under which work can be done without being exposed to the vagaries of the weather.
7. Bodily Integrity and Respect	• To be free from verbal insults or abuses at work • To have one's occupational choice respected irrespective of gender
8. English Literacy	• To be able to read and write in English • To be able to apply English literacy skills to record-keeping and good financial management

Discussion

At the heart of the capability approach, is the lives that people manage to lead and the freedoms they value to achieve different combinations of functionings. Evaluating aspects of well-being or poverty associated with informal apprenticeship in the space of functionings and capabilities reveal eight dimensions of capabilities of informal apprentices and journeypersons. While the capabilities are presented along different domains, they collectively represent the quality of life of informal apprentices and journeypersons. Five key messages that emerge from this chapter are outlined below.

The first point relates to the value of the capability approach for apprenticeship research. It helps to focus on beings and doings such as basic requirements of life and training, respect and occupational safety and health as constitutive of well-being and development. Besides

the intrinsic role of the dimensions of capabilities to the quality of life of apprentices and journeypersons, the instrumental nature of freedoms further supports a holistic approach to apprenticeship. For example, increment in workshop production is instrumental to learning through production and the freedom to achieve basic needs through financial support apprentices may receive at work. Likewise, the freedom to achieve basic needs is instrumental to being independent through the completion of training. Also, formal recognition of skills is instrumental to labour mobility in the sense of taking up work opportunities abroad and in the formal sector. Lastly, English language proficiency is instrumental to the freedom for further learning, progression through the formal education system, to business relations with others and one's business. These linkages albeit very important to the development of TVET and to development in general are not drawn in the literature. These point to the limitations of framing apprenticeship within the human capital theory of development.

Second, the findings presented in the chapter show that informal apprentices in the automotive trade seek formal recognition of their skills as that will enable them to have equal opportunities to be included and to participate in education and the labour market. In a study on informal apprenticeship in Zambia, Ryan (2015) also reported that the majority of the apprentices in the automotive trade interviewed expressed the desire to have their skills recognised. Their desire for opportunities to acquire further learning and to have their skills formally recognised challenge narratives that informal apprenticeship is for the academically weak and school dropouts with no ambitions for further education (Bortei-Doku et al., 2011, 2013).

Comparing this capability to others such as "occupational knowledge" and "upgrade skills and qualifications throughout life course" developed in formal contexts, it can be argued that this is an important capability regardless of whether TVET is being pursued in the formal or informal context (McGrath et al., 2020). As highlighted in the previous chapter, about a quarter of the study's sample enrolled in informal apprenticeship due to the inability to continue with their formal education. On the other hand, they envisaged that pursuing further education in the formal system would be possible through apprenticeship. In view of this, the opportunity to advance these aspirations is very important. Also, such opportunities are relevant to improve the social standing of apprenticeship and to make it a real alternative educational pathway. The latter is the central message in the Anamuah-Mensah Committee

report, discussed in Chapter Two, which highlighted the state's neglect of apprenticeship and the need to improve linkages between apprenticeship and the formal education system.

Third and linked to the previous point is the relevance of opportunities to acquire theoretical knowledge within apprenticeship. Within the human capital framing of apprenticeship, this is appreciated only from a productivity perspective. From a CCA-VET perspective, this knowledge also improves one's capability for work and makes work more valuable (Bonvin & Farvaque, 2006; Moodie et al., 2018; McGrath et al., 2020). Findings from this chapter support the latter view in that informal apprentices seek knowledge of their trade to make sense of what they do and why they do it, rather than only observing and doing which is characteristic of learning in informal workshops. This is central to their vocational identity and self-esteem.

Fourth, the findings show the extent to which the freedoms of apprentices emanate from both the strengths and the weaknesses of informal apprenticeship represented in Table 3.1. For example, while the self-regulatory nature of apprenticeship, that is no government support, control or supervision is often celebrated as the strength of apprenticeship, it is from this strength that one observes labour exploitation, maltreatment of apprentices, poor occupational safety and health and lack of recognition of skills. This leads one to question whether this feature of apprenticeship is a strength and in whose interest it serves.

While typologising the features of apprenticeship into strengths and weaknesses is useful in knowing how to intervene to address the weaknesses, it precludes a useful analysis of the weaknesses embedded in those strengths or how the strengths equally breed weaknesses. This puts into perspective Akoojee's (2019) point that:

> Criticisms that the training is still tied to the very excesses related to the informal economy and those related to health, safety, and livelihood of livelihood security, exploitation, and inequity are clearly valid. They should not be ignored in our enthusiasm to embrace learning in this sector (p. 114).

In addition to the above statement, Akoojee (2019) also notes that "the possibility that informal apprenticeships don't always function well in light of the precarious 'decent work outcomes' is an important one that cannot be left unresolved" (p. 115). Concerning this, care needs to be taken in celebrating the strengths of apprenticeship as it risks maintaining the

status quo, seeing the training system and its environment as static and trainees' well-being as undynamic. This is further discussed in the next chapter.

Fifth, the capability approach helps to understand gendered aspects of capabilities as gender influences capabilities that are valued. This was particularly evident in the second dimension of capability on independence and the seventh on bodily integrity and respect. Concerning independence, male apprentices and journeypersons are less concerned about reproductive roles and care responsibilities in planning for their transition from training to self-employment. On the other hand, this is an important consideration for females and a conversion factor necessary for them to translate training into further freedoms. This nuanced understanding is important in efforts to support females in male-dominated trades.

As will be discussed in the next chapter, oral traditions regarding females' reproductive and care responsibilities were the main explanations for the minimum participation of females in the automotive trade as offered by MCPs, apprentices and other stakeholders interviewed. On the other hand, the reality is more complex. On bodily integrity and respect, while few female apprentices and journeypersons expressed the desire to have their occupational choice respected due to gender norms, male apprentices seek respect from their masters due to relations between the old and young and parents' disengagement with the welfare of the apprentices. Recognition and respect as a dimension of capability also emerged in the work of Powell (2014) and Hilal (2018). In Hilal's (2018) study this was a concern for students due to the social standing of TVET, whereas, in South Africa, it was the outcome of its racial history and TVET's involvement in that. These differences show that context matters in understanding TVET and in efforts to expand the capabilities of VET students.

In conclusion, viewing poverty as capability deprivation reveals the various ways in which poverty is experienced in training. While income is instrumental to some of the deprivations, focusing on capabilities, directs attention to other deprivations that are not income dependent. Examples of these include bodily integrity and respect and English language proficiency. These are important in understanding other means, including institutional arrangements that are central to addressing these deprivations. Also, it helps to move beyond the narrow view that apprenticeship provides a means for escaping income poverty through the acquisition and utilisation of skills (Palmer, 2007a). In other words, it helps to evaluate the social arrangements which provide informal apprentices and journeypersons with the opportunities for achieving valued functionings. The next chapter evaluates the opportunity and agency

freedom that informal apprentices and journeypersons have to achieve their valued functionings.

Chapter Eight: Freedoms of Informal Apprentices and Journeypersons to Achieve Valued Functionings

In the previous chapter, the dimensions of capabilities of informal apprentices and journeypersons were presented. This chapter examines their opportunity and agency freedom to achieve valued functionings identified in the previous chapter. The analysis proceeds with an examination of the structural context that forms their conditions of action, followed by a discussion of the conduct of informal apprentices and journeypersons in relation to their valued functionings.

In the sections on conduct, I explore the freedom of agency that apprentices and journeypersons have. This takes into consideration the extent to which they either "routinely and pre-reflexively, or strategically and critically draw on her [or their] internal structures" into their conduct (Stones, 2005, p. 85). Through an analysis of both the context of action and the conduct of informal apprentices and journeypersons, the chapter aims to present the freedoms that they have to achieve their valued functionings. The discussion is organised around the dimensions of capabilities presented in the previous chapter.

Basic Requirement of Life and Training

In the previous chapter, basic requirement of life and training was identified as an important capability that informal apprentices' value. During the training period, they depend on the support of others to be accommodated, clothed, and nourished. In this section, I examine the position-practices of networked others such as parents or family members and MCPs and the extent to which these position-practices enable them to achieve this dimension of capability. This is followed by a discussion of the agency and agency freedom of informal apprentices through conduct analysis.

Position-Practices of Family

The family is the primary unit of social welfare in Ghana, although there are social welfare programmes organised by the state through different ministries to support poor individuals and households in poverty. Estimates reveal that about forty-four social protection programmes are being implemented by the Government of Ghana (Human Rights Advocacy Centre, 2018). These are however piecemeal and have limited reach, making the family extremely important in welfare provision. The narratives of informal apprentices and MCPs confirmed the important role the family plays in the welfare of apprentices. Most of them rely on their families for their sustenance, although it could be deduced that this support is

insufficient in meeting their basic needs. The excerpts of Timothy, Ebo, and Kobby below show the level of support they receive from their families. Timothy who lodges at the workshop stated:

> Our master gives us some chop money. We get about six or seven Ghana cedis[25] (GHS 6 or 7) now but at first, we used to get five Ghana cedis (GHS 5). It is from that money I buy food. Sometimes too, we get tips from the jobs we do. I don't get much from my uncle. When I am sick and I go there, I get something, but it's been long since I last had money from him. It's not enough but what can I do?

Similarly, Ebo mentioned:

> He [uncle] was the one who used to give me transportation when I started. What he was giving me was exactly the transportation fare. We used to get some small tips as well as chop money here [at work]. I used to save a lot to cover for my food. In my second year, he stopped giving me money.

Also, Kobby noted:

> When I started, it was my stepfather who was giving me money. He used to give me ten Ghana cedis (GHS 10). That was not regular. I got it once every three days. Now I cater for myself and I get that money from tips at work since I have gotten to know the work.

These narratives show the minimal support that apprentices receive from their parents. MCPs confirmed the disengagement of families/parents in their wards' training. Out of frustration, MCP 5 stated:

> Apprenticeship, you see should be like the school where the parents send their children, and they give them pocket money and buy things for them. But when they bring their children here that is the end. They will not even pass around

[25] The amount quoted is below the minimum wage for the year 2018 in which the data was gathered. The minimum wage in 2018 stood at GHS 9.80.

> to see what is going on. This is something I have been advocating that we should change.

From the perspective of informal apprentices, Adwenpa added:

> Some apprentices' families know that once they have brought them here the master should give them something but imagine we are so many here. Can the master give everyone chop money? So, when you the parent don't give anything at all to the kids how do you expect them to learn? Some get so hungry that it is pathetic! So, they come to me to ask for money.

Aside from speaking for his colleagues, he also mentioned:

> I have told my uncle about my tools, but he doesn't mind me. As for my father, he doesn't even know where I am… When I was coming here, I told him about it, and it took about 2 weeks and he didn't give me any good response, so I came with my brother to look at this place. Where I live, he doesn't know. On my first day, he wasn't here, when we came to pay for the fees he wasn't there. He doesn't even know my whereabouts but anytime I go home, I go to meet him. If I tell him anything, he doesn't mind me. When I was looking for a house, I told him about it, and he said he doesn't mind…

The narratives of the apprentices regarding the position-practices of their parents resonate with Haan's (2006) report on Senegal. Haan (2006) notes that "for the parents, apprenticeship training is the last recourse: they are keen to pass on, without further costs, their responsibilities with regard to education and training of their children" (p. 174). Similar findings of parents in Ghana are reported by Bortei-Doku et al. (2011). These reflect the sentiments of MCPs as will be shown shortly. It is difficult to conclude whether parents can provide for their wards and do not or they cannot afford to. The view or expectation that trainees may earn something from work or be supported by masters is an explanatory factor. On the other hand, there is a strong role for them to play as echoed by apprentices, MCPs and representatives of GNAG. Their capability to perform their responsibilities will be made easier if national development strategies work to improve the economic status of many households in Ghana. Also, the narratives of some informal apprentices and the MCPs raise questions regarding the apprenticeship agreement and the roles of the parties to the agreement. The next section examines these from the perspective of MCPs.

Position-practices of MCPs

Most apprenticeship agreements are verbal. MCPs stated that in these agreements, parents are asked to provide accommodation and upkeep money for the apprentices. This is also stated in the written agreement obtained from one of the clusters that was visited in Accra (Appendix E). This is the preferred arrangement that differs from traditional arrangements where MCPs bore these responsibilities. In the old arrangement, apprentices usually stayed with their master and were treated as members of the master's family (Peil, 1970). Following the emergence of new trades during the colonial period and changes to the recruitment of apprentices based on kin relations, the old contractual arrangement changed.

Despite the preferred arrangement, some MCPs make some compromises such as accommodating apprentices in their residence or permitting them to lodge in the workshop or any open space, when parents are unable to meet these. Regarding this, MCP 3 stated:

> Most of the time when they come, they agree with the master that they will sleep [at the workplace] and then weekend go [home], generally that is how it is, that is the culture of the work. But I don't insist especially if your parents have a place for you. But if not then I allow them to sleep at the workplace.

Also, MCP 2 noted: "I have eight apprentices; some live with me in my house and some perch in cars but I am putting up a place for them". He pointed to an uncompleted structure that he was putting up for his informal apprentices. He further stated: "The parents don't provide for the apprentice, so all responsibility is on the master. We should not be responsible for their upkeep".

The examples above show the considerations MCPs make, which could partly be the result of the functional relationship between them and the apprentices. Where apprentices reside in the workshop, they respond quickly to demands of the job, and where they reside in the master's house, they support with household activities while also responding to the demands of the job[26]. To illustrate, MCP 3 stated: "Early morning when somebody brings a job, the master can call you [apprentice] to do this or that before he comes to the workshop". This was

[26] This is the case for garages that are attached to the master's private residence.

confirmed by Kwasi (who lived in his master's house) as he stated: "I start work between 8.30 to 9.00 am; I do some house chores in the morning like taking the kids to school".

Aside from the functional relationship, that is the mutual benefit reaped by both parties, moral considerations also inform the actions of MCPs. For example, MCP 6 reported:

> Today for instance that there is no job, what they will get to eat is a problem because the parents don't give them anything. This also makes them to quit because they get hungry, but I am supposed to give them at least something small that they can get to buy food. Even when there is no work you have to try and give them something.

Contrary to MCPs who feel the need to accommodate apprentices regardless of the decency of the accommodation, others do not offer such support. For example, MCP 6 stated: "If I don't have a place for them to sleep, I don't take them…". MCP 5 added:

> But you find them sleeping in cars which is against the industrial regulations. Some [masters] find any open place and want people [apprentices] to sleep there. But I do not allow anybody to come and sleep here because I won't allow my own kids to sleep here so won't do same for anyone.

