

Knowledge Gaps and Research Questions: Informal Apprenticeship Training in Ghana



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Informal apprenticeship training in Ghana: research challenges

1. to assess the extent to which the poor – and especially poor females - are able to access different types of IAT;
2. to generate information on the labour market outcomes of male and female graduates of IAT noting, in particular, the outcomes for the poor;
3. to examine the effect of disabling and more enabling environments on 2) above - examining both the *delivery* (e.g. training quality) and *transformative* environments (e.g. labour market, socio-cultural, political and policy environments).

Informal apprenticeship training in Ghana: research challenges

- these three research concerns help us to interrogate the often assumed links between skills, work, poverty reduction and growth.

1. The social composition of informal apprenticeship training

- IAT is often described as the most accessible form of skills training for the poor, but there is a lack of data on who it is that is actually accessing different types of IAT.

1. The social composition of informal apprenticeship training

- From the perspective of skills for poverty reduction, a precondition to discussing whether IAT impacts on the poor is to know to what extent the children of the poor – and especially poor females - actually participate in such training provision at all (and what kinds of IAT).

1. The social composition of informal apprenticeship training

- It is known that young women tend to cluster in a limited number of IAT areas
- the current conditions under which apprenticeship is offered to girls outside the traditional female crafts, are not favourable.

1. The social composition of informal apprenticeship training

- Recent evidence from Ghana (Ahadzie, 2003; Palmer, 2007) suggests that IAT is fragmented along (at least) 3 lines:
 - Gender
 - Education level
 - Poverty level

1. The social composition of informal apprenticeship training

- How does the socio-cultural, economic and political context shape the social composition of IAT? E.g.
 - What role does the current institutional framework for IAT play in this?
 - Cultural pressures (ie gender stereotypes)
 - Economic pressures (more trades in demand)

2. Labour market outcomes in enabling and disabling contexts

- With the exception of a few externally-required evaluations of the donor-funded projects (e.g. World Bank VSP, IFAD REP), there has been very little research investigating how effectively the skills acquired are being translated into the labour market.

2. Labour market outcomes in enabling and disabling contexts

- Therefore, skills development policymaking in Ghana is not heavily rooted in evidence-based arguments.
- Rather, it is often led by the assumption that the provision of vocational skills will make beneficiaries employable, equip them with the skill and know-how to enter and/or progress in self-employment and, ultimately, reduce poverty through raised incomes.

2. Labour market outcomes in enabling and disabling contexts

- any examination of the labour market outcomes of IAT must also examine both the context in which IAT took place, and the context into which informal enterprises are graduating their apprentices.

2. Labour market outcomes in enabling and disabling contexts

- The labour market outcomes of IAT affected by two types of enabling or disabling environment:
- a *delivery context* in which IAT can flourish (essentially a question of the quality and sustainability of training provision across the whole education and training sector);
- a *transformative context* which facilitates translation from IAT into developmental outcomes.

2. Labour market outcomes in enabling and disabling contexts

- The **delivery context** largely relates to the quality of the training delivered in IAT. Exmaple research areas include:
 - The degree to which ISAs, in the different trade areas, are functioning as both representatives of members, and as overseers of training quality in IAT.

2. Labour market outcomes in enabling and disabling contexts

- The **transformative context** would include the degree to which there are supportive policies in place – as well as the political will and capacity to successfully implement these policies - which facilitate informal enterprise development. E.g.
 - nature of transport and other infrastructure; the market demand for goods and services; MSE support; the socio-cultural context etc

3. Skills for Growth and Poverty Reduction in Ghana: research project (2006 - 09)

- Edinburgh University & AFC, Accra
- Research under the DFID-funded RPC examining the outcomes of education; sub-theme investigating the pathways available to poor Ghanaians seeking work and improved incomes through skills acquisition.
- Different skill modalities are being examined, but IAT is a focus area given its widespread nature.
- 5 different localities in Ghana: north (2) and south (3).

3. Skills for Growth and Poverty Reduction in Ghana: research project (2006 - 09)

- **Main Research Question:**
- How, and under what conditions, do the main long- and short-term skill training systems (public and non-state) contribute to labour market outcomes that help break the cycle of deprivation for the poor?

3. Skills for Growth and Poverty Reduction in Ghana: research project (2006 - 09)

- **Objectives (i)**

- To find out whether the poor, as defined by income and non-income indicators, actually gain any benefits from skills training (by assessing how equitable and accessible existing opportunities for participation in skills training are); particular attention should be paid to whether poor girls are at a disadvantage when it comes to skills development opportunities;

3. Skills for Growth and Poverty Reduction in Ghana: research project (2006 - 09)

- **Objectives (ii)**

- To assess the labour market outcomes of selected, long and short term, public and private, training systems - e.g. the extent to which skills acquired are utilised by graduates, and to consider the constraints (from institutional, strategic, and political environments) to improving labour market outcomes;

3. Skills for Growth and Poverty Reduction in Ghana: research project (2006 - 09)

- **Objectives (iii)**

- To find out how the trainees from poor backgrounds who successfully enter work and self-employment, especially in the SME or informal economy, learn the things that make them succeed.

3. Skills for Growth and Poverty Reduction in Ghana: research project (2006 - 09)

- During 2006 initial research work was conducted with vocational training institutes in both the north and south of the country.
- Next phase of research is planned for October 2007 where the analytical work proposed would be predominantly on informal MSEs
- Design is ongoing!

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