UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

AN EVALUATION OF THE SKILLS TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

PLACEMENT (STEP) PROGRAMME ON THE YOUTH IN THE

ZABZUGU/TATALE DISTRICT IN THE NORTHERN REGION OF

GHANA

ABIRU SHAIBU TERNNI

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ZABZUGU/TATALE DISTRICT IN THE NORTHERN REGION OF GHANA

BY

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DEVELOPMENT

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DECLARATION

Candidate's declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature:……………………   Date: …………………..

Name: Abiru Shaibu Ternni

Supervisor's declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the dissertation were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of dissertation laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's Signature:…………………………   Date: ………………..

Name: Professor C. K. Brown

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to assess the effectiveness of the Skills Training and Employment Placement (STEP) Programme on the youth in terms of job placements. It focused on the perceptions of the youth on the programme based on their experiences during and after the skills training. The research design, therefore, used for the study was evaluative.

The stratified random sampling technique was used to select 152 respondents out of a population of 200 youth who participated in the programme in the Zabzugu-Tatale district between the period March, 2002 - September, 2005. Questionnaire and interview schedules were used to gather the data for the study.

The findings showed that the programme helped the respondents to acquire the necessary skills, had access to micro financial assistance, get gainful employment, and impart their skills on their personal growth and development. It was, however, revealed that proper recruitment procedures were not adhered to. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that, in order to sustain youth development intervention programmes, the Ministry of Manpower Development, Youth and Employment should: forge partnership with small-scale businesses and micro enterprises that are interested in youth development programmes and come out with a comprehensive youth development policy; and establish a working relationship with them and design a proper career progression that will afford the trainees to move from one level of training to the other. These will help in sustainable youth development programmes.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ACRONYMS

CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DACF	District Assemblies Common Fund
GRATIS	Ghana Regional Appropriate Technology and Industrial Services
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Country
ICCES	Integrated Community Centre for Employable Skills
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IGA	Income Generation Approach
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IYLDP	Integrated Youth Leadership Development Programme
MCF	Micro Credit Fund
MMDYE	Ministry of Manpower Development, Youth and Employment
NMA	New Minimal Approach
NPP	New Patriotic Party
NVTI	National Vocational Training Institute
NYEP	National Youth Employment Programme
PAF	Poverty Alleviation Fund
PNDC	Provisional National Defense Council
STEP	Skills Training and Employment Placement
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNO	United Nations Organisation
ZTDA	Zabzugu-Tatale District Assembly

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the study

All over the world, youth unemployment has been a major concern. Recent literature, including a review by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) of fifty years of its Youth Employment Programme, has shown that the youth employment challenge is nothing new. Issues like job-creation policies and the management of school-to-work transition have remained unresolved. Hence we have a large number of unemployed and underemployed youth all over the world, particularly, in the developing countries. As a result of this, there have been many interventions put in place by both governmental and non-governmental organisations to empower these unemployed youth either to get employed or be self-employed to enable them to contribute to the developmental programmes of their countries. It is also worth noting that the youth are full of potentials which, if properly harnessed, could not only be channelled for the development of the youth themselves but also for sustained socio-economic development of the country.

In Ghana, youth unemployment has been on the increase and a big worry to all governments. In view of this, previous governments have made interventions, such as the Builders Brigade, State Farms Programme, Vocational and Technical Training Programme, and Community Rural Development Programme. These programmes were to empower the youth

through job placements to enable them to contribute to the development process. The most recent intervention was the Skills Training and Employment Placement (STEP) Programme, which was introduced by the New Patriotic Party (NPP) government.

The STEP Programme was started in March, 2002 by the Ministry of Manpower Development, Youth and Employment. This was after the registration of unemployed youth in September, 2001, throughout the country. A total number of 943,212 unemployed youth were registered nationwide during the period. In the Northern Region alone, 52,000 of them were registered. After the registration of the unemployed youth, it came to light that most of them were desirous of training which would lead to skills acquisition, so that they could either be self-employed or be employed to become productive and economically active members of society and help in the socio-economic development of the country (Ministry of Manpower Development, Youth and Employment, 2004).

The STEP programme, therefore, conducted development activities comprising training in life skills, vocational and technical skills, business skills, good financial management, workplace exposure, leadership skills, career guidance, job seeking skills, good housekeeping, sanitation and skills management. This integrated full-time programme was divided into five major components, namely: entrepreneurial skills development training; vocational/technical skills training; vocational agricultural training; apprenticeship/attachment training; and community-based vocational training (Ministry of Manpower Development, Youth and Employment, 2004).

The entrepreneurial skills development training component comprised: training in various inter and intra personal courses such as self- identity and assertiveness development; leadership and organisational skills; financial management; communication; marketing skills; career guidance and business management. This component was for those with tertiary education, specifically from the Universities and the Polytechnics, and was to enable them set up and manage their own enterprises with a start-up capital from the Micro Credit Fund after the training. Empretec-Ghana, an entrepreneurship foundation in the country, was responsible for the training, establishing and monitoring under this component.

The second component, vocational/technical skills training, was seen as a major means to fight the widespread problem of youth unemployment by empowering the participants with marketable vocational and technical skills and basic knowledge necessary to identify and easily access jobs and/or self-employment opportunities. It involved training courses of three to six months duration of competency-based training for junior high and senior high school graduates without prior experience in tradesmanship. The vocational or technical areas included: wood carving; cane and basketry; broadloom weaving; batik, tie and dye; screen printing; beads making; food processing; soap and powder making; upholstery; electrical installation; masonry; carpentry; tiling; and flower arranging.

The third component of the training programme involved the growing of specific agricultural products for which access to the Micro Credit Fund or the Poverty Alleviation Fund was guaranteed. Linkage to markets, where their products would be sold, was facilitated by the Ministry of Manpower

Development and Employment. The training areas included: snail rearing; rabbit rearing; grass-cutter rearing; bee-keeping; mushroom farming; guinea fowl rearing; aquaculture; establishment of economic trees nursery, like mango, cashew and sheanut; and the cultivation of indigenous and exotic leafy vegetables.

The fourth component involved the training of master craftsmen who have earlier received skills enhancement through the Ghana Regional Appropriate Technology and Industrial Services (GRATIS) and the Integrated Community Centre for Employable Skills (ICCES). GRATIS and ICCES are public institutions that prepared them to be effective overseers of apprentices during the training period. The skills under this component include: hairdressing; dress-making; catering; batik, tie and dye; welding; masonry; carpentry, vehicle repairs; good housekeeping; and sanitation.

The final component involved the community-based vocational skills training, which was the provision of increased skills relevant and accessible to the youth in the local technical or vocational areas. The training here was done by ICCES and involved: the manufacturing of local simple farm tools like hoes, hand trowels, rakes; simple processing tools for sheabutter extraction, groundnut extraction, palm oil extraction, gari processing; cooking tools like aluminium pans and bowls, pots and buckets; and other simple fishing tools.

According to the Ministry of Manpower Development, Youth and Employment (2004), the STEP programme was funded by the government from the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Fund. Part was also from the World Bank through the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the District Assemblies Common Fund (DACF) for the various districts. Part of

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the funding was also pledged by private organisations through their corporate social responsibilities (CSR) to support the government's fund.

During the period, a total of 200 youth, comprising 135 females and 65 males, went through the training in the Zabzug-Tatale district to empower them with the necessary skills, practical knowledge and experience and financial support to enable them become economically productive. The cost of training per participant in the district during the period was GH¢120.00 for a maximum period of six months.

Statement of the problem

According to the Ministry of Manpower Development, Youth and Employment (2005), the STEP training programme ended in September, 2005 and a new youth intervention programme, the National Youth Employment Programme (NYEP) was introduced. The revised programme comprised modules, such as agricultural business, information communication technology, trades in crafts, auxiliary health attendants, community teaching assistants, community protection unit, community waste and management unit, and internship with some major departments and agencies.

During the period of the implementation of the STEP programme, there were several developmental challenges that the programme faced. It faced financial and other problems that resulted in the programme being suspended and the introduction of the new intervention. According to the Ministry of Manpower Development, Youth and Employment (2005), part of the funding pledged by the CSR to support the government's fund was not forthcoming. In view of this, the support from the government dwindled and

was finally suspended. The sponsorship for the participants either from the Ministry or the District Assembly, during the training, was another concern. According to the Zabzug-Tatale District Assembly (2006), most of the participants came from disadvantaged families, with serious financial problems and, therefore, could not sponsor themselves when government suspended the funding. Concerns were also raised about the mode of selection of the participants for the training programme. Most of those selected were said to be sympathisers and supporters of the New Patriotic Party (NPP), who had no certificates from the junior high schools, the senior high schools or from the tertiary institutions. More females were also to be considered for the programme, as they were more vulnerable to problems of unemployment. Finally, there was a problem about the start-up micro financial assistance that was to be given the participants to establish their business after the training.

According to the Ministry of Manpower Development, Youth and Employment (2005), the programme was evaluated internally by the Ministry and the implementing agencies and, therefore, could not determine the effectiveness of the programme on the youth, their growth and development as originally intended in the objectives after the training. The need, therefore, to have a more comprehensive external evaluation of the programme has become necessary so as to learn lessons to be incorporated in the new intervention.

Objectives of the study

The general objective of the study was to assess the extent to which the Skills Training and Employment Placement (STEP) Programme has helped

the youth in the Zabzug-Tatale District either to be employed or be self-employed.

The specific objectives of the study were to:-

- Assess the recruitment categories and procedures for participants in the STEP programme;

- Ascertain the types of skills acquired and the micro financial assistance received under the STEP programme;

- Assess the extent to which the STEP programme helped to reduce the youth unemployment situation in the Zabzug-Tatale District;

- Determine the major problems encountered by the participants under the STEP programme; and

- Assess the extent to which the STEP programme helped in Sustaining Youth Development Interventions.

Research questions

In order to meet the objectives of the study, the following research questions were formulated:-

- What were the categories and procedures for the recruitment of participants for the STEP programme?

- Which types of skills were acquired and micro financial assistance received under the STEP programme?

- To what extent did the STEP programme help to reduce the youth unemployment situation in the Zabzug-Tatale District?

- What were the major problems encountered by the participants under the STEP programme?

- How has the STEP Programme helped in Sustaining Youth Development Interventions?

Scope of the study

The scope of the study is limited to the effects of the STEP programme on youth unemployment and their personal growth and development. Issues such as those relating to other human resource management practices, such as trainee management and evaluation, are not considered.

The study is strictly limited to the Zabzug-Tatale District, located in the Northern Region of Ghana. It is from this district that the sample has been drawn and all references made. The district had its peculiar problems with regard to the STEP programme. The research findings and conclusions are, therefore, limited to the effects of the programme on youth unemployment in the district and its contribution to the participants' personal growth and development.