The perspectives of the masters show the difficult situations they are confronted with. They are concerned about the upkeep of apprentices and, their future should they refuse to train them based on their parents' inability to provide them with accommodation. Yet, the nature of accommodation offered, or other forms of support have implications on the well-being achievements and freedom of informal apprentices. An excerpt from Nana illuminates this. He stated that "had it not been for him [master], I wouldn't know where I will be now. Because it was difficult financially; what to eat was a problem". Amidst the varying levels of support offered by MCPs, it has to be noted that these need not substitute the role of families as Nana pointed out that "when you even have a mother and a father, it is as if they are not alive!". Parents neglecting their responsibilities have repercussions on practices in informal apprenticeship, the conduct of apprentices and other dimensions of their capabilities. I briefly discuss the conduct of apprentices in the next section.

Conduct of informal apprentices and journeypersons

The position-practices of parents and MCPs as discussed above help to understand the capability set or opportunities from which informal apprentices make choices to achieve their valued functionings. This section focuses on how they orient themselves with regard to the context, that is how they draw on their knowledge of the context in their conduct.

Amidst the position-practices of parents and masters, the narratives of most of the informal apprentices and journeypersons demonstrated tenacity, resilience, and determination to complete their training. This includes sacrificing comfort in the short term, to achieve their goals. Christabel, for example, noted: "I really suffered while I was an apprentice, but I tried to endure it. I was with the boys, we slept in different cars and that is how I lived till I completed. I was prepared to learn the trade…". Similarly, Serwaa mentioned:

> Now I am selling my football boots because I need money. …you have to do the right thing for everyone to see that you have graduated and are on your own. It is the nicest part of it. It is not easy but good to stay to the end.

Also, Abigail remarked:

> Although the finances are not great, we are managing. We console ourselves too that one day we will become masters and make money. If I follow the financial constraints I would quit, and I wouldn't know what would become of my life.

Lastly, Adwenpa highlighted in response to his father's conduct:

> It's my life so what can I do? I need to do something to make my life meaningful. So, we are managing bit by bit. I have it in mind that I will do well so my father will see what I have become!

The data was replete with similar expressions of agency. The phrase "we are managing" used by Adwenpa and Abigail, is a common expression used in Ghana, especially among the youth. It is the response usually given to the question, how are you? This is captured by Langevang (2008) in her article on how young people in Ghana navigate hardship and uncertain paths to respectable adulthood. Langevang (2008) notes that the expression shows young people's "relentless determination to negotiate conditions of turbulence and to

introduce order and predictability into their lives" (p. 2045). This also involves managing social relations that they perceive useful in securing opportunities to satisfy their basic needs.

The master-apprentice relation is valued and carefully managed by informal apprentices and journeypersons as it provides them with opportunities for achieving valued functionings. Some of these opportunities exist in the support they provide for their masters. While some of those are closely related to their training, others fall outside this domain. An example of extra support in the area of training is found in Adwenpa's narrative. He narrated:

> My master knows I am a good boy and I do his account for him, receipts, and any paper documents for him which has brought me closer to him. I go to the bank on his behalf…. When he sends me on an errand, and I give him the change he gives it to me…. If you know that you have no help from anywhere and you are poor, you have to take good care of yourself and be helpful…

The tasks Adwenpa undertakes for his master helps him to learn other aspects of the trade such as keeping accounts. Access to undertake these tasks requires a high level of trust and very few apprentices get this privilege. Aside from Adwenpa, Nana also shared how he took advantage of his relationship with his master during his training. He reported:

> It was really tough during my apprenticeship. I wished then I could stop but I couldn't as I didn't have anything or options apart from apprenticeship. So, I used to wash the car of my master and he was giving me tips…I used to eat at his house, his wife was good so after washing his car, I used to get breakfast and then come with him to work. My master liked me a lot, had it not been for him…

The narratives above, show the extent to which some apprentices position themselves or the choices they make to gain support from their masters. While these actions demonstrate agency, inadequate support from parents limit the degree of freedoms they have to choose between different combinations of functionings. First, they save the little they are given, and this usually implies trimming other concerns or purposes. For example, Kwasi commented: "You have to save no matter how little you are being given. Once you know the goals you want to achieve….". Almost all the apprentices reported a saving habit due to the uncertainties in securing their basic needs from their parents.

Second, inadequate support from parents increases apprentices' dependence on their masters and the tendency for the relationship to turn exploitive. Also, it underpins the disrespect their masters demonstrate towards them as MCP 5 stated: "…So when they bring the person everything is left with the master so sometimes, they also decide to do whatever they do with them…". These put into perspective, Stones' (2005) argument that an agent can resist the constraining effect of structures if they are confident their actions will not "endanger the conditions of possibility for the realisation of core commitments" (p. 115). As long as informal apprentices are entirely dependent on their masters for their daily needs, their agency to resist constraining structures may be reduced. To make this argument is not to downplay unequal power relations, rules of respect and non-questioning of adults that characterise the master-apprentice relationship (Goody, 1989; Schraven et al., 2013). The focus is on highlighting the conditions that aid the perpetuation of exploitation and abuse within that relationship.

In sum, the determination and motivation of apprentices to complete their training, escape income poverty and contribute to their societies enable them to critically draw on their knowledge of their parents' position-practices as well as general-dispositional structures such as the hierarchical relationship between them and their masters to survive in training. While they mediate these, attention to the process of agency is important in challenging the neoliberal extolment of the self-regulatory nature of apprenticeship, where costs are borne by the apprentice and his family (Haan, 2006).

Independence and Increased Demand for Services of Training Enterprises

In this section, I examine the structural context that provides opportunities for informal apprentices and journeypersons to transition from training to self-employment. The section also examines the context that contributes to the low levels of production in informal workshops as identified in the previous chapter. Discussion of these two dimensions of capabilities is combined due to similarities in the structural context that underpin them. In analysing independence as a dimension of capability, I focus on transitioning from training to employment because being able to do this successfully underpins the freedom to be independent.

Resources that are needed to transition from training to self-employment include start-up capital or credit, land and business networks. Difficulties informal economy workers, including artisans, encounter in accessing credit is well covered in the literature. These

include characteristics of informality such as unregistered businesses, poor financial records or credit history (Aryeetey, 2002; Wellalage & Locke, 2016). Others include high lending rate in Africa and the reluctance of banks to do business with MSMEs due to the high administrative costs involved (World Bank, 2011). These constraints were confirmed in an interview with an official of the National Board for Small-Scale Industries (NBSSI). Aside from these, the official added that the lack of recognition of their skills and difficulties identifying them make it difficult to ascertain their competence and monitor them should they be given credit.

The discussion below focuses on access to land as this is not covered in the literature. The physical or material environment of the clusters is also discussed in relation to the levels of production in training enterprises. This discussion is followed by an evaluation of the hermeneutic frames of relevant agents to the extent to which these frames, condition the practices they enact which in turn affect the opportunities that MCPs, informal apprentices and journeypersons have to achieve these two dimensions of capability. I begin with the material environment of the clusters.

The Environment of Clusters

The agglomeration of enterprises in an area is known to promote the productivity and growth of firms because of the potential to benefit from external economies of scale such as access to market (McCormick, 1999). Other benefits that accrue to firms in a cluster and help reduce overhead costs include technological and knowledge transfer, innovation and shared infrastructural facilities and services (Outlook, 2017, p. 219). In the absence of these conditions, however, firms do not maximise the benefit of clustering. In the mechanic clusters that were selected for this study, some of the conditions that negatively impact firms' levels of production and demand for services related to the nature of infrastructure such as road network.

In Suame Magazine, for instance, roads were almost unmotorable and made it difficult for mechanics to attract clients to their workshops. A journeyperson in Magazine stated that on numerous occasions she has had to undertake auto body works outside the cluster as her clients with saloon cars are unable to drive through the poor roads. This is costly for her as it requires her to transport her tools and equipment. Also, she risks losing her clients to other mechanics who are better located. In addition to the poor road network, the absence of drainage systems exposes the clusters to flooding anytime there is a heavy downpour. This

leads to the destruction of goods and equipment and makes it difficult for work to be done during the raining season. Other mechanic clusters visited in Accra encountered similar problems. MCPs noted that clients' fear for their vehicles prevents them from servicing their vehicles in the clusters.

Moving on, the transition from training to self-employment requires access to land. This is one of the problems that informal apprentices and journeypersons expressed concerns over. Group acquisition of land in the city is hampered by the unavailability of swathes of land in urban areas. Land acquisition in preferred areas is expensive and artisans are unable to raise funds to purchase. As a result, it is common to find mechanics operating in open spaces in the city. The clusters where most of the mechanics operate are congested due to yearly increment in their numbers. New graduates are impacted as they need to find workspaces outside the clusters. In response to a question on the availability of land for graduates, a representative of GNAG remarked, "no, the place is choked". He continued: "The policy of the association is to have 4 [artisans] on each plot (70x100ft) but now if you are to count the number of masters on each plot, we are about 12". In another cluster, another representative also noted: "The land is choked so when the apprentices complete, where do they go?". These problems form the conditions of action of informal apprentices and journeypersons and raise questions about the role of ITAs and government in supporting the transition of informal apprentices into self-employment.

In the next section, I discuss further the views of representatives of the Garages and relevant staff of government Ministries, Department and Agencies such as the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI) and the Trades Union Congress (TUC) regarding these issues.

The Hermeneutic Frames of Representatives of GNAG and Other Stakeholders

First, all the key persons acknowledged the constraints discussed above and their role or power in providing opportunities for MCPs and journeypersons to achieve these dimensions of freedoms. On the other hand, very little is being done.

Regarding congestion in the clusters, the problem was attributed to the behaviour of informal apprentices. An official of MoTI remarked: "Government has already advised that if you [apprentices] come and learn skills in the cluster, go back to wherever you came from and apply the skills. Set up a workshop in your village, but they do not". He continued: "so it has become so congested that plans to develop the place become difficult" although it is part of

the government's long-term plan to develop the sites (Official, MoTI). He cited plans to relocate the artisans to new sites for the old sites to be developed and the reluctance of the artisans to move to new sites that are further away from the city. In view of this, an official of GNAG confirmed that attempts to decongest and move members to other sites have been difficult. He outlined two reasons why attempts to get members to relocate to new sites have been unsuccessful. One is the inability to make land payments and the other relates to concerns about access to clients.

Further probing regarding the first reason revealed that the artisans require some guarantee from either government or a private investor due to difficulties in offering outright payment for lands. Such agreement, however, depends on negotiations between the parties, with evidence of the Association's creditworthiness. On the other hand, the representatives of the GNAG's confirmed that the Association's financial records have been poor, and negotiations have usually been unsuccessful.

Three factors emerged from the data to explain this. First, most of the masters and representatives of the GNAG attributed the poor financial records of the Association to its poor accountability to members leading to their reluctance to pay their dues. The second factor relates to the lack of proactiveness on the part of the leadership in attracting new members into the Association and in developing initiatives that can help generate money for the Association. The third point relates to its lack of voice to effectively engage with the government due to its non-affiliation with TUC. In relation to the latter point, the official of TUC noted that TUC is working to bring all informal economy groups under its fold, to enable them to become affiliated to the Union. Currently, the Union of Informal Sector Workers Association (UNIWA) which comprises seventeen informal associations is an affiliate of TUC (Osei-Boateng, 2019). Through their affiliation, the associations are provided support in various ways including educating their members about their rights and responsibilities, engaging with the government on their behalf, supporting them to develop bargaining skills, advancing and protecting the interest of their members and strengthening their organisational structures.

These efforts are part of ILO's agenda to transition the informal economy to the formal. It seeks to develop a strong relationship between informal actors and the government. It is hoped that the transition to formality will contribute to sustainable, democratic, and inclusive

development geared towards addressing decent work deficits and promoting livelihoods (Lapeyre, 2020).

The ongoing discussion shows that the capability of the Association is very instrumental to the freedoms of its members and informal apprentices. Support to strengthen its structures and accountability is essential to future negotiations through which its needs can be met. The ongoing work of TUC is laudable. On the other hand, the hermeneutic frames of the MoTI officials regarding the directive that informal apprentices return to their villages do not expand their freedoms to be independent. First, most of the automotive client base is located in urban areas. Second, with no post-training support such as credit, most apprentices, as will be shortly discussed below rely on informal wage employment with their masters to save the initial capital needed for self-employment. Few who acquire formal certification can secure wage employment in formal companies. These are primary motivations for staying in the clusters. In view of this, the assertions of the officials demonstrate the low level of government's commitment towards self-employment as demonstrated in Chapter Two. Also, it reveals the weaknesses of the TVET orthodoxy within which its skills policies are embedded and the assumption that skills acquisition leads to productivity and self-employment in the absence of an enabling delivery and transformative environment for the utilisation of skills as Palmer (2007a) argues. Indeed, an official of COTVET remarked in response to lessons learnt from NAP: "When apprenticeship is completed, over time, their livelihoods change for the better".

Conduct of Apprentices and Journeypersons

Informal apprentices and journeypersons desire to own their workshop and to be independent upon completion of training. However, they perceive the difficulties involved in securing the relevant forms of capital and resources required. Paul, for example, stated: "Completion too is not easy because you need some land and money for your tools and equipment for setting the place up on the plot. So, if you don't have the money you cannot just leave like that". Similarly, Christabel remarked: "When I completed, I did not have anyone to help me, had I not been brave, I would have been at home. There are so many people who have completed apprenticeship and are at home".

In line with their knowledge of the structural context, they adopt various strategies to obtain the resources needed. Some of these include securing wage employment in informal firms. In relation to this, Timothy, who is in his third year, stated that "now I can see that I am done

with the training. I need to get company work or if I get some work and pay, I will do it to gather some money. But I wish to open my shop". All the other apprentices also noted similar plans and their dispositions may have been informed by their observation of journeypersons and knowledge of their masters' experiences. It was observed that those who had completed are spending longer years in journey work. Others too were delaying their completion because of uncertainties in transitioning from training to employment. Akuba for example has been a journeywoman for about 15 years and so has Esi. Akuba reported being offered a land by an acquaintance, but her inability to raise money to purchase it partly explains the reason she is still a journeywoman.

The ongoing discussion shows the extent of freedoms that informal apprentices have, to be independent and how they draw on their knowledge of the structural context in their conduct or plans after training. Considering these challenges, Schraven et al. (2013) argue that apprenticeship does not guarantee escape from income poverty due to the high level of precarity and insecurity (p. 29). This is an important argument considering that many of the apprentices and journeypersons in this study chose apprenticeship in the hope that it will offer a means to sustainable livelihood as discussed in Chapter Six.

Opportunities for Formal Recognition of Skills and Further Learning Within Apprenticeship

In this section, I discuss the structural context that provides opportunities for and conditions the agency of informal apprentices and journeypersons to achieve these dimensions of capability.

