UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMMES AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE DEAF AT BECHEM SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF, IN THE BRONG-AHAFO REGION OF GHANA

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DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I, Akongyam Merri, hereby declare that this dissertation except for references to other peoples‟ work which have been duly identified and acknowledged, is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in the university or elsewhere.

Signature……

Date……

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the dissertation was supervised in accordance with the guidelines and supervision as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

Name of Supervisor: Dr. Samuel K. Amoako-Gyimah

Signature….....……

Date…….....…

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my parents, Mr Baba Yaro Amaachab and Mrs Comfort Amaachab for their love, support, advice, motivation and encouragement throughout the course.

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ABSTRACT

The study explored vocational training programmes and employment opportunities for students who are deaf at Bechem School for the Deaf in the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana. Four research questions guided the study. A case study research design was adopted for the study. A sample size of 25 respondents comprising 12 instructors, 8 students and 5 graduates of the school were involved in the study. Purposive and snowball sampling techniques were used to select the sample size for the study. An interview guide was used to gather data for the study. The interview data were analyzed thematically. Analysis of the data revealed that vocational training programmes at Bechem School for the Deaf contains numerous programmes for the vocational training of students, some of which are fashion design, building and construction, welding, carpentry, beads, batik, tie and dye. However, some students indicated that they want the programme to be expanded. Again, it was found out that teaching and learning resources for the programme were not adequate for the students in the school. Also, it was established that the instructors employ the individual teaching approach. Finally, the study revealed that students who are deaf who graduate from the programme found it difficult to find employment and there was no special scheme to provide start-up capitals for the graduates of the programme. Based on the findings of the study, recommendations were made to improve on programmes.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

In order to help individuals who are Deaf to attain high quality livelihood, the need for vocational education becomes paramount. Vocational education provides a wide range of vocational services including job training, job placement, career counseling, supported employment, on-the-job training, and assistance with interviewing and resume writing skills. According to Bassi and McMurrer (2006), globally, vocational training program for the individuals who are deaf provides services for clients with significant employment barriers who need extensive services. Training is provided in a number of occupations, to include hotel cleaning, postal services, janitorial services, landscaping, food service, and woodworking.

Global economic competition increasingly requires countries to compete on the quality of human resources that requires a labour force with a range of mid-level trade, technical and professional skills alongside the high-level skills associated with university education. According to Torres, Preskill and Piontek, (2004), theoretical knowledge and practical skills are the engines of economic growth and social development of any country the world over.

Globally, the role of education in facilitating skills and knowledge acquisition has long been recognized. Education improves functional and analytical ability and thereby opens up opportunities for individuals and also groups to achieve greater access to labour markets and livelihoods (UNESCO, 2012). UNESCO (2012) continued to say that skills and knowledge are the engines of economic growth and social development of any country. Countries with higher and better levels of

knowledge and skills respond more effectively and promptly to challenges and opportunities of globalization.

Skills development is essential to address the opportunities and challenges to meet new demands of changing economies and new technologies in the context of globalization. The principles and values of decent work provide guidance for the design and delivery of skills development and are an effective way of efficiently managing socially just transitions. At the International Labour organization‟s (ILO) (2008) International Labour Conference (ILC) in Geneva, Switzerland, representatives of governments, employers and workers adopted a set of conclusions for using skills development to improve productivity, employment growth and development. The conclusions comprise a set of guidelines that can help sustain the competitiveness of enterprises and the employability of workers. In this framework, skills development for the individuals who are deaf can help build a "virtuous circle" in which the quality and relevance of education and training for women and men who are deaf fuels the innovation, investment, technological change, enterprise development, economic diversification and competitiveness that economies not only need to accelerate the creation of more jobs, but also more productive jobs (International Labour organization (ILO) 2008).

The Ghanaian vocational training system for individuals who are deaf provides vocational training under three main headings (regulated training, occupational training, and continuing training). Regulated vocational training is a form of initial vocational training provided under the education system, aimed at students with no previous work experience. It has developed considerably over time. Currently its primary objective is to ensure trainees develop the abilities necessary to fulfil the roles demanded of them and cope with situations arising in the course of

their work. On the other hand, occupational training is defined by the Fondo de Formación (2012) as the result of teaching and learning efforts directed at improving the preparation of those concerned for the world of work. The National Institute of Employment (INEM, 1992) describes occupational training as training designed to equip workers, employed or unemployed, for a given occupation or job by means of shorter or longer courses.

For vocational training for individuals who are deaf to progress, there is the need to consider the type of resources available. Resources constitute a major strategic factor in organizational functioning of vocational training programmes. Thomas and John (2008) stated that school managers work with many resources to accomplish their goals. Such resources include raw materials to produce goods, building to house operations and financial resources to fund their activities.

In order for the school to thrive, one important consideration to be made is on the quality of resources that are being used. Whenever instructors have access to good quantities and quality of materials it is likely that they would perform better as human resource. Good quality and quantity of resources ensure that instructors can organize hands-on teaching approaches that would go a long way to help the learners to comprehend as effective as possible. It is obvious that students who are taught with well stalk of resources would graduate as quality manpower than those in the contrary.

Teaching strategies adopted by instructors of individuals who are deaf is the life wire of the overall training of these students. The better the strategy, the better the education system of individuals who are deaf. Once the instructor of the deaf has gone through the requisite education and training, it is likely that he would become an effective instructor. However, several other factors might affect the teaching skills of

these instructors. The effective instructor of the individual who is deaf must make a lot of efforts to ensure effective communication between him and his students to ensure student success.

If is also imperative for the instructor to make a lot of accommodations by adjusting teaching methods to accommodate these learners‟ needs by writing all homework assignments, class instructions and procedural changes on the board. Again, it is critical for effective instructors to monitor the progress and understanding of all students with the use of effective assessment strategies.

Another important consideration of vocational education for the individuals who are deaf is employment opportunities of graduates who are deaf. Once students who are deaf graduate from the vocational school, the next expectation is their employment. They need to get worthwhile employment that are related to their specific subject areas in the vocational training programmes in order that they can work to their greatest abilities. In several instances, it could be observed that students who are deaf graduate from the vocational programmes but still hover in buses and other public places to beg for alms. It not clear why graduate individuals who are deaf do not get employed after their training (www.totaljobs.com. in Spence, 2002).

1.2 Statement of the problem

It is very important for vocational training schools to have an assortment of programmes from which students can always select from. When the programmes are numerous, it would help to give the students a lot of choices to make and once students have made their comfortable choices, it would give them the needed motivation to participate in the teaching and learning process. Notwithstanding, with the researcher‟s observation, it appears the programmes being offered students at the Bechem School for the Deaf are not enough.

Also, per a casual observation done at the Bechem School for the Deaf, it looks as if there are a lot of shortages in the material resources that are needed for effective teaching and learning in the vocational training program. Some of the materials appear too old and not in good shape.

Furthermore, for every institution to be successful, there is the need for instructors" teaching strategies to be considered since effective instructional strategies go a long way to ensure the success of the school. However, very little is known about the teaching strategies employed by teacher and the employment opportunities available to deaf graduates of the vocational training programme.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to explore what vocational training programmes and employment opportunities available for students who are deaf in the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The objectives for the study was to:

1. Examine the types of programmes offered at the center.
2. Find out the resources available for training students of the program.
3. Explore the instructional strategies used by instructors of the program.
4. Find out the extent to which graduates of the program get employed.

1.5 Research questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What vocational training programmes are offered at the vocational training center of Bechem School for the Deaf?

2. What resources are available for training students in the vocational programmes?
3. What instructional strategies are used by the instructors in teaching the programmes?
4. What opportunities are available for graduates after trainning?

1.6 Significance of the study

The results of the study would help in revealing what vocational training programmes are available at the Bechem School for the Deaf. Specifically, the results of study would reveal the types of vocational training programmes that are offered in the school. This highlight would guide the national vocational and technical institute to make the necessary arrangements or adjustments on their programmes if necessary. It is also hoped that the findings of the study would to a large extent shed some light on the quantity and quality of training resources in the vocational center at Bechem School for the Deaf. These findings would guide the government in its decision to supply of the necessary equipment and logistics for effective training at the school. It is envisaged that the results would point to the various kinds of instructional strategies adopted by the instructors of the program. This would go a long way to help the Ghana Education Service to plan in-service trainings and other professional development programmes for these instructors.

The results of the study would also help in finding out factors that affect the employment opportunities of graduate students who are deaf. This would enable the Social Welfare Department to take the necessary actions to address the problem. Finally, the results of the study would add to the existing literature for other researchers interested in similar studies.

1.7 Delimitation of the study

Even though there are various programmes at the Bechem School for the Deaf, this study was delimited to the vocational training program at the school and employment opportunities available for graduates after the training.

1.8 Operational definition of terms

The definition of terms was operational and referenced.

Job opportunities: The chance of one practicing a vocation with the skills acquired. An employment through which an individual earns a living.

Instructors: a instructor, or professor, of a specialized subject that involves skill.

Labour market: The existence of physical and mental resource of individual‟s in the creation of wealth to the system of the exchange of goods and services.

Resources: a stock or supply of money, materials, staff, and other assets that can be drawn on by a person or organization in order to function effectively.

Teaching strategies: methods used to help students learn the desired course contents and be able to develop achievable goals in the future.

Vocational training programme: The process of teaching individuals how to move accurately and thoroughly perform the technical components of their jobs. Training can include technology applications, products, sales and service tactics, and more. Technical skills are job-specific as opposed to soft skills, which are transferable.

Vocational training: Equipping persons with necessary skills which will enable them to be gainfully employed and live on their own after training, mostly given to anybody in a trade within the school setting or workshops.

1.10 Organisation of the study.

This study is organized and presented in five chapters. Chapter one presents the introduction which consists of the background to the study, the statement of the problem and purpose of the study, the scope and limitations of the study, as well as definition of terms. Chapter two entails the review of related literature. It makes use of secondary information such as newspapers, encyclopedia, journals, books and internet blogs related to the research topic as well as the theoretical framework whiles the third chapter examines the methodology used in harvesting data.

Chapter four examined the data collection, analysis of findings and discussion of results. Chapter five concludes the study by summarizing, concluding, and making recommendations based on the findings. It also covers the implications of the study. References and appendixes follow at the end of chapter five.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The chapter presents the literature reviewed for the study. The review first covered the theoretical framework followed by the review on the key themes raised in the research questions for the study such as:

- Vocational training programmes offered in the school
- Resources available for training vocational training programmes in the school
- Teaching strategies in vocational training
- Employment opportunities in vocational training

2.1 Theoretical framework

This study hinges on the Human Capital theory by Shaltz(1961). The Human capital theory is a term first proposed by Gary Becker (1961), an economist from the University of Chicago in the United States of America, and Jacob Mincer that refers to the stock of knowledge, habits, social and personality attributes, including creativity, embodied in the ability to perform labor so as to produce economic value.

The theory advocates that education or training gives useful knowledge and skills to workers which in turn increase their productivity and incomes level. Shaltz (1961) distinguished between specific human capital and general human capital. Specific human capital includes expertise acquired through education and training which is specific to a particular firm (firm-specific or context-specific skills). General human capital (general skills), on the other hand, is knowledge gained through education and training which is valuable across board (e.g., reading and writing).

Becker (1961) views human capital as similar to "physical means of production", e.g., factories and machines: one can invest in human capital (via education, training, medical treatment) and one's outputs depend partly on the rate of return on the human capital one owns. Thus, human capital is a means of production, into which additional investment yields additional output.

According to Goldin (2012), alternatively, human capital is a collection of traits – all the knowledge, talents, skills, abilities, experience, intelligence, training, judgment, and wisdom possessed individually and collectively by individuals in a population. These resources are the total capacity of the people that represents a form of wealth which can be directed to accomplish the goals of the nation or state or a portion thereof. Similarly, Simkovic (2013) is of the view that, it is an economic view of the human being acting within economies, which is an attempt to capture the social, biological, cultural and psychological complexity as they interact in explicit and/or economic transactions. Simkovic (2013) added that many theories explicitly connect investment in human capital development to education, and the role of human capital in economic development, productivity growth, and innovation has frequently been cited as a justification for government subsidies for education and job skills training.

According to Goldin (2012), studies of structural unemployment have increasingly focused on a mismatch between the stock of job-specific human capital and the needs of employers. In other words, there is increasingly a recognition that human capital may be specific to particular jobs or tasks and not general and readily transferable. Recent work has attempted to improve the linkages between education and the needs of the labor market by linking labor market data to education loan pricing.

The human capital theory is relevant to this study since every employee including those who are deaf must acquire the requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are worthwhile for effective job performance in the workplace. It is when there is effective job performance that productivity would also improve.

2.2 Types of vocational training programmes

Vocational training programme can be grouped under four broad headings: cosmetology, hospitality, trades and administrative assistantships.