Significance of the study

The success of any community development intervention programme can best be measured through a scientific evaluative study. According to McCurdy (1979), programme evaluation is essential for assessing the effectiveness that service delivery agencies or organisations make on their target population or communities. As a result, the outcome of the evaluation can serve as a good basis from which organisations can give an account to the communities which they have and continue to serve. This type of evaluation is called retrospective evaluation and is very necessary for end of programmes.

According to McCurdy (1979), an evaluation is crucial in that it enables human service-delivery organisations to conduct their own SWOT analysis. That is, it affords them an opportunity to introspect themselves in as far as their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are concerned. This type of evaluation, notably prospective evaluation, is necessary for future programme planning

For the purpose of the new youth development intervention introduced after the STEP programme, prospective evaluation will be used in this study. This type of evaluation will offer an opportunity for the Ministry and the implementing organisation to learn lessons that will be carried into the new intervention.

Consequently, a formal scientific evaluation research can render several youth development programmes credible and self-sustainable as well as maximise their future funding opportunities for successful implementation. This will help in the sustainability of such youth interventions or programmes.

The import of this study is, therefore, to make both theoretical as well as empirical contributions to come out with concerns brought up as well as the problems with regard to the youth employment opportunities in the country under the STEP programme. These concerns and problems, when properly addressed, will help the youth to contribute their quota to ensure rapid and sustained socio-economic development of the country.

Limitations of the study

Some of the participants knew the researcher and this may have influenced the responses given, thus affecting the validity of the findings. This

was seen as a limitation during the study. However, the advantage was that the researcher also had insight knowledge about the training programme, which an independent evaluator would otherwise not have solved.

Operational definition of concepts

For the purposes of this study, the following meanings are used for the following concepts:

Problems: Difficulties restricting the trainees or the implementers of the programme.

Effects: Results caused by the STEP Training programme.

Micro Credit Fund: Small grant or money in the form of loan with little interest given to the trainees of the STEP programme who want to be self-employed. The amount and the interest is repayable.

Micro Financial Assistance: Money given to trainees either from the Micro Credit Fund or the Poverty Alleviation Fund. This is to enable them get established in private enterprises after the training.

Participants: Unemployed youth who went through the STEP programme.

Poverty Alleviation Fund: Small amount of money given out to the trainees who are from very poor family background to enable them get established. This amount is from the District Assembly and is repayable without interest.

Programme Evaluation: A systematic examination of the programme to determine whether it has achieved its goal and objectives.

Recruitment: A process where implementers of the STEP programme search for the best people available to help achieve its mission.

Skills: Knowledge and ability that participants go through to empower them do something very well.

Youth: Young men and women between the ages of 18 and 39.

Organisation of the study

This dissertation has Five Chapters. The first chapter orientates the reader to the study. It highlights the background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, scope of the study, significance of the study, limitations of the study as well as operational definition of concepts used.

The second chapter examines various literature relevant to recruitment, unemployment (types, causes, effects), and possible ways of eradicating unemployment, such as skills training, STEP training programme and micro financial assistance. It also examines measures, such as skills management development and programmes evaluation, which seek to ensure sustainable youth development intervention programmes.

The third chapter comprise discussion on the research design, the study area, the study population, sampling procedures, sources of data, data collection instruments, pre-test, the fieldwork, and data processing and analysis. The fourth chapter provides an overview of the presentation and discussion of findings of the fieldwork. The final chapter, which is Chapter Five, contains the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher reviews the relevant literature on recruitment, unemployment, skills training, skills training programmes, micro finance, skills management development, and programme evaluation.

Recruitment

Various authorities in human resource practice have made attempts at defining the concept of recruitment. Notable among them are Bernardin and Russell (1998). According to them, recruitment is the process of finding and attracting applicants who are interested in and qualified for position vacancies. According to Gareth, Jennifer and Hill (2000), recruitment includes all the activities that human resource managers engage in to develop a pool of qualified candidates for an open position. Other human resource management practitioners, such as Harris (2000) also observed that recruitment is a process which includes those practices and activities an organisation uses to identify and attract qualified applicants for a position. This means that, during recruitment, many people are given the chance for selection for the positions. Recruitment should, therefore, encompass both the attraction and the selection of the most qualified personnel.

Thus, the ultimate goal of a recruitment process is to appoint the most qualified person(s) without compromising any laid down procedures or laws. This process is, however, in stages which depend on each other for the success of the recruitment exercise. It starts from the planning stage, strategy development, activities and evaluation. Recruitment, as a human resource practice in organisations, is the biggest single challenge facing management of such organisations. Experience shows that certain recruitment sources and methods provide the best candidates for a particular job or vacancy. As a result, each job vacancy should be analysed to identify what method will be most effective before initiating the recruitment process. As identified by Rebore (1998) and Harris (2000) among others, there are two general sources of recruitment, namely: internal source and external source. Internal recruitment source seeks applicants for a position from among the ranks of those currently employed. On the other hand, an external recruitment source is where an organisation seeks job applicants outside the organisation. The internal recruitment source is normally based on well-developed internal labour market arrangements for promotion, training and career development. Gareth et al (2000), however, remarked that employees recruited internally seek lateral moves, job changes that entail no major changes in responsibility or authority. Harris (2000) has further noted that two commonly used internal recruitment sources exist. These are closed and open internal recruitment sources. In the closed source, employees are unaware of the job openings and, therefore, do not have the opportunity to formally apply for the vacant positions. They are simply nominated by the manager when there is a job opening. This system can be abused as the manager may not nominate a

person on merit, but someone who is closer to him, such as a relative or a friend.

On the other hand, with the open source, employees are made aware of potential openings and the opportunity to formally apply and go through the normal selection procedures with others if any. This will create high morale among them and make them feel proud, thereby giving of their best on the job or at training. External recruitment source involves direct application, where a job-seeker submits unsolicited curriculum vitae with the hope that a position is available or simply shows up in person seeking employment. One method in external recruitment source is the referral system. In this system, an applicant or someone is recommended to the employer or the organisation for consideration. This recommendation can be formal or informal. Bernardin and Russell (1998) observed that, while the formal referral system is more effective in attracting interested applicants, some evidence reveals that the quality of the applicants is less than what results from the informal system of referral.

Another common method of external recruitment source according to Bernardin and Russell (1998) is through advertising and can range from a simple classified to an elaborate media campaign. The content of the advertisement is determined by the job description of the vacancy or the skills available for training and the criteria that will be used in selecting the most qualified person or persons for the vacancy or the training. This method, though expensive, is the best method.

Harris (2000) has identified recruitment practice as one variable that can affect an applicant's attraction to the organisation. Some of the recruitment practices include: developing an accurate job description; conducting a good interview; strict adherence to selection principles; providing realistic information about the job; creating a good reward system; and a unique organisational culture. Errors in recruitment practices or process can have a major effect on job candidates' impression of an organisation and willingness to work well for the achievement of the objectives. According to Harris (2000), these errors include: reputation and policies of the organisation; the position to be filled may not be attractive; unattractive rewards system; and affirmative system.

Unemployment

According to Longman's Dictionary of Contemporary English (2000), unemployment is "the condition of lack of job". Ghana Statistical Service (2002), described unemployment as a condition in which all people between the ages of eighteen and fifty five in the country that are not working, but are prepared to work. Unemployment is either voluntary or involuntary. It is voluntary when the individual concerned is responsible. Conversely, it is involuntary when it occurs as a result of the forces of the economic system in the country.

According to Blaug (1973), unemployment is more than the absence of jobs or the inability to take a job. He explains that the unemployment problem is primarily one of inadequate income and only secondarily one of insufficient work opportunities. He notes further that a person is employed only if one gets

adequate income from one's employment to sustain oneself. He then suggests that the ultimate objective of any government policy should not just be to provide more jobs but to provide those jobs that yield enough income to sustain a reasonable standard of living.

In the view of Coombs and Ahmed (1974), unemployment is the inability of people, including workers of all categories, to afford regular 'square meals'. They, therefore, see those engaged in one type of work or the other and those who cannot make ends meet, though they are working, as unemployed.

The International Labour Organisation (2000) observed that youth unemployment problems continue to pervade both developed and developing countries, with a disproportionately large number of young women and men exposed to long-term unemployment or else limited to precarious or short-term work. As a result, many drop out of the workforce or fail to enter it successfully in the first place and become inactive. Socially disadvantaged youth are particularly affected, thereby, perpetuating a cycle of poverty and social exclusion.

According to the International Labour Organisation (2000), the issue of youth unemployment has for a long time been a major concern for every government as the ultimate objective of their policies is to provide more jobs that will yield enough income to sustain a reasonable standard of living. It noted that the thrust of the issue is twofold, namely: the relevance of the educational system for job placement, and how the acquisition of skills through training facilitates job placements and personal growth and development.

Kwesi (2006) did not mince words when he complained about the high rate of youth unemployment in the country. He said that there was a high rate of unemployment among the youth in the country and most of them did not have any qualifications and skills to contribute towards the development of the country. He added that the rate of unemployment among the youth was about 46 percent and said that was a critical issue that needed the attention of all well-meaning Ghanaians.

Types of youth unemployment

The classification of different types of unemployment is essential for specifying the nature and extent of the problems affecting the youth under discussion. Several types of unemployment have been identified by Harbison (1968) and Sorkin (1974). They include: frictional, seasonal, cyclical, structural and disguised unemployment

According to Harbison (1968), frictional unemployment is the type of unemployment that comprises new young entrants who have just left school and those young men and women who, out of their own volition, resign from work and find themselves jobless because they do not have an alternative employment. This type of unemployment is common among women in developing countries.

Harbison (1968) also describes seasonal youth unemployment as caused by the shortage of job opportunities for the young people, as a result of seasonal changes in business activities. For example, people are employed to work on farms during the peak cocoa or maize seasons and in industries towards the Christmas season to meet production targets and satisfy seasonal

demands. At the end of the season, they are declared redundant and, therefore, become unemployed.

Sorkin (1974) described cyclical youth unemployment as undesirable situation in which employers find themselves unable to employ the increasing labour force and rehire those who were laid off from work due to economic recession or depression in the country.

According to Sorkin (1974), structural unemployment occurs when there is a sudden change in the demand for one product in favour of another. This may also be due to the lucrative nature of one job as compared to the other. Some workers, therefore, will become unemployed because of being unable to relocate to other places. For example, specialists in declining industries may become frustrated and finally become unemployed.

The term disguised unemployment is used interchangeably with youth underemployment. According to Sorkin (1974), it refers to a situation in which young people take up jobs for which they are either overqualified or that do not require maximum utilization of their skills, experience and training. Disguised unemployment is commonly found among farming communities in the country due to inadequate farmlands and large family size working on the same piece of land as the years roll by.

Causes of youth unemployment

Education plays a vital role in the human resource development of a country. Harbison (1968) argues that a nation's most treasured and dynamic assets are its human resources. A country's growth and sustenance of development depends on the development of its human resource through the

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provision of quality education to the youth. This means that putting more resources into and paying more attention to the provision of quality education will result in considerable strides in economic development and social transformation, and raise the quality of life of the people, particularly the youth.