Structures for the Recognition of Skills

The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) has been a TVET policy priority in Ghana since it adopted the NTVETQF in 2012 (Boahin, 2018). It is believed that an RPL system will enhance lifelong learning and support different pathways in education and employment. Eight years on, there is no functional system for validating or recognising skills gained outside of the formal education system. In relation to this, an official of COTVET noted: "We are still working on it, the centres that will host the RPL are being prepared, as well as the training providers". This was confirmed by a second official of COTVET.

The development of an RPL system is part of ongoing reforms in the TVET space including the development of occupational standards and accreditation of institutions to deliver CBT.

The objectives of these reforms are two-fold, to systematise TVET delivery in the country and make training demand-oriented. In the meantime, formal recognition and certification of skills are tied to one's participation in formal training (Official of COTVET). In this regard, NVTI and other VTIs offer training accompanied by trade testing and certification. Participation in formal training is a means to acquire further knowledge to undertake trade tests, pass and receive formal certification. This is often a requirement due to the inadequacy of knowledge acquired in informal workshops and the competences required for certification. The lack of recognition of prior learning and the processes involved in having one's skills certified limits the freedoms of apprentices to have their skills recognised.

In the section below, I examine existing training arrangements and the extent of freedoms it provides informal apprentices or journeypersons to achieve valued functionings under the two dimensions of capabilities being examined.

Training Arrangements

In Chapter Two, I highlighted the parallel development of informal apprenticeship with formal vocational training in the country. This means that while NVTI offers vocational training courses for all, including informal apprentices and MCPs, participation is voluntary. In the mechanic trade, acquiring vocational certification from NVTI is not a requirement for practising the trade, although apprentices are expected to take the trade test examinations at the end of their training (see Appendix E). There is no formal arrangement in apprenticeship that allows apprentices time off to participate in external vocational courses, although most of the masters noted they encourage them to. As a result, the emphasis is placed on practical training at the workshop. For example, Kwasi mentioned:

> I have been considering it. But I haven't made any step yet. I don't have time to do that because there's no way I can go anywhere without his [master] permission and all the time there is work to do. We work 24 hours, 7 days a week, from Monday to Saturday. We don't have any holiday except Sunday.

Kwasi's emphasis on working 24 hours suggests there is no time to undertake personal activities outside of the workshop. Many reasons, however, account for why an institutional arrangement for further learning is not embedded in informal apprenticeship. Among these include the lack of financial arrangement.

Financial Arrangement

As I highlighted in Chapter Two, informal apprenticeship is a private arrangement where apprentices pay to be trained. Informal firms or MCPs do not bear financial responsibility for external vocational education that an apprentice may choose to undertake. The cost of any external course is therefore usually borne by the apprentice and his family. In most cases apprentices are unable to participate in further education because of the cost. This is the most cited reason found in the literature for why few informal apprentices enrol in NVTI courses (Jaarsma et al., 2011). Since the 1990s, there have been many donor-supported projects and programmes implemented in the informal economy which absorb the cost of external vocational education. Examples include the World Bank's VSP, SDF and Ghana TVET Voucher Project which started in 2017 and ends in 2021. These have been very helpful. The primary goal of these projects is to enhance the productivity of apprentices and their masters through further education. It is expected that initial sponsorship of the vocational education of apprentices or their masters will stimulate further interest in learning and the desire to bear the cost.

Among all these initiatives, it is the SDF that aims to foster a long-term institutional arrangement whereby firms and government contribute to the Fund for the purpose of training. This initiative is very important because it is only in the presence of a sustainable financial arrangement that the additional training needs of skilled persons, especially those in the informal economy can be met. Regarding the Fund, an official mentioned that discussions are ongoing with various stakeholders for an arrangement. Till this is done, the cost of training informal apprentices will be borne by them privately and through existing donor-funded projects, which reach few compared to the total number of apprentices. In the next section, I examine the extent to which informal apprentices and journeypersons draw on their knowledge of the context in their conduct.

Conduct of Informal Apprentices and Journeypersons

Most informal apprentices and journeypersons who participated in this study had knowledge of external training opportunities at NVTI. Only six did not know about these. Those who knew about NVTI perceived it as a formal training school that offers theoretical instruction in vocational trades and awards certificates for skills acquired. Both the knowledge offered

there, and certificates were valued by informal apprentices and journeypersons. On the other hand, only two out of the twenty-three informal apprentices and journey persons had undertaken external training at the time of the interview.

The data revealed two explanations for their non-participation. One relates to their dispositional structures, acquired in apprenticeship and the other is their knowledge about the costs involved in undertaking external training. The problem of cost concurs with the findings of other studies, but it needs not to be interpreted as operating in isolation. It has to be read in relation to other concerns that the apprentices and journeypersons have and how that informs their sorting of priorities.

Turning to their dispositional structures, some of the informal apprentices and journeypersons see the need to focus on their practical training in the informal workshop, after which they can undertake external training. This disposition emanates from their situatedness in informal training environment. The excerpts from Yoofi and Nana below illustrate this point. Yoofi remarked:

> Being here makes me a better mechanic than them because all they know is the theory. We know the practicals and they are not able to do what we do. I will need that knowledge though to add to the knowledge I have gained here. It's good to get more knowledge especially gain more understanding of the work here.

Similarly, Nana stated:

> All that I know has been acquired here. I haven't been to NVTI or any technical school. I know there is one here but not now... I don't need to go to technical school to learn all of these. They always come here to do practicals. We teach them a lot here. All they know is book knowledge…

These excerpts show the importance placed on the practical skills that are acquired in the informal workshops. Also, formal vocational education is typified for its theoretical focus, leading to some form of comparison. The sentiments of Nana and Yoofi align with their reasons for enrolling in informal apprenticeship, that is to acquire practical skills for sustainable livelihood. While they value external training, they see the need to first acquire practical skills with which they can work and earn income.

Like Yoofi and Nana, other apprentices and journeypersons who desire further knowledge or opportunities to participate in external training postpone it. To some extent, prioritising practical training leads to the perception that theoretical knowledge about one's trade can be sought later when one has achieved competency in the practical aspect of the trade and financially sound. This is expressed by Paul in the except below:

> I have heard of NVTI and I have plans to go but not now. The opportunity hasn't come for me to go yet but my plan is to get the certificate to add to my skills... Once I get the theory to add to what I already know of the practical aspect I will be good to go.

Acquiring vocational knowledge and certification from NVTI was not the immediate priority for some of the informal apprentices like Paul. To them, it seems logical to focus on the practical training, even if the knowledge is inadequate, and pursue formal training at a later stage. However, the problem with this strategy is that their habitus may be structured by informal practices in their training environment. As a result, it may not be easy to just add theory and be good to go as Paul noted.

In relation to waiting till one is financially sound, it was realised that pursuing further learning in formal institutions becomes more difficult at a later stage for a range of reasons. One has to do with the fulfilment of family obligations as one begins to earn income. Another relates to complacency. Paul expressed this as: "We become complacent with the small money we get here as we work and then at that time, we put on hold other things like further education. But I will definitely go". Similarly, Fiifi stated: "Now that I know how to look for money it is difficult to". For other informal apprentices and journeypersons, it was an issue of time. For example, Nana explained: "Very soon I will go. It is not a matter of money, but I don't have the time now. My time is not enough and especially the festive times I am very busy". Akuba also added:

> I could get work at any time and if I am in school how can I leave. It is good but the thing is that at this time you may lose your customer. I pay light bill and take care of the home so if I use my time to go to school and don't work to get some money then you have disturbed me.

It is for the reasons outlined above that some informal apprentices expressed the desire for alternative arrangements where aspects of formal training such as theory and certification can

be embedded in informal apprenticeship. This arrangement will be useful because most of the apprentices emphasised technological advancement in the field and the relevance of lifelong learning. Similarly, masters emphasised the relevance of trade theory to their work.

The analyses point to the need to consider the underlying structural or institutional arrangement and its effects on the desire for and the agency to act in relation to the capability for further learning. This is because apprentices desire further learning and recognition of skills, but the structural context they find themselves in limits their agency to act in relation to their desire. In a fast-changing technological automotive industry, this conundrum ought to be taken seriously. With more automation and technologically advanced vehicles, more knowledge is needed to make the mechanic undertake quality work and achieve mastery in what he or she does.

Occupational Safety and Health

In the previous chapter, informal apprentices and journeypersons' poor occupational safety and health functionings were discussed. These included accidents encountered due to disregard for or inappropriate safety and health practices. This section examines the structural context within which they act and their conduct in relation to their valued functionings. I begin with the policy and regulatory context.

Policy and Regulatory Context

Conditions of work, including health and safety regulations, are detailed in the 1970 Factories, Offices and Shops Act (328) (GoG, 1970a). Issues covered include but not limited to cleanliness in factories, offices and shops (Section 13), ventilation (Section 15), washing facilities (Section 16), sanitary conveniences (Section 19), protective clothing and appliances (Section 25), prohibition of lifting excessive weights (Section 27), first aid (Section 28), floors, passages and stairs (Section 35), training and supervision (Section 36), hoists and lifts (Section 44) and cranes and other lifting machines (Section 46).

The regulations above are to guide work in factories, offices, and shops. They apply to all employers who take on apprentices and therefore needs to be referred to when other regulations on apprenticeship touch briefly on safety and health. An example is Section 4 of COTVET's L.I. 2195 which states that informal training providers "should have a safe and healthy learning environment suitable for apprenticeship training" (GoG, 2012a) Similarly,

the Children's Act (Section 99) states that it is the responsibility of a craftsman who takes on an apprentice to "provide a safe and healthy environment for the apprentice" (GoG, 1998).

To some extent, the state ensures the implementation of this law in formal establishments, but this is not the case for the informal economy. For example, the Department for Factories Inspectorate (DFI), an agency under the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations (MoELR), responsible for enforcing OSH and educating people on OSH, organised 48 talks and training across all the sectors in the country in the year 2018. Only one of these was organised in the auto or transport industry (MoELR, 2019, p. 13). Two officials of the MoELR were asked about the government's position on the valued functionings of informal apprentices in this domain. Both acknowledged that the informal economy is the responsibility of the government. The first official attributed the inability of DFI to carry out safety and labour inspections to the limited financial and human resources at its disposal. On the other hand, he acknowledged that the Ministry could collaborate with intermediary organisations such as trade associations to ensure that conditions of work are safe for informal apprentices.

In addition to the limited resources, the second official added that the informal nature of work or training arrangements makes it difficult for her department to engage with persons in the informal economy. She stated that due to the tripartite system that guides the work of the Ministry, meaningful engagement with the informal economy can take place under certain conditions. Among these include the organisation of informal economy groups, the identification of workers and work sites, provision of relevant information and mutual understanding between the government and informal actors regarding each party's rights and responsibilities. In line with these conditions, efforts to address them were outlined. Examples include ongoing work to develop an informal economy roadmap. This aims to understand the informal economy better, engage with actors in the economy to address issues that emerge, harmonise fragmented policies on the informal economy and revise existing legislations or regulations that apply to the informal economy and support TUC to better support informal economy groups like GNAG.

Position-Practices of MCPs

Aside from state agencies, MCPs have a crucial role to play in educating and enforcing occupational safety and health practices at the workplace. The law requires that they provide information on OSH and a safe working environment. On the other hand, most of the masters

do not educate their apprentices about it. For example, MCP 1 stated: “I do not teach apprentices safety and health. I think they have to learn it themselves”. Also, MCP 7 mentioned, “Me I don’t talk about these [OSH] with my apprentices so they don’t know unless they learn from somewhere”. These comments seem to suggest that MCPs do not have adequate knowledge about safety and health.

Aside from knowledge of OSH, two MCPs attributed their inability to educate apprentices on OSH to lack of time. MCP 2 stated: “When they go for external training, they will take them through that. It is not something we have been doing, we do not have time…”. Similarly, MCP 10 explained: “We do not have time, so the time to gather the kids to teach them is a problem”. In addition, he cited the environment as an explanatory factor, as he said: “We do not have the right environment”. On the environment, MCP 6 also added: “The environment here is not like the factory and there are a lot of differences”. He continued: “If I rate that place 100 per cent, I will rate this place 35 per cent. The machines that you will use to work, the protector and all are not here”. Against the poor working environment, practices that do not guarantee safety and health are adopted in line with available resources.

Conduct of Apprentices

As highlighted above, most masters do not instruct apprentices about OSH upon recruitment. However, there were variations in apprentices and journeypersons source and levels of OSH knowledge. Those who knew about appropriate safety and health practices had obtained this knowledge from other contexts, including formal vocational education and training. On the other hand, their varying levels of knowledge are not translated into actions or practices that will enable them to achieve safety and health. Two reasons emerged from the data to explain this.

The first relates to their awareness of normative expectations within their context of work. Three excerpts from the data are drawn to illustrate this. Paul noted: “Here in Magazine we don’t follow those regulations. It’s the company work that follows those like Newmont etc”. Similarly, Araba answered: “We don’t follow safety measures here [in the informal workshop]”. Also, Aba replied: “As for safety we do not even have any consciousness of it”. By “we” she meant those who work in the informal economy. Understanding of the context includes their assessment of the normative sanctions associated with doing what is right for their health and safety. Concerning this, Jojo narrated:

> Over here when you use the helmet or the goggles, they will take it and throw it at you but once there was this customer who had come from America, who saw what was happening and complained about it. So, after my master took my helmet and put it somewhere.

Similarly, Nana who owns personal protective equipment but does not use it in the workshop opined:

> I don't use [my PPE) it here but I use it there [when working in formal company] or when I am travelling to go and work. Over here when you use it…, you know our people. The kind of things that they will say about it.

Nana's narrative shows that he alters his actions depending on where he works. If he is in his informal workshop, he does not use PPE for fear of what his master will say. However, when he is working elsewhere on private jobs, he uses his PPE as he understands the risk of not doing so. The knowledge structures, namely norms and interpretive schemes drawn upon in their actions are influenced by perceptions of their context of action, rewards and sanctions.

It is important to mention that occupational safety and health encompasses a broad range of practices. Among these include "specialised" knowledge and skills that are applied in practices. Also, other material resources are instrumental to the appropriate utilisation of such knowledge and skills. As actors who are embedded in the informal apprenticeship environment, their practices within that context, involves the application of their knowledge per the material resources available. They unleash their creativity, improvise, and innovate but in ways that only enable them to achieve minimal levels of safety and health. For example, Adwenpa explained:

> Here you have to use your mind. For instance, as you park a car you should know that you will be going underneath it and its life and death. So, when you park you need to double-check to see if the grounding is strong. That the place is not soft and sloppy as you can easily slip when you park in that condition.