2.2.1 Cosmetology

Cosmetology is a branch of specialty which includes hairdressing, skin care, manicure/pedicure, non-permanent hair removal and permanent hair removal processes.

2.2.1.1 Hairdressing

Hairdressing programme aims at helping students to develop, through a balanced curriculum with generic and vocational knowledge and skills, and structured whole person development competencies in a specific trade so as to enhance their opportunities for employment and / or further studies Baum (2005). According to Baum (2005), the hairdressing programme for vocational training covers mainly fundamental knowledge and skills required in the hairdressing services sector. Graduates may choose to seek employment or further their studies.

Blyton (2015) contends that in looking at the carreer prospects of hairdressing, graduates may be employed as junior stylist, technician trainees and products sale executives in the salon. Blyton (2015) adds that upon satisfying the credit requirements for a specific award, students will be awarded with the Certificate of Basic Craft Studies (BCC), Certificate of Technician Foundation Studies (TFC) or

Diploma of Vocational Education (DVE) award for employment or further studies. Holders of the Diploma of Vocational Education award upon successful completion of prescribed modules will be eligible to apply for VTC‟s Higher Diploma programmes.

There is a general objectives associated with the hairdressing component of vocational training programmes. Bradley (2010) pointed out that the general objectives of the Vocational Qualification in Hairdressing are to provide extensive basic vocational skills for working in various tasks in the field. As hair care professionals, hairdressers are skilled in hair care and care of the scalp, hair trimming and shaves, styling and application of make-up, dyeing of hair and permanents, as well as entrepreneurship and enterprising activities in the field of hair care. They also have the competence needed for working life in the field, such as the skills needed for the styling services provided to the customer and putting together hair care and styling packages.

According to Burns (2007), hairdressers expertly serve customers in various interactive situations based on the customers‟ needs and expectations. As customer service attendants and members of a work community, the hairdressers observe good behaviour and operating methods. Burns (2007) continue to posit that high quality work in hair care requires not only manual skill but also knowledge of cosmetic substances and products, versatile mastering of working methods and familiarity with equipment used in the field. When guiding a customer, hairdressers take into account, among other things, contemporary fashions and styles that suit the customer. Hairdressers observe the values of the hair care field, work economically, responsibly and equally, and keep to their promises. They are motivated in their work and act flexibly and innovatively in new and diverse working life situations.

Before a student is certificated as a hairdresser in the vocational program, there is the need for some basic requirements. Students or candidates must be able to design and implement hairstyles for customers with hair of varying lengths and using different techniques, wash the customer‟s hair, finish the hairstyles, use the products, tools and materials needed for hairstyles. attach a hair extension/pouf or accessory, design and apply various types of make-up use the products and tools needed in applying make-up, take fashion into consideration when designing hair styles and make-up, and take form theory into account in hair styles and make-up (Odgers & Baum, 2011, p.26).

2.2.1.2 Skin care

Skin care specialists or estheticians provide treatments for skin maintenance and enhancements, including facials, massages to the head and neck and the application of treatments like peels and scrubs. Additionally, someone in an esthetician role might apply laser and/or wax techniques to a client's skin (Poon, 1993).

In the vocational programmes, students are trained on how to execute the following processes:

- Cleansing**:** Dissolving makeup and grime from the surface of the face
- Toning: Freshening the skin and closing the pores
- Exfoliating: Removing dead skin cells for brighter appearance of the skin
- Moisturizing: Lubricating the skin and helping it feel fresh and flexible
- Medical peels: Medical peels use stronger products than typical chemical peels to reduce the signs of aging or skin pigmentation (Reich, 2011 p.158).

Additionally, students are given worthwhile training in the handling of basic equipment. According to Reich (2011), having the right supplies can be important in

both school and on the professional level. Students on their way to an esthetician license will typically have the following items in their supply kit:

- Bowls
- Cosmetics such as blush, foundation, eye shadow, mascara and lip gloss
- Cotton swabs
- Eye pads
- Eyebrow shapers
- Vinyl gloves (p. 89).

Reich (2011) adds that professional estheticians also make sure that proper sanitation and safety techniques are followed for all available services. The state board could visit for inspection at any time, and code violations could endanger the cosmetology license status of individuals working in unsafe or unsanitary conditions.

According to Susanne (2011), estheticians are licensed professionals who are experts in maintaining and improving skin. An esthetician's general scope of practice is limited to the epidermis (the outer layer of skin). Estheticians work in many different environments such as salons, med spas, day spas, skin care clinics, and private practices. Estheticians may also specialize in treatments such as microdermabrasion, micro current (also known as non-surgical "face lifts"), cosmetic electrotherapy treatments (galvanic current, high frequency), LED (light emitting diode) treatments, ultrasound/ultrasonic (low level), and mechanical massage (vacuum and vibratory).

2.2.1.3 Manicure and pedicure

Manicurists and pedicurists, also referred to as nail technicians, are personal appearance workers who specialize in procedures that enhance the fingernails and toenails of their clients. They trim, file and polish nails and apply fingernail extensions (Baum, 2005). Nails, feet and hands care are not only and esthetic necessity of the modern world, but also an essential part of human body hygiene (Sussane, 2011). According to Sussane (2011) manicure and pedicure classes are realized a maximum of three times a week. The classes include both theory and practice, but the practical part is significantly emphasized. Manicure and pedicure technicians often work in salons and spas, performing a series of nail technology steps. They start by removing any existing polish from the nails and then prepare baths to soak the client's hands and feet. Scrub brushes, pumice stones and other tools are used to clean the hands and feet. Nail technicians treat the cuticles by softening and moisturizing them with oil and then pushing back or trimming them. Nail filing and clipping are also performed. Some manicure and pedicure technicians massage clients' hands and feet.

Similarly, Blyton (2015) observed that clients often choose from a selection of nail polishes, which the nail technician uses to paint the nails. Nail technicians also perform specialty services, such as applying artificial nails or treatments, to help improve nail strength or deter nail biting. Nail decorations or airbrushing are also offered by some manicure and pedicure technicians. Clients may seek advice from nail technicians regarding proper nail care or beneficial products to use. According to Blyton (2015), some salons offer nail technicians‟ incentives for selling nail care products. They may also set appointments, collect payment and keep inventory of nail

care supplies. Maintaining their work areas and ensuring all equipment is clean and sanitized are a manicure and pedicure technician's responsibility.

Apart from manicure and pedicure techniques, students are also trained for nail extension and nail art. Upon passing the manicure and pedicure course, the trainee has a practical exam. Having passed it, they receive a manicure and pedicure vocational certificate. Finishing this course enables the student to independently work as a manicure and pedicure technician (Burns, 2007).

2.2.1.4 Hair cutting / styling

Hair cutting training programs is offered at beauty and vocational training schools and at community colleges. Both certificate and associate's degree programs in cosmetology provide the necessary skills to become a licensed hair stylist (Keep and Mayhew (1999). For a career as a hair stylist, enrollment in a cosmetology program is required to learn the trade. A certificate/diploma program might require an apprenticeship with a licensed, established hair stylist for hands-on experience.

According to Mistillis and Daniele (2010), aspiring hair stylists in cosmetology certificate or diploma programs can expect to learn hair cutting techniques, as well as chemical treatment application methods for bleaching, perming and coloring. Students demonstrate beauty skills on mannequins provided by the schools and, sometimes, on other students. Most students take additional hair courses in specialty areas such as:

- Braiding
- Razor cuts
- Highlighting
- Weaves
- Skin care

After becoming licensed as a hair cutter or stylist and gaining some experience, a beauty professional may seek a career as a consultant or sales representative for a beauty company. Other professionals may pursue ownership of their own salon or become a barber, which requires enrollment in a barber program and the passing of a state licensing exam. Most barbers specialize in cutting men's hair, razor shaving and trimming beards; generally, barbers do not perform advanced hair styling techniques, such as coloring, adding hair extensions or perming, as a hairdresser would (Reich, 2011).

2.2.2 Trades in vocational training programmes

Trades are jobs requiring manual skills and special training. Vocational training is provided in small duration trades such as Carpentry, Electrician, Plumber, Auto-technician, Painters, and masonry or mason assistant.

2.2.2.1 Carpentry

Carpentry is one of the trades that are often targeted by vocational institutions including that designed for the individuals who are deaf. According to Arends (2014), carpenters make up the largest building trades occupation in the industry and those with all-around skills are in high demand. Carpenters are involved in many different kinds of construction activities, from building highways and bridges to installing kitchen cabinets. Carpenters construct, erect, install, and repair structures and fixtures made from wood and other materials.

The curriculum of the carpentry course is fully packed with some four related areas. This four-level curriculum covers content such as building materials, cabinet fabrication, and advanced wall systems (Chen, Hsu & Hung, 2010). These authors contend that carpenters are skilled craftsmen who build structures and products from

wood and other materials. Also, when one wants to pursue a formal carpentry education, basic courses teach about the manual and power tools, building materials and safety procedures used in basic carpentry.

According to Diaz-Maggioli (2014), an alternative to formal education is participation in an apprenticeship, which can give you long-term experience working under the guidance of a skilled carpenter. The apprentice training program combines hands-on classroom education by qualified instructors with on-the-job training. This "earn while you learn" approach gives students the opportunity to earn a good living while developing highly marketable skills for life (p. 85). The authors pointed out further that there are numerous specialized carpenter training programs that are right for students in the area of vocational training some of which include but not limited to;

- Carpentry - General
- Concrete Forming
- Drywall
- Pile Driving
- Shingling
- Siding (p. 87).

Williams (2010) sees an apprentice as someone who is learning a trade by working under the guidance of skilled journeymen. It's on-the-job training where one earns while he/she learns and is paid a wage. According to this author, apprentices usually start at about 40 percent of the skilled journeyman's rate of pay. And again, apprentice wages are increased at periodic intervals until their wages are up to 80 percent of the journeyman's rate-usually the last year of training. The authors continue

to point out that any candidate applying for an apprenticeship must meet the following requirements:

- Must have attained the age of 17.
- Must reside within the jurisdiction of the apprenticeship program.
- Must have successfully completed two (2) years of required high school study that meets graduation requirements in an accredited high school, or has earned a GED certificate.
- Must have an original Social Security card or a receipt showing an application for a duplicate card.
- Must be physically fit to work at the trade (p. 91).

In the view of Williams (2010), if the above requirements are met the applicant must appear in person at the Apprentice Training Center to complete and file an "Application for Apprenticeship in Carpentry". At that time the applicant must meet the minimum qualifications and present prescribed documents as required. Each applicant shall take an aptitude and qualifying tests, as required for entry into the Apprenticeship Program. The aptitude and qualifying tests are held at various times and measure vocabulary and word meaning, arithmetic ability, reasoning power and natural talent for carpentry.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reports that in the U.S., no standard training requirements are in place for carpenters; it typically takes 3 to 4 years in an apprenticeship program to achieve proficiency (www.bls.gov). The BLS also states that training may be acquired through apprenticeships or directly on the job, but apprenticeships are hard to come by, and on-the-job preparation may offer no formal instruction. Similarly, Orlich (2007) puts out that another option for aspiring carpenters is attending a trade or vocational school that offers practical application of

the techniques learned. According to the BLS, many employers look highly upon such preparation and may start formally educated carpenters at higher levels of employment.

There are lots of carpentry programmes for persons who are interested in vocational training programmes. For instance, The BLS reported the carpentry field was expected to grow by 6% from 2014 to 2024. Seasonal fluctuations in employment are to be expected in addition to employment being impacted by the economy. Peak periods are expected to offer the best employment opportunities. The BLS stated that the median annual wage for carpenters was $40,820 in May of 2014.

The modules in Construction and Carpentry are designed for students to build skills in making calculations, using tools safely, and understanding how housing systems work (Sallis & Jones, 2002). According to the authors, these skills also need to be demonstrated through practical application. Projects, if not directly related to residential construction, should challenge students to interpret plans, utilize tools, and pay attention to details. High-quality skills should translate into high-quality projects. Similarly, students and instructors alike will find a tremendous amount of industry terminology in this curriculum. The glossary at the back is comprehensive, but a number of good resources will still be required to develop a working knowledge of the terminology required to be competent in the construction trades.

Robinson (2010) propounded that while actual blueprints have gone the way of the dinosaurs, the amount of detailed plans and drawings produced for projects and residential structures has multiplied. Drafting modules have been included in the suggested course configurations to provide extra learning opportunities and practice at reading technical drawings. The author continues to add that community projects provide an array of opportunities for Construction and Carpentry classes. Several

large-scale projects in the province have students spending an entire semester building a house with community partners.

The instructor factor in the impacting of the carpentry curriculum in the vocational training programme cannot be left out. According to Power (2009), for deep understanding, it is vital that students learn by constructing knowledge, with some understandings provided directly by the instructor. As an example, basic understanding of the effects of changing the pitch on a roof is something that the instructor can demonstrate and name for the students; however, first the students could explore the important ideas by experimenting with different pitches. In a similar stance, Sallis and Jones (2002) has also contended that demonstrations by the instructor in the Construction and Carpentry class often form a significant portion of the instruction, but the students must have adequate practice time to construct their own understandings of the feel of adequately demonstrating the required skill.