Harbison (1968) has therefore, attributed the main cause of youth unemployment to modernization. In explaining his position, he differentiates between two types of economies in developing countries. These are modern and traditional. The modern sector in the urban areas is fully within the large-scale world-wide monetary economy. But in the face of globalisation and competition, many industries in the developing countries cannot survive, leading to redundancy of most of the energetic educated youth in developing countries like Ghana.

The educational system in Ghana is rather said to be the major cause of youth unemployment. Blaug (1973) and the "Deschoolers," such as Illich (1972) and Reimer (1972) have noted that the formal educational system is the main factor contributing to the rising rate of youth unemployment. Many writers such as Harbison (1968) and Dore (1976) have also complained about the schools producing "unemployables".

Rodney (2005) has said that education is crucial in any type of society for the preservation of the lives of its members and the maintenance of the social structure. He notes that, under certain circumstances, education also promotes social change and the greater portion of that education is informal, being acquired by the youth from the example and behaviour of elders in society. However, during the colonial period, the school system was tailored to

train Africans to help man the local administration at the lowest ranks. In effect, it was an educational system that selected a few Africans to participate in the local administration, leaving the majority without education.

Owing to the importance of education, after independence, developing countries believed that formal education was an essential feature of development and, therefore, embarked on a large-scale expansion of schools and pursued fee-free and compulsory educational policies. According to Amedzro (2005), in 1951, the Gold Coast (now Ghana) achieved internal self-government and, thereafter, embarked on its large-scale expansion of schools and also introduced the policy of fee-free and compulsory education in the country. The youth were then enrolled in their numbers, and tuition fees in the primary schools were also abolished. It then became apparent that new secondary schools had to be opened to absorb the products of the elementary school system and a free-market approach to education was also adopted. Many private schools were opened and the government also built more through the Ghana Education Trust Fund. It was sad to note that despite these developments, the British colonial syllabus continued to be used in these schools and the products would only be interested in white-collar jobs, which were not available.

This, therefore, generated a host of problems, including unemployment and lack of community participation and improvement. According to Amedzro (2005), these problems were compounded when the criterion used to justify the existence of the schools was merely numbers. He said that no serious attempts were made to create job-training opportunities for the youth.

In trying to solve these myriad of problems, the then Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) government, from the mid-1980s made attempts to overhaul the educational system to respond to these challenges of youth unemployment. This resulted in the introduction of the junior and senior secondary schools concept. The idea was to place emphasis on vocational and technical courses so that the graduates from these schools could come out with vocational or technical skills and establish their own small-scale businesses or become readily employable. However, since 1987 when the government introduced this system of education, the unemployment problem has rather worsened. The system was beset with many problems, such as lack of vocational and technical tutors, lack of well-equipped workshops to train the students, and the difficulty to acquire tools and equipment by the students. This worsened the unemployment situation due to high school drop-out rate at the various educational levels. Many entrants who could not proceed to the top of the educational ladder became frustrated and dropped out of school. The enrolment figures in Table 1 clearly show the problems.

Table 1: Enrolment at the various educational levels in 1997/98

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Tertiary	36,629	1.2
Secondary	224,532	7.5
Basic	2,722,494	91.3
Total	2,983,655	100.0

Source: Amedzro (2005)

From Table 1, over ninety percent of those in the school system in 1997/98 were at the basic level; only about seven percent were at the secondary level and less than two percent were at the tertiary level. This clearly shows the drop-out rate at all stages. The major problem is that not much attention was paid to those who dropped out in terms of skills training. According to Amedzro (2005), the following were the number of institutions at the various educational levels in the public system as at 1997/98: Basic – 18,346; Secondary – 504; Polytechnics – 9; and Universities – 5. This, according to him, explains why the number of students decreased from the lower to the higher levels in 1997/98. The higher the level, the less the vacancies, which leads to many students dropping out.

It is also to be noted that the three northern regions (Northern, Upper East and Upper West) have the highest illiteracy rates in the country, with the Northern Region having 78.7 percent of the population of 15 years and above being totally illiterate. Upper East has 78.1 percent, while Upper West has 75.5 percent. Table 2 shows the illiteracy rate in the country and this could account for the high level of youth unemployment, which made them unable to create economic opportunities for themselves.

The illiteracy rate could also be as a result of high school drop-out rate. The situation remained like this until the year 2001, when the New Patriotic Party (NPP) government took over the administration of the country and registered all unemployed youth in the country. The aim was to train the unemployed youth in technical or vocational skills so that they could either be self-employed or be employable.

Table 2: Illiteracy rates in Ghana by region and by sex in 2000

Region	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
Western	35.6	56.4	45.7
Central	35.0	58.8	47.9
Gt. Accra	14.0	27.2	20.6
Volta	34.3	53.9	44.8
Eastern	30.6	50.3	40.8
Ashanti	31.9	49.0	40.4
Brong Ahafo	45.4	61.6	53.5
Northern	72.6	84.7	78.7
Upper East	72.1	83.1	78.1
Upper West	69.4	80.6	75.5
National	37.1	54.3	45.9

Source: Ghana Statistical Service (2002)

Effects of youth unemployment

According to Harbison (1968), unemployment and poverty are important socio-economic phenomena. This, therefore, means that unemployment contributes towards helplessness, insecurity, low self-esteem and ultimately absolute poverty. In the view of Amedzro (2005), in Ghana, most of the youth are either unemployed or underemployed. They are without higher education or skills and, therefore, have very limited economic opportunities.

Skills training

Skills training facilitates job placements and the human resource development of the youth. Armstrong (2003) defines training as the formal and systematic modification of behaviour through learning, which occurs as a result of education, instruction, development and planned experiences. He notes that training means investing in people to enable them to perform better and to empower them to make the best use of their natural abilities. The training must be strategic, relevant, problem-based, action-oriented, performance-related, and continuous to the people who are being trained for rapid and sustainable socio-economic development.

Skills training according to Rodney (2005), can be used as an empowerment tool aimed at enabling young people to seize identified opportunities and become self-reliant by assisting others, assuming the central role and helping to steer processes of socio-economic, political, spiritual and cultural development as desired. It is also a critical area of human resource requirement for industrialisation and sustainable economic development. However, this has not received the deserved attention in the country's educational policies since independence.

Informal apprenticeship is also one important aspect of skills training. According to the Ghana Statistical Service (2002), this sector contributes over seventy percent of self-employment within the total labour force of over seven million. Youth development programmes usually form part of skills training programmes.

Youth development programmes usually come as intervention strategies that seek to equip the pillars of reconstruction and development with

the provision of the necessary skills training or to develop their already acquired skills, talents and abilities. It forms an important aspect of skills training for the youth. This involves enhancing their capacities to deal with challenges in the social, economic, religious and political in development projects. This could be done either at the primary phase, the secondary phase or the tertiary phase.

According to the International Labour Organisation (2000), special emphasis has been placed on the youth by the United Nations Organisation to help young men and women in their transition from school to work and to carefully target education and training of women and persons with special needs, such as young people. It stressed that while enterprises are primarily responsible for training their employees and apprentices, they should also share responsibility for the initial vocational training of young people to meet future needs.

Skills training programmes

There are several youth development intervention programmes, in the form of skills training that have been implemented successfully in other countries. According to Mizen (1995), the Youth Scheme in Britain has been a central feature in the restructuring of work and employment to 'modernise' an ailing British economy. According to him, it provides school-leavers with the opportunity to acquire skills that employers need, gives them the 'right' attitudes to work that is being demanded by an internationally successful economy and the chance to undertake quality foundation training for jobs.

According to Mizen (1995), in South Africa, the Integrated Youth Leadership Development Programme (IYLDP) was established in 1991 and was aimed at equipping the young people from deprived families in South Africa with the necessary skills to become productive and economically active members of society. According to him, the programme provided the youth with training in lifeskills, vocational skills, business skills, workplace exposure, career guidance and job seeking skills. He said this was seen as a means to fight the widespread problem of youth unemployment in the country. Between 1991 and 1997, a total of 302 youth went through the one-year programme. The programme was mainly donor funded from private organisations. Some contributions also came from some public organisations.

In 1951, the Accelerated Development Plan for Education was drawn by the Convention People's Party (CPP). The aim of the plan was to embark upon a vigorous expansion programme of opening elementary schools in the country. In line with this plan, Emergency Training Centres were established in 1953 to give six week skills training course to teachers to man these schools. Those who were recruited for the training programme were the youth with Middle School Leaving Certificate (MSLC). They were then employed after the training and had their conditions improved. There were other youth development interventions such as the Youth in Agriculture Programme, the National Youth Fund Programme and the National Service Scheme, all aimed at serving as sources of employment to the unemployed youth from the intermediate and tertiary institutions. Youth Leadership Institutes were also established in the 1980 in the country to train the youth in leadership development.

Micro finance

According to the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) (1992), micro finance has recently assumed a certain degree of prominence. It is used to reduce poverty in many developing countries. It is based on the recognition that the latent capacity of the poor for entrepreneurship would be encouraged with the availability of small-scale loans and would introduce them to the small-enterprise sector. This could allow them to be more self-reliant and create employment opportunities. According to IFAD (1992), as at 1992, there were estimated to be three thousand micro finance institutions in developing countries. They included the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh; the Rural Enterprise Programme in Kenya; the Banco Solidario in Bolivia; the Bank Rakyat in Indonesia; and the Bankin Raya Karkara in Niger. Currently, the Rural Banks in Ghana are offering micro finance services to the rural poor. The areas of funding include agriculture, distribution, trading, small craft and processing industries.

Schneider (1997) also notes that the word "micro finance" did not exist before the 1970s but has now become a buzz-word among development practitioners. He notes further that this has created a lot of misunderstanding and confusion in the use of the term. The term is variously used to mean agricultural credit, rural credit, cooperative credit, consumer credit, and credit from the savings and loans associations, credit unions or money lenders.

According to the United Nations Organisation (1997), the micro finance system was termed the Grameen Bank and almost all its borrowers were women, who tend to be poorer than men and have fewer opportunities. Grameen Bank requires its borrowers to organise themselves into groups of

five and all are cut off if one borrower defaults. They meet every week to make loan repayments at commercial interest rates and also critique one another's business plans. With this, many of its borrowers have crossed the poverty line.

Like any other concept, the micro finance system has its own principles. According to Schneider (1997), its mission is to help poor families to help themselves to overcome poverty. It is, therefore, targeted at the poor, particularly poor women. He went on to say that it is not based on any collateral or legally enforceable constraints, but based on "trust".

Another principle, according to Schneider (1997), is that it is offered for creating self-employment for income – generating activities and housing for the poor and was initiated as a challenge to conventional banking, which rejected the poor by classifying them as "not creditworthy". This means that those supported with micro finance schemes, after their skills training, were become self-employed and improve on their income.

According to the United Nations Organisation (1997), the micro finance system also provides services at the door-step of the poor based on the principle that the people should not go to the bank. Rather, the bank should go to the people. Also, in order to obtain loans, a borrower must join a group of borrowers and loans can be received in a continuous sequence if his/her previous loan is repaid (in instalment).