In other instances, improvisations such as makeshift glasses are used in place of goggles for welding. In auto-spraying, some wear wet rags instead of the appropriate mask. These actions are enacted by apprentices and journeypersons to protect themselves and minimise the negative effects of work on their health. However, some also work with no form of protection

as they weld with their bare eyes and inhale poisonous gases from spraying in open spaces. In cases where the usage of PPE can ensure some level of safety, most of the informal apprentices and journeypersons attributed their non-usage to their inability to afford one. Unlike formal firms, where this is the responsibility of the employer, the apprenticeship agreement stipulates that apprentices and their parents are responsible for this.

Like the previous dimension of capability, the inability of informal apprentices and journeypersons to afford PPE should be seen in relation to other obligations that they have. To reiterate, most of the apprentices and journeypersons mentioned they save, but the money being saved is allotted to their food and accommodation. This shows that even as their safety and health is important to them, there is a trimming of this purpose to safeguard others. This brings to the fore McLaughlin's (1979) argument that "in the absence of different modes of training or different economic circumstances, it is not unusual that the improvisational capacities of Ghanaian wayside mechanics would be very highly refined" (p. 208). This is reflected in the data just presented and in some of the narratives of the apprentices. The narrative of Fiifi sums it up perfectly, as he explains the condition under which he can act differently. He notes:

> Someday I would not want to take my apprentice through all the painful things I have gone through here. God should allow me to at least buy the tools and equipment needed. Our work makes us travel and when we go to the companies and we see the machines, how they do not use manpower… machines for removing tight bolts and lifting heavy things. I am not going to treat other people the same *unless it doesn't go well* with me [emphasis added].

Bodily Integrity and Respect

In the previous chapter, the gendered experiences of apprentices and journeypersons in relation to this dimension of capability and the capability to be independent were discussed. The factors that contribute to the disrespect of masters towards their male apprentices have been broached in the first dimension of capability. In this section, I focus on the females. I examine the structural context that provides opportunities and constraints to their freedoms. This position is taken considering the small representation of females in the trade and the need to ensure gender equality. I begin with the policy context, specifically the position-practices of officials of COTVET. This is followed by an analysis of the workshop context,

that is the position-practices of masters and customers. The last section examines the conduct of master craftswomen and journeypersons regarding organising and gender norms.

Policy Context

The need to address gender equality in and through TVET has been on the agenda of the Government of Ghana (GoG, 2004). On the other hand, the government's commitment, and support to this course, especially in informal training has been minimal. Examples of interventions by COTVET to increase female representation in TVET more generally and in male-dominated trades include a national bursary support scheme which was implemented from 2014 to 2019 as part of the Development of Skills for Industry Project (DSIP)[27], guidance and counselling in schools, MyTVET campaign and TVET role model programme.

An official of COTVET noted that implementation of gender programmes, especially guidance and counselling, have dragged because the Council is constrained by inadequate financial resources. This is partly because the government's support for the TVET sub-sector is very minimal. The official continued: "When we get something the funds are so meagre that they cannot sponsor bigger projects like that". As initiatives mainly depend on donor support, programmes are susceptible to fluidity in funds and lack sustainability.

Workshop Context

In the context of minimal government support in the area of gender equality in TVET, male masters who take on female apprentices help to challenge gender stereotypes through their practices at the workshop. In relation to the distribution of tasks, most of the female apprentices reported that tasks in the workshop are distributed fairly in most cases. Almost all the female apprentices and journeypersons reported that they receive enormous support from their masters and customers alike. In relation to the latter, it emerged from the narratives that after expressing initial surprise, customers encourage the female artisans. For example, Aba

[27] DSIP was a skills development project by GoG that aimed to support the TVET sector. The objectives of the project included support for the drafting of a TVET Strategic Plan, commitment to increase female participation in science related and male-dominated trades and the strengthening of the capacity of COTVET (African Development Bank, 2020). It consisted of GoG's financial contribution of UA 7.7 million, an African Development Bank loan of UA 45 million and a grant of UA 25 million (African Development Bank 2020).

stated: “As a female apprentice, some people see you and admire what you do, even in my decorative work”. Also, Maame Afua added:

> I saw this master who said I shouldn’t mind people who discourage me and that it is good that I am doing this as a female. If I have my own shop, I will see the number of jobs I will get, as males get attracted to such females and will like to bring their cars to you.

A third apprentice, Abena also remarked:

> People encourage me a lot, they tell me to keep on and that I am doing very well. That is uplifting. I can’t even count the many times people have encouraged or admired what I do. Because it’s a male job traditionally, once they see a female doing it, they admire it.

As it has been remarked by the apprentices, these words show the extent to which they are encouraged. Likewise, the encouragement represents perceived gender construction of work and this was highlighted by Aba as she noted: “But I got fed up with that [the encouraging words] because it’s like some stereotype”.

Despite these positive developments, there is still more to be done to raise consciousness about gender in workshops. This is because three apprentices voiced that some masters are discriminatory, doubtful of females’ abilities and overly conscious of gender in assigning tasks to their male and female apprentices. For example, Aba stated:

> And you are given special treatment and that is what I don’t like. It got to a time my master was giving me preferential treatment. Like when we have to go somewhere, he thinks I can’t do certain things so asks me to stay behind. But I don’t like it. I want to be able to do things. Even when it is hard, at least let me decide for myself. But if you tell me that I can’t do it, you kill me!

Similarly, Abena added: “Some of the things they think I cannot do so they ask the guys to do it”. Serwaa recounted her experience as follows:

> My father once asked me to work on his car and I was able to do it. My master saw it and was surprised so he came to ask me if we were the ones who worked on my father’s car and I said no. He [my father] got his stuff and asked me to do it. So, he was surprised at the work I had done, and he

> informed my dad saying that I had exceeded his expectations. He told him how smart I am and how he was wrong about me.

The narratives above show some of the ways in which the stereotypical or prejudiced attitudes of some masters negatively impact on female apprentices' freedom to be respected and treated equally in the workplace. However, it is important to mention that while these attitudes could be motivated by the gendered construction of work, it also emanates from the labour-intensive nature of work in informal mechanic workshops. Automotive repair work as it was described by the apprentices, journeypersons and MCPs is very labour intensive. Adding to this uneasiness, workshops lack the tools and equipment that enhance the completion of tasks with less manpower. This was a major issue for the male apprentices who are expected to demonstrate their masculinity and not complain when working in this condition. These may have contributed to masters' assignment of some tasks to male apprentices to complete as they feel the females cannot perform them. For example, MCP 6 stated: "The guys are strong compared to the women". Also, Nana, lamenting about the training environment, mentioned: "It makes the work very difficult and you cannot say you can't do it. It makes it difficult for the women who can't lift these heavy equipment and parts". This was reiterated by other apprentices. Kobby also remarked: "We use our strength to lift machines and equipment so if we get equipment to do that, that will be good. It's not an easy job so how can women do these?".

Aba, although not endorsing the discriminatory actions of some MCPs, remarked: "It's never true that what a man can do a woman can do and do it better. When I try, I get massive chest pains, so I don't pressure myself. I stay in my lane to do what I can do". While this assertion is true in the sense of the physical strength of males and females, if the infrastructure at the informal workplaces could be improved, it would make it easier for females to complete some tasks easily and reduce the discrimination and gendered stereotypes. When this occurs, gender will cease to be a barrier to participating in male- dominated trades. In the interim, females do not shy away from asking for help if they need it, although they do not wish to be discriminated against based on their gender.

Conduct of Female Apprentices

In this section, I examine the extent to which female apprentices, journeypersons and masters interpret general-dispositional structures that have the potential to undermine their choices and participation in the automotive trade. Four examples of these general-dispositional

structures (proverbs) in Akan that bear on their subjectivity are (a) when a woman and a man meet, the woman remains (literally is) a woman and the man (is literally) a man, (b) a woman sells garden eggs and not gunpowder, (c) if a woman will be successful or wealthy it is due to a man, and (d) a woman's glory (literally what causes her to be respected) is marriage (Diabah & Appiah Amfo, 2015, pp. 13 – 20). The first proverb conveys the message of female submissiveness to men. The second proverb means that culturally acceptable economic activities for women include trade in foodstuffs and other vocational trades that align with their femininity such as catering, hairdressing among others. The third and last proverbs affirm the value of marriage in Ghanaian society. In relation to these, most of the stakeholders attributed the low participation or retention of females in the automotive trade to their uncritical acceptance of these structures in their relationships or marriage. In addition to this is the difficulty of combining reproductive roles with the demands of automotive work.

Female apprentices, masters and journeypersons who participated in this study, were asked the hypothetical question of what they would do if they were to meet a partner who did not approve of their occupational choice. Their responses showed degrees of critical distance from their general-dispositional structures. They did not demonstrate the tendency to compromise on career choice as it constituted their identity. However, for reasons of security, only Araba was willing to forego her career for an alternative livelihood. I present the narratives of Baaba and Christabel below.

Baaba narrated:

> My husband in future cannot tell me to stop because if I stay at home how much will he give me. The more I stay at home the more I will forget the work. Some of them are like that when they come into your life, they tell you to be a housewife and after a while, they begin to maltreat you. So, for me, if you are a man and you come into my life and want me to stop my work then you will rather go because that will not be possible.

Also, Christabel, who has rented a space for working, is in a stable relationship and plans to get married remarked:

> Now I have someone who is a teacher in one of the private schools. He understands me. He hasn't complained before as he knows this is what I do. If

> you don't understand that way, then we can't be in a relationship. So, you have to accept me and the work that I do.

The female apprentices and journeypersons felt they had invested so much to learn the trade and therefore normative expectations regarding their work could not be compromised, as it constrains their freedom to be respected. These responses are significant in a context where marriage is a status symbol and also serves as a social safety net for females (Lowe, 2019). In addition, their responses complement their motivations for enrolling in training discussed in Chapter Six and exemplified in Ami's statement: "I had a vision of what I wanted to become". However, within the will to subvert normative expectations, are conditions that could lead to compromises. The narrative of Araba demonstrates this. Araba commented:

> Someday if my husband tells me to stop and that he will be able to take care of me, I will, it doesn't matter if all the 7 years of training are wasted, but I cannot just be at home and I have to do something else, at least work.

While Araba did not explain her reasoning, it is important to acknowledge the varied influences of the work environment and safety and health practices on the conduct of females. Ama's trajectory testifies to this. She took extensive breaks during pregnancy as she noted: "The paint used to get into my system and affect my lungs…and my husband did not like it". She used to take her child to the workplace and put him to bed in a car while she worked. She narrated that his child got sick and her husband asked her to quit. She resorted to the sale of different items ranging from soap to used clothing. After her fourth child turned almost two years, she reasoned, "no, as for this job [automotive work] it is my passion, so I need to get back to it". She then returned to the trade.

The narrative of Ama reveals that normative structures are not the only factors responsible for the low participation or retention of females in the trade. The environment for the utilisation of skills in the context of decent work is important. Also, the ability to afford childcare is essential for the auto-sprayers who work outside the home, in conditions unsuitable for children. Furthermore, unionisation or organising helps females to voice their concerns and to have them met. In relation to this, the poor organisation of female artisans vis-à-vis their male counterparts disadvantage them further. None of the female journeypersons and masters were members of the GNAG. Most of them, including the informal apprentices did not know about the GNAG and neither was there an association or network for the females. A proper organisation would make them visible to all, especially to other females who aspire to be in

the trade. This would help to dispel gender stereotypes. Also, considering the advantages of organising such as benefiting from government support and having a voice, the poor representation of females in GNAG and the absence of a female network or association means that they do not benefit from such support and remain marginalised within the trade.

English Literacy

This section examines the structural context that provides opportunities for the realisation of the capability to acquire English Language proficiency. The position-practices of officials of the Non-Formal Education Division is evaluated. This is followed by the conduct of apprentices and journeypersons in relation to this capability.

The Non-Formal Education Division is an agency of the Ministry of Education that provides literacy and numeracy lessons for out-of-school populations. However, there has been a huge gap between the expectations of the Division and its functioning. An official of NFED confirmed that the institution is not able to function effectively as it should due to some institutional as well as learner constraints. Learner constraints include time and the inability of learners to prioritise the learning of English language. Some of the institutional constraints mentioned include lack of non-formal education policy, inadequate human and financial resources. Others include the approach to the delivery of programmes. Government support for the Division has been low (MoE, 2018). Since funding from the World Bank for the National Functional Literacy Programme (NFLP) run out in 2008, the Division has had less funding to run literacy programmes.

Due to lessons learnt from NFLP regarding participants evaluation of the relevance of the Programme, the Division has developed vocational literacy curriculum for the Ghana Hairdressers and Beauticians Association (GHABA) and Dressmakers Association. This is yet to be developed for other trade areas including the automotive trade. The NFED official acknowledged the importance of tailored lessons in his statement below:

> We need to make provision flexible and responsive towards the felt needs of the people. I always say that if an adult does not see the relevance of what he is learning it becomes a waste of time to him or her.

In the section, below, I briefly discuss the conduct of informal apprentices and journey persons in relation to this dimension of capability.

Conduct of Apprentices and Journeypersons

Informal apprentices and journeypersons who expressed the desire to be proficient in English language did not know about NFED and the opportunities available to acquire instruction in English. One would expect that as they desire this functioning, efforts will be made to achieve it. Though desirable, it is not perceived as a priority among other concerns that they have. The excerpt of Kobby below depicts this.

> I can't speak English very well even though they used to tell us in primary school to speak English. It's been a long time since I last wrote with a pen. My tools are my pens, my everything and my life and future.

For others with families like Akuba, it was difficult making time to attend lessons. These constraints were alluded to by the NFED official who noted, "that is where I sometimes see people who are eager to learn or express interest are not found in the classroom just because of the livelihood issues".

Discussion

This chapter has evaluated the extent of freedoms that informal apprentices and journeypersons have, to achieve valued functionings identified in the previous chapter. Supplementing the capability approach with strong structuration theory, context analysis was used to understand the structural context, including the position-practices of networked agents to the extent to which these provide or limit the opportunities that apprentices and journeypersons have to achieve valued functionings. Context analysis was paired with conduct analysis to understand the agency involved or choices that apprentices and journeypersons make in relation to their valued functionings. While both Sen (1999) and Stones (2005) conceive of agents as individuals who act and intervene in the course of events or state of affairs, strong structuration theory's theorisation helps to understand agency as situated and a culmination of one's knowledge of and interpretation or engagement with the context of action. This provides information regarding the extent of agency that individuals have to bring about change to their circumstances or valued functionings.