2.2.2.2 Electrical works

Electricians work in the construction, maintenance and manufacturing industries and are responsible for installing, repairing and maintaining electrical systems and equipment. In the view of (Arends, 2014), electricians must understand state and local building codes and be able to read technical diagrams. And that the prerequisites for beginning electrician training includes a high school diploma or the equivalent and be 18 years old. Similarly, Williams (2010) has pointed out that electricians are highly skilled trade professionals, and not just because of the risks associated with their work. Electricians train to handle a wide variety of issues with electrical power, lighting and control systems. They might work in households wiring outlets and light fixtures, or in businesses or factories, overseeing electrical

equipment. According to these authors, some electricians work outdoors, repairing electrical boxes and other peripherals that help keep society humming.

The completion of the Vocational qualification in electrical engineering and will equip the student with the basic level of expertise necessary to carry out installation, service and maintenance tasks related to electrical engineering. Wagner (2008) posits that it is essential that those working in the field always follow the regulations pertaining to working safety, electrical safety, and electrical installation safety and that they master the basics of electrical engineering technology.

Knowledge of and the ability to handle the materials and components used is also required in all electrical engineering and automation technology tasks. Basic education and training in electrical engineering technology will endow students with a good ability to develop themselves and their professional skills further and to be an active members of the information society (Chen, Hsu and Hung (2010). Similarly, according to Diaz-Maggioli (2014), those who have completed the Vocational Qualification in Electrical Engineering know how to work as an electrical engineering technology professional in an environmentally conscious manner, supporting material and energy efficiency.

Electricians might work for utility companies, construction firms or service providers. Electricians in different industries have varying job duties. For example, maintenance electricians working for factories might be required to service and repair assembly lines, while construction electricians who work on remodeling homes might need to install switches and rewire lighting (Hsu, Chen & Hung, 2000).

Electricians require some formal education. Learn more about the education requirements, licensing requirements and job duties to find out if this is the right career for you. Orlich (2007) observes that no college education is required to become

an electrician, but significant training takes place through an apprenticeship program, which provides in-class and hands-on instruction. They can be employed in a number of electrical jobs or work freelance, both of which mandate licensure. This author continues to say that electricians might specialize in construction or repair, though they often perform both functions.

Pavlova (2009) also put it out that electricians usually gain career training through an apprenticeship program. Some electricians begin the training process by attending a classroom-based vocational program or serving as an electrician's helper; however, these electricians often go on to complete apprenticeships. It is also pointed out that apprentices receive approximately 600 hours of in-class instruction on safety principles, electrical circuits and blueprint reading. Aside from learning in the classroom, apprentices receive on-the-job training under the supervision of experienced electricians. Apprentices might practice wiring outlets and soldering electrical components.

Electrician apprenticeship programs include a minimum of 144 hours of instruction in the classroom each year. Students learn about special systems such as fire alarms, elevators and communications. Soldering techniques are also introduced. Classroom topics include:

- Blueprint reading
- Math
- Code requirements
- Electrical theory and safety (p. 8).

Individuals who get into an electrician training program can go on to many different careers. Some job titles might include construction electrician, controls engineer and photovoltaic installation technician (Power, 2009). These authors further

add that before there is employment of graduates in this field, there are some key competences for lifelong learning. These key competences for lifelong learning are taken to mean such competence as is needed in continuous learning, in seizing future and new situations as well as in coping with the changing working life environment. They are an important part of vocational skills and reflect an individual‟s intellectual flexibility and ability to manage different situations. They increase the vocational civilisation and civic readiness needed in all fields and help the students or candidates to keep up with the changes in society and working life as well as to act under changing conditions. They also play a major part in one‟s quality of life and development of personality.

It is hoped that the electrician graduate of any vocational training program must possess worthwhile knowledge of ank2d using electrical installation materials. For instance, Sallis and Jones (2002) maintain that the student or candidate of vocational training must be able to conduct final circuit-level electrical installation work, such as basic lighting coupling, and is able to conduct dead commissioning inspections on his/her own installations and document them. When installing, the student is able to select appropriate armature, cables, fastenings and connectors for the purpose of use, when selecting utensils, is able to act taking the environment into consideration and effectively in terms of materials and energy, and again, when preparing lists of utensils, is able to make use of information sources such as the list of electrical product numbers and titles maintained by the Electrical Wholesalers´ Federation and use these titles when discussing with professionals in the field.

Likewise, Tileston (2007) also pointed out the following:

- in electrical installation work, is able to fix various components on building materials (such as wood, tile, concrete, building boards)
- knows wire conduits used in electrical engineering and is able to install related cables and armature
- is able to select suitable materials for electrical installations in various spaces based on the markings on the devices and taking into consideration the requirements placed on the electrical devices by the space, such as the enclosure classes of electrical devices
- is able to take the required measurements and make sensory inspections of, for example, enclosure and cable mounting when repairing electrical devices
- is able to interpret and prepare electrical drawings, such as installation drawings and centre main diagrams
- is able to interpret construction drawings needed in electrical engineering.
- is able to find out where the supplies needed in installation work can be acquired (p. 56).

Mastery and use of electrical drawings, electrical specifications, installation manuals and user‟s manuals is another very important component of the electrician‟s course work. According to Tileston (2007), the student or candidate of a vocational training program must be familiar with the most common graphic symbols used in the electrical installations of various buildings, must be able to read electrical drawings well enough to conduct the work independently or under some instruction, and again, must be able to read and apply electrical specifications correctly. Furthermore, the authors put forward that the student must be able to read system-specific instructions and act accordingly, interpret layout drawings, system charts, device lists and

electrical specifications and to make modifications to them based on potential changes taking place during work, prepare a working plan for a small-scale target, based on which the work can be completed, use the correct graphic symbols when modifying electrical drawings, able to read installation instructions and use them to install and connect electrical devices of various systems to the network, and better still be able to provide use guidance to the client with the help of user‟s manuals.

According to Arends (2014), competence in lighting technology, and lighting installations also matters in the study courses involved in electrical installations and their related fields. In this line the researcher mentioned that for a student to be classified as a renowned specialist in this field, he must be proficient in the most common light sources, their colour temperatures, colour shades and connection devices. Also, he must be familiar with various lighting structures and is able to select appropriate light sources for structures, and is also aware of the importance of energy saving in the planning and installation of lighting. Also, he is able to correctly install various surface and recess mounted luminaires with the help of manufacturer‟s instructions and take into consideration the installation position and enclosure class of the luminaire in accordance with the requirements of space classes, is able to consider the requirements set on the maintenance of luminaires and above all is able to install the components controlling lighting, such as switches and push buttons.

2.2.2.3 Plumbing works

There are several objectives for developing a national curriculum for the training of students in plumbing. The study of a national curriculum for plumbing is intended to assist students/trainees to develop knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will enable them to become eligible for entry-level employment in the field of plumbing, develop sensitivity to the issues, problems and challenges encountered in a

working environment, benefit from the group activity and team work needed for personal development and development as workers, and also make themselves available for opportunities for lifelong learning through exposure to bridging programs in the field of plumbing (Advertising Standards Authority, 2006).

In a similar view, Odgers and Baum (2011) add that plumbing and heating program prepares students to practise the trade of pipe fitter. This trade is part of the building services sector and includes two specialties: plumbing and heating. Generally speaking, pipe fitters install, modify, repair and maintain plumbing and heating systems. More specifically, they work on pipes in water supply and drainage systems. They also work on pipes and other components of hydronic, steam, forced air, oil, radiant, natural gas and propane heating systems. They are interested in new technologies, in particular renewable energy (e.g. geothermic, solar). Provided they meet the necessary requirements, pipe fitters can work in the construction sector and in other sectors, in particular in the residential, commercial and institutional subsectors. They may also work in the industrial sector in areas other than construction.

The program goals of the plumbing program are based on the general goals of vocational training. These goals are as follows:

- To help students develop effectiveness in the practice of a trade, that is: to teach students to perform roles, functions, tasks and activities associated with the trade upon entry into the job market
- to enable students to acquire the competencies they need to obtain a Competency Certificate– Apprentice (CCA) and those that will allow them, after the necessary apprenticeship periods, to obtain a Competency Certificate–Journeyman (CCJ) in order to work in the construction industry to

prepare students to progress satisfactorily on the job (which implies having the technical and technological knowledge and skills in such areas as communication, problem solving, decision making, ethics and health and safety

- help students adopt the attitudes required to successfully practise the trade, and instill in them a sense of responsibility and a concern for excellence to promote job mobility, that is to help students develop positive attitudes toward change to help students develop the means to manage their careers by familiarizing them with entrepreneurship (Poon, 1993p.51)

According to Advertising Standards Authority (2006), there are numerous opportunities available for trainees who are certified as competent in the knowledge, skills and attitudes presented in this curriculum. Technical and Vocational Education offers seamless educational advancement through the hierarchy of occupational levels. The Advertising Standards Authority (2006) adds that a national curriculum in plumbing is in accordance with the criteria for the award of international vocational qualifications which mandates the inclusion of all core competencies. The curriculum offers one (level one) elective and three (level two) electives.

For the purposes of this study, references to commercial and industrial plumbing will be understood as interchangeable. The word „plumber" derives from the Latin „plumbum" relating to the element of lead (Watson, 2005). Historically, plumbers used lead to make cisterns and pipes to contain or carry water, but this is no longer the case due to health risks. However, some plumbers still work with lead, which is also used for roof coverings and flashings to seal buildings against wet weakther. The type of work usually undertaken by contemporary plumbers is described by SummitSkills (2010) as including:

- Installing and maintaining central heating systems, hot and cold water systems and drainage systems
- Installing, commissioning and maintaining solar water heating, rainwater harvesters and kgrey water recycling systems
- Installing and maintaining gas, oil and solid fuel appliances
- Installing and maintaining industrial and commercial heating, specialist appliances and fire protection systems (p. 54).

Indeed, SummitSkills (2010) describe the plumbing industry as largely made up of small domestic firms with 63% of the skilled workforce aged between 35 and 54. Most people in plumbing training are aged over 25, with 45% aged between 16 and 24. SummitSkills (2010) adds that the college-based qualifications that both apprentices and full-time students undertook were called technical certificates and these involved both practical and knowledge training in simulated college settings. Full-time students typically attended college two and a half days per week for one academic year to attain this technical certificate at level 2 or 3.

2.2.2.4 Automotive technology

Automotive Technology is designed to provide the future and working technician with a strong foundation in automotive repair, including knowledge of and skills in the most up-to date and advanced technology. The goal of the Automotive

According to Cutshall (2013), the Automotive Technology program is in a constant state of development and expansion into new technology. The program is offered in four major sections: engine, electrical, fuel, and chassis. Cutshall mentioned that normally the two-year vocational program may be taken during both day and evenings. Classes vary from entry level to advanced training in specialized topics. Students must receive a minimum grade of "C" or better in all required core

courses and the specific courses listed as program electives in order to qualify for the degree or certificate.

There are several distinctive features of the auto technology program. For instance, Cutshall (2013) pointed out that students have direct access to specialized and up-to-date automotive repair equipment. They are able to run equipment and perform automotive repairs in the automotive shop. The program features both lecture and "hands-on" instruction, covers both domestic and imported vehicles, and emphasizes the latest in high-technology.

It is hoped that successful graduates of Automotive Engineering (Light Vehicle Strand) will have an understanding of the operation of most motor vehicle systems and be able to diagnose and repair common faults. Also will be able to work in the motor industry under limited supervision to diagnose, repair a wide range of motor vehicles. Successful graduates will have an understanding of the operation of most heavy vehicle systems and be able to diagnose and repair common faults. Also will be able to work in the motor industry under limited supervision to diagnose, repair a wide range of heavy vehicles. The graduates are supposed to have an understanding of the operation of most motor vehicle electrical systems and be able to diagnose and repair common faults. Also will be able to work in the motor industry under limited supervision to diagnose, repair a wide range of motor vehicles (Baum, 2005).

According to Baum (2005), limited access to vocational and technical training is a major constraint for women wishing to enter the labour market, especially for those who do not qualify for admission to formal post-secondary training. The general situation as revealed by the analysis of the reports is that the participation of girls in technical and vocational education is generally low with some differences between

the countries. This disparity between girls and boys is further intensified when only soft options of courses such as tailoring, dressmaking, and secretarial assistance are made available to girls.

2.2.3 Administrative Assistants

Administrative assistants are persons responsible for providing various kinds of assistance in offices. They are sometimes called administrative support specialist. They have the responsibility of ensuring that the administrative activities within an organization run efficiently, by providing structure to other employees throughout the organization. These activities can range from being responsible for the management of human resources, budgets and records, to undertaking the role of supervising other employees. These responsibilities can vary depending on the employer and level of education of the employee (Bradley, 2010).