Schneider (1997) also opines that generally, these loans are given through non-profit making organisations or through institutions owned primarily by the borrowers. The rule of thumb of micro finance is as much as possible to keep the interest rate as close to the market rate prevailing in the

commercial banking sector, without sacrificing sustainability. It also gives high priority to building social capital through the formation of groups and centres and developing leadership quality through annual election of group centre leaders. It also puts special emphasis on the formation of human capital by bringing technology to the people.

According to the United Nations Organisation (1997), micro finance is based on the premise that the poor have skills which remain unutilised or under-utilised and that poverty is not created by the poor. It is created by the institutions and policies which surround them. In order to eliminate poverty, all that is needed is to make appropriate changes in the institutions and policies, and/or create new ones.

The United Nations Organisation (1997) further stated that micro finance programmes have proved to be effective in freeing people from poverty and have helped to increase their participation in the economic and political process of society. This means that through micro finance, people are empowered by increasing their access to all the factors of production, including credit.

In view of the importance of micro finance programmes, governments been called upon to review national legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks that restrict the access of people living in poverty, especially women, to credit on reasonable terms; to promote realistic targets for access to affordable credit; to provide incentives for improving access to and strengthening the capacity of organised credit system to deliver credit and related services to the people living in poverty and vulnerable groups; and finally to expand financial networks, building on existing networks, promoting

attractive opportunities for savings and ensuring equitable access to credit at the local level.

Since the introduction of micro finance programmes, many institutions have adopted innovative ways of providing credits and savings services to the entrepreneurial poor. Two approaches have been advocated on the role of credit in poverty reduction. While supporters of the Income Generation Approach (IGA) maintain that credit should be provided mainly to the entrepreneurial poor to enable them to finance specific income-generating activities to increase their revenue, proponents of the New Minimalist Approach (NMA) argue that credit programmes would still be helping the poor fight poverty by giving credit to any poor person who is able to repay a loan without dictating to that person how and what the loan should be used.

According to the United Nations Organisation (1997), studies have shown that people who went through micro finance programmes usually have jobs and have higher and more stable incomes than they did before they joined the programme. However, some practitioners still have reservations about the findings of those studies. Moreover, not many micro finance institutions can afford to undertake impact assessments because they are generally expensive and time consuming.

There are serious disagreements among experts on the validity of methodologies used in some of the published studies, with some even showing inconclusive results. In addition, the administrative structures governing these institutions are commonly either fragile or rudimentary and often involve large transactional costs. According to Schneider (1997), the success of financial intermediaries at any time depends significantly on how efficiently the

transaction is completed. If the transaction cost, combined with high interest rates, requires that the operation in question should generate profit margins of the order of 30 to 50 percent, it is not clear that this would be economically beneficial.

Skills management development

Management development is instrumental for giving managers the necessary skills and perspectives that they need to be successful. This is to guide and encourage individuals in their personal growth and development. By this, they help individuals to promote learning and to provide them with the knowledge and portfolio of transferable skills that will help them to progress in their careers.

According to Mumford (1994), three elements have to be combined to produce an effective management development system. These are:

- Self-development – a recognition that individuals can learn but are unlikely to be taught, and that the initiative for development often rests with the individual;

- Organisation-derived development – the development of the systems of formal development known by personnel and management development specialists; and

- Boss-derived development – those actions undertaken by a senior manager with others, most frequently around real problems at work.

Mumford (1994:42) also makes the point that managers think in terms of activities, not learning opportunities and, therefore,:

"our main concern must be to facilitate learning through our understanding of real work in the manager's world, rather than attempting to impose separate management development process".

He suggests that formal management development processes do not always function as effectively as we would like because:

"we have put too much emphasis on planning ahead, and not enough on enabling managers to use, understand and then build on their past experiences" (Mumford, 1994: 42-43).

According to Mumford (1994), management development should, therefore, be regarded as a range of related activities rather than an all-embracing programme. These activities depend on the organisation's technology, its environment, its philosophy and the managers' preparedness to learn. Skills management development is, therefore, very important if the skills training programme is to be sustained.

According to DeSimone and Harris (1998), there are many skills management development training programmes, but the most commonly used are the leadership training and the behaviour modelling training.

According to them, the leadership training approach is widely used. This is termed the Leader Match Training. This approach is based on a theory about what leadership is and how it can be acquired. This approach is to improve leadership effectiveness. According to them, this theory is based on the notion that effective leadership occurs when there is a match between the leader's style and the situation he or she faces. This theory proposes that each person has a particular leadership style, based on his or her needs, that dictates how he or she will act. Because this style is based on the leader's needs, it is

very difficult for the leader to change it. It is, therefore, the leader's task to diagnose the situation and either place himself in a situation favourable to the style or modify the situation so that it becomes favourable to his or her style.

The other leadership training approach is the Transformational Leadership Training. According to DeSimone and Harris (1998), the main elements of transformational leadership training include charisma (offering a vision and raising the self-expectations of followers); intellectual stimulation (helping followers change their assumptions and focus on rational solutions); and individual consideration (providing coaching and individual development). This type of leadership training seems to fit most people's idea of a "real leader", especially when they are leading an organisational change effort. In this regard, most organisations have developed transformational leadership training as the process of its leadership development.

Behaviour Modelling Training is a popular training technique that has been used primarily to train people to perform manual, interpersonal and cognitive skills. According to DeSimone and Harris (1998), this technique is based on Bandura's Social Learning Theory, which was applied to supervisory training. The underlying rationale for this form of training is that people can learn by observing other people (models) perform a task, provided they are shown clearly what the components of the behaviour are, remember what the behaviour is, actually perform the behaviour, and are motivated to use what they have learned. This technique, therefore, involves five steps, which are: modelling (showing of film or videotape); retention (trainees perform activities to enhance their memory); rehearsal (each trainee role plays the desired behaviour); feedback (trainees receive feedback on his/her

performance); and transfer of training (trainees are encouraged to practise the newly learned behaviour on the job). In behaviour modelling programmes, trainees regroup later to discuss problems and successes in using their newly learned skills.

According to Cole (2000), management development must embrace all managers in the enterprise and must aim at challenging all to growth and self-development. This technique is very important in skills training for the youth and also the management development of the skills training programme. This will ensure the success and sustainability of the programme. In support of this view, Gilley, Eggland and Gilley (2002) have said that, when managerial malpractice is allowed to flourish, the organisation's performance, quality, productivity, and effectiveness suffer greatly. One way of overcoming managerial malpractice is by creating management development initiatives throughout the organisation. This will ensure the improvement and effectiveness of the organisational performance capacity and development of work climate conducive to improved productivity.

Programme evaluation

According to McCurdy (1979), programme evaluation is the systematic application of social research procedures used by evaluators to assess the manner in which social intervention programmes are conceptualised, designed and conducted, and their utility to the beneficiaries. He proposes an evaluation model, which he terms the Integrated Model of Programme Evaluation. He notes that there are many types of the programme evaluation. They include: needs assessment; evaluability assessment;

programme monitoring; impact evaluation; cost effectiveness evaluation; and utilization assessment. The researcher, however, chooses the kind of programme evaluation that is appropriate for the study.

The most appropriate type of programme evaluation for the STEP programme, therefore, is impact evaluation, which seeks to measure its effectiveness on the unemployed youth. This means that the effectiveness of the STEP programme will be determined by whether the services did bring about the desired change in the lives of the youth who underwent the training programme, and the extent to which the observed change(s) as a result of the training, if any, can be detected

Hence, the study seeks to look at the programme generally and make the necessary recommendations in order to make good use of the potentials of the youth. Osborne and Gaebler (1992) said that if you do not measure results, you cannot tell success from failure; if you cannot see success, you cannot reward it; if you cannot reward success, you cannot learn from it; if you cannot recognize failure, you cannot correct it; and if you cannot demonstrate results, you cannot win public support. So, whether the programme achieved its intended results or not depends on a comprehensive evaluation.

Summary

This chapter reviewed literature on the various recruitment sources, which were internal and external, as in human resource practice. It also reviewed literature on youth unemployment (types, causes, and effects), skills training and micro financial assistance. Literature on other skills training

programmes, skills management development and programme evaluation were all reviewed in this chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the methodology employed in the study. Issues covered include: the research design, the study area, the study population, sampling procedures, sources of data, data collection instruments, pre-test, the fieldwork, and data processing and analysis.

Research design

The study was an evaluative one focusing on the Zabzug-Tatale district as the case study. Smith (1975) presents an evaluative study in terms of assessing the effectiveness of a social programme already put in place and designed to offer tentative solutions to existing social problems. In trying to explain evaluative study, Stufflebeam & Webster (1980) postulate an evaluative in the area of obtaining and providing useful information for decision making. It attempts to collect and use information so gathered to make decisions about an educational or social programme. An evaluative study, therefore, comes out with information, based on facts which are precise and can be used to make a decision on what to be evaluated.

This position leads to the consideration of Bordens and Abbott (2002). They considered evaluative study as one which determines whether things are working or conforming to designed plan and the indicators could either be outcome or impact based.   The purpose of this study was to assess the extent to which the STEP Programme has helped the youth to be employed or self-employed. An evaluative research design was therefore used because the study employed the survey strategy that sought to determine whether the skills training did bring about the desired change in the lives of the youth who underwent the training programme, and the extent to which the observed change(s) as a result of the training could be detected. To this effect, the research design examined the recruitment procedures of the trainees, the training skills they received, the micro financial assistance they received, the major problems they faced and their employment status after the skills training.

The dependent variable in this regard was the employment status of the trainees. The independent variables were: the recruitment procedures of the trainees; the training skills they received; and the micro financial assistance the trainees received after the skills training. To assess the impact of the independent variables on the dependent variable, the survey covered the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the trainees, such as their ages, educational status, recruitment procedures, year of training, skills acquired, difficulties encountered during the training, career development, and micro financial assistance received.

The study area

The study was conducted in the Zabzug-Tatale District, in the Northern Region of Ghana. The Zabzug-Tatale District was carved out of the Yendi District in 1988. The majority of the people belong to the Dagbon Traditional Kingdom. It is located in the eastern flank of the Northern Region of Ghana and covers a land area of about 2,332km^2. It shares boundaries with the Republic of Togo to the East, Yendi District to the West, Nanumba North and South Districts to the South and Saboba and Chereponi Districts to the North. The district capital, Zabzugu, is located approximately 150 kilometres north west of the regional capital, Tamale. Figure 1 is the map of Northern Region showing the Zabzug-Tatale District.