Context analysis reveals a range of position-practice relations within which informal apprentices are embedded. Among these include relations with clients, parents, masters, officials of the GNAG, MoTI, MoELR, MoE, COTVET and TUC. The opportunities that they have to achieve their valued functionings are connected to the institutionalised features of the system relating to formality and informality as well as the position-practices of these

agents. The relational nature of position-practices implies that each positional agent or group of agents' practices affect others. This makes it important to understand the linkages as well as the dialectic of control between and among positioned agents, the conditions within which these agents act, and either reproduce the institutionalised features of the system or transform them, and their capacity for agency within those structures. Nine main findings emerge from the analysis of context and conduct in relation to the eight dimensions of capabilities discussed. Six of these are drawn from context analysis and these are discussed first.

First, the training stage is a period in which informal apprentices need to be supported to achieve the basic requirement of life and training such as shelter, food and tools and equipment. As apprenticeship is a private arrangement between parents or family members of apprentices and MCPs, their practices are extremely central to the achievement of this capability. The findings of the chapter show that per the apprenticeship agreement, parents are required to bear all the cost associated with training such as apprenticeship fees, accommodation of their wards, food, medical care, tools and equipment, protective clothing and money for upkeep. On the other hand, their practices fall short of their positional obligations.

As the study's sample does not include parents, it is not entirely clear why they do not live up to these obligations, but it could be due to the enormous costs involved in seeing a ward through training. This may be further linked to their socio-economic status (see Appendix B. 1), as almost all of the parents are either self-employed farmers or in informal employment. The most recent analysis of poverty trends in Ghana shows that poverty is highest among households whose heads are self-employed in the agricultural sector (GSS, 2018). This is followed by those who work in the private sector (GSS, 2018). It is important to mention that the private sector absorbs about 93 per cent of the labour force, while the public sector employs about seven per cent (GSS, 2019). Of those who work in the private sector, about 71 per cent are in informal employment (GSS, 2019). Also, about two-thirds of the working population are in vulnerable employment (GSS, 2019). The poverty report shows that poverty is lowest for households whose heads are employees of the public sector (GSS, 2018).

The position-practices of parents therefore limits the opportunities that apprentices have to achieve the basic requirements of life and training. In response, MCPs help to shoulder the responsibilities of the parents. However, they are limited in the extent to which they can bear all these responsibilities and the support provided, while helpful, is inadequate in meeting the

needs of the apprentices. In the apprenticeship literature, the apprenticeship arrangement is considered a model due to its self-financing feature, affordability, cost-effectiveness and non-involvement of the state (Palmer, 2009; Johanson & Adams, 2004; Breyer, 2007). While this may be true for access to apprenticeship for youths compared to formal TVET, the findings show that it is important to look beyond access to how well apprentices do in training. The findings of the position-practices of masters and parents is not an invitation for the involvement of the Government in the provision of stipends for apprentices. Rather, it leads to a questioning of the romanticisation and idealisation of informal apprenticeship in the skills literature. These further raise issues about equality considering that informal apprenticeship caters to disadvantaged youths and is promoted for the poor who cannot afford formal education and training.

Second, informal apprenticeship is strongly linked to self-employment due to its practical orientation and situatedness in workshop production. Trainees develop social capital and business-related skills such as client engagement and costing. The transition from training to self-employment also requires start-up capital and land. The latter is very important and of grave concern to automotive artisans due to the nature of their work. Due to yearly increment in their numbers, the clusters are congested, making it difficult for new graduates to secure working plots for work in the clusters. In addition, the clusters are poorly developed, and this partly contributes to the low demand for their services. This finding supports the discussion in Chapter Two regarding inadequate support for small-scale industrialists in the informal economy. Also, the finding reflects Palmer's (2007a) emphasis on a transformative environment for the utilisation of skills such as adequate infrastructure for informal enterprises.

Besides this, the hermeneutic frames of some of the government officials regarding congestion in the clusters and their role in providing an enabling environment for apprentices and journeypersons show an inadequate understanding of the process involved in transitioning from training to employment such as the uptake of informal work to save the capital needed. Their frame of reference which informs their position-practices can be likened to Dejaeghere and Baxter's (2014) critique of the neoliberal employability discourse that shifts the responsibility of employment to young people.

Although GNAG exists to advance the interest of its members, it has not been successful in securing land for its members and in negotiating with local government authorities regarding

infrastructural development in the cluster. These are some of the functions that Haan (2006) highlighted ITAs are good for. However, institutional practices of the Association such as its accountability to members, poor leadership and partisanship have been inimical to their effectiveness. Efforts of the TUC in this area is essential in supporting the Association to develop stronger structures to be effective in its functions. The capability of the Association is instrumental to the freedoms of its members in many areas including the transition from training to work or the attainment of sustainable livelihood as highlighted in the apprenticeship literature. On the other hand, this capability cannot be conceived outside a meaningful relationship between the state and ITAs.

Third, it was found in relation to the fourth dimension of capability that the absence of an RPL system reduces the range of options that apprentices have, to get their skills formally recognised. On the other hand, participation in the courses and trade test of NVTI is instrumental to the acquisition of certification needed to access employment in the formal labour market, should they choose to. Their participation is also linked to their opportunity to acquire further learning, which is the fifth dimension of capability. Apprentices are encouraged by their MCPs to participate in further learning at NVTI and undertake trade tests that lead to certification. However, financial constraints on their part and lack of sustainable financial arrangement on the part of government and employers limit their engagement with NVTI. This leads to a focus on the practical aspect of the trade that is offered by MCPs in the workshop.

Fourth, the findings presented under the sixth dimension of capability shows that the capability of informal apprentices and journeypersons to achieve occupational safety and health and to work under conditions of decent work more broadly are restricted due to lack of education and enforcement of safety and health measures by their masters in the workshop. The findings point to some factors such as inadequate knowledge of safety and health, lack of time for such instruction and the poor infrastructural conditions of the workshop.

At the level of the state, the MoELR, which is responsible for labour issues, including safety and health is not able to carry out OSH talks and inspection in informal workplaces. While this state of affairs is attributed to inadequate resources, the findings also show that the formal institutional structures (rules) that guide the operations of the Ministry limit its engagement with informal actors. As the MoELR operates under tripartism, it works with organised labour and employers' association. In view of this, its purview over practices in

informal workshops is limited. Efforts of TUC in assisting informal associations to become affiliated to it will contribute to informal associations' formidability. This will further strengthen their capacity to partner with the state in providing the right conditions of work for its members and informal apprentices. In addition to these findings is the need to ensure the development of clusters, access to finance and macro-economic factors relevant for the growth of enterprises as emphasised within the growth paradigm and in the skills literature (Palmer, 2007a; Johanson & Adams, 2004; Middleton et al., 1991).

Fifth, analysis of the context of the capability of bodily health and integrity shows that efforts are being made by COTVET to provide gender education and campaign against gender norms that affect females' participation in male-dominated trades. However, its support can be intensified with more financial allocation from the central government. At the workshop level, the findings show that masters and clients are supportive of females' choices and encourage them to take the trade seriously. On the other hand, the poor infrastructural state of the workshops which makes the automotive work extremely labour intensive and physically difficult leads to the differentiation of tasks according to the level of physical strength involved. This risk reproducing norms regarding appropriate activities for males and females. The finding points to an overemphasis in the literature that "apprenticeship is gender-biased" and norms limit opportunities for the equal participation of females in male-dominated trades (Palmer, 2007b, p. 408; Johanson & Adams, 2004, p. 132; Haan, 2006).

In relation to male apprentices, the lack of respect by their masters and exploitation that is encountered in the workshop stem from parental neglect of their responsibilities and poor supervision of practices in the workshop by the GNAG. The position-practices of these agents, especially parents are essential to the capability of voice of informal apprentices. In the CCA-VET literature, this is an important capability that is instrumental to the achievement of other capabilities. In view of this, an institutional arrangement such as the development of a youth chapter in the GNAG as it exists in the Ghana Hairdressers and Beauticians Association will support this capability (Schraven et al., 2013).

Sixth, the discussion under the capability for English Language proficiency shows that NFED comprehends the importance of its role in providing opportunities for the realisation of this capability. On the other hand, their capacity to support apprentices is significantly affected by inadequate resources. Within the bureaucratic circuit, NFED receives less funding from the

government and relies on the support of international agencies in rolling out literacy programmes. This further weakens its capacity to achieve its mandate.

Seventh, analysis of the conduct or degrees of agency of informal apprentices and journeypersons in relation to their dimensions of capabilities show that they attach great importance to their training and are directly motivated to complete it. Amidst inadequate support from parents and MCPs, this motivation leads them to sacrifice comfort and endure harsh conditions in relation to the satisfaction of the basic requirement of life such as food, clothing and shelter. The motivation helps to distinguish between those who drop out of training and those who successfully complete the training programme. In addition, it attests to the discussion in Chapter Six regarding their perception of apprenticeship. If apprenticeship was a last resort, they would not be able to stay on course amidst the challenges.

Beyond training, they adopt various strategies to navigate the difficult terrain of transitioning to self-employment. This includes delaying their graduation, while they continue to work with their masters, securing informal wage employment with them or other informal employers until enough money is saved to cover land rent and tools and equipment needed to be self-employed. On the other hand, these need not substitute the provision of adequate support in the transition from training to self-employment.

Eight, while informal apprentices and journeypersons value opportunities to acquire further education and have their skills formally recognised, they prioritise the acquisition of practical skills in the workshop till they are financially sound to undertake further learning in formal vocational institutes. Likewise, the prioritisation of work leads to less prioritisation of other concerns such as the desire to acquire proficiency in English Language. Also, in the absence of a supportive environment and inadequate funds to purchase personal protective equipment for the achievement of safety and health, they unleash their creativity and improvise in varied ways to achieve some level of safety.

Ninth, the examination of the agency of female apprentices, journeypersons and MCPs regarding the capability for bodily integrity and respect shows a high degree of critical distance from normative expectations associated with their gender. They do not demonstrate the tendency to sacrifice their occupational choice for other livelihoods that align with their gender. This shows that gender can be enacted differently, and females are capable of being critical of structures. Their gendered practices are key to changing gender norms. On the other hand, attending to the process of choice points to the need to take seriously the

conditions that can lead them to practice gender in a way that reproduces the existing structures. Among these include care arrangements and the harsh conditions that emanate from the poor working environment.

To conclude on the analysis of the conduct of informal apprentices and journeypersons, the discussion first demonstrates a strong desire or motivation to acquire skills among informal apprentices and journeypersons. In line with the notion of rationalisation of action, the discussion points to Giddens (1979) argument that "one's life-activity does not consist of a strung-out series of discrete purposes and projects…" (p. 89). Life is a flow with different connected domains of well-being or functionings that are constitutive of a person's life (Sen, 1995). This is similar to McGrath (2012) assertion that "VET is about humans learning, working, and living" (p. 625).

In attending to the flow of life, informal apprentices and journeypersons integrate their concerns into some hierarchy, which informs their conduct (Stones, 2005). The integration of concerns, Stones (2005) argues may be done in a taken-for-granted manner or reflectively and may not necessarily "imply harmony and the lack of tension" (p. 103). The process is informed by one's dispositional structures as well as an assessment of the "substantive terrain of action" and judgement of which projects are mutually attainable (Stones, 2005, p. 103). Examples include the prioritisation of livelihood concerns over other equally important and desired concerns such as the capability of English literacy, further learning and achievement of safety and health. While apprentices and journeypersons critically draw on their knowledge of the context into their conduct in line with their strong desire to acquire skills and secure a sustainable livelihood, their conduct and the process of agency calls for critical examination of and intervention in their conditions of action. Understanding this process extends and qualifies the notion of agency freedom in the capability approach.

Chapter Nine: Conclusions

This thesis began with a historical overview of the development of informal apprenticeship in Ghana and its neglect in the country's colonial and the first half of its post-colonial history. During this period, most of the education reforms focused on vocationalising the school curriculum to prepare pupils for the labour market. While informal apprenticeship served as an initial and post-school training option for the majority of youths, less attention was paid to the system and the needs of those it catered to.

The discovery of the informal economy in the 1970s, the slow growth of the modern sector and its capacity to absorb large numbers of the working population, neoliberal critique of public TVET and its effectiveness and adverse effects of economic restructuring led to increased academic and policy interest in informal apprenticeship. Interest in informal apprenticeship from the 1990s was stimulated by a series of studies that affirmed a positive correlation between primary education and labour market outcomes on the one hand, and low rate of return for TVET (Psacharopoulos, 1985, 1987; Colclough, 1982). These culminated in the publication of a TVET policy by the World Bank in which the Bank emphasised private over the public provision of TVET.

Informal apprenticeship has since become an important policy tool due to its capacity to provide skills to large numbers of basic education graduates, solve the problem of youth unemployment and alleviate poverty. Also, it is considered the primary means of improving the productivity of the informal economy. Viewed within the human capital theory and embedded in the growth paradigm, increased attention is paid to the human capital development of skilled persons in anticipation of associated positive effects on productivity, poverty and economic growth. Against this background, this study was prompted by two main problematics.

First, while informal apprenticeship is high on the policy agenda for its instrumental role in employment, poverty reduction and the economy, the academic literature underscores its low standing in society and undesirability among the youth as it is poorly perceived (Bortei-Doku et al., 2011; Foster, 1965a; Haan, 2006). In view of this, the study sought to contribute to the literature on young people's perceptions of informal apprenticeship. By drawing on a sample of male and female participants in the automotive trade in Ghana, the first research question asked why young people enrol in informal apprenticeship.

The second problem relates to King and Palmer's (2007) concern about the narrow income-based conception of poverty and an inadequate understanding of the poverty-reducing role of skills training and its contribution to the well-being of trainees. Following from this is McGrath's (2012) critique of the dominant TVET for economic growth orthodoxy as well as other concerns about the limitations of this paradigm in understanding the role of TVET. The quest to understand the contribution of informal apprenticeship in the broader well-being of trainees informed the study's second and third research questions. Framed within the capability approach and strong structuration theory, the second and third research questions asked: What freedoms are valued by informal apprentices and journeypersons and to what extent do they have the opportunity and agency freedom to achieve valued functionings?.

The rest of the chapter discusses the study's key research findings. Discussion of the findings is organised along the three research questions outlined above. This is followed by the central argument advanced in the study, policy implications of the study and its limitations. These are preceded by a discussion of the contribution of the study.

Contribution of the Study

Following McGrath's (2012) argument that "VET is grounded in an outmoded model of development" and his subsequent call for TVET research that is grounded in a human development paradigm, there has been a theoretical shift away from the human capital theory and TVET for economic development orthodoxy that has underpinned TVET policy and academic research for centuries (p. 623). In the past decade, a growing body of literature has emerged that apply the capability approach to our understanding of the role of TVET in human development (Moodie, et al., 2018; Wheelahan & Moodie, 2011; López Fogués, 2014; Suart, 2019; Powell & McGrath, 2019; Hilal, 2018; Ngcwangu, 2019; Thorne, 2020; Dejaeghere & Baxter, 2014; Dejaeghere, Wiger & Willemsen, 2016; Tikly, 2013, 2019; Dejaeghere, 2020). The contribution that this body of work makes to the TVET literature was discussed in Chapter Four. This includes an emphasis on the voices of trainees, their functionings and capabilities.