Administrative assistants perform clerical duties in nearly every industry. Some administrative assistants, like those in the legal industry, may be more specialized than others. Most administrative assistant duties revolve around managing and distributing information within an office. This generally includes answering phones, taking memos and maintaining files (Keep & Mayhew, 1999). Keep and Mayhew (1999) add that administrative assistants may also be in charge of sending and receiving correspondence, as well as greeting clients and customers.

Bookkeeping is one most important function of the administrative assistance. Mistillis and Daniele (2010) contends that admin assistants in some offices may be charged with monitoring and recording expenditures. Duties may range from creating spreadsheets to reporting expenses to an office manager. As such, some administrative assistants may be required to be knowledgeable in office bookkeeping software, such as Microsoft Excel.

Odgers and Baum (2011) summerises the various duties of the administrative assistance or the office clerk as; providing customer service, assisting with all aspects of administrative management, directory maintenance, logistics, equipment and storage. Again, they help in managing inventory of assets and supplies, sourcing for suppliers (vendors) and submitting invoices, coordinating between departments and operating units in resolving day-to-day administrative and operational problems, scheduling and coordinating meetings, interviews, events and other similar activities, sending out and receiving mail and packages, preparing business correspondence, agendas, and presentations, typically using Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, Outlook) and sending faxes and emails. Further to the above list, the administrative assistant also helps in managing documents and files, performing multifaceted general office support, sending and receiving documents for the company, answering the phone, assisting in various daily operations, operating a range of office machines such as photocopiers and computers, managing mailing or distribution lists as needed, and also greeting guests and visitors.

In a related vein, Poon (1993) has catigorise the duties of various administrative assistants in the work place as:

Receptionists play a key role in the organizations management, as they are entrusted with arranging and greeting the clients, suppliers and visitors directly via emails, phone calls or direct mail. The employee undertaking the role of a receptionist must show good organisational, communicational and customer service skills in order to ensure efficiency with the organisation. Other responsibilities that a receptionist is entrusted with are;

- Ensuring that the outgoing and incoming mail is allocated to the right department within the organisation
- Organising and assist fellow employees with meetings, conferences and direct telephone calls when required
- communicating with members of the public when an inquiry is made
- managing and maintain the filing system that has been implemented into the organisation e.g. information systems
- clerical duties that involve the ordering of equipment, office supplies and other inventories that are required (Reich (2011 p. 25).

Personal Assistants are commonly associated with an office manager that help maintain the efficiency of their day-to-day work, this is through providing secretarial support and assistance. Becoming a personal assistant requires the employee to have experience in previous administrative jobs, in which entailed the use of computers and information systems. Like any other role that is related to an office administrator, the job title of personal assistant requires the employee to be organized, show professionalism and the ability to work under pressure when given a task of vital importance (Reich (2011).

According to the author, the duties that a personal assistant must carry out each day are the following;

- The task of inputting, filing and managing the data that is stored within the organization's office system
- Personal assistants act as a first hand to the office manager so they must ensure that all contacts from third party individuals are processed through them

- To arrange transportation and meetings that are of importance to the office manager
- Ensure that documents, reports ad presentations are set up prior to any meetings
- Process emails and letters that are received in correspondent to the office manager (p. 25).

Office Manager has the responsibility in ensuring that an organization‟s office duties are completed efficiently and effectively, whilst allocated the task of supervising other member of staff. The role of an office manager requires the candidate to have a higher skill and qualification set than other administrative vacancies, such skills and qualifications include; strong administrative experience, competency in human resources, reporting skills, delegation, managing processes and the ability to communicate to other members of the organization

Reich (2011) contends that office managers are given many important duties daily that help the organization run effectively and efficiently, these being;

- Organize the office's operations and procedures by undertaking several administrative tasks e.g. designing and implementing a new filing system
- Assigning certain employees to undertake operational requirements, whilst following up on their progress
- The duty of recruiting, selecting and training new employees, whilst simultaneously maintaining the current employees through coaching ad counseling

- Producing an annual budget that represents the organization's financial objectives (determines where expenditures need to be scheduled for the next financial year).
- Attending several workshops that will benefit and increase the knowledge of the office manager e.g. educational workshops and participating in professional societies (p.78).

2.2.4 Hospitality

Hospitality is one of the various aspects of vocational training programmes that is worthwhile. Students earning their Vocational Qualification in Hotel, Restaurant and Catering Services will possess a wide range of fundamental skills for the sector. According to Reich (2011), they will be serving Finnish and foreign customers and be able to work in hotel and foodservice capacities for a wide variety of companies and places of business. The objective of the Vocational Qualification is to bring service-minded, responsible, reliable and co-operative employees with self-initiative to the sector.

The „newer" areas include functions and tasks that exhibit considerable cross-over with work that falls out with normal definitions of hospitality in food and drink manufacture, office administration, IT systems management and specialist areas of sports and leisure. Indeed, it is fair to say that although there is long-standing debate as to whether the hospitality industry is „unique" (Mullins, 2011), there is little doubt that there is little that is unique about hospitality skills. Most of the skills that are employed within the sector also have relevance and application in other sectors of the economy. Those employed in areas where there is considerable skills overlap with hospitality, such as the areas listed above, may well see themselves in terms of their generic skills area, rather than as part of the hospitality labour market. Some of these

skills have been subject to separate assessment (Ecotec, 2001) in a manner that has value and cross-over implications for the hospitality sector.

The characteristics and the organisation of the hospitality industry are subject to on-going re-structuring and evolutionary change. There are major labour market and skills implications of such change as businesses re-shape the range of services they offer (Hjalager & Baum, 2008), or respond to fashion and trend imperatives in the consumer marketplace (Warhurst, 2010). Vertical diversity in hospitality work is represented by a more traditional classification that ranges from unskilled to semi-skilled, and from skilled to supervisory and management. This „traditional" perspective of work and, therefore, skills in hospitality is partly described by Riley (2016) in terms that suggest that the proportionate breakdown of the workforce in hospitality is as follows:

- Managerial – 6%
- Supervisory – 8%
- Craft (skilled) – 22%
- Operative (semi skilled and unskilled) – 64%

This simplification masks major business organisational diversity in hospitality, reflecting the size, location and ownership of hospitality businesses. The actual job and skills content of work in hospitality is predicated upon these factors so that common job titles (e.g. restaurant manager, sous chef) almost certainly mask a very different range of responsibilities, tasks and skills within jobs in different establishments. Riley is useful in his application of the weak-strong internal labour market model to illustrate the relationship that his workforce structure has to a number of externalities including educational requirements, points of entry into the workforce, workplace pay differentials and level of trade union membership.

The skills profile of hospitality, in turn, is influenced by the labour market that is available to it, both in direct terms, and via educational and training establishments. The weak internal labour market characteristics in themselves impose downward pressures on the skills expectations that employers have of their staff and this, in turn, influences the nature and level of training that the educational system delivers. There is an evident cycle of down-skilling, not so much in response to the actual demands of hospitality work or of consumer expectations of what it can deliver, but as a result of the perceptions of potential employees and the expectations that employers have of them.

Hospitality work is widely characterised in both the popular press and in research-based academic sources as dominated by a low skills profile (Wood, 2007) or, as Shaw & Williams (1994), rather brutally and, probably, unfairly put it, „uneducated, unmotivated, untrained, unskilled and unproductive" (p. 142). Bradley (2010) apply this epithet to the wider service or new economy in questioning assumptions about a skills revolution in Britain, noting that „jobs commonly retain a low-skill character, especially in the fastest-growing sectors" (p. 129). However, Burns (2007) questions the basis for categorizing hospitality employment into „skilled" and „unskilled" categories, arguing the post-modernist case that this separation is something of a social construct. This construct is rooted in, first, manpower planning paradigms for the manufacturing sector and, secondly, in the traditional power of trade unions to control entry into the workplace through lengthy apprenticeships.

Burns bases this argument on a useful consideration of the definition of skills in hospitality, noting that the different sectors that comprise tourism-as-industry take different approaches to their human resources, and that some of these differences ...

are due to whether or not the employees have a history of being „organised" (either in terms of trade unions or staff associations with formalised communication procedures) (p. 240).

This strong internal labour market analysis leads Burns to argue that skills within „organised" sectors, such as airlines and hotel companies with clearly defined staff relationship structures, such as Sheraton, are recognised and valued. By contrast, catering and fast food „operate within a business culture where labour is seen in terms of costs which must be kept at the lowest possible level" (p. 240) and where skills, therefore, are not valued or developed. Burns" definition of hospitality skills seeks to go beyond the purely technical capabilities that those using „unskilled" or „low skills" descriptors assume. He draws upon Ritzer"s (1993)"s drama analogy for the service workplace to argue that: Working in such an environment requires more than an ability to operate a cash register; emotional demands are made of employees to constantly be in a positive, joyful and even playful mood. An ability to cope with such demands must be recognized as a „skill" par excellence. (p. 240)

This case is also argued by Poon (1993) who notes that new employees in hospitality:

- Must be trained to be loyal, flexible, tolerant, amiable and responsible at every successful tourism establishment, it is the employees that stand out
- Technology cannot substitute for welcoming employees. (p. 262)

Burns" emphasis on „emotional demands" as an additional dimension of hospitality skills has been developed in the work of Seymour (2010). Her work builds upon the seminal earlier work of Hochschild (1983) who introduced the concept of emotional work within the services economy. Hochschild argues that service employees are required to manage their emotions for the benefit of customers and are,

in part, paid to do this. Likewise, Seymour considers the contribution of what she calls „emotional labour" makes to work in fast food and traditional areas of service work, and concludes that both areas demand considerable emotional elements in addition to overt technical skills.

On the basis of this argument, Baum contends that work that may be unskilled in the Europe and the USA requires significant investment in terms of education and training elsewhere and cannot, therefore, be universally described as „low skilled". This issue is one that is beginning to assume significance in Western Europe as a combination of service sector labour shortages and growing immigration from countries of Eastern Europe and elsewhere means that skills assumptions in hospitality can no longer be taken for granted.

The current hospitality labour market in the Republic of Ireland illustrates this situation where service standards are under challenge as the industry recruits staff from a wide range of former eastern block countries. A government-sponsored response has been to organize special training programmes of 3 months duration for new workers from Poland and Russia. The gap however remains that the situation in the Jamasi School for the Deaf is unknown.

An important feature of skills within hospitality is the range of capabilities that a diverse sector can accommodate. The sector is one that provides opportunities that range from senior global business management through to work that is within the capability of people with a range of physical and learning disabilities (Baum, 2005). The low skills argument also tends to neglect the opportunities that hospitality provides for the relatively easy access to the use of entrepreneurial and management skills. Weak internal labour market characteristics mean that it is readily feasible for

those with limited specific hospitality or business training to enter the industry at ownership or senior management levels, especially in the independent sector.

Keep & Mayhew (1999) note that „the aim of many who enter the sector is to eventually start up their own business". Others may choose to do so after careers in different areas of employment or enterprise, perhaps for „lifestyle" reasons (Andrew, 2011). What they have in common is the desire to build upon a skills base in hospitality that may be relatively limited in order to utilise wider enterprise and business skills within the sector. On this basis, the initial or base skills that are used to describe hospitality work (hamburger flipping) do not provide a complete basis for describing the nature of work in the sector.

It is clear that there is no ready resolution to this „low skills debate". Reich's (2011) occupational typology as presented by Keep & Mayhew (1999), identifies three discreet categories:

- high-level symbolic manipulators or analysts;
- a dwindling group of those engaged in routine production;
- a group providing interpersonal services – waiters, hotel receptionists among others (p. 11)

Within this classification, it is clear that skills which are most highly valued in society fall within the first category. Hospitality work, on the face of it, falls, in part, into the second category (chefs) and predominantly into the growing third category, a grouping that does not readily accommodate the consequences of the arguments of Burns or Baum or those relating to emotional labour. The role of information technology in transforming work across a wide range of sectors in the economy does not really feature in Reich's classification and yet the impact of the information age can be seen as adding a new dimension to traditional or routine occupations.

Mistillis and Daniele (2010) argue the case that there is a new category of tourism work emerging as a result of the information revolution, requiring creative and information processing skills of an entirely different order to those traditionally associated with the sector. This may be true in a segment of the tourism and hospitality sector, but the contrary assessment of Odgers & Baum (2011) is that while such skills do exist, they operate at a level remote from routine tourism work and that front office staff, for example, play little or no role in the development and maintenance of marketing web sites on the internet. Assessment of the real impact of the information revolution on skills demands in hospitality work, therefore, must remain an issue for future consideration.