Key

⬤   **Zabzugu/Tatale District**
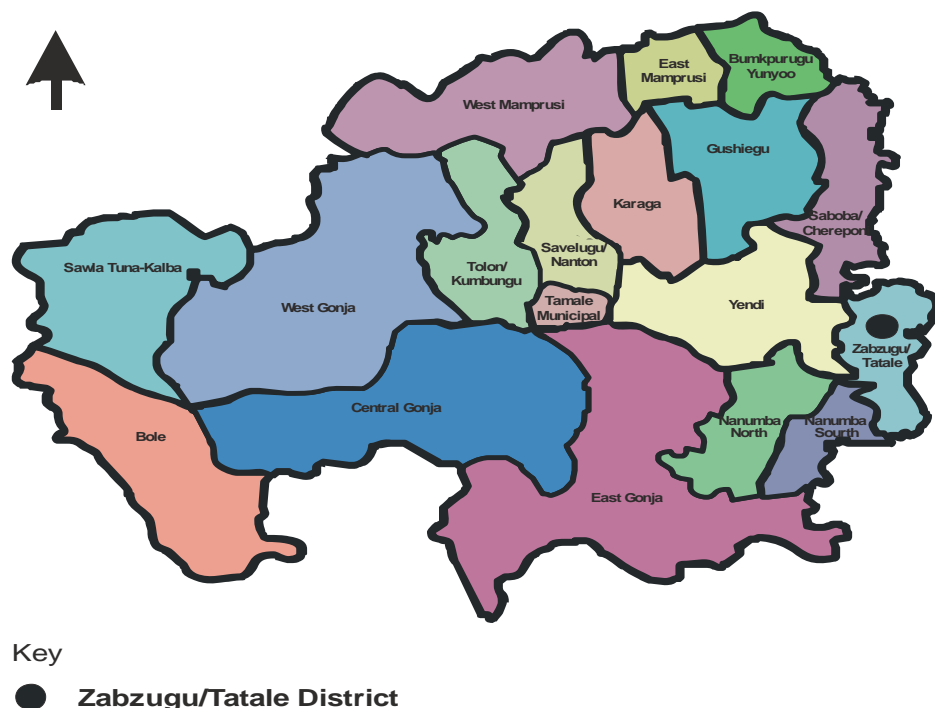
Figure 1: Map of Northern Region showing the Zabzugu - Tatale District

Source: Zabzugu - Tatale District Assembly (2002)

According to the Ghana Statistical Service (2002), the results of the 2000 National Population and Housing Census indicates that the population of the Zabzug-Tatale District was about 79,201, comprising 38,696 males and 40,505 females, with a growth rate of about 2 percent. Hence, the district's population was projected to be 89,665 in 2006. The proportion of youth (aged between 18 and 39 years) is about 43 percent.

According to the Zabzug-Tatale Distict Assembly (2002), there are three major ethnic groups in the district, namely: Dagombas, who are the majority; Konkombas; and Basares. There are, however, some minority tribes, such as Bators, Hausas, Fulanis, Kabres, Grumas and Kotokolis. Owing to the scarcity of farmlands in the area, some of these tribes have taken a very entrenched stand on land issues. This has made the District highly prone to ethnic conflicts leading to mass youth unemployment.

However, majority of the youth are engaged in crop production and livestock farming. Other economic activities engaged in by a few youth are small-scale agro-based industries, such as sheabutter and groundnut oil processing, rice milling, gari processing and carving of pestles and mortars. Large- scale fishing is also carried out on the River Oti around communities, such as Sabare Numbers I and II. Fishing is however, seasonal as the river often dries up during the dry season.

According to the Zabzug-Tatale District Assembly (2006), the district presently has nine day-care centres including a private school; there are also 68 primary schools, 14 junior high schools and two senior high schools. At the basic level, there are 192 teachers in the primary schools and 46 teachers in

the junior high schools. Figure 2 is the map of Zabzug-Tatale District showing the study area Zabzugu, the dstrict capital.

Figure 2: Map of Zabzugu -Tatale District showing the study area.

Source: Zabzugu - Tatale District Assembly (2002)

The long-standing ethnic conflicts have also affected education in the district. According to the Zabzug-Tatale District Assembly (2006), as at May, 2006, out of the 192 teachers in the primary schools, 114 of them were untrained. At the junior high school level, out of the 46 teachers at post, 36 of

them were untrained. The two senior high schools were worst affected in terms of staffing. The Zabzugu Senior High School, for instance, had 18 teachers, including the headmaster in 2006. Out of this number, only six were trained, with the remaining 12 doing their National Service. The second senior high school in the district, Tatale Evangelical Presbyterian Agricultural Senior High School, also had 16 teachers, including the headmaster. Out of this number, only two of them were trained. The remaining 14 were doing their National Service. Lack of professional teachers in the schools has also contributed to the low level of the human resource base and school drop out.

Study population

The population for the study comprised all those who went through the STEP programme in the Zabzug-Tatale District, the District Assembly staff who were in charge of funding the programme, the ICCES staff who were responsible for running the programme in the district, and parents of the participants who were made tremendous contribution to the programme. In all, a total number of 200 youth, comprising 135 females and 65 males went through the training programme. The District Assembly staff were 20, the ICCES staff were eight and the parents were also 52. This brings the total to 280 and comprised the study population.

Sampling procedures

During sampling, systematic procedures were followed in order to make the selected group of respondents adequately representative of the population. In the sampling procedures, therefore, both the probability and

non-probability sampling techniques were used to select the sample. This was to ensure that the sample was representative of the population. A purposive sampling technique was first used to select Zabzugu, the district capital as the study area and was also where most of the STEP participants resided. A purposive sampling technique was also used to select the samples of the District Assembly staff, the ICCES staff, and the parents of the participants. This was used because they made tremendous contribution and had information about the programme. They, therefore, provided key information during the interviews. One other non-probability sampling technique used was snowballing. This was used to solicit information about other participants of the STEP programme that could not be located easily.

On the other hand, two probability sampling techniques, which allowed chance to determine the persons to be included in the sample, were used. These were stratified and simple random sampling techniques. The stratified random sampling technique was used to stratify the participants into the various skills they pursued, while the simple random sampling technique was used to select the final sample size from each stratum.

For many sample surveys, a 100 percent response rate is highly unlikely. Hence, samples need to be large enough to ensure sufficient responses for the margin of error required. In view of this, a sample of 152 from the population of 200 trainees was targeted to be interviewed. This sample constituted 76 percent of the population and was deemed appropriate and representative of the population. It is important to note that the sample size was also determined, to some extent, by the available logistics.

In selecting the respondents, the first sampling activity was to stratify the trainees into the various skills they acquired. In doing so, the list consisting of the 200 youth, who went through the STEP programme, was used as the sampling frame. The list consisted of their names, their places of residence, the location of their business, and the skills they pursued. The skills were: catering; dress-making; batik, tie and dye; masonry; and carpentry. In order to ensure that the number of respondents in each stratum was the same as that in the population, a proportionate stratified random sampling was used to select the sample for the various skills and was based on the 76 percent of the population (Table 3).

Table 3: The distribution of the population and the selected sample by skills category

Skills Category	Population	Percentage	Sample	Percentage
Catering	20	10	15	10
Dress-making	50	25	38	25
Batik, tie and dye	65	33	50	33
Masonry	40	20	30	20
Carpentry	25	12	19	12
Total	200	100	152	100

Source: Field Survey (2007)

The final stage was the selection of eligible respondents from each category (stratum) for the study. At this stage, simple random sampling technique was used to select the required number of respondents from each stratum. This means that both male and female respondents were selected

through the same technique. The population from each stratum was first numbered from one to the last numbers before the samples were selected through the simple random sampling technique.

It is important to note that there was no bias in the sampling technique used because almost all the participants of the STEP programme were either employed in the district or had established their own business in the district capital. Hence, locating them was not difficult as the District Assembly had their particulars. Even where it was difficult locating some of them, the snowball sampling technique was used, to some extent, to help locate them.

Sources of data

Data for the study were collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were obtained from respondents through the administration of questionnaire and interview schedules. The questionnaire was used for the trainees of the STEP programme, while three interview schedules were used for the District Assembly staff, the ICCES staff and the parents of the trainees. Secondary data, on the other hand, were derived through the analysis of the STEP programme guidelines document and from other published materials such as books, journals, articles, and newspapers.

Data collection instruments

The basic instruments used for the collection of data were questionnaire and interview schedules. The design of the questionnaire was based on the objectives of the study and selected works of experienced researchers in this area of study.

The questionnaire, which used both pre-coded and open-ended questions, was divided into four sections and was given to the respondents to answer. The sections were as follows: Section A dealt with personal data of the respondents; Section B dealt with the selection and training of respondents; Section C dealt with employment and career development of respondents; and Section D took up issues relating to sustaining youth development interventions. Each respondent was asked to respond by writing about his or her biographical details, how they were recruited, skills pursued, year and period of training, problems faced during the training, current employment status, financial support, and their roles towards their personal growth and development; in all, there were 26 items on the questionnaire.

A different interview schedule was designed for each of the three stakeholders. The first schedule was for the District Assembly staff and consisted of 20 questions; another schedule was for the ICCES staff and consisted of 21 questions; and the third schedule was for the parents of the trainees and consisted of 18 questions. Each of the respondents in all cases was asked to respond to the close and open-ended questions.

Pre-test

According to Borg and Gall (1989), there is the need to pre-test a new instrument within a population similar to that from which the sample for the study would be taken. Based on this assertion, the test instruments were pre-tested on a randomly selected sample of 30 respondents.

The pre-tests were conducted in Nyohini sub-metro of Tamale metropolis. This sub-metro exhibits similar socio-economic characteristics,

such as a high number of school drop-outs and youth unemployment as the research area. The youth in the area also benefited from the STEP programme. Their selection was therefore, premised on the assumption that they resembled the prospective respondents for the main study. This was done to find out the difficulties to be encountered in the administration of the questionnaire and also to enable the researcher to streamline and modify some of the questions for easier and better responses.

The fieldwork

A preliminary visit was undertaken by the researcher to the study area to assess the location of the respondents. The visit also helped in the selection of field assistants. Rapport was also established with the workers of the District Assembly, the ICCES staff, and the parents of the trainees during the visit.

Three field assistants were recruited and trained to help the researcher for the data collection. Before the survey, a one-day briefing workshop was held for the field assistants. The aim of the workshop was to train them to understand the meanings behind the questions presented in the questionnaire.

Each of the field assistants was assigned to an area and was encouraged to work in the area for which he was assigned with full responsibility in order to speed up the procedure of the administration of the questionnaire. The researcher personally interviewed the District Assembly staff, the ICCES staff and the parents of the trainees.

The questionnaire was administered to the respondents at their homes, workplaces or nearby locations at their own convenience. They were asked to

respond to the questions independently and were collected after they had finished. One week was used for the administration of the questionnaire. The period for the main fieldwork was 20th to 26th April, 2007.

During the fieldwork, some problems were encountered but were solved immediately. One of the problems was that some respondents were not convinced about the usefulness of such an academic exercise and were, therefore, not prepared to take part. They were persuaded to cooperate since the information would help policy makers in the development of youth intervention programmes.

Another problem was that some of the respondents were not prepared to respond to the questionnaire because they saw it as a means of tax assessment for the payment of tax. These respondents were also persuaded to cooperate since the information would help address some of their concerns.

