

IMPACT OF NEEDS-DRIVEN BUSINESS MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP TRAINING INTERVENTIONS IN GHANA

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Abstract

This paper analyses the impact of needs-driven business management and leadership training interventions on Master Craft Persons (MCPs) in the Volta Region. Artisans in developing countries are mostly school dropouts; therefore, those who have quality education and are able to venture into the industry are more likely to excel. This is because the artisanal activities require a mix of skills to excel. First, this study identified the training needs of artisans who have already been trained in precision quality and invited for focused group discussions. Secondly, the team developed and implemented a tailor-made training package to address their training needs. Thirdly, we assessed the impact of the training intervention based on baseline data we collected prior to the training and follow-up data after the training. The paper relied on qualitative and quantitative data collected from a sample of 56 Master Craft Persons. A key finding is that, for most constructs under business management, the impact of the training intervention was positive and statistically significant. For example, their general business planning, record keeping and financial management skills were significantly improved (with a value of $p < 0.0001$). There was also a statistically significant improvement in customer relations (with a value of $p = 0.0145$). Indications were that the impact on marketing skills was positive but not statistically significant (with a value of $p = 0.0648$). Thirdly, for the constructs under leadership skills, we found that the impact of the training intervention on skills needs such as leading change, building and managing interpersonal relationships within the group, motivating people, and informing was positive and statistically significant (with a value of $p < 0.0001$). Also, the training intervention had a positive and statistically significant impact on constructs such as choosing effective followers, delegating responsibility, gaining group members' consensus, and participative decision-making (with values of $p = 0.0203$, 0.0340 , and 0.0182 , respectively). However, the impact on showing self-awareness and self-confidence was positive but not statistically significant (with a value of $p = 0.2031$). Based

on these findings, we conclude that needs assessment-based training intervention is critical for impactful capacity-building in the artisanal sector.

Keywords: Artisans, leadership, business management, training, impact

1.0 Introduction

This paper aims to measure and understand the early impact of business management and leadership training intervention on master craft persons (MCPs) in the Volta Region of Ghana. These MCPs have earlier undergone precision quality training. To set the tone for the exercise, this introduction provides insights into the background and context of the training intervention as well as the overarching aim, objectives and scope of this study.

1.1 Background And Context of the Training Intervention

In Europe and developed countries, artisans and master craft persons (MCPs) ensure that their finished products, such as welding, carpentry, masonry/ building, mechanic repairs and even garment marking/sewing, meet international standards. Since products from developed countries meet international standards, they could easily be exported to other countries. The story is different in most African countries and Ghana specifically. In Ghana, these MCPs produce products with very poor finishing and, therefore, cannot compete in the international market. This phenomenon has persisted for several years because there is no specific training institute for artisans who cannot speak English to upgrade their skills. Besides, the educational curriculum in Ghana is all structured in the English language, giving no room for the local artisan to upgrade their skills to enable MCPs to produce products that will meet international standards and expand their businesses upon completion of their training.

In view of this, the Design and Technology Institute (DTI), in collaboration with the Ho Technical University, launched a training program to train one thousand one hundred (1,100) artisans in the Volta-Region of Ghana in precision Quality (PQ) using the local language Ewe as the main medium for communication and training. The training includes five (5) main modules thus: change to grow, process integration, people and team development, health and safety in the work places and managing quality and customer relations. After each training session with the MCPs, we normally have open discussions with the MCPs on the issues affecting their businesses that need to be resolved. In almost all the training sessions, the MCPs express their gratitude for the PQ training and ask for follow-up training in leadership and business management skills. To authenticate these, in March 2022, the top management of DTI, who are the owners of the Precision Quality teaching program, held a PQ review meeting with the PQ Research Team at HTU and a select group of MCPs to deliberate on the impact of the Precision. At the end of the discussions, it was unanimously concluded that MCPs find it difficult to mobilise their members for the various PQ training sessions and other related programs. This was a result of the nonchalant attitude of some of the leaders of the associations which made it difficult for them to carry the messages to

their members. It was therefore evident that the leaders of the MCPs have challenges in managing their members which called for the need for leadership training.

Furthermore, due to the lack of business management skills on the part of the MCPs, they have not been able to manage their business properly, with regards to financial management such as paying self-salaries, savings, social security and national insurance trust payment (SSNIT) and also to innovate and initiate new related businesses alongside their mainstream business or add value to their existing business. Furthermore, the MCPs also stated that they needed training in bookkeeping and record keeping as most of them find it very difficult to keep simple records on cash inflow and outflow; rather, they spend at random; as a result, they find it very difficult to declare whether they make profit or loss at the end of each month.