2.3 Resources available for the development of Vocational Training programmes for individuals who are deaf.

Touching on the resources available for the development of Vocational Training programmes for individuals who are deaf, the following sub-strands will be reviewed: qualities of vocational training instructors for the individuals who are deaf, and material resources for effective vocational training programmes.

2.3.1 Qualities of vocational training instructors for individuals who are deaf

The objective of vocational education and training programmes for students who are deaf is to motivate them to complete a programme of training that can qualify them for employment and at the same time, accommodate the needs of the labour market. According to Dess and Pickens (1999), the programmes are organized by employing instructors to give these young people a taste of further education and active participation in society by developing the students‟ personal and social skills like instilling a spirit of independence and cooperation, and stimulating their awareness about innovation, environment and internationalization. The instructors are

to ensure that those who have completed vocational training programmes can immediately work within the line of industry or trade that is the focus of the programme.

UNESCO-IBE (2008) posits that there is a global shortage of instructors, particularly of instructors who are sufficiently trained and motivated to impart vocational and technical skills to the individuals who are deaf and other marginalized groups schools. Yet vocational and technical skills are vital for achieving Education for All (EFA) goals and bringing the millions of currently excluded children into the classroom. United Nations (UN) (2006) adds that in order to develop vocational and technical skills in children who are deaf, instructors need to learn about and practice vocational and technical education during pre-service and in-service training, and they need to be given opportunities for continuing professional development (which extends beyond simply attending training courses) throughout their careers.

Similarly, Sjur and Radu (2010) have stated that governments and donors need to strengthen investments in educational improvement, and prioritise improvement of the vocational education opportunities of Deaf children and communities. They continue to speculate that Policy-makers and trainers responsible for developing the instructor training needs and for recruiting instructors need to understand vocational and technical education and its importance in any drive for educational improvement. They need to grasp the concept of vocational and technical education as a twin-track approach which can improve the quality of education for all and also provide specialised support where needed for Deaf children.

Shulman (2007) adds that vocational education training and continuous professional development need to be designed and delivered with inputs from diverse stakeholders, in particular, community members and professionals with disabilities, to

give a stronger sense of reality to instructors‟ learning experiences. There is the need to ensure positive values for instructors of the individuals who are deaf. This will go a long way to enhance the day-to-day teaching and learning of the individuals who are deaf students. According to European Commission (2010), four core values relating to teaching and learning have been identified as the basis for the work of all instructors in vocational and technical education for the individuals who are deaf.

These four core values are: valuing learner diversity (learner difference is considered as a resource and an asset to education); supporting all learners (technical instructors for the individuals who are deaf have high expectations for their learners‟ achievements); working with others (collaboration and teamwork are essential approaches for all technical instructors) and continuing personal professional development (teaching is a learning activity and Deaf instructors take responsibility for their own lifelong learning). European Commission (2009) further presents these core values along with the associated areas of instructor competence. The areas of competence are made up of three elements: attitudes, knowledge and skills. A certain attitude or belief demands certain knowledge or level of understanding and then skills in order to implement this knowledge in a practical situation (European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, 2011).

European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education continue to speculate that they should be seen as the foundation for specialist professional development routes and the starting point for discussions at different levels on the context specific areas of competence needed by all instructors working in different country situations. Denzin (1979) contends that valuing learner diversity must be seen as a resource and an asset to education. In this way instructors are expected to possess crucial skills and abilities to be developed within this area of competence which

include critically examining one‟s own beliefs and attitudes and the impact these have on actions, engaging in ethical practice at all times and respecting confidentiality, possessing the ability to deconstruct educational history to understand current situations and contexts, being empathetic to the diverse needs of learners, and also modeling respect in social relationships and using appropriate language with all learners and stakeholders in education.

Other characteristics that are pointed out by Booth (2010) as being important as far as instructors of Deaf in vocational or technical schools are concerned are that; learner diversity is to be respected, valued and understood as a resource that enhances learning opportunities and adds value to schools, local communities and society; all learner‟s voices should be heard and valued; the instructor is a key influence on a learners‟ self-esteem and, as a consequence, their learning potential; and also categorisation and labelling of learners can have a negative impact upon learning opportunities.

Adams (2010) contended that one of the most significant issues that emerged as worthwhile is the instructor‟s pedagogy. According to Adams (2010), vocational instructors must be adept at how they teach and communicate their knowledge. Adams add that the growth of vocational and applied curriculum and the related situated and experiential learning necessitates that a new strategic focus should be placed on vocational and technical pedagogy.

Effective instructors of the individuals who are deaf love their work. Beaton (1990) posit that the single most important quality that every instructor for the individuals who are deaf should possess is a love and passion for teaching young people who are Deaf. Unfortunately, there are instructors who do not love what they do. This single most important factor can destroy a instructor‟s effectiveness quicker

than anything else. Instructors of the individuals who are deaf who do not enjoy their job cannot possibly be effective in their day–to–day activities. Canadian Council on Social Development (2002), there are too many discouraging factors associated with teaching that is difficult enough on an instructor who absolutely loves what they do, much less on one who doesn‟t have the drive, passion, or enthusiasm for it.

According to Kenopic (1996), instructors for individuals who are deaf are the ones that can relate well to their students. The best instructors work hard to figure out how to relate to each of their students. In the point of view of Beaton (1990), common interest can be hard to find, but exceptional instructors will find a way to connect with their students even if they have to fake it. You can relate to that student if you do something as simple as ordering a Lego catalog and then going through it and discussing it with that student. Even if you have no actual interest in Lego‟s, the student will think you do and thus naturally create a connection.

According to Canadian Hearing Society (2001), what works for one student, will not work for every student. Instructors have to be willing to be creative and adaptive in their lessons, thinking outside the box on a continual basis. If you try to teach every concept in the same manner, there will be students who miss out on key factors because they aren‟t wired to learn that way.

An effective instructor for the individuals who are deaf is an excellent communicator. To be the best possible instructor you must be an effective communicator. Halton Region Health Department (1998) contends that instructor of the individuals who are deaf are not just limited to being a skilled communicator to his students although that is a must. They need to be strong communicators with parents of their students as well as their faculty/staff team within the school. Kenopic (1996) adds that if the instructor of the individuals who are deaf has a difficulty

communicating with the individuals who are deaf group, then they limit their overall effectiveness as an instructor for the individuals who are deaf.

The usage of numerous media in the teaching process is acceptable globally. An effective instructor for the individuals who are deaf is the one that uses a variety of media in their lessons. "Like it or not we are in the 21st century, and this generation of students were born in the digital age. These students have been bombarded by technological advances unlike any other generation. They have embraced it, and if we as instructors do not, then we are falling behind" (Canadian Council on Social Development, 2002, p. 254).

According to Malkowski (2001), an effective instructor for the individuals who are deaf understands the content that they teach and knows how to explain that content in a manner that their students understand. There are instructors who do not know the content well enough to effectively teach it. There are instructors for the individuals who are deaf who are truly experts on the content, but struggle to effectively explain it to their students. The highly effective instructor both understands the content and explains it on level. Kenopic (1996) adds that this can be a difficult skill to accomplish, but the instructors who can, maximize their effectiveness as an instructor.

2.3.2 Material resources for vocational training programmes for the individuals who are deaf

Deaf individuals‟ need for education and training does not end upon completion of sign language course in their formal schooling years. Today, more than ever, vocational education is paramount to maintaining and enhancing one's skills, especially in response to changes in job acquisition modes that impact virtually every profession (Rycher & Salganik, 2001).

Equipping fixed desks with under-top monitors ensures adequate sightlines between trainers and Deaf students in a classroom. According to De Giorgi (2005), a training facility for Deaf individuals must have flexible and technologically-advanced learning environments that are safe, healthy, comfortable, aesthetically-pleasing, and accessible. It must be able to accommodate the specific space and equipment needs of the training program and curriculum. Monk and Teal (2008) also add that support spaces geared toward adult needs, such as a business station that allows students to carry out some business functions during their training sessions, must be seamlessly integrated into the facility as well.

Vocational training facility incorporates a number of space types to meet the needs of adult trainees, trainers, and staff. Large-size rooms (auditorium) designed for lecture-style instruction and training must be provided. Auditorium may be equipped with partitions to create smaller training venues (Dionisos, Muehlemann, Pfeiffer, Walden, Wenzelmann & Wolter, 2009). Dionisos, et"al (2009) further speculates that for effective Deaf training in vocational programmes, one important resource to consider is a conference room and the instructor to students" ratio. According to Fedorets and Spitz-Oener (2011), depending on the seating configuration, the rooms may accommodate lecture-style instruction or encourage interaction in the form of roundtable discussions. Often two or three conference rooms can be combined to form a larger conference room by opening movable partitions that slide or fold into pockets in the walls. Garcia and Fares (2008) continues to say that seminar rooms can also be created in some cases. According to Abowd, Kramarz, Lemieux and Margolis (2000), seminar rooms are multiple-purpose, small-size instruction rooms, usually used to accommodate a small number of people within close proximity.

Hoeckel (2008) contend that another important resource for training of individuals who are deaf is an administrative Support Spaces. This may include administrative offices that may be private or semi-private acoustically and/or visually designed, trainer offices which may be shared space and equipment, including computers, phones, fax machines, desks, libraries, and supplies. Another important resource is the operation and maintenance spaces which may include general storage space which comprise of such items such as stationery, equipment, and instructional materials. Others include food preparation area or kitchen, Computer/Information Technology (IT) Closets, maintenance closets, and others (Huitfeldt & Kabbani, 2006).

According to International Labour Organization (ILO) (2011) there is the need to make several considerations when it comes to the design of vocational training centers including that of the individuals who are deaf. Some of the important design considerations include but not limited to; flexibility, technological connectivity, indoor environmental quality, signage, security and occupant Safety, and operations and maintenance.

Technology has become an indispensable tool for business, industry, and education of the individuals who are deaf. As a result, International Youth Foundation (2011) contends that many training courses are specifically designed to enhance a trainee's competency with new software and hardware. The International Youth Foundation contends further that in some cases, technology has even changed the way instruction is provided to the individuals who are deaf from traditional live instructor-led courses to self-directed learning and individualized instruction. According to the International Youth Foundation (2011), distance learning using telecommunication technologies like cable television, internet, satellites, and videotapes, is popular

because it allows Deaf students from across different cultures to participant in courses remote from the point of instruction.

All educational facilities for the individuals who are deaf, including training facilities, must have high-quality indoor environments to promote learning as well as productivity. Kabbani and Kothari (2005) posit that for effective vocational training of the individuals who are deaf, a serious consideration must be made to quality acoustics. Malamoud and Pop-Eleches (2010) similarly posit that Deaf trainees should be able to see their instructors clearly, and vice versa. As a result, trainers must ensure low ambient background noise and appropriate acoustics in classrooms and support spaces through a combination of space planning, sound absorption, and sound transmission reduction techniques. For example, trainers must avoid placing mechanical rooms next to classrooms, conference rooms, auditoriums, offices. Klasen and Pieters (2011) contend that appropriate lighting must be ensured.

A high quality, energy-efficient lighting system that utilizes both natural and electric sources as well as lighting controls is optimal for a learning environment. Therefore, for effective training of the individuals who are deaf, there is the need to ensure that the lighting design is appropriate for the task at hand. "Consider indirect/direct luminaries for ambient lighting in classrooms and support areas, allow individually controlled lighting in study areas and workrooms where possible, and again, design appropriate exterior lighting for facilities that will be used at night" (Kolos, Tóth and Vukovich, 1999, p.145).

Another important consideration for vocational training for the individuals who are deaf is signage (design or use of signs and symbols to communicate a message to a specific group, usually for the purpose of marketing or a kind of advocacy). Signage and other way finding measures help promote a welcoming and

efficient training environment, especially for trainees new to the training facility. According to Krueger and Kumar (2004), signage should include posted directories for easy navigation, schedules of activities, and clear designation of classrooms and support spaces. Many facilities have extended hours and exist on "open" campuses. When entrances are unmonitored, post building hours, appropriate trespassing notices, and important building use policies on the exterior of the building. There is the need therefore to consider the use of colors or other visual markers to facilitate way finding, and also ensure signage is available for persons with disabilities.

Security and occupant safety are two important considerations in the training of all persons including the individuals who are deaf. Lam, Leibbrandt and Mlatsheni (2008) contend that for effective training of students who are deaf, there is the need to implement security measures based on the level of protection desired to protect facility occupants and assets (e.g.,computer equipment). There is the need also to consider standoff distances; access control strategies; entrances that do not face uncontrolled vantage points with direct lines of sight to the entrance; open areas that allow for easy visual detection by occupants; and minimized glazing. Lamb (2011) stipulates that first time students, unfamiliar with their surroundings, may have trouble navigating the safest exit route from the building. As a result of this there is the need to consider using increased signage and/or providing safety information and a building directory in welcome brochures.