The final problem faced was that some respondents wanted to be paid in kind or in cash, or wanted to be assisted to expand their business before responding to the questionnaire. Again, the respondents were persuaded to cooperate, which they did.

After the data was collected, a one-day workshop was held to discuss fieldworkers' observations, impressions, and encounters in the field. This also helped in the synchronization of the data collected through the questionnaire and the interview schedules.

Data processing and analysis

Data processing and analysis include the process of editing, coding, inputting, and running of the results. A teaching assistant from the Institute for

Development Studies, University of Cape Coast, played a commendable role in processing and making statistical analysis of the data collected. The data collected qualitatively was categorised in a particular order of priority into variables by first coding the responses into variables. This was after the data had been cross-checked and screened in the field by the researcher for consistency. In all, a total of 122 respondents, representing 80 percent of the sample, responded, and the data were judged good enough to be used for the analysis (Table 4).

The analysis was based on frequency distribution and cross-tabulation. Before the analysis, the variables were first entered into the variable view. Then the data was entered into the data view of the Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS Version 12.0) software for the frequency distribution and cross-tabulation.

Table 4: Sampling distribution of the respondents by skills category

Skills Category	Frequency	Percentage
Catering	12	10
Dress-making	32	26
Batik, Tie and Dye	41	34
Masonry	21	17
Carpentry	16	13
Total	122	100.0

Source: Field Survey (2007)

Finally, the analysis and the interpretation of the findings were done, based on the selected variables. The variables, such as education, recruitment,

skills acquired, and micro financial assistance, were related to employment status. This was based on the assumption that those who have skills training will have gainful employment. The variables were measured and coded before the entries were made.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the presentation and analysis of the data collected from the field. It presents the results of the self-administered questionnaire and the interview schedules. The findings were based on 122 responses, representing 80 percent of the sample. The discussion of the findings has been grouped into five sections, namely: categories and procedures of recruitment; types of skills and micro financial assistance; extent to which the STEP programme helped to reduce youth unemployment; major problems encountered under the STEP programme; and extent to which the STEP programme helped in sustaining youth development interventions.

Categories and procedures of recruitment of respondents

The category of the respondents was centred on the age, sex and educational qualification. This could also be termed the characteristics of the respondents.

Age and sex distribution of respondents

The STEP programme tried to increase the number of young women in the programme as they are more vulnerable to unemployment problems due to high school drop-out rates. Frictional unemployment is mostly common

among women in developing countries (Harbison, 1968). The policy was therefore, to recruit between 60 and 70 percent female. This was to give the young women employable skills to enable them become independent and to contribute their quota towards sustainable national development. It was also to help most of them have opportunities in assessing the micro financial assistance because, most of the borrowers of the Grameen Bank were women who were fast in making repayments. This enabled most of them to cross the poverty line (United Nations Organisation, 1997). This principle was therefore, applied in the recruitment for the STEP programme, where more females were considered.

The age and sex distribution of the respondents is shown in Table 5. The table show that 85 of the respondents recruited into the programme were female, while 37 of them were male. This was to enable the females develop their potentials for sustainable financial assistance and gainful employment.

The respondents were also grouped into age intervals of five, as their age difference was not wide. Their ages were between 17 and 27, and at this age, most of the school entrants could not proceed to the top of the educational ladder. They, therefore, became frustrated and dropped out of school either at basic or the secondary level (Amedzro, 2005). The age and sex distribution in Table 5 shows that the majority of them (57 %) were between the age group of 18 and 22. This can be attributed to the high school drop-out rate and a lengthy period without youth intervention programmes like the STEP programme. At this age, most of the youth might have dropped out from school at the junior high school or the senior high school levels and have been waiting for non-existent white collar jobs. At this age also, special interest is placed on them to

help them in their transition from school to work (International Labour Organisation, 200). This means that policies concerning development intervention programmes for the youth must reach the very young ones at the primary or the junior high school levels for them to have adequate career guidance while in school. Those in the age-group 23 to 27 constituted 27 percent of the respondents. It was observed that only 16 percent of the respondents were below 18 years.

Table 5: Age and sex distribution of respondents

Age Group	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Below 18 Years	7	19	13	15	20	16
18 – 22 Years	20	54	50	59	70	57
23 – 27 Years	10	27	22	26	32	27
Total	37	100	85	100	122	100

Source: Field Survey (2007)

Educational qualification of respondents by sex

The STEP programme was targeting unemployed young men and women who have either junior high school or senior high school certificate or have dropped out of school from these levels. It also targeted a few of those who had graduated from tertiary institutions. From Table 6, it was observed that 95 of the respondents completed senior high school, while those who completed junior high school were 27. There were, however, no respondents from the tertiary institutions in the district who took part in the programme.

This could be as a result of the types of skills acquired under the STEP programme in the district, which favoured junior high school and senior high school certificate holders or those who dropped out of school from these levels.

From Table 6, it was also observed that out of the 95 of the respondents who completed senior high school, 68 percent of them were female, while 32 percent were male. For the 37 who completed junior high school, 74 percent of them were female, while 26 percent were male. The programme has, therefore, favoured the intake of female from both the junior high school and the senior high school levels in the district.

Table 6: Educational qualification of respondents by sex

Sex/Educational Qualification	JHS		SHS		Tertiary		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	7	26	30	32	-	-	37	30
Female	20	74	65	68	-	-	85	70
Total	27	100	95	100	-	-	122	100

Source: Field Survey (2007)

Recruitment procedures of respondents

Proper recruitment procedures of qualified young men and women, who were interested and qualified provides the best candidates for the STEP programme. Of all the recruitment procedures, the open interview is said to be the best and followed by selection (Bernadin and Russell, 1998). Those who were referred or nominated did not go through the best recruitment method.

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Hence best recruitment practices included developing accurate job description, conducting good interview, strict adherence to selection principles and providing realistic information about the job (Harris, 2000).

From Table 7, it was observed that out of the 122 respondents, only 17 percent were recruited through open interview, while nine percent were recruited through selection. This means that only 26 percent of the respondents went through the best recruitment procedures, which are open interview and selection. It was also observed that 48 percent of the respondents were recruited through the referred method, while 26 percent were nominated. This means that those who did not go through the best recruitment procedures were 74 percent. Best recruitment sources, internal and external were employed (Robore, 1998 and Haris, 2000). This could be one of the possible reasons why the STEP programme was suspended, because the best recruitment procedures were not adhered to for all the participants during recruitment, to ensure the sustainability of the programme.

Table 7: Recruitment procedures of respondents

Recruitment procedure	Frequency	Percentage
Open interview	21	17
Selected	11	9
Nominated	32	26
Referred	58	48
Total	122	100

Source: Field Survey (2007)

Skills components acquired and micro financial assistance

      This section looked at types of skills acquired under the STEP programme, year of training, duration of skills training, and micro financial assistance given to the respondents after the training.

Skills components acquired

      The STEP programme conducted an integrated full-time training in five major components in entrepreneurial skills development, vocational/technical skills, good housekeeping, sanitation and management skills. However, the respondents in the Zabzug-Tatale District went through five practical skills training components, namely: dress-making; catering; batik, tie and die; masonry; and carpentry. This was to facilitate their job placements and human resource development.

      From Table 8, it can be observed that 10 percent of the respondents were trained in catering, while 34 percent were trained in batik, tie and dye. It can also be observed that 26 percent of them were trained in dress-making. All these were skills components pursued by the females. It can be observed from table 9 again that 17 percent of them pursued skills in masonry, while 13 percent pursued skills in carpentry. All these skills components (masonry and carpentry) were also pursued by males. This type of skills acquired by the participants will enable them to perform better and empower them to make the best use of their abilities (Armstrong, 2003).

      According to the participants some skills like catering were quite intensive and, therefore, expensive. This explains why only 10 percent of them were trained in catering. They said the dwindling support from the government

and corporations was another factor. However, they saw this area to be very good for self-employment opportunities in the district as against batik, tie and die in which 34 % of them were trained.

Table 8: Skills components distribution of respondents

Skills component	Frequency	Percentage
Catering	12	10
Batik, tie and dye	41	34
Dress-making	32	26
Masonry	21	17
Carpentry	16	13
Total	122	100

Source: Field Survey (2007)

Year of STEP training

After the registration of the unemployed youth in September, 2001, the STEP programme started in March, 2002 under the five practical skills training and ended in September, 2004. From Table 9, it was observed that most of the respondents undertook their training in 2003. Those who were recruited and trained that year were 57 percent. Those who were recruited to start the training programme in 2002 were only 26 percent of the total respondents. The number recruited and trained went down again in 2004. That year, only 17 percent of the respondents were recruited and trained and this formed the last batch of the training. The period between the registration of the unemployed youth and the commencement of the STEP training was short.

This therefore, encouraged the unemployed youth to show much interest in the training programme.

Table 9: Year of STEP training of respondents

Year of training	Frequency	Percentage
2002	32	26
2003	69	57
2004	21	17
Total	122	100

Source: Field Survey (2007)

Duration of skills training

It was interesting to note that all the 122 respondents completed their skills training successfully. This shows how desirous they were to have employable skills because it will be used as an empowerment tool, which will make them become self-reliant (Rodney, 2005). It was therefore, evident that the introduction of the youth development intervention (STEP programme) was very timely. The training took them between three and six months to complete.

From Table 10, it can be observed that 94 of the respondents completed the skills training within three months. They were in batik, tie and dye, dress-making and masonry. The remaining 28 completed their skills training within six months in catering and carpentry. The cost of training in these skills was very high and participants were highly supported by the District Assembly because of the potential for job opportunities in the district.

Table 10: Duration of skills training of respondents

	3 Months		6 Months	
Skills Category	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Catering	-	-	12	43
Batik, Tie and Dye	41	44	-	-
Dress-making	32	34	-	-
Masonry	21	22	-	-
Carpentry	-	-	16	57
Total	94	100	28	100

Source: Field Survey (2007)

Micro financial assistance

Experience in youth development intervention programmes has shown that skills training alone is not enough to provide the youth with employment and career development. Some form of micro financial assistance has tremendous impact on the future of the youth in terms of setting up their small-scale enterprises to earn some income and career advancement (United Nations Organisation, 1997). This micro financial assistance, according to the STEP programme, is to serve as start-up capital for the trainees, which will afford them the opportunity to be self- employed after acquiring the skills. This is in line with the principles of micro financial assistance, which are to help poor families to overcome poverty and is offered for creating self-employment for income-generating activities (Schneider, 1997).

Two forms of micro financial assistance were made available to the trainees, depending on their financial background. These were: micro credit

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fund; and poverty alleviation fund, both aimed at helping the youth to help themselves to overcome poverty. According to the District Assembly, which was responsible for the management of the programme, 74 percent of the respondents were given micro financial assistance, while 26 percent of them were not given. However, those who were not given were linked up for employment within the district.