While the TVET for human development account has much to contribute to the literature on informal apprenticeship, it has not yet been applied to the study of informal apprenticeship. As it was argued in Chapter Three, the skills training literature is embedded in the TVET for economic development paradigm. Within this paradigm, there is a predominant focus on the skills needs of informal artisans and the contribution of their human capital to the

productivity of the informal economy, unemployment, poverty reduction and economic growth. As a result, the implication of apprenticeship as a means of human development is largely unexplored.

The first contribution of this study lies in its application of the capability approach to the study of informal apprenticeship. This contribution is novel and very important in that while few studies focus on the experiences of informal apprentices in training, none provide a holistic examination of functionings that are valued by informal apprentices (Schraven et al, 2013; Donkor, 2012; Ryan, 2015). Also, no study provides an understanding of the different domains of well-being associated with informal apprenticeship. This study achieves that by providing a summary of functionings that are valued by informal apprentices and journeypersons in Table 7.1. This is useful in focusing the discussion on what matters to these individuals, while also forming the basis for further refinement. Furthermore, the identification of the valued functionings of informal apprentices and journeypersons aid evaluation of the extent of freedoms they have to achieve these. This is addressed in Chapter Eight of the thesis.

Second, following an established tradition in the education and capability literature in developing a list of capabilities that are valued by informal apprentices and journeypersons, the study contributes to the existing literature on TVET capabilities. Apart from Dejaeghere and Baxter (2014) who apply the approach to non-formal training in Sub-Saharan Africa, other applications of the approach have focused on formal TVET. As informal apprenticeship is the largest provider of training for the majority of youths in Sub-Saharan Africa, knowledge of the functionings and valued functionings of youth enrolled in informal apprenticeship is a great contribution to the literature. Whilst Ghana was the focus of the study, its apprenticeship system is one of the most extensively developed, comparable to others in West Africa. Also, as highlighted in Chapter Three, due to the embeddedness of informal apprenticeship in the informal economy and similarities in some of its features across other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, the knowledge generated is useful to informal apprenticeship in other contexts.

Third, the study contributes to the capability approach by supplementing it with strong structuration theory. Strong structuration theory helps to address some of the weaknesses of the capability approach such as its inadequate account of structure and attention to the social conditions or context in which capabilities are constituted. Other studies have addressed the

weaknesses of the approach with different theories. For example, López Fogués (2014) applied Young's "five faces of oppression" namely exploitation, marginalisation, powerlessness, cultural imperialism, and violence to conceptualise the forces or structures that limit opportunities of TVET students within education and in the labour market. Also, Powell (2014) drew on Archer's social realist theory within the critical realist ontology to theorise the structural conditions that confront students and their agential mediation of these structures. Hart (2019) utilised Bourdieu's theory of habitus and field to understand the fields within which students are embedded and how these affect their habitus and access to capital required to transform their aspirations into capabilities. Dejaeghere (2020) drew on feminist and postcolonial theories to understand the effects of gender and postcolonial relations on capabilities. Similarly, Hilal (2018) drew on theories in Gender and Development (GAD) in a way that allowed her to theorise intersectional inequalities that confront students and measure the contribution of TVET to their empowerment.

These theoretical syntheses offer unique perspectives for understanding the social constitution of capabilities. On the other hand, they embody different ontological and epistemological assumptions that are different from strong structuration theory. This study contributes to the capability approach by drawing on the duality of structure in strong structuration theory to operationalise opportunity and agency freedom in the capability approach. The framework developed from a synthesis of the capability approach and strong structuration theory adapts Dejaeghere and Baxter's (2014) capabilities model for explaining capabilities of youth in an NGO livelihood programme. In their model, individual and household endowments, which includes skills gained from the programme, are taken as the starting point of analysis as these are perceived to contribute to livelihood opportunities. Also, emphasis is placed on structures of constraints that affect the transformation of endowments into capabilities and individual values and desires that influence the choices that are made in transforming capabilities into functionings.

This study's framework differs from and theoretically extends Dejaeghere and Baxter's (2014) model. First, it takes as its starting point valued functionings instead of endowments (individual and household). This helps to investigate the influence of one's structural context on his or her capability set. Second, taking the view that individuals are embedded in sets of position-practice relations and institutions that provide opportunities, including endowments for the expansion of their capability set, an emphasis is placed on position-practice relations

and material context that provide or limit opportunities for the achievement of capabilities. This helps to move beyond a focus on structural constraints to understand structure as both enablement and constraints to freedoms. Also, this theorisation helps to move beyond a focus on endowment or assets to the conditions that influence these endowments in the first place. Third and in response to criticisms regarding the inadequate sociological grounding of agency and individual choices, choices are conceptualised as an outcome of how agents pre-reflexively or critically draw on their internal structures in their conduct. This provides an understanding of how structures are mediated by individuals to produce conduct.

Third, structuration theory's ontology of praxis "presumes that set of highly structured practices and unequal relations exist between and among differently situated agents in the family, workplace and state bureaucracies" (Cohen, 1989, p. 207). Consequently, it does not focus on these relations from a structural perspective. On the other hand, it prioritises enacted practices of socially positioned agents and how these contribute to the reproduction or transformation of existing relations or institutionalised practices. Theoretically, this helps to understand freedoms as "anchored in the structuring, but changing, interactions [or practices] between [and among positioned] people" (Zimmerman, 2006, p. 477). Chapter Eight discussed the empirical implications of this theorising and its contribution to the apprenticeship literature. In this chapter, these are summarised in the section on key findings of the study.

Fourth, by drawing on strong structuration theory to interpret young people's reasons for enrolling in informal apprenticeship, the study moves beyond the overly structural reading or account of why people enrol in informal apprenticeship. In these accounts, young people are denied agency leading to a poor understanding of their motivations for enrolling in training. Enrolment is explained as the outcome of income poverty leading to the inability to continue with formal education, parental choice and gender norms that determine females' selection of feminised trades over male-dominated ones (Kusi-Mensah, 2017; Bortei-Doku et al., 2011, 2013). Working with strong structuration theory, constraining conditions of action are acknowledged, on the other hand, the theory emphasises the degrees to which these conditions are mediated by young people in line with their desires and interests. This helps to understand apprenticeship as a real choice among young people, despite the range of conditions, including income poverty that inform this choice.

The next section discusses thirteen of the study's key findings organised along its three research questions and data chapters. Five of them are from the first research question, four from the second and four from the third research question.

Key Findings of Research Question 1

First, the findings of Chapter Six bridge the contradiction regarding the importance and promotion of informal apprenticeship in the international policy literature on the one hand, and young people's poor perceptions of such training and its undesirability on the other. Drawing on the hermeneutic frames of informal apprentices, journeypersons and master craftswomen in the automotive trade, the findings show that the majority of them enrolled in informal apprenticeship not out of necessity or compulsion as emphasised in the literature (Bortei-Doku et al., 2013, 2011; Johanson & Adams, 2004; Haan, 2006). The participants of this study do not perceive informal apprenticeship poorly. About half of them preferred to learn a trade to continuing with their formal education after the completion of compulsory education. Also, a similar number chose apprenticeship as they perceived it to be a means to sustainable livelihood compared to casual and unskilled work in the informal economy. On the other hand, about one-third of the participants attributed their inability to continue with their formal education as the main explanatory reason for enrolment. Among this cohort, it is important to mention that the financial constraint or condition did not determine their conduct. Rather, it provided them with the opportunity to explore apprenticeship as a pathway that will enable them to pursue a vocational career. Consequently, informal apprenticeship was perceived as an alternative educational pathway, like formal TVET.

Through their choices, the young people transcended their general-dispositional structures regarding the inferiority and low standing of informal apprenticeship compared to formal education. They critically drew on their knowledge of the practical nature of informal apprenticeship in line with their desire and interest in a vocational career. Such interpretative frames and agentic actions challenge a deficit view about them and informal apprenticeship.

Second, the findings of the chapter reveal the agency of females as they actively and critically engage with gender structures that have the potential to stream them into feminised trades. While general-dispositional structures in the form of expectations regarding appropriate activities for males and females inhabited their frames of reference, the females were critical of these structures and distanced themselves from them in line with their desire to acquire

automotive skills. Their conduct contradicts the often-structural way in which they are perceived and presented in the skills literature.

Third, the findings show that majority of the females' decision to enrol in informal apprenticeship and the automotive trade was endorsed or supported by their family and friends. Also, most of them did not encounter any resistance from master craftsmen who trained them. These findings speak to the view that discriminatory practices of MCPs restrict opportunities for females to participate in male-dominated trades. Likewise, the findings challenge the view that apprenticeship restricts opportunities for females' participation in male-dominated trades and thus perpetuates occupational segregation (King & Palmer, 2010; Palmer, 2007b; ILO 2012; Haan, 2006; Schraven et al., 2013; Johanson & Adams, 2004). As will be highlighted later, other concerns are more important to the females' participation in the automotive trade.

Fourth, the findings of the chapter bring to the fore, other benefits of informal apprenticeship, besides its economic value. While informal apprenticeship is widely associated with the potential to prepare young people for self-employment and contribute to the reduction of income poverty, the study's findings reveal the role of apprenticeship in enabling young people to develop self-confidence, earn the respect of family, friends and other members of society. Through their training, they develop a useful work ethic, become more focused, achievement-oriented and responsible adults who seek to contribute to their societies. These findings are important in understanding the role that informal apprenticeship plays in the lives of young people. Also, they contribute to a small body of literature that develops a positive account of formal TVET against rate of returns studies which devalue its purpose (Powell, 2014, 2012; Hilal, 2018; McGrath, 2012; Suart, 2019).

Key Findings of Research Question 2

First, most of the dimensions of capabilities and valued functionings of informal apprentices and journeypersons derive from two main features of the system, namely its self-regulatory and self-financing function. The dominant position in the literature is that these are the two main strengths of informal apprenticeship aside from its practical orientation (Johanson & Adams, 2004; Palmer, 2009; ILO, 2012). This strong view is espoused despite an acknowledgement of the weaknesses of the system as it emanates from these features. Considering that the valued functionings of informal apprentices and journeypersons are

strongly connected to these features, the findings throw into question this liberal or neoliberal perspective about informal apprenticeship.

Second, the desire of informal apprentices and journeypersons to acquire further learning aligns with the relevance attached to this capability in the skills literature (Johanson & Adams, 2004; Haan, 2006). Whereas the need for the upgrade of the skills of informal apprentices is perceived from a productivist standpoint in the literature, the findings of this study show that its value goes beyond this. It is connected to their self-respect, self-identity and confidence. In addition to the desire for further learning is the desire to have their skills formally recognised. This capability stems from their quest to have equal opportunities to be included and to participate in education and the labour market as their counterparts in the formal education system. These two capabilities challenge the view that informal apprenticeship is for the academically weak and school dropouts with no ambitions for further education (Bortei-Doku et al., 2011). They affirm what is needed to make informal apprenticeship a real alternative educational pathway. Comparing this capability with others such as "occupational knowledge" and "upgrade skills and qualifications throughout life course" developed in formal contexts, it is argued that these are important TVET capabilities regardless of whether TVET is pursued in the formal or informal context (McGrath et al., 2020).

Third, most of the dimensions and capabilities that emerged from this study's data are distinct from those developed in formal vocational institutions (Powell, 2014; Hilal, 2018) and non-formal contexts (Dejaeghere, 2020; Thorne, 2020). They are grounded in the realities or characteristics of work in the informal economy. For example, while domains of freedom such as occupational safety and health, recognition of skills, increased demand for the services of training enterprise, independence and English literacy feature in none of the other lists of capabilities, these are central to the well-being of informal apprentices and journeypersons. Furthermore, capabilities that have resonance with those in other lists such as opportunities for further learning and bodily integrity and respect have details that reflect the different social contexts within which TVET systems are embedded. These show that context is extremely relevant in understanding TVET, in efforts to expand the capabilities of TVET students and speak to McGrath and Lugg's (2012) concern about the limitations of "VET policy toolkit" (p. 696).

Key Findings of Research Question 3

First, the findings of Chapter Eight show that the thesis advanced by Foster (1965 a, b) regarding the assumed relationship between vocational education, self-employment and economic growth in Ghana, and which was also emphasised by Palmer (2007a) almost forty years later still holds. Whilst informal apprenticeship prepares young people for self-employment, there is little to no support for them in transitioning from training to self-employment. Besides the challenge of securing start-up capital, obtaining a plot of land for their workshop is equally difficult. The hermeneutic frames of government officials interviewed show little understanding of the process of transitioning from training to employment as graduates are expected to move back to their villages after acquiring training in the clusters. Among other factors, these could explain their position-practices which have contributed to this state of affairs.

Second and linked to the above point is the poor state of enterprises and infrastructural development in the mechanic clusters. This condition impacts the demand for services of training enterprises and adherence to occupational safety and health measures. Furthermore, the findings of the chapter demonstrate that this is a very important condition with regard to the attraction of females into the mechanic trade, their retention, occupational progress and ability to convert training into valued functionings such as bodily integrity, respect and independence. An analysis of the conduct of females in the automotive trade shows that they are very reflective of gender norms that threaten their participation in the trade. On the other hand, the harsh conditions of work are important concerns that could limit their agency freedom to achieve valued functionings.

Third, the findings of the chapter further challenge the touted strengths of informal apprenticeship, that is its self-financing feature. Analysis of the context of informal apprentices and journeypersons show that while parents are expected or required to provide for their wards, they do not live up to these expectations. Also, while the literature reports on MCPs' support for informal apprentices, the oral and written apprenticeship agreement in the case of the automotive trade obliges parents to provide for their wards' basic needs, tools and equipment. As MCPs move to cover for lapses in the position-practices of parents, the support provided is inadequate, inconsistent and limits the freedom of informal apprentices and journeypersons to achieve valued functionings.

Fourth and linked to the above point is the role that Informal Trade Associations (ITAs) are believed to play and their capacity as key bodies in the self-regulation of informal apprenticeship. The findings of the chapter show that due to their informality and internal weaknesses, their capacity to govern, perform expected responsibilities, such as those relating to the maintenance of occupational standards and other forms of support to members is constrained. One of the position-practices of government, in line with ILO's agenda of formalising the informal economy, relates to the encouragement of ITA's to be affiliated to the TUC. The goal is to increase their formidability and their ability to negotiate with the government regarding the needs of its members. Through their affiliation with TUC, they receive support in developing good governance structures relevant to increasing their legitimacy and accountability to their members. This is important for them to play a stronger role in the governance of informal apprenticeship.