Various forms of modern and traditional materials are extensively used in most of the Ghanaian schools for the individuals who are deaf. According to Kyere (2009), material used in Ghanaian vocational schools for the individuals who are deaf take many forms, for example: chisels, axes, paintbrushes, as well as semi-automatic weapons.

In a survey by Kyere (2009) to find out about the nature of the vocational training program at Kibi School for the individuals who are deaf, the researcher found that although, tools and materials needed by instructors and students were inadequate, what was available were in the researcher‟s view judiciously utilized. Some of the materials available were tables, chair, prototype staircase, student‟s bed, shoe rack, room divider, bedside cabinet etc.

2. 4 Employment opportunities for graduates who are deaf after vocational training

Compared to people with normal hearing, both individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing populations face notable challenges in finding jobs after transitions from vocational training. For instance, Abdullah (1993) pointed out that failure to provide a Sign Language interpreter can sink a deaf job seeker's chances in an interview. According to the author, job application process can prove challenging for deaf applicants. The author recommends that hiring managers ask if the individuals who are deaf applicant prefers having an interpreter present. If more than one person will meet the candidate, he should receive a written itinerary, so the session is easier to follow. Interviewers should also notify the receptionist, who can help the applicant relax, and complete his paperwork. Failure to follow these steps can mean an unproductive or unsuccessful interview.

Another factor that affect the job acquisition among Deaf graduates after transition from vocational training programmes has to do with discriminatory practices on the part of employers and better still the co-workers. Adams (2010) contends that Deaf graduates may also face discrimination and lack of empathy from potential employers who don't want to treat them as equals. The Americans with Disabilities Act requires an employer to provide a reasonable accommodation for

persons with disabilities, unless it causes an undue hardship. The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission cited this language in suing Toys "R" Us, Inc., for requiring a deaf applicant, Shakirra Thomas, to provide her own interpreter at a group interview. Thomas's mother stepped into that role, but the company refused to hire her. Such cases, according to the author, show the discrimination that deaf applicants can experience.

Employer misconceptions has also been cited as another important setback to the employment chances of the individuals who are deaf who graduate from vocational training programmes. Several misconceptions make employers wary of hiring deaf applicants (Atchoarena & Delluc, 2001). The author further contends that although many deaf people want to work, hiring managers may regard their disability as a weakness, or evidence that they are unproductive.

Positive interactions are critical for success at work. Even when they find jobs, deaf people face challenges in these areas, according to a position paper posted by the Rochester Institute of Technology. According to Awotunde (1993), co-workers often expect deaf people to process knowledge and communicate as quickly as someone with normal hearing. When that assumption proves wrong, the individuals who are deaf employee may be seen as incapable or lacking intelligence, leaving him ostracized by his co-workers and vulnerable to poor job evaluations.

The impact of limited academic progress is most evident when the occupational outcomes for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing are examined. Currently, large numbers of youth who are deaf or hard of hearing receive Supplemental Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) (Danek & Busby, 1999) without being involved in any productive activity (Bullis, Davis, Bull, & Johnson, 1997). While the exact figures vary from study to study, collectively researchers report that

the manner in which students who are deaf or hard of hearing are prepared for the world of work is unsatisfactory. For example, in a national follow up study, MacleodGallinger (1992) reported that 53 percent of the respondents were unemployed one year after graduation. However, the picture improved considerably over time with almost 19 percent of respondents who were deaf or hard of hearing reporting that they were unemployed 10 years after graduation.

The transition from school to postsecondary education or the world of work, as well as managing adult responsibilities and living independently, represent a major challenge for many individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing (Danek & Busby, 1999). Students are required to leave a relatively supportive educational system, which usually includes trained special education professionals and specialized services, for the dynamic and unsheltered world of adult living, which typically does not provide the same level of services or support. To better meet the challenges of everyday adult living, professionals, and families along with adult service providers, state agency representatives, community members, and faculty at postsecondary institutions need to work together to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate transition plans that help individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing lead personally fulfilling lives (Luckner, 2002).

According to Commander and Kollo (2004), many individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing make use of social security income (SSI) and social security disability insurance (SSDI) to help them get settled. These programs provide supplemental income as well as medicaid and medicare benefits. Unfortunately, large numbers of individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing receive SSI or SSDI, do not work, and are uninvolved in any productive activity (Danek & Busby, 2009).

Another important factor that affects the rate of job acquisition and sustainiance has to do with discrimination. For instance, Denzin (1979) pointed out that negative attitudes and discrimination toward individuals with disabilities in general, and individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing in particular, are deeply rooted and difficult to change. The primary reasons for this include limited experience interacting with individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing and prejudices and fear on the part of the hearing population (Foster, 2007).

Furthermore, there is ample evidence that many workers who are deaf or hard of hearing experience difficulties such as communication stress, social isolation, and unsupportive supervisors, which isolate them from resources within their work organizations that could accelerate their career advancement (Geyer & Schroedel, 2008).

The effect of unemployment as a result of inadequate or no skills training in particular is that, the individuals who are deaf are mostly found on the streets of our cities and towns begging for alms while others are mainly engaged in menial jobs like carrying load of goods, cleaning and washing of utensils. Rhodes (2000) had this to say about unemployment, “there is high unemployment for the individuals who are deaf, and I believe sincerely that, we will either prepare these deaf for work, and provide them with jobs or we will continue to fight them on the streets”. The author continues to say that, work is a means of earning a living, earning self-respect for others, and self-discipline necessary for effective citizenship in our society. Vocational guidance and training should be early in the elementary school curriculum in order to develop in all the disabled youth respect for all work and motivating them to take their place in the world of work.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology for the study. The following areas were covered: research design, population, sample size, sampling technique, instrumentation, validity, reliability, procedure for data collection and data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted a case study research design to explore what vocational training programmes are available at of Bechem School for the Deaf in the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana. Case studies are analyses of persons, events, decisions, periods, projects, policies, institutions, or other systems that are studied holistically by one or more methods (Gray, 2011). The intrinsic worth of a case study approach is that it offers an enormous amount of description and detail about a specific case. This helps to build the foundation for further research. Again, Stake (2000) contended that a case study method is responsible for intensive study of a unit. It is a thorough and deep investigation and exploration of an event.

3.2 Population

The population for the study was made up of 120. They comprised of all the instructors, students and graduates at Bechem School for the Deaf in the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana. It also comprised of a section of the graduate students of the school. These graduates were individuals who have graduated from vocational training programme and are pursuing various kinds of trades in and around the Bechem Township.

3.3 Sample Size

The sample for the study was made up 25 participants. They comprised of 12 instructors, 8 final year students who are deaf and 5 graduate student of the vocational training programme. The instructors comprised of 7 males and 5 females while the students were made up of 5 males and 3 females. Also, the graduate students of the programme that participated in the study were made up of 2 female and 3 males. The sample also comprised of 12 final year students of the school.

Table 3.1: Represent the participants who were interviewed

Type of Participant	Male	Female	Total
Instructor	7	5	12
Final year students	5	3	8
Graduates who are deaf	3	2	5
Totals	**15**	**10**	**25**

3.4 Sampling techniques

The purposive sampling technique was used to select the vocational training instructors and the students for the study. Avoke (2005) contended that in purposive sampling technique the researcher handpicks the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of their judgment of typicality. Fraenkel and Wallen (2009) also explained that purposive sampling technique is a technique in which researchers use their judgment to select a sample that they believe, based on prior information, will provide the data they need.

In the case of the deaf graduates, the snowballing sampling technique was employed. In this procedure, the researcher located one graduate who stayed closer to the school. The graduate also led the researcher to another graduate. Collectively, the

three graduates also led the researcher to another two graduates. A total of 5 graduates were finally reached out to in this process.

3.5 Research instrument

The instrument used to collect data was a set of interview guides. Two sets of interview guides were designed for data collection. The first guide was designed to solicit data from the instructors and students while the second was used to solicit information from the deaf graduates. The researcher developed the interview guides with assistance from her supervisor. The interview guide for the instructors and students (Appendix A) was designed with the use of the first three research questions whiles the interview guide for the graduates of the programme who are deaf (Appendix B) was also designed based on research question 4.

3.6 Validity of instruments

In order to enhance the validity of the instrument, the interview guide was shown to the researcher‟s peers, lecturers and finally to the supervisor for comments. The comments were consider in restructuring the interview items in order to avoid ambiguity in the interview questions. The various individuals who saw the research instruments also checked whether the items and questions had covered the content of the literature. This was ensured that there is high amounts of validity as far as the interview questions are concerned.

3.7 Reliability of instruments

To ensure reliability, a pretest was conducted at Jamasi School for the Deaf in the Ashanti Region involving instructors, students and graduates at the vocational training programme of the school. The results of the pretest was considered in the final draft of the interview items.

3.8 Procedure for data collection

Creswell (2002), posits that the site where research takes place and gaining permission before entering a site is very paramount in research. A letter of introduction was taken from the Department of Special Education, University of Education, and Winneba (UEW). The letter was submitted to the head teacher of Bechem School for the deaf. All terms were clearly explain to remove ambiguities and the participants were given the option to participate voluntarily. The researcher then inform the selected respondents when the researcher visited the school for the interview administration. Seven days were used for the data collection exercise. A research assistant was employed to translate the sign language into written language as the researcher engaged the participants in the question and response processes.

3.9 Data analysis

Data was analyzed qualitatively using narrative themes from the interview data recorded and transcribed. Transcripts of the interview data were given codes as Instructor 1 to instructor 8, Student 1 to Student 8, and Graduate student 1 to Graduate student 5. Fraenkel and Wallen (2009) noted that the first step in coding data to assign identity numbers to every group from whom data has been collected. Colors were further used to code the interview data for categorization to know the themes that emerged from each research question (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Creswell, 2012). According to Bogdan and Biklen, coding allows for the categories and patterns emerging from data to be decided in advance, and facilitates the interpretation of smaller units since the analysis begins with the researcher reading all of the data to gain the sense of the whole. Verbatim expressions of the students were used in reporting the data where necessary.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter analysis and discussions of findings of the study. Four research questions guided the study such as:

- What vocational programmes are offered at the Bechem School for the Deaf?
- What resources are available for training students in the vocational training programmes?
- What instructional strategies are used by the instructors in training the programmes?
- What opportunities are available for graduates after training?

The analysis were done in two sections: Section A represents the analysis of the interview questions whiles section B also represented the analysis of the interview data gathered from the students. The four research questions formed the themes. The research questions are as follows;

4.1 What vocational training programmes are offered at the vocational training center of Bechem School for the deaf.

In expressing their views about the types of vocational training programmes offer to students who are deaf in the school, the instructors revealed that their offer course in fashion and designing, batik tie and dye, bead making among other. Some of the instructors remarked these ways:

One instructor stated:

> *"the programmes we offer here are fashion and design, batik tie and dye, beads, building and construction, metal work or welding and fabrication, wood work and carpentry joinery "(Instructor A).*

Another instructor said;

> *"we have fashion and design,, building and construction, weldering, beading, carpentry and joinery" (Instructor C).*

A third instructor added:

> *"the programmes we have here are carpentry and joinery, welding and fabrication, batik tie and dye, beads making (fashion) and metal work" (Instructor E).*

From the above responses, it is clear that there are different programmes that are offered in the Bechem Vocational School for the Deaf. Most of the instructors mentioned the same types of programmes. Based on this, it can be concluded that the programmes are quite sufficient to ensure that at least every student that goes to the school would have a fair choice of a program to offer.

Programs purposely for boys

As far as the vocational training programmes for boys were concerned, the following views were expressed by the respondents.

One of the instructors indicated;

> *"Carpentry, building and construction, metal work and welding are purposely designed for the boys" (Instructor B).*

Another instructor said:

> *"Carpentry, building and construction, welding are purposefully designed for the boys even though three of the boys are into fashion". (Instruction D).*

Another instructor stated;

> *"metal work, woodwork building and construction, welding and fabrication are for only boys the rest are for the girls". (Instructor G).*

From the above responses, it can be deduced that majority of the boys are offering the same kind of programmes. Except that a few of them are offering some programmes that have been labeled for girls.

Plans for future expansion of the vocational training program

Considering plans for future expansion of the programme, the following comments were made by the instructors.

One of the instructors said;

> *"We have discussed it, we even want to add barbering, catering and shoemaking to make the programme more interesting to learn" (Instructor C).*

Another instructor had this to say;

> *"We want to add more programmes for students who have talents in other courses like hairdressing, barbering, shoemaking to also benefit from the programme" (Instructor E).*

Another instructor pointed out;

> *"Yes, we are planning to add hair dressing, catering and leather work which I think will make the programme very effective"(Instructor H).*

In view of the various responses from instructors, it can be said that majority of them wants the expansion of the program. They mentioned the need to have an expansion of the program so that the students can choose from the different programmes.