From Table 11, it can be observed that out of the number that received the micro financial assistance, 36 percent were given the Micro Credit Fund, while the remaining 64 percent were given the Poverty Alleviation Fund. With the Micro Credit Fund, the principal and the interest were repayable, while, with the Poverty Alleviation Fund, only the principal was repayable. The 64 percent of the respondents who received the Poverty Alleviation Fund was an indication that the programme was to help the youth establish themselves to overcome poverty.

Table 11: Types of micro financial assistance received by respondents

Micro financial assistance	Frequency	Percentage
Micro credit fund	32	36
Poverty alleviation fund	58	64
Total	90	100

Source: Field Survey (2007)

Extent to which the STEP programme helped to reduce youth unemployment

This section looked at the employment status of the participants after the skills training. This was to show whether the programme helped to reduce youth unemployment in the district.

Employment status of respondents

From Table 12, it can be observed that 48 percent of the respondents were self-employed, while 39 percent of them were employed in other sectors in the district. However, 13 percent of them said they were unemployed. But in terms of both the strict and expanded definition of unemployment, one is unemployed when he or she is available to start work immediately after the skills training but cannot get the job. This means that those who were selective in the type of work they were looking for cannot be said to be unemployed. According to the managers of the programme, some of the participants were selective in looking for work after the training. Most of them also left their jobs with the hope of finding better employment elsewhere, because according to some of the participants, they felt underemployed for the skills they possessed. Unfortunately, some of them became victims of frictional unemployment as they could not get an alternative employment (Harbison, 1968). Hence, the 13 percent who indicated that they were unemployed, may not be so, because they were selective in terms of job opportunities as indicated by the District Assembly and collaborated by some of the parents.

Table 12: Employment status of respondents

Employment Status	Frequency	Percentage
Employed	47	39
Self-employed	59	48
Unemployed	16	13
Total	122	100

Source: Field Survey (2007)

Major problems encountered under the STEP programme

Even though all the respondents completed their skills successfully, it was not without problems. They saw these problems as challenges, which they had to overcome in order to be successful in life. This is as a result of management development skills training that they had. This gave them insight in the organisation's performance, quality of what they will do in order to improve on their effectiveness (Gilley, Eggland and Gilley, 2002). The problems they faced were: financial; family problems; quality of training; and the skills they acquired.

From Table 13, it can be observed that four percent of the respondents said the major problem they faced during the training was family problems. Those who said that the quality of training was the major problem they faced were13 percent, while 22 percent said their major problem during the training period was the comprehensive skills training. However, majority (61 percent) of the respondents said they had difficulties with regard to how the programme was managed. This had to do with the financial support given to them by the District Assembly.

It was indicated that those who faced family problems were in the form of assisting parents on the farm during the training period. This was because the scheduled training periods coincided with the farming season. This did not, however, discourage them from pursuing the skills training programme. It was also observed that those who faced financial problems came from very disadvantaged families and, therefore, could not be sponsored nor supported by their parents. Their only hope for successful completion of the training was with the District Assembly, which was funding the major part of the training. But 94 percent of the respondents indicated that these difficulties were addressed before the end of the training programme. This, according to the District Assembly, was made possible because some of the parents assisted by contributing money and food items for the participants.

Table 13: Major problems encountered by respondents

Problems	Frequency	Percentage
Family	5	4
Training	16	13
Financial	74	61
Skills	21	22
Total	122	100

Source: Field Survey, (2007)

Sustaining youth development interventions

The questions under this section were framed in order to solicit ideas on how to sustain youth development intervention programmes, such as the STEP programme.

Management development skills

Management development skills training is to provide the participants with the necessary skills and perspectives that they need to develop their career to be successful. This will therefore, help in sustaining the skills training programme (Mumford, 1994). This was, therefore, made part of the training programme to help the participants of the STEP programme to effectively manage their enterprises. Most of the participants (92%) indicated that they were given management development skills training and it was adequate for them to be successful in the management of their business.

The role of the skills and micro financial assistance

The issues dealt with under this section included: the role of the skills and micro financial assistance in sustaining youth development interventions.

All the respondents, who were employed (87 percent), indicated that the programme had been very helpful in getting employment or establishing a business enterprise. It was only the 13 percent who were unemployed who indicated that the programme was not helpful to them. This finding confirms the existing knowledge that skills training facilitates job placements and the human resource development of the youth (Armstrong, 2003). This, therefore,

shows the extent to which the STEP programme helped the youth to get employment.

With regard to the micro financial assistance, 66 percent of those given, indicated that the assistance had been very helpful in establishing their business enterprises, while 17 percent said that it was helpful to them in establishing their business enterprise. This shows the extent to which the micro financial assistance helped the youth to establish their business enterprises in the district. This finding also confirms the existing knowledge that micro financial assistance is an effective tool in freeing people from poverty and helps to increase their participation in the economic and political process of society (United Nations Organisation, 1997).

Usefulness of skills trainings

Regarding the usefulness of the skills training to their personal growth and development, 87 percent of the respondents said they were grateful for the skills training they had had. They felt equipped with the relevant skills, which enabled them to be employed or be self-employed. They said they were well equipped with the skills in management development, which was aimed at developing their career. In all, 87 percent indicated that the programme was very useful to their personal growth and development, while 13 percent indicated that the programme was not useful to their personal growth and development. They were those who indicated that they were unemployed after the skills training.

With all the skills training given to the participants of the STEP programme, they also have very important roles to play towards their personal

growth and development. In line with this, 87 percent of the respondents who were employed or self-employed indicated that they were aware that they had very important roles to play towards their personal growth and development. These roles, according to them, included: making the right decisions about their business; determination to succeed; improving on their knowledge and skills through skills development; prudent business management practices; and putting what they had learned into practice.

In order to achieve this, some said that they attended other relevant workshops and seminars organised elsewhere. Some also said they applied the knowledge and the functional skills they acquired during the STEP training programme; they helped each other in terms of material and financial support; and they had monthly meetings and critiqued one another's business activities with the intention of overcoming poverty. This means that their own-self determination and the amount of efforts that they put in, as architectures of their own lives, towards achieving their own goals, was a determining factor in eradicating poverty (Rodney, 2005).

Opinion of respondents regarding the STEP programme

With regard to the opinion of the respondents regarding the STEP programme, 87 percent of them regarded the STEP programme as an opportunity which enabled them to acquire employable skills that made them to either be employed or become self-employed. This has also made them productive and economically active members of society, and has enabled them to help in the sustainable socio-economic development of the country.

Youth development interventions were regarded by most of the youth as a necessity. Indicating their opinion on this, they perceived the interventions as being essential means to empower them with useful knowledge, relevant skills and the experience necessary to make a living and to bring about a significant change in their communities and the country as a whole. They said that, apart from keeping them from joining the loitering unemployed masses, youth development intervention programmes acknowledged their abilities and afforded them the opportunity to exchange their views and to practise what they had learnt from each other. The intervention programmes also engaged them in constructive activities that did not only prepare them for the future, but equipped them with functional skills to face current challenges (International Labour Organisation, 2000).

There was, however, a feeling that youth development intervention programmes were not taken seriously in the country. This is because different governments come with their own different intervention programmes and also there were situations where even the same government comes with different intervention programmes. They cited the fact that the STEP Programme had been suspended and replaced with the National Youth Employment Programme (NYEP) by the same New Patriotic Party (NPP) Government.

Suggestions for improvement of youth development interventions

In an evaluative research like this, it is important to solicit suggestions from the respondents for the improvement of the programme being evaluated. It is to know whether things are working or conforming to designed plan (Borden and Abbott, 2002). With regard to the STEP programme, the

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respondents suggested that the skills training programme for the youth should be continued. They however, said there was the need to introduce a financial management skills course as part of the programme. Sixty five (65) percent of the respondents suggested that the programme should be focused on providing skills strictly for the informal sector, and not for the formal sector jobs, which are almost non-existent. On the quality of training, they said it was quite poor due to lack of adequate funds, some untrained staff, outdated curricula, poorly maintained equipment and building, and lack of adequate stationery. They, therefore, suggested improvements in all these areas.

The respondents also suggested that the STEP programme should establish a working relationship and enter into contracts with small-scale businesses and micro enterprises that are interested in youth development programmes. According to them, this could afford good job opportunities to the qualified and experienced youth. They also said the programme did not make provision for career progression of participants, that is, an opportunity to move from one level of training to the next. They then suggested a progression from semi-skilled level, to the craft and technician level, and then to the technologist level after acquiring competence on the job.

The respondents generally commended the implementers of the programme for their good work, despite all the initial difficulties. They expressed their gratitude for the opportunity afforded them by the programme. They finally suggested the full involvement of parents in matters of the programme for them to supplement or make some contributions towards the training. However, 65 percent of the respondents were not happy about the suspension of the programme. They said the government should have

addressed the problems and continued to provide the youth with the necessary skills, instead of the current modules of the National Youth Employment Programme, which they thought were not sustainable due to lack of adequate financial support.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter deals with the summary of the study, the conclusions, and the recommendations. The summary focused on the main findings from the study, which tried to answer the research questions. The recommendations, on the other hand, are based on the conclusions.

Summary

The main objective of the study was to assess the extent to which the STEP programme has helped the youth in the Zabzugu-Tatale District to have gainful employment and its contribution towards their personal growth and development. To achieve this objective, an evaluative research design was used to determine whether the skills training did bring about the desired change in the lives of the youth who underwent the training programme.

A stratified sampling technique was employed to obtain a sample size of 152 eligible respondents from a population of 200 trainees. This sample size was made up of 103 females and 49 males. Self-administered questionnaires and interview schedules were used to gather primary data, while the literature on the STEP programme, books, journals, articles, and news-papers were used for the secondary data.

A total of 122 responses, representing 80 percent of the sample were judged good enough and was used for the analysis. The analysis was based on frequency distribution and cross-tabulation. Selected variables, such as education, recruitment, skills training, and micro financial assistance, were examined in relation to employment status of the respondents during the analysis.

The main findings of the study are as follows:

- The majority (70%) of the youth who took part in the programme were females who have completed senior high schools and junior high schools and are mostly between the ages of 18 to 22 and 23 to 27.

- Best recruitment procedure was not adopted for the selection of participants for the programme, as majority of them (74%) were either nominated or referred. Only 26 percent of them were selected through the best recruitment methods (open interview and selection).

- The study established that very few (10%) of the respondents were trained in skills, such as catering, that had very high employment opportunities.

- The majority (90%) of them were trained in skills such as dress-making, batik, tie and dye, masonry, and carpentry. These skills have very low employment opportunities due to high number of apprentices in these trade areas.

- It was observed that the majority (74 %) of the participants were assisted with micro finance. Out of this, most of them (64 %) were

assisted with the Poverty Alleviation Fund, due to the poverty level in the district.

- The rest (36%) were assisted with the Micro Credit Fund to help establish their business enterprises.

- A large number of the participants (87 %) were gainfully employed after the skills training.

- Most (48 percent) of the employed were self-employed, managing their own businesses.

- The remaining 39 percent of them were employed in other sectors within the district.