Fifth, while Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) has been a policy priority of GoG, there is no functional system of RPL. As a result, existing opportunities for having one's skills recognised lie in the participation of courses offered in Vocational Training Institutes (VTIs). Few informal apprentices participate in formal VTI courses mainly due to cost. While the cost of participation is sometimes taken up in skills training projects that are implemented by GoG in collaboration with international development agencies, these projects reach few informal apprentices.

Finally, analysis of the conduct of informal apprentices and journeypersons demonstrate a strong desire and motivation to complete their training, excel in their vocations and contribute to their communities. These orients the choices and practices they enact in relation to their valued functionings. At the same time, their agency freedom is greatly conditioned by the position-practices and relations within which they are embedded. As situated agents, they draw on degrees of knowledge about their context into their conduct and integrate these into some hierarchy of purposes. This results in various levels of improvisation within the context of action in a manner that only enables them to achieve minimal levels of safety at work, prioritisation of practical aspects of the trade until financially sound to afford the cost of trade courses in formal VTIs, delaying of graduation and engaging in informal wage labour for extensive periods to secure start-up capital for their enterprise and lastly, sacrificing comfort in the short term in the hope of a better future. In view of these, opportunities that expand

their capability set are essential to the expansion of their agency freedom and quality of life during and after their training period.

Central Argument

The findings of the study's three research questions were outlined in the previous section. Following the findings, two main arguments are advanced. First, contrary to previous studies about young people's poor perceptions and disdain for informal apprenticeship, this study argues, based on the narratives of twenty-six informal apprentices, journeypersons and master craftswomen that informal apprenticeship is valued and a real choice among young people of different educational backgrounds. This argument justifies the policy focus on informal apprenticeship (UNESCO, 2016a). At the level of policy, this is important to the success of programmes and initiatives targeted at informal apprentices and informal apprenticeship. From an academic perspective, this moves the field forward theoretically beyond the old liberal versus vocational education debate and the deficit conceptions of informal apprenticeship and its learners. This is useful in engaging with issues of inequalities as it allows serious questions to be asked, some of which include the aspirations or capabilities of young people who opt for informal apprenticeship.

Second, drawing on the capability approach to understand the well-being freedoms of informal apprentices and journeypersons, the study argues that categorising the self-regulatory and self-financing feature of informal apprenticeship as two of three of its main strengths is antithetical to the very weaknesses of the system. In addition, it does not foster social justice in informal apprenticeship. The categorisation stands in sharp contrast with the acknowledgement of categories of young people who enrol in informal apprenticeship on the one hand and the promotion of informal apprenticeship as a system of training for poor and disadvantaged youths. With the assertion that the human capital of the poor is their most important asset and the view that training will enable them to escape income poverty, the lives that apprentices manage to lead while in training are taken for granted and ignored as very important issues of social justice. From a capability perspective, social justice is concerned with the lives that people manage to lead and whether existing social arrangements enable or expand and constrain them. As the discussion in Chapter Eight shows, these features contribute to the perpetuation of inequalities and injustices as they limit the freedoms of apprentices to achieve valued functionings and to participate on an equal basis with others in the formal education and training system.

Policy Implications

The thesis has drawn on three usefulness of the capability approach namely a critique of other approaches, a normative framework for conceptualising well-being and poverty and a framework for evaluating capabilities. In line with this application of the capability approach, this section distils some policy implications from the theoretical discussion and empirical data presented and discussed in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight.

The first policy implication that emerges from the study relates to the importance of framing Ghana's TVET policy in a human development approach. While Ghana has adopted a multidimensional approach to poverty in assessing the human development of the country, its TVET sits within the growth paradigm. The mission of the TVET system as cited in its 2004 TVET Policy is to improve the productivity and competitiveness of the workforce and raise their income-earning capacity. While these goals are very important, there is more to training that this perspective masks. Besides the policy, the vision and mission of the National TVET Strategic Plan which seeks to address inadequacies and deficiencies in the current TVET system does not diverge significantly from the 2004 TVET policy and the 2012 review of the policy. This is because it is very much focussed on developing a competitive workforce for the social and economic transformation of Ghana's development through the delivery of high-quality skills development programmes and TVET qualifications (COTVET, 2018).

While the Strategic Plan is more comprehensive in scope and aims to address many issues including the image of TVET, its delivery environment, gender in TVET, financing, greening TVET and lifelong learning, it could benefit from the human development approach. For example, in efforts to make the system demand-driven, the entire system is being driven towards a competency-based delivery and the curricula of all institutions, including informal apprenticeship are to be re-aligned towards this goal. Accordingly, external training opportunities for informal apprentices and MCPs in VTIs which are sponsored by the state in collaboration with international donor agencies are competency-based. Also, the NTVETQF which has been developed is underpinned by competency-based curricula in line with existing occupational standards.

As the presentation of the functionings and valued functionings of informal apprentices and journeypersons under the third dimension of capability (opportunities for further learning within apprenticeship) show, apprentices desire to have theoretical knowledge to supplement the practical skills they gain from the workshop. It is not entirely clear that a competency-

based curriculum, which is centrally driven, will address vocational knowledge deficits in informal apprenticeship. A capability approach to TVET will enable the TVET system to rise above its economic and instrumental focus and embrace the view that TVET is not only about the development of human capital needed for the economy, but the expansion of the freedom of learners to achieve valued functionings.

Second, the relevance of the capability approach for TVET policy lies in its usefulness in providing a holistic understanding and overview of the quality of life of TVET learners. The approach broadens the current orientation of TVET beyond the alleviation of income poverty through the acquisition of skills. During and after the period of training, poverty is experienced in many ways, some of which are not reducible to income. As dimensions of capabilities cut across various domains of well-being, it brings to fore the need for policy coordination across a range of bodies such as ITAs, ministries and agencies whose activities and responsibilities bear on informal apprenticeship. Also, it calls for a multi-stakeholder engagement with all the stakeholders involved in informal apprenticeship especially parents and MCPs. Informal apprentices also ought to be included as equal stakeholders in the issues that affect them and in the evaluation of the responsiveness of reforms and the system to their needs. While COTVET overseas the coordination and regulation of TVET, its policies need to align with those of NFED, MoE, MoELR, and MoTI. This will facilitate the monitoring of activities in these different ministries and agencies to the extent to which they expand the freedoms of informal apprentices and journeypersons.

The third policy implication that flows from a gendered analysis of the study is that while gender norms or stereotypes have been the main causal explanations for the low participation of females in male-dominated trades, the findings of this study suggest that they are not the only ones and not the most important causal factors. Conditions of training and work in the informal economy, including difficulties in transitioning from training to self-employment, is a major factor in attracting and retaining females in male-dominated trades. In view of this, the policy objective to dispel gender norms ought to continue. Also, in addition to the development of gender-friendly infrastructural development in formal TVET institutions, it is essential to concentrate attention on training delivered in informal economy. As COTVET is under MoE, policy coordination across the different ministries as highlighted earlier, especially between COTVET and the MoTI is essential to targeted interventions for females who are already working in male-dominated trades and in attracting more females into such

trades in the informal economy. Support to enable them to convert their training into valued functionings across the domains of independence, increased demand for the services of enterprises, the satisfaction of basic requirements of life and training, occupational safety and health and bodily integrity and respect are key. Also, support for females to develop strong networks is essential. These will enable them to be effective role models to other young people in their communities and the country as they desire.

Fourth, informal apprenticeship thrives due to the enrolment of apprentices. Without their enrolment, the institution cannot be sustained. In West Africa, including Ghana, they provide support to micro-enterprises which employ more apprentices than wage employees (Ninsin, 1991; Johanson & Adams, 2004). While their economic contribution to informal micro-enterprises and the economy is important, their human development across all the dimensions of capability is equally relevant. As Fluitman (1992) once remarked: "to intervene or not is a serious question…there should indeed be good reasons to…." (p. 8). Fluitman (1989) adds that "a sensible approach to intervening… must be rooted in the knowledge of the people who work there and their environment, of their major problems and aspirations" (p. 1). From a normative and social justice perspective, the human development or capabilities of informal apprentices and journeypersons are good reasons for intervention.

Within the human development approach to development, capabilities are constitutive of the development process as they are the end of development, while opportunities for the expansion of capabilities are the means of development (Sen, 1999). As a result, they cannot be delayed and neglected in the process of development. This view speaks to previous policy recommendations on apprenticeship where capabilities other than those related to skills needs are luxuries for developing countries and can only be guaranteed after growth has been achieved (Callaway, 1964). Situating apprenticeship in the capability approach does not provide easy solutions to these complex issues and the acknowledgement of capabilities that centre on decent work does not necessarily imply the enactment of new regulations, the feared beast in the liberal or neoliberal orientation to informal apprenticeship. As Sen (2000) rightly argues, "the practical implications that emanate from this acknowledgement can go beyond new legislations to other types of social, political and economic actions" (p. 123). The capability approach supports plural institutional arrangements, with or beside the state, to the extent to which they expand capabilities (Sen, 1999; Routh, 2014). The nature of the intervention and the form of institutional arrangement should be the outcome of a democratic

process or dialogue which includes informal apprentices. These are central to UNESCO's (2016b) policy commitment towards fostering partnerships in TVET governance and delivery.

Limitations of the Study

The challenge set at the onset of the study to identify functionings that are valued by informal apprentices and journeypersons was an important one. As beings and doings that are constitutive of life, functionings cut across different domains of well-being and this is reflected in the eight dimensions of capabilities presented in Chapter Seven. While this is the main strength of the study, it also presented the challenge of addressing holistically the extent of freedoms that informal apprentices and journeypersons have, to achieve these functionings. In relation to context analysis, the task was made more difficult by the range of position-practice relations within which informal apprentices are embedded and which bears on their capabilities. While an effort was made to understand the hermeneutic frames of all relevant positioned agents, the views of parents or guardians would have enriched the study and provided more understanding into their dispositions towards the well-being of their wards, as they enrol in training. Also, in relation to conduct analysis, the rationalisation of action as an element of active agency could have received more attention. A notable example is a gendered analysis of how female apprentices and journeypersons with family integrate the demands of the job and training with family responsibilities or domestic activities. This could be taken up in further research on the freedoms of female apprentices, journeypersons and MCPs in male-dominated trades.

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Appendices

A. Sample participant information sheet and consent form
B. Biographical information of informal apprentices, journeypersons and masters
C. Interview guide for participants in Table 5.1(informal apprentices, journeypersons and masters)
D. Interview guide for all stakeholders in Table 5.2 (Official(s) of the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI), Non-Formal Education Division of the Ministry of Education (NFED), Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (COTVET), Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations (MoELR), Skills Development Fund (SDF), National Board for Small-Scale Industries (NBSSI), Ghana National Association of Garages (GNAG), Trades Union Congress (TUC), National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI) Regulatory Board, Head of a Branch of the NVTI).
E. Informal apprenticeship agreement

Appendix A.1 – Participant Information Sheet

Information Sheet for Informal Apprentices

Research Title: A capability approach to the human development of informal apprentices in Ghana

Researcher: Joyceline Alla-Mensah

I would like to invite you to take part in a research study. Before you decide whether to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being conducted and what your participation will involve. Please take time to read the information carefully and contact me for further information or clarification. Please take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. If you decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form.

Aim of Research

The study aims to evaluate the valued functionings of informal apprentices in Ghana and the extent to which these are enhanced or constrained in apprenticeship. It is hoped that the findings of the research will contribute to the literature and encourage debate about the broad motivations of informal apprentices. Also, the results of the research will be presented at academic conferences and journals.

Requirements

You will be required to participate in a life history interview. The interview is expected to take between 60 to 90 minutes. In the interview, you will be asked information about your background such as your age, gender and your previous education. Then, you will be asked about your motivation for choosing informal apprenticeship and the particular trade you are in. In addition, you will be asked about your valued functionings. that is what you would like to be and to do. Questions relating to your experience in informal apprenticeship and the opportunities and constraints that you have encountered will also be asked.

The interview will be recorded, and later transcribed into text format. Recordings of the session will be safely stored and destroyed after the study has ended.

Anonymity/Participation

The information that you will provide will be presented and analysed in my study. However, your name and some personal information will not be revealed. Pseudonyms will be used to protect your identity and any sensitive information you will give. The data collected will be stored securely on a password-protected file and not shared with anyone.

You will be free to decline answering any question if you so wish. At any point in the interview, if you decide not to continue any longer, please feel free to let me know and the interview will be discontinued. If you withdraw from the interview, any information that you have provided will be deleted.

If you have complaints about any aspect of this research or the interview, please feel free to discuss it with me. If you are uncomfortable complaining to me, you can contact the University of Nottingham using the details below for further advice and information:

Supervisor's Name: Prof. Simon McGrath

Supervisor's Name: Prof. Monica McLean

Contact for further information

School of Education, University of Nottingham

Email: educationresearchpgr@nottingham.ac.uk

Ethical complaints should be directed to educationresearchethics@nottingham.ac.uk

Appendix A.2 – Consent Form

Consent Form for Officials at the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations (MoELR)

Project title: A capability approach to the human development of informal apprentices in Ghana

Researcher's Name: Joyceline Alla-Mensah

Supervisors' Names: Prof. Simon McGrath and Prof. Monica McLean

- I have read the Participant Information Sheet and the nature and purpose of the research project have been explained to me. I understand and agree to take part.
- I understand the purpose of the research project and my involvement in it.
- I understand that I may withdraw from the research project at any stage
- I understand that while information gained during the study may be published, I will not be identified, and my personal information will remain confidential
- I understand that I will be audiotaped during the interview
- I understand that electronic data will be stored in a password-protected computer that only the researcher has access to
- I understand that I may contact the researcher or supervisor if I require further information about the research and that I may contact the Research Ethics Coordinator of the School of Education, University of Nottingham, if I wish to make a complaint relating to my involvement in the research.