4.2 Resources available for vocational training programmes

To find out the various types of materials and resources being used for the vocational training programme at Bechem school for the Deaf, the following issues were gathered from the respondents;

Resources available for training students of the vocational program

In finding out the kinds of resources available for the vocational training program, it came up that there challenges with the availability of resources that were being used in the vocational training program at the Bechem Vocational School for the Deaf. This was reflected in the following responses by the instructors:

One instructor said;

> *"Currently most of the materials are under resourced and needs to be added to make the programme more effective" (Instructor C).*

The next instructor said;

> *"The resources are not enough the government and the non-governmental organisations should come to our aid in order to enhance teaching and learning" (Instructor D).*

Another instructor pointed out;

> *All the resources are not fully furnished , we as an institution are trying our best to get some of the needed resources because we are trying our possible best to make the vocational training programme a better one (Instructor G).*

From the above responses by the instructors it can be deduced that majority of the respondents have realized that the material resources for the enhancement of teaching and learning in the vocational training program for persons who are Deaf at Bechem Vocational School for the Deaf are woefully inadequate. Majority of them requested that the government and other stakeholders should provide more of these resources to enhance the future of the program.

The quality of the resources for the vocational training program

The respondents indicated similar views when it came to the quality and state of the resources available for vocational training programmes for the Bechem School for the Deaf.

One of the instructors said;

> *"The resources are old and some need to be changed for smooth teaching and learning, students sometimes find it difficult working with some resources" (Instructor B)*

Another instructor indicated that;

> *„Many of the resources are five (5) years and above which I think need to be changed since new resources come to the system all the time" (Instructor D).*

Another instructor also had this to say;

> *"The resources are somehow old, you see we are in a modern world and new things come to the system all the time so you don"thave to use resources for a long time" (Respondent G).*

It is glaring from the responses or the respondents that, the various resources for teaching and learning, apart from their inadequacy, the few ones are very old and are not very functional as expected. This is likely to create lapses in the teaching and learning process.

4.3 Teaching strategies used by vocational training instructors

In attempt to gather data on the teaching strategies employed by vocational training instructors at the Bechem School for the Deaf, the following concerns were raised:

Individualized teaching pedagogies in the vocational training program

In finding out if instructors in the vocational training program at Bechem School for the Deaf use individualised teaching methods. The responses by the instructors were numerous. Below are the responses from the instructors.

One instructor said;

> *No! the teaching is done to the whole class and the individual students who don"t understand the lesson later go to the instructor for extra attention to be given to him" (Instructor C).*

Another instructor said;

> *Most at times we use individualized teaching in 6+our lessons with the students if there is any difficulty with the teaching and learning (Instructo*

The next instructor responded as follows:

> *"Some of the subject"s demand individualized teaching whiles others do not, depend on what you are doing at a particular time". (Instructor H)*

Almost all the instructors indicated that in most cases they apply the individualizes pedagogies in their teaching process. This is suggestive that good practices of teaching are being executed in the school.

Practicality of lesson in the vocational training program

In finding out the how practical instructors‟ lessons are, it was revealed that the instructors make their lessons as practical as possible at the Bechem School for the Deaf. This revelation was reflected in the following responses by the instructors:

The first instructor indicated;

> *“We pay more attention to the practical, vocational education cannot be successful without practical lessons (Instructor A).*

Furthermore, the next instructor stated;

> *“Most of the lessons are practical, the programme goes with practicals and everybody is practicing it as such (Instructor E)*

A third instructors added:

> *“The practical lessons are 70%and the rest theory, our students are even more interested in the practical lessons (Instructor F)*

It is clear from the responses of the participants that, the instructors at Bechem School for the Deaf use the practical approaches in teaching under the vocational training programme which is ideal for programme that seeks to teach practical skills to students.

Incorporation of ICT in teaching and learning in vocational training program

In expressing their views on the benefits of the use information and communication technology tools in teaching the students, instructors indicated that the incorporation of ICT would be something they appreciate. In response, the following were the responses:

One instructor mentioned;

> *"We already teach ICT in the school, every student in the school learns ICT which is part of the school curriculum (Instructor A).*

The next instructor also said;

> *"We have introduced the ICT already, we have ICT lab in the school and all the students go there to practice when it is their turn on the time table (Instructor D)*

Another instructor also indicated;

> *"We are doing ICT in the school, now ICT is introduced everywhere and our school is not exceptional" (Instructor E).*

The instructors have indicated that Information and Communication Technology has been introduced in the school for quite a long time now and it is ongoing.

Students' responses

Types of vocational training program offered in the school

With regards to the types of vocational training in the school, the following comments were made by the students:

One student said;

> "*the programmes we have here are carpentry and joinery, metal work, fashion, batik, tie and die, bead making, welding and fabrication, building and construction"* (Student A).

Another student indicated:

> *"we offer carpentry, building and construction, fashion, welding, bead making and metal work"* (Student B)

Considering the various responses of the students, it is clear that there are enough programmes being offered by the students at the school. Most of the programmes are the physical types that the girls cannot offer.

Students' responses on the need to introduce new programmes

In finding out from the students, whether there was the need to introduce more programmes:

One student said

> *"Even though we have some programmes already, I would be happy if more programmes are added" (Student E).*

Another student added;

> *"we need some more programmes so that we can choose from a variety of programmes in order to help one to choose a programme the one can perform better" (Student F).*

However, one student remarked;

> *"The programmes we have are sufficient for us because all of us have been able to choose one that we are interested in" (Student H).*

From various responses of the students, it can be said that majority of them wanted an expansion of the program. The students have mentioned the need to have an expansion of the program even though one of the students felt there was no need for the expansion since she is content with what they have.

Students responses on availability of resources

Concerning the adequacy of resources being used to run the programme, the following comments were made by the students.

One student indicated:

> *"The resources for the programme are not adequate, we have few that are new , the rest are old and sometimes we have to buy our own resources for the programme" (Student A).*

Another student stated;

> *"As for the resources of the programme it is not all that enough sometimes we have to buy our own resources in order to pursue the programme which sometimes makes things difficult for us" (Student D).*

Comments by the students indicated that the resources for teaching and learning in the vocational training programme at the Bechem School for the Deaf are not sufficient. The students felt that there must be some kinds of expansion in the programme for smooth teaching and learning.

The students were asked whether or not some of the programmes are under resourced. In response,

One of the students said:

> *"All the programmes are under resourced, we all need financial resource, human resource and capital resource, as a student I think the government should come to our aid." (Student C).*

The next student also commented;

> *" The resources are inadequate, we all need resources for practicals, vocational programme is about practicals and if you don"t have the resources for practicals how can you do it" (Student D).*

The forth student also indicated that:

> *"The programme needs more resources because it is under resources, instructors and students sometimes will have to work hard in order to get available resources for the programme (Student E).*

These responses point out that there is much to be done by the government and other stakeholders in the vocational education sector. A lot of responses point to the fact that that there is the lack and adequacy of materials in this field of study.

After these responses, the students were then asked to tell if they benefit from the individualized instructor methodologies of not.

The students responded as follows,

A student said:

> *"Mostly our instructors do the individual teaching whenever we are having practical lessons and that gives us the opportunity to practice what we know individually and also ask them questions. The individualized teaching helps the instructors to teach us based on our levels, during this time we all benefit from the programme since we are attended to based on our level (Student B).*

Similarly, another student stated:

> "*I benefit from individualized teaching approach because it gives me the opportunity to ask any question that I don"t understand, the instructors also go according to my level* (Student F)

The next respondent said:

> *Personally, I benefit from individualized teaching approach, basically am a slow learner so during this time the instructors move according to my level and am also able to catch up with my friends* (Student H)

The responses by the students point indicated that their instructors are actually knowledgeable about the programme. All the students indicated that their instructors use the individualized approach to teaching in their respective lessons. The responses by these students have affirmed that the individualized teaching pedagogy is so helpful to them as students.

The researcher asked the students to tell whether teachers use practical approach to teach them. The responses were as follows.

A student said:

> *"We always do practical lessons, all the programmes are practically oriented and all the instructors make sure that we do practical lessons as many as possible (Student C)*

Another student added:

> *"Our instructors are well versed with the practical lessons so they always want us to learn the practical lessons too because of that we do practical lessons as often as possible" (Student D).*

The third student opined:

> *"Most of the programmes are practically oriented and we do it very often which is making the programme more interesting for us (Student F)*

The students stated that, their instructors use practical methods to teach them in most cases. According to the students, they also enjoy the practical lessons the most.

The students also said the following concerning the teaching of ICT at vocational training Centre, the researcher asked the students to tell how they would feel if ICT is taught in their school.

One student remarked:

> *They already have ICT on our programme, their instructors are regular and they have been teaching them very well. They also have ICT lab in the school and they enjoy the programme. And also they always attend ICT class when they have it on their time table* (Student D).

Another student said:

> *"There is ICT on the programme so we always attend ICT class whenever we that lesson on our timetable and I always enjoy that lesson (Student G)*

The student stated:

> *"We are doing ICT and I feel very much excited that am also learning it because it will give me the opportunity to learn more about the programme am offering (student H).*

Per the responses of the students, one can deduce that ICT is not a new thing to be introduced in the school because from every indication, the program is ongoing. The teaching of ICT has been introduced in the programme already.

4.4 Deaf graduate employability

With regards to how graduates from Vocational training programmes at Bechem School for the Deaf get employed, the following comments were made by the graduates.

One graduates said:

> *"I don"thave my own business. This business is not for me am working for my uncle and he pays me every week (Graduate C).*

Another graduate indicated:

> *Please I don"thave money to set up my own business. I am working with someone and the person is paying me, through the help of my sister am doing work and pay and it is helping me (Graduate D).*

The above responses indicated that majority of the graduates do not have their own businesses. This has led a lot of them to either work for their relatives or other

members of the general public. From all the responses, the Deaf graduates yearn to put their expertise to practice but it appears they are faced with some challenges. Some have problem getting startup funds whiles others too are being discriminated against when it comes to the selling of their products. Communication gap was also cited as one other problem when it comes to the sales of their products.

Opportunities for Deaf graduates

Concerning employment opportunities for Deaf graduates of Vocational training programmes into the public sector, the following comments were made by the grandaunts.

One graduate said:

> *"I have applied so many times but have not been called, I was even wondering if the application letter went through the necessary process but I still do follow up (Graduate B)*

A third graduate remarked:

> *Yes, I did apply but to no avail. As at now I don"teven know whether the places that I applied to will still call me or not (Graduate C)*

A graduate also put up;

> *No, I didn"ttry that because I had the believe and fear that they may not eve pay attention to me because of my condition (Graduate D)*

From the comments of the graduates, it is clear that the Deaf graduates have made several attempts to solicit for funds from the government but it has become difficult for them. Although, some of them never applied, the ones that applied have not been given anything to start up their businesses as it is done in some advanced countries.

The researcher also asked a question on self-employment. Here, she was interested in finding out whether the graduates engage in self-employment or not. Below were the comments made by the first graduate:

> "*no, I don"t have the money for self-employment so I wish I have someone to work under befor I can have seed money to start my own business".(Graduate A)*

Another graduate also said that

> *"it is difficult to fund myself since I don"t have any money because I am not from a rich home". (Graduate B)*

From the comments of the graduates, it is clear that the graduates of the Vocational training programme at Bechem School for the Deaf have no means of raising sufficient funds to take care of their own businesses. As a result they must rely on the government for the necessary funding.

On whether the public patronised the products of the Deaf graduates. The following comments were made by the graduates.

One graduate said:

> "*as for me, I don"t have problem with the level of patronage. The people have been buying my things". For me since most of the buyers are not deaf. As a result, there is always a communication gap". . (Graduate A)*

A second graduate indicated:

> *"people have been buying my products as it is expected. However, communication is a gap which have prevented some people from approaching me to find out the cost of my items". (Graduate C)*

From the comments of the graduates, it is clear that the deaf graduates have no apparent issues in selling off their items except that majority of the community members have not acquire basic sign language skills that can help them do effective communication with the deaf graduates who sells.

4.5 Discussion of Results

The discussion of the various data was guided by the various research questions delineated in chapter one. These research questions are; which programmes

types are offered at the vocational training center of Bechem School for the Deaf, which resources are available for training students of the vocational program, what instructional strategies are used by the instructors of the program, and to what extent do graduates from the program get employed?

Research Question 1: Which programmes types are offered at the vocational training center of Bechem School for the Deaf?

According to the interview data from students and instructors, there are some programmes that are being offered by the Bechem School for the Deaf. Some of the programmes that are being offered by the school were listed as fashion, building and construction, weldering, carpentry, beads, batik tie and dye. The analysis of the interview for instructors and students revealed that there are various programmes being offered at the vocational training centre for students who are deaf at Bechem School for the Deaf. The analysis further revealed that some of the students however wanted an expansion of the programmes on offer so as to give them the opportunity to choose the program they are interested in.