- The majority (61%) of the respondents had problems with regard to how the programme was managed. This had to do with the financial support given to them by the District Assembly.

- It was established that the training periods coincided with the farming season and most of the parents of the participants were farmers. In view of this, four percent had problem with the training period.

- All the respondents (87%) employed indicated that the programme had been very helpful in getting employment or established a business enterprise.

- Most (87%) of the participants given micro financial assistance indicated that the assistance had been very helpful in establishing their business enterprises.

- Eighty seven percent of the respondents indicated that the skills training they had had been very useful to their personal growth and development.

- In terms of their personal roles towards their personal growth and development, most (87%) of them indicated that they were aware of their roles to face current challenges.

- Most (65%) of the respondents suggested that the programme should be focused on providing skills strictly for the informal sector, and not for the formal sector.

- Eighty seven percent of the respondents suggested that the STEP programme should establish a working relationship and enter into contracts with small-scale businesses and micro enterprises that are interested in youth development programmes.

- Sixty five percent of the respondents suggested the full involvement of parents on matters of the programme for them to support or make some contributions towards the training of such interventions.

Conclusions

Based on the summarised findings, it is evident that most of the participants recruited were female who had completed junior high school and senior high school but did not have the required grades to further their education. Also the procedures used in recruitment of the participants for the programme were not consistent with the best recruitment procedures. Best recruitment procedures entail the usage of open interview and selection but the

programme used nomination and referred, thus making it unlikely for the real needy to be selected for the programme.

Although there were many skills under the STEP programme, it was evident that the participants in the Zabzugu-Tatale district went through only five skills components, namely: catering; dress-making; batik, tie and dye; masonry; and carpentry. They were, therefore, limited in terms of choice of skills to pursue. Most of these skills like dress-making, batik, tie and dye and masonry were however, not very marketable in the district.

Based on the summarised findings, it is evident that two forms of micro financial assistance – the Micro Credit Fund and the Poverty Alleviation Fund - were made available to the participants after they acquired the skills. This helped most of the trainees to get established in terms of gainful employment to overcome poverty. This shows the importance of micro finance in terms of job creation for the youth. Hence this has shown that skill training alone is not enough to provide the youth with the necessary employment opportunities but also some form of micro financial assistance has tremendous impact on the future of the youth in terms of gainful employment.

It was discovered that majority of the participants were employed or self-employed. This has made them to earn some income and to make right decisions about their businesses, which made them to become productive and economically active members of the society. This has, therefore, helped to reduce youth unemployment in the district, to some extent. It has also helped them in terms of their career development, which enhanced their spirit of teamwork wherever they went. The study has, therefore, demonstrated the

success of the programme in enabling the unemployed youth to get employment.

It was also evident that majority of the participants had problems with how the programme was managed. This had to do with the financial support given to them by the District Assembly. It was evident that the training periods coincided with the farming season and most of the parents of the participants were farmers. In view of this, four percent had problem with the training period.

It was observed that all the respondents employed indicated that the programme had been very helpful in getting employment or established a business enterprise and the micro financial assistance had been very helpful in establishing these business enterprises. Most of the participants also suggested that the programme should be focused on providing skills strictly for the informal sector, and not for the formal sector, establish a working relationship and enter into contracts with small-scale businesses and micro enterprises that are interested in youth development programmes.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study and the conclusions, the following recommendations were made:

- Implementing development intervention programmes, such as the STEP programme, requires the adoption of the best recruitment methods. This will help in recruiting interested and qualified applicants and will, therefore, ensure the sustainability of the programme. The Ministry of Manpower Development, Youth and

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- It is important, when implementing skills training programmes, to train the participants in vocational skills that will help most of them instead of just a few. There were other important vocational skills that would have been more beneficial to the participants. It is, therefore, recommended that the District Assembly should next time implement this type of vocational skills training.

- In future, Poverty Alleviation Fund, instead of the Micro Credit Fund, should be given to participants who would go through skills training. This is recommended because of the financial background of the participants who went through the skills training and the purpose of the Poverty Alleviation Fund. Hence, the District Assembly should next time give the participants Poverty Alleviation Fund and properly monitored them to ensure the effective use of the fund to help these youth to overcome poverty.

- Future youth development intervention programmes should be restructured to equip the participants with additional skills such as financial management that would enable them to have a sense of determination, hard work, commitment, sacrifice, and high risk management. This will help them to take risk in prudent management of their business to speed up their personal growth and development.

- The Ministry of Manpower Development, Youth and Employment should try and forge partnership with small-scale businesses and micro enterprises that are interested in youth development programmes and come out with a comprehensive youth policy document, which will be used to plan proper and sustainable skills training programmes as youth development interventions.

- The Ministry of Manpower Development, Youth and Employment should establish a working relationship and enter into contracts with small-scale businesses and micro enterprises that are interested in youth development programmes. This will afford good job opportunities to qualified and experienced youth who go through skills training. This will also prepare them for career progression.

- In order to make the new youth development intervention (NYEP) programme self-sustaining, the Ministry of Manpower Development, Youth and Employment should try and forge partnership with private organisations through their corporate social responsibilities, to establish a Youth Development Intervention Fund in the country. This will make resources readily available for all the modules under the programme.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR BENEFICIARIES OF THE STEP

PROGRAMME

(Please fill in the spaces below but tick the appropriate response where applicable).

Section A: Personal Data

1. Sex: (a) Male [   ]   (b) Female [   ]

2. State Age   ………………………………

3. Highest Educational Qualification: (a) No schooling [   ]   (b) Primary

[   ] (c) Junior Secondary [   ]   (d) Senoir Secondary [   ] (e) Tertiary [   ]

4. Marital Status: (a) Married [   ]   (b) Single [   ]   (c) Divorced [   ]

   (d) Widowed [   ]   (e) Separated [   ]

5. Number of children: ………………………..

Section B: Selection and Training

6. Which year did you participate in the STEP training programme?

   (a) 2002 [   ]   (b) 2003 [   ]   (c) 2004 [   ]   (d) 2005 [   ]

7. How did you get information about recruiting for the STEP training

 programme?...

8. How were you recruited for the training programme?   (a) Open Interview

[   ]   (b) Nominated [   ]   (c) Referred [   ]   (d) Selected [   ]

9. In which of the courses (skills) did you take part?

   (a) Dress-making [   ] (b) Catering [   ]   (c) Batik, Tie and Dye [   ]

(d) Masonry [   ] (e)   Carpentry [   ]

10. Did you complete the course successfully? (a) Yes   [   ]   (b) No [   ]

11. If yes, how long did it take you to complete the course?

   (a) 3 months [   ]   (b) 6 Months [   ]   (c) One Year [   ]

Section C: Employment and Career Development

12. Were you given any management development skills training?

        (a) Yes [   ]   (b) No [   ]

13. Did you receive any micro financial assistance after the skills training?

        (a) Yes [   ]   (b) No [   ]

14. If yes, what type of assistance were you given? (a) Micro Credit Fund [   ]

        (b) Poverty Alleviation Fund [   ]   (c) Other (specify)......................

15. Do you find any difficulty in the re-payment of the micro credit fund given

to you? (a) Yes [   ]   (b) No [   ]

16. If yes, what are difficulties?...

17. What is your current employment status? (a) Employed [   ]

        (b) Self-employed [   ]   (c) Unemployed [ ]

Section D: Sustaining Youth Development Interventions

18. What difficulties did you face during your training?

   (a) Financial Problem [ ] (b) Family Problem [   ]   (c) Training Problem

[   ] (d) Skills Problem [   ]   (e) Other (Specify)

19. Were these difficulties addressed before the end of your training?

        (a) Yes [   ]   (b) No [   ]

20. T what extent did the STEP training programme help you to get employment or be self-employed? (a) Very Helpful [   ]   (b) Helpful [   ](c) Some what Helpful [   ]   (d) Not Helpful [   ]   (e) Not very Helpful [   ]

21. To what extent did the Micro Financial Assistance help you to establish your   business? …………………………………………………………

22. How useful did you find the skills training to your personal growth and
    development? ……………………………………………

23. What role did you play towards your personal growth and development?
    ………………………………………………………………………….

24. What is your opinion regarding the STEP Training Programme?
…………………………………………………………………….

25. What is your opinion regarding youth development interventions in general in your are ?..

26. What suggestions would you make for the improvement of the STEP TrainingProgramme?..

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE DISTRICT ASSEMBLY STAFF

1. What is your position within the District Assembly?

2. How did you inform the youth about the STEP training programm?

3. How did you recruit the participants for the STEP training programm?

4. In which vocational skills were the participants trained?

5. How did the participants select their skills?

6. Were the participants given any micro financial assistance?

7. What type of micro financial assistance were they given?

8. Was the micro financial assistance repayable?

9. If yes was it with interest?

10. What was the interest rate?

11. How long did it take to train the participants?

12. Do you know the number of the trainees who are employed?

13. Do you know the number of the trainees who are self-employed?

14. Do you know the number of the trainees who are unemployed?

15. Do you know where the trainees are as at now?

16. Do you think the training was enough for employment or self-employment?

17. Did you have any problem with regards to the training programme?

18. How was the training funded?

19. Did you get any support from other organisations?

20. What difficulties do you think the participants faced during the training?

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE ICCES STAFF IN THE

DISTRICT

1. What is you position within the ICCESS?

2. How were the youth informed about the STEP training programme?

3. How were they recruited for the STEP training programm?

4. In which vocational skills did you train the participants?

5. Were the participants given the chance to select their skills?

6. Were the participants given any micro financial assistance?

7. What type of micro financial assistance were they given?

8. Was the micro financial assistance repayable?

9. If yes was it with interest?

10. What was the interest rate?

11. How long did it take to train the participants?

12. Do you know the number of the trainees who are employed?

13. Do you know the number of the trainees who are self-employed?

14. Do you know the number of the trainees who are unemployed?

15. Do you know where the trainees are as at now?

16. Do you think the training was enough for employment or self-employment?

17. Did you have any problem with regards to the training programme?

18. How was the training funded?

19. Did you get any support from other organisations?

20. Did you face any difficulties with the District Assembly?

21. What difficulties do you think the participants faced during the training?

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE PARENTS OF THE STEP

PROGRAMME

1. How many of your children/wards took part in the STEP programme?

2. How did you get the information about the STEP training programme?

3. Do you know how they were they recruited for the STEP training programm?

4. In which vocational skills were the participants trained?

5. Do you know how the participants selected their skills?

6. Do you know whether the participants were given any micro financial assistance?

7. If yes, what type of micro financial assistance were they given?

8. Was the micro financial assistance repayable?

9. If yes was it with interest?

10. What was the interest rate?

11. How long did it take to train the participants?

12. Are your children/wards employed after the skills training?

13. Do you think the training was enough for them to get employment or for them to be self-employed?

14. Do you think the training was enough for employment or self-employment?

15. What contribution did you make towards the training programm?

16. Do you know how the training was funded?

17. Do you think the participants had some difficulties during the training?

18. What suggestions will you give for the improvement of the STEP training programme?