Signed ……

(research participant)

Print name: ……Date:

Contact details:

Researcher: Joyceline Alla-Mensah

University of Nottingham

Email: ttxja44@nottingham.ac.uk

Supervisor's Name: Prof. Simon McGrath

Supervisor's Name: Prof. Monica McLean

The contact details of the research ethics coordinator should participants wish to make a complaint on ethical grounds are:

educationresearchethics@nottingham.ac.uk

Appendix B.1 – Biographical Information of Informal Apprentices, Journeypersons and Master Craftswomen

Pseudonym	Highest qualification at the time of enrolment	Status and area of trade	Age	Sex	Year of training or years in practice (for JPs and master craftswomen	Parents' occupation (mother)	Parents' occupation (father)
Jojo	NABPTEX certificate in automotive engineering	Apprentice (mechanics)	25	M	3	N/A[28]	Security
Aba	WASSCE[29]	Apprentice (auto-spraying)	25	F	1	Trader	Welder
Fiifi	BECE[30]	Apprentice (mechanics)	28	M	6	Security	Driver
Kwasi	BECE	Apprentice (mechanics)	27	M	3	Farmer	Farmer
Kobby	BECE	Apprentice (mechanics)	25	M	4	Trader	Blacksmith
Adwenpa	WASSCE	Apprentice (mechanics)	25	M	3	Food vendor	Farmer

[28] N/A is used to denote the passing of a parent.
[29] The West African Senior School Certificate Examinations (WASSCE) is written at the end of three years of senior secondary education
[30] The Basic Education Certificate Examinations (BECE) is undertaken at the end of nine years of compulsory education

Abena	BECE	Apprentice (air-conditioning)	26	F	2	N/A	General worker (hospital)
Kwame	BECE	Apprentice (mechanic)	24	M	3	Farmer	Farmer
Ebo	BECE	Apprentice (mechanics)	30	M	10	Farmer	Farmer
Timothy	JHS1	Apprentice (air-conditioning)	23	M	4	Farmer	Farmer
Serwaa	WASSCE	Apprentice (auto-spraying)	25	F	2	Trader	Trader
Abigail	JHS2	Apprentice (auto-spraying)	25	F	5	Trader	N/A
Paul	WASSCE	Apprentice (mechanics)	28	M	6	Carer (USA)	Security (USA)
Oheneba	JHS1	Apprentice (air-conditioning)	19	M	4	Food vendor	Photographer
Yaw	BECE	Apprentice (mechanics)	22	M	4	Trader	Farmer
Baaba	BECE	Apprentice (auto-spraying	29	F	5	Carer (USA)	Driver (USA)
Yoofi	BECE	Apprentice (mechanics)	25	M	3	Farmer	Farmer

Akuba	BECE	Journeywoman (auto-spraying)	37	F	15	Unemployed	Mechanic
Esi	BECE	Journeywoman(auto-spraying)	34	F	20	Farmer	Farmer
Ama	BECE	Journeywoman (auto-spraying)	37	F	4	N/A	N/A
Araba	BECE	Journeywoman(auto-spraying)	32	F	5	Farmer	Farmer
Maame Afua	BECE	Journeywoman(auto-spraying)	27	F	1	N/A	Tiler
Nana	BECE	Journeyman (mechanics)	31	M	9	Farmer	Farmer
Christabel	Primary 5	MCP (auto-spraying)	32	F	6	Farmer	Farmer
Ami	Diploma	MCP (auto-spraying)	35	F	11	Farmer	Entrepreneur and farmer
Ohemaa	BECE	MCP (auto-spraying)	39	F	20	Network engineer in government agency	Teacher

Appendix B.2 – Biographical Information of MCPs

Pseudonym	Sex	Highest Level of Formal Education or Qualification	Area of Specialisation	Years of Practice	Number of Apprentices	Source of Training
MCP1	Female	Diploma	Auto-spraying	11 years	11	Informal apprenticeship
MCP2	Male	Auto Technician Part 3 Certificate (NABPTEX)	Mechanics	30 years	8	Informal apprenticeship
MCP3	Male	BECE	Air-conditioning	12 years	3	NVTI and informal apprenticeship
MCP4	Male	No formal education	Mechanic	15 years	4	Informal apprenticeship
MCP5	Male	Higher National Diploma	Mechanic	20years+	None	Formal on the job
MCP6	Male	Middle School Leaving Certificate[31]	Auto-spraying	30 years+	1	NVTI and formal on the job
MCP7	Male	BECE	Mechanic	15 years	5	Informal apprenticeship

[31] Middle school was four years post-primary and equivalent to ten years compulsory education. It was replaced by the Junior Secondary School system.

MCP8	Female	BECE	Auto-spraying	19 years	3	Informal apprenticeship and formal on the job
MCP9	Female	Primary 6	Auto-spraying	6 years	None	Informal apprenticeship
MCP10	Male	BECE	Mechanics	12 years	40	Informal apprenticeship

Appendix C – Interview Guide for Informal Apprentices, Journeypersons and Master Craftswomen

1. The decision to enrol in apprenticeship: This focused on their reasons for choosing informal apprenticeship and specifically the mechanic trade. The activities of participants prior to enrolment in apprenticeship were also asked.
2. Support in apprenticeship: This looked into the kinds of support that informal apprentices and journeypersons have or had while in training. Questions about apprenticeship fees, purchase of tools and equipment, where they live or lived and the amount of money they have/had for daily upkeep were asked.
3. Structural arrangement in apprenticeship: this focused on the rules and practices in apprenticeship, the responsibilities of apprentices at key stages of their training, the nature of learning, resources available at the workplace, gender norms, best and worst experiences.
4. Plans after apprenticeship: this focused on the plans informal apprentices have after completion of training, and steps that were or are being taken towards this or how they wish to execute those plans. For the journeypersons, I was equally interested in knowing what their short and long-term objectives are, as well as their transitioning experience if it fell short of their expectations and the reasons why
5. Training opportunities: this focused on the kinds of external training that informal apprentices and graduates have acquired, how they financed those and their knowledge of training opportunities.

Appendix D.1 – Interview Guide for MCPs

1. What is your area of speciality?
2. What is your level of education and source of training?
3. For how long have you been an MCP?
4. Do you participate in external training programmes? If yes which ones and how often?
5. What are some of the challenges that apprentices encounter and advantages of training?
6. Is the environment supportive of their learning? If no, why?
7. How are tasks distributed among male and female apprentices?
8. How do you act or have acted in the past to mitigate the challenges that apprentices encounter in training?
9. Are you a member of the GNAG? If not, why?
10. What are the benefits of being part of the association?
11. What do you think are their responsibilities or mandate?

Appendix D.2 – Interview Guide for Officials of the Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (COTVET)

1. Please describe the mandate of COTVET and its relationship with informal apprenticeship.
2. Does COTVET have an apprenticeship policy?
3. What were some of the lessons learnt from the National Apprenticeship Programme?
4. What is COTVET's approach to engaging with training providers in the informal economy?
5. What forms of support are provided for informal trainers and apprentices?
6. What is the state of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in Ghana?
7. Does COTVET have an Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) policy for TVET institutions including training providers in the informal economy?
8. Are there training manuals for informal apprenticeship?
9. Is there a database of MCPs and informal apprentices?
10. How does COTVET raise funds to support its activities?
11. What is the role of the National Apprenticeship Committee?
12. What are the criteria for accrediting training providers in the informal economy?
13. What is COTVET's assessment of gender inequality in TVET and the reasons for this?
14. Does COTVET have a TVET gender strategy?
15. What efforts are being made to attract females into male-dominated trades?
16. What is COTVET's approach to addressing gender inequalities in training?

Appendix D. 3 - Interview Guide for Official of the Skills Development Fund (SDF)

1. Please describe the Skills Development Fund, when it was formed, its objectives, and achievements.
2. What are the criteria and processes involved in accessing credit from the Fund?
3. What is the Fund's approach to encouraging and supporting the applications of people, especially those in the informal economy?
4. Are there gender disparities in applications for credit?
5. What plans are being put in place to ensure the sustainability of the Fund?

Appendix D.4 - Interview Guide for Representatives of the Ghana National Association of Garages (GNAG)

1. What is the role of the Ghana National Association of Garages?
2. What do you perceive are the challenges that MCPs and apprentices encounter and how does GNAG intervene to provide the support needed?
3. What are some of the challenges that confront the Association?
4. What are some of the advantages or opportunities for apprentices in this trade area?
5. What is being done to attract new members into the Association?
6. How does your association project or advance the interest of its members?
7. Does the Association engage with COTVET or NVTI regarding the needs of its members?

Appendix D.5.1 - Interview Guide for Officials of the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI)

1. Is there a government policy on informal economy or to be specific small-scale manufacturing in the informal economy? If yes, what does this policy seek to achieve and if no could you explain why?
2. How does government reach out to informal artisans in order to understand and address their needs?
3. In what ways does government support informal artisans to have access to technology for their operations and secure land and capital for their work?
4. What are some of the successes and challenges that are encountered in meeting the needs of micro, small and medium scale businesses in the informal sector?
5. What is the government's strategy to support the infrastructural development of informal manufacturing clusters?
6. Are there other forms of support that are provided for informal artisans apart from the ones I have raised?

Appendix D. 5.2 – Interview Guide for Official of the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI - National Board for Small-Scale Industries, NBSSI)

1. What is NBSSI's approach to reaching out to informal micro-enterprises that need support from the organisation?
2. What forms of support does NBSSI provide to micro-enterprises in the informal economy?
3. What are some of the challenges encountered in meeting the credit needs of informal entrepreneurs including artisans?

Appendix D. 6 - Interview Guide for Official of the Non-Formal Education Division, Ministry of Education

1. What is the Non-Formal Education Division's (NFED) approach to reaching out to the out-of-school population, especially informal artisans in Ghana? Could you please outline some of your programmes?
2. What are the challenges and successes in NFED's approach to reaching out to the out-of-school population, especially young adults?
3. How does NFED coordinate with informal trade associations to deliver or tailor literacy programmes to their needs? Can you please name some of the trades that have you have worked with?
4. What are the constraints to providing literacy lessons for out-of-school populations and how can NFED enhance the opportunities for out-of-school populations to be literate?
5. To what extent are the programmes you offer sustainable? What are government's plans to sustain these programmes?

Appendix D. 7- Interview Guide for Officials of the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations

1. Please describe your Ministry's work in relation to vocational training and work in the informal economy.
2. What are the formal regulations that govern vocational training and work in the informal economy?
3. To what extent have state regulations or interventions in vocational training and work impacted training and working in the informal economy? Can you please explain why and how informal work and training has been impacted?
4. What are the challenges encountered and how have they been addressed?
5. Is there a relationship between the state and vocational training and work in the informal economy? If yes, what is the nature of this relationship and if no could you please explain why?
6. Are informal economy associations involved in policy formulation or implementation regulations on training and work in the informal economy?
7. How have their involvement impacted policy outcomes and implementation?
8. In your opinion, what do you think can be done to ensure training and work in the informal economy adhere to the regulations outlined earlier?

Appendix D.7.1 - Interview Guide for an Official of the Regulatory Board of NVTI

1. Please describe the mandate of NVTI and its relationship with informal apprenticeship
2. Does NVTI have an apprenticeship policy?
3. Are there areas of overlap in the mandate of COTVET and NVTI?
4. How does NVTI coordinate with COTVET in responding to the training needs of informal artisans?
5. What have been the challenges with providing support for informal trainers and apprentices?
6. What have been the experiences of the Institute in its work with the informal trainers and apprentices?
7. Annually, how many informal apprentices take the NVTI proficiency exams?
8. Is there financial support for informal apprentices who cannot afford the cost for training at NVTI?

Appendix D. 7.2 - Interview Guide for a Head of one of the Branches of NVTI

1. What is the Institute's approach to encouraging the participation of informal apprentices and MCPs in its training programmes?
2. Are training programmes tailored to the needs of informal apprentices?
3. Are there funding opportunities for informal apprentices who cannot afford the cost of training at NVTI?
4. What do you perceive as some of the challenges that informal apprentices encounter in accessing and progressing in TVET?
5. Is the environment at the Institute supportive of the learning of female learners?
6. What are the costs involved in participating in the training programmes of NVTI, especially in the proficiency 1 and 2 certification programmes?
7. What could be done to support the education and training needs of informal apprentices and master craftspersons?

Appendix D. 8 - Interview Guide for Official of the Trades Union Congress

1. Please tell me about the role of TUC, in particular, the informal wing of the Union
2. What are the benefits of informal associations' affiliation with TUC?
3. In your perspective, what are some of the challenges that informal associations encounter and how does TUC support them in these areas?

Appendix E - Apprenticeship Agreement

FORM FEES..... **APPRENTICESHIP ADMISSION FORM.**

..... (COMPLETE IN BLOCK LETTERS.)

NAME OF SHOP

SECTION A

1. SURNAME: ..... OTHER NAMES: .....
2. NATIONALITY.....SEX:.....
3. DATE OF BIRTH: .....RELIGION: .....
4. HOMETOWN: ..... REGION: .....
5. RESIDENTIAL ADDRESS: .....
6. TELEPHONE: .....
7. TIN: .....

NAME OF INSTITUTION/SCHOOLS:

- ..... FROM:.....TO.....
- ..... FROM..... TO.....
- ..... FROM..... TO.....

8. CERTIFICATES OBTAINED:
   - .....
   - .....
9. TRADE — DURATION.
   - AUTO MECHANICS .....
   - AUTO BODY WORKS .....
   - AUTO ELECTRICALS .....
   - AUTO SPRAYING .....
   - WELDING & FABRICATION .....
   - MACHINING & FABRICATION .....
   - UPHOLSTERY WORKS .....
   - ALIGNMENT & SUSPENSION .....
   - VULGANIZING .....
   - OTHERS (SPECIFY) .....
10. DECLARATION BY APPLICANT:

I ..... declare that the information given above is to the best of my knowledge. I shall abide by the rules and regulations guiding my stay as an apprentice. Anything contrary to deserves punishment as ascribed by the association.

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT: ..... DATE: .....

WITNESSES:

- PARENT OR GUARDIAN
  NAME: .....
  ADDRESS: .....
  SIGN .....

ANY OTHER PERSON
NAME: .....
ADDRESS: .....
SIGN .....

SECTION B.

REQUIREMENTS: BASIC TOOLS AND SAFETY GEARS.

- An applicant must be fifteen (15) years & above and must have completed at least J.H.S.
- Applicant must provide one passport size photographs.

TOOLS.

- Set of flat spanners, ring spanners, screw drivers, both flat and Philips. Hammer, pair of pliers and a toolbox.
- Work gear, safety boot and other protective materials for the safety of the apprentice with regards to the trade.
- Apprentice will take the N.V.T.I or trade test exams at the end of the training, cost of which shall be borne by the parents or guardians.
- Parents /Guardians shall be responsible for accommodation,
- Medical care and feeding of wards.
- A mass passing out / graduation ceremony shall be arranged by the association where certificate and testimonial shall be presented to deserving graduates.
- A training fee of ……..shall be paid.

SECTION C.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY.

ASSOCIATION CHAIRMAN
NAME: ……..
SIGNATURE: ……
DATE: ……..

WORKSHOP MANAGER/DIRECTOR
NAME: ……..
SIGNATURE: ……..
DATE: ……..

ASSOCIATION SECCRETARY
NAME: ……..
SIGNATURE: ……..
DATE: ……