It can be seen that the findings are in line with the Human capital theory. The findings indicate that there are numerous programmes of study in vocational training programme at Bechem School for the Deaf which goes a long way to ensure that the students are satisfied with their programmes of choice and to help them acquire the requisite skills that are needed for their future endeavours. This assertion can be drawn from the advocacy of the theory that education or training imparts useful knowledge and skills to workers which in turn increase their productivity and incomes as indicated by Shaltz (1961).

Also, the study revealed that vocational training programme at the Bechem School for the deaf has some amount of future per the responses gathered from the

respondents. Responses such as we have discussed it, we even want to add barbering, catering and shoemaking, we want to add more programmes for students who have talents in other courses like hairdressing, barbering, shoemaking to also benefit from the programme and many others substantiate this claim.

It was also clear that some of the programmes offered in vocational training programme at Bechem School for the Deaf have been categorized. Some of the programmes are for girls whiles others are for boys. However so of them are general for both sexes. This can be realized in some of the statements and assertions of the respondents. Mostly, they mentioned carpentry, building and construction, and welding are purposely designed for the boys. However, some said that fashion designing is reserved for girls. The various responses put out by the respondents make it clear that the observation made by Baum (2005) is correct when he said that limited access to vocational and technical training is a major constraint for women wishing to enter the labour market, especially for those who do not qualify for admission to formal post-secondary training. The general situation as revealed by the analysis of a reports is that the participation of girls in technical and vocational education is generally low with some differences between the countries. This disparity between girls and boys is further intensified when only soft options of courses such as tailoring, dressmaking, and secretarial assistance are made available to girls.

Research Question 2: Which resources are available for training students of the vocational program?

It emerged from the analysis of the interview data of instructors and students that, there are various resource constraints as far as the vocational training programme at Bechem School for the Deaf is concerned.

The outcome that the resources for vocational training programmes at the Bechem School for the Deaf are not very sufficient goes contrary to the Human capital theory which suggests that the students may not be exposed to the required amount of equipment that are to be used in their future jobs. The quest to have the student exposed to variety of equipment and resources can be traced to Becker(1961) that, one can invest in human capital (via education, training, medical treatment) and one's outputs depend partly on the rate of return on the human capital one owns. Thus, human capital is a means of production, into which additional investment yields additional output. This is to say that for a person to attain the standards of human capital, there is the need for vigorous skill and knowledge acquisition.

It is also evident that there was inadequacy of resources that ranged from capital to human through to material resources. For instance, some respondents said that there exist some human resources but they needed more hand where another set of respondents also indicated that, they have some resources but instructors are not enough and materials are old. The nature of the respondents‟ responses are such that there are a lot of challenges with the nature of resources that are being used in the vocational training programme. The responses are in line with the contentions of Geyer and Schroedel (2008) that in many OECD countries, the instructor and trainer workforce faces two interconnected challenges. First, the workforce is ageing. Many European countries face a shortage of vocational instructors and trainers in vocational training institutions, or expect to face such a shortage soon. According to these scholars, in Sweden, for example, more than half of the vocational instructors and trainers in upper secondary schools are over 50 years of age.

Another set of responses also made it openly clear that most of the resources that are being used at the school are desolate. This can be traced in the comments by

the respondents such “the resources are old”, “the old ones are more than the new ones” as well as “most of them are very old”. All this developments go contrary to the situation at Panama where Blyton (2015) has indicated that the equipment for instruction appeared to be quite adequate in terms of quantity and quality. This is perhaps one of the benefits resulting from the schools having to meet City and Guilds standards for equipment. Each school had a suitably equipped language laboratory, the use of which should greatly facilitate the learning of English. Overall, equipment was observed to be in good, safe and operable condition, with accessories and tools well maintained and properly stored for easy checking. Safety education is an integral part of each shop programme.

Research Question 3: What instructional strategies are used by the instructors of the program?

Analysis of instructors and students interviewed revealed that individulased methods of teaching which can also be referred to as child-centered learning was employed in teaching.

The finding shows that, the viewpoint of Rhodes (2000) was true when he state that courses appropriate for individualized instruction are usually those that require skill building. With adequate planning and appropriate instructional materials, theory programmes can be successfully taught using the individualized instruction method. One point to the success of individualized instruction is the quality of the lesson plans. Rhodes (2000), indicates several benefits, available to schools who elect to use the individualized method of instruction, are shown as:

Individualized instruction allows a student who is above or below "average" to proceed at the student‟s own pace for optimal learning. Students do not have to repeat

portions of a course that they have already mastered. Students learn the self-discipline needed to motivate themselves and to keep their progress on target.

There were concerns also about how practical lessons organized for the persons who are dead are. The responses pointed to the fact that the lessons are usually practical. This can be realized in the responses by majority of the respondents when they said among other things that "we pay more attention to the practical", "the vocational program is practical oriented so we do more practical than the theory" and again "we pay more attention to the practical lessons". These responses are a true reflection that most of the lessons delivered in vocational training programme at Bechem School for the deaf are practicalised which is in conformity to the observation of Huitfeldt and Kabbani (2006) that because of their training in prevocational skills special vocation instructors prepared measurable annual goals for students who are deaf in pre-vocational skills that were linked to the assessment data that helped each student acquire the practical skills taught. Special vocation instructors were also able to break down annual goals into short-term objectives (benchmarks) which in turn enabled pupils to achieve the set goals.

It was also evident that information and communication teachnology was being observed in the teaching of vocational training programmes to the students who are deaf. The following responses are used to attest to this fact. For instance, "we already teach ICT", "we have introduced the ICT already", they do ICT everyday", etc. The respondents confirmed to the affirmative which are in line with the International Youth Foundation (2011) that technology has become an indispensable tool for business, industry, and education of individuals who are deaf the scholars further said that many training courses are specifically designed to enhance a trainee's competency with new software and hardware. The International Youth Foundation

(2001) contends further that in some cases, technology has even changed the way instruction is provided to the individuals who are deaf from traditional live instructor-led courses to self-directed learning and individualized instruction.

The use of theories and tools of ICT as was indicated by the respondents are in line with the ideals of the Human capital theory. Whenever there is the use of technological tools, it ensures that there is high productivity. This affirms the view point of Thurow (2005) who commented on the Human capital theory that productivity is largely a characteristic of jobs rather than of workers; employers use education credentials to select workers because better-educated workers can be trained for specific jobs more quickly and at a lower cost than their less-educated peers. With this assertion of Thurow, it can be deduced that it is very important that students at the Bechem School for the Deaf are being trained with ICT which will give them all the manpower requirements to work in the future.

Research Question 4: what opportunities are available for graduates after training ?

Analysis of interview data on employment opportunities for graduates of the programme revealed that, majority of the deaf graduates look for their own finances in order to start and sustain their businesses as indicated by these graduates as “no, I did not qualify so I did not apply”, “I have applied so many times but have not been called”, etc. According to the trend in the above responses, it can be deduced that even though the respondents are interested in acquiring government occupations, all of them are not employed by the government. This suggests that the situation at the Bechem School for the Deaf is not different from that of other European countries as said by Goldin (2012) citing OECD (2010) that the 2008/2009 financial crisis and its aftermath clearly highlight the interaction of cyclical influences on youth unemployment and long-standing institutional features affecting the transition from

school to work. The youth unemployment situation deteriorated the most in countries where young people already had had difficulty transitioning into the labor market even before the crisis.

The graduates who are deaf also indicated that their products are low patronized by the public just as it is with their hearing counterparts. All the responses give a clear indication that the Deaf graduates find it very difficult to market their products. This challenge emanate from the kinds of attitudes and prejudices people have for the persons who are disabled including the deaf. This situation can be equated to the research findings that was reported by Robinson (2010) that the majority of UK adults generally believe that disabled people face prejudice in Britain.

With the question of whether or not they can set their own businesses after graduating, all of them answered in the contrary. For instance, Respondent W pointed out that "am working with someone and the person is paying me" whiles Respondent X also indicated that "I don"t have my own place so I sit in front of my house and am gathering money to see if I can find a place". Respondent Y also said "I was given money by a friend outside the country so I established my place", etc. Most of the respondents don"t have their own businesses and as a result resort to working with friends and other family members. Their inability to set-up their own businesses goes contrary to the observation of Sallis and Jones (2002) when they put up that particularly in the technology industry, the future is looking bright for young and tech-savvy entrepreneurs looking to start their own business. Although it would seem to take great ambition and bravery build a startup instead of looking into a more orthodox graduate position at an established company, the job market has become increasingly secure.

The responses depict that after all the number of years used in the training of the Deaf in vocational training, several of the Deaf graduates still cannot raise funds to startup their own businesses defeats the ideals of the human capital theory when Shaltz (1961) mentioned that Specific human capital includes expertise acquired through education and training which is specific to a particular firm (firm-specific or context-specific skills). General human capital (general skills), on the other hand, is knowledge gained through education and training which is valuable across board (e.g., reading and writing). This theory cannot be said to be applicable in the area of vocational training among the Deaf in Bechem School for the Deaf.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This is the final chapter of the study. It presented the summary, findings and recommendations for the study.

5.1 Summary of research findings

The study sought to find out:

- which vocational training programmes are offered at the vocational training center of Bechem School for the Deaf?
- which resources are available for training students of the vocational program?
- what instructional strategies are used by the instructors of the program?
- what extent do graduates from the program get employed?

It emerged from the analysis of the interview data of instructors and students that there are various programmes being offered at the vocational training section of Bechem School for the Deaf. However, some of the students wanted expansion of the program.

From the analysis, the vocational training program at Bechem School for the Deaf has a lot of challenges concerning the availability of material resources for the smooth running of the program.

The analysis of the data gathered from the instructors and students revealed that individualised methods of teaching was employed in instructing the students under the vocational programme.

It emerged from the data collected that some of the students who have graduated from the programme are finding it difficult to get employed either in the public sector or in the private sector. Such graduates were also finding it difficult to get funds to establish their own businesses.

5.3 Conclusion

The study concluded that vocational training programmes for students who are deaf at Bechem School for the Deaf is faced with some challenges which does not make the programme attractive. The findings revealed that most of the teacher wanted expansion of the skills taught under the programme. It was also revealed that there were inadequate quantity and quality of materials used in teaching the students. Also, difficulty of graduates of the programme in finding well paid jobs with the skills acquired make it unattractive to prospective students and parents.

5.4 Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study. Four recommendations were drawn for the study, one for each research question

- The school authorities should appeal to government and other stakeholders to expand the vocational programmes in the school. For instance, courses on clerical and office duties can be added to the current programmes being offered in the school.
- The government should ensure the regular supply of adequate teaching and learning materials to replace the old ones. This will go a long way to ensure that the students and their instructors use these materials with ease.

- Apart from individualized teaching, teachers of the programme should adopt other instructional strategies such as group work and discussions because some students benefit from such strategies.
- It is also recommended that once the deaf students graduate from school, the metropolitan, municipal and district assemblies of these students should support them with start-up capital from the district assembly common funds to enable them set up their own business. By this approach, job coaches should also be made available to monitor their activities so that these monies are not plunge into wasteful activities.

5.5 Suggestions for further research

It is suggested that a research is conducted solely on the employment opportunities available to deaf graduates of the vocational training programme at Bechem School for the deaf.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Interview Guide

As part of the requirements for the award of a Master of Education in Special Education, I am conducting a research to investigate the vocational training program at the Bechem School for the Deaf in the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana. I would be very grateful if you could support this study by answering these few questions. The exercise is purely academic, and your confidentiality is assured.

Types of vocational training programmes

Instructional strategies for vocational training program

What types of vocational programmes do you pursue in your school?

Which or the programmes are purposely for the boys?

Which or the programmes are purposely for the girls?

What plans do you have in expanding the program in future?

Which programmes do you have in mind for the expansion of the programme?

Resources for vocational training programmes

What will you say about the resources for the various programmes you ran?

Which programmes are the most under resourced?

Which plans do you have in beefing up resources for that programme?

What are your plans in introducing ICT into your programme?

Teaching Strategies

Do you do individual teaching?

How practical are your lessons?

How do you embark on field trips?

What will you say about the practical component of your programme?

How do you assess your students under the vocational training programme?

Interview guide for the students

Types of vocational training programmes

What types of vocational programmes do you pursue in your school?

Which are the programmes are purposely for the boys?

Which or the programmes are purposely for the girls?

How would you feel if your program is expanded?

Which programmes should be added in case it is to be expanded?

Resources for vocational training programmes

What will you say about the resources for the various programmes you offer?

Which of your programmes are the most under resourced?

How would you feel if ICT is introduced in your programme?

Teaching Strategies

How do you benefit from individualized teaching approach by your teachers?

How practical are your lessons?

How do you assess your students under the vocational training programme?

Thank you for your prompt responses and your time.

APPENDIX B

GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY

How did you set-up your business?

How are your products patronized?

Did you seek for government employment after school?

Thank you for your prompt responses and your time.