Based on the above-stated issues, the top Management of DTI, upon further consultations with the PQ consultant, PQ facilitators and PQ research, agreed that there was a need to organise a study to validate the issues stated above and conduct a proper need assessment of the leaders. Based on the need assessments, the PQ instructors then designed a tailored capacity-building training package to address the issues raised and other issues discovered during the research.

Participants of this program will then be monitored and coached for 3 months, and the impact of the training will be evaluated. This led to the launch of the special need assessment-based training program dubbed MCPs Leadership and Capacity Building Training and Research for MCPs.

1.2 The Aim of this Study

This study aims to understand the impact of business management and leadership training intervention on MCPs in the Volta Region of Ghana. Specifically, the training intervention aimed at:

1. Training the MCPs,
2. Monitoring and coaching the MCPs after the training,
3. Collect follow-up data
4. Measuring the impact of the training,

1.3 Objectives of the Study

In seeking to achieve the over-arching aim, the objectives of this study are:

1. To take the baseline data of the 56 MCPs selected executives (MCPs) in the Volta Region of Ghana to address the issues identified
2. To conduct capacity-building workshops for these 56 MCPs
3. To undertake follow-up and coaching visits to reinforce learning and activate new leadership behaviour (monitor the MCP to ensure the implementation of the lesson learnt).
4. To collect follow-up quantitative data on MCPs.

5. To conduct an assessment and Evaluation of data to measure the early impact (after 8 months) of the capacity building workshop (Comparing the initial data with the follow-up data).

1.4 The Scope of the Study

To be able to achieve these objectives, the study covered 10-12 MCPs drawn from each of the trade areas. Specifically, the study covered welders, carpenters, sprayers, auto electricians, fashion designers, and beauticians for this special training program. Following the collection of baseline data from the MCPs, a training intervention was implemented, and a follow-up survey was undertaken after 8 months to measure the impact of the intervention.

1.5 Organisation of the Study

This paper is organised into five sections. This section is followed by section two, which gives a brief theoretical and empirical review, and section three, which outlines the methodology and data used. Section four presents the results and discussions. The study ends with section five which is on the summary and conclusions.

2.0 Brief Theoretical and Empirical Review

The section is organised into two sub-sections. Specifically, the first sub-section focuses on the review of the impact of business management training on artisans. The second sub-section deals with the review of the importance of leadership training to artisans.

2.1 The Impact of Business Management Training on Artisans

Business management is indeed critical to the success of every business, that is why Benjamin Franklin said, "*Failing to plan is planning to fail*" According to Tweneboah-Koduah & Adusei (2016); Omeje et al. (2021), without business management training for artisans the know-how of artisans with regards to business management will diminish over the years and innovation in the sector will die with the passing of the MCP's. This means that there will be no succession plan for the successors of the MCPs to take over from their master upon their demise. It should be noted, however, that artisans provide significant support to the Ghanaian population, yet not much credence has been given to this sector. The sector is grossly neglected, with limited refresher training and credit assistance to help the artisans expand their businesses. According to Monney et al. (2014), about seventy-eight per cent (78%) of the artisans lack training in fire safety, and basic fire fighting equipment is non-existent in the workshops. The study of Effah et al. (2013) also showed that artisans do not receive training in various critical elements of business management thus, they fell short of expanding their businesses and generating the needed profit. A systematic review and a meta-analysis of the entrepreneurship and business management literature further suggest that entrepreneurial and business management activities are the most important drivers of economic growth. Pret and Cogan (2018); and Adebawale & Agumba (2021), yet entrepreneurial and business management education is not given much attention within the artisanal sector. Tweneboah-Koduah & Adusei (2016) observed that the artisans and craftsmen in

Kumasi Metropolis face many challenges. They, therefore, postulated that for the artisanal sector to be vibrant, there is a need to pay attention to destructors within industries with such a low level of theoretical knowledge backing MCP's activities. This is basically because most artisans learn the job without recourse to the theory underpinning the actions they take on activities. For example, mechanics inflate tyres without knowing the required pressure for each tyre. There is, therefore, the need to bridge the knowledge gap within the industry to enhance growth. When resolved, this will increase entrepreneurial and business management processes and activities to alleviate poverty in Kumasi Metropolis in particular and stimulate economic growth, employment generation, and organisation empowerment throughout the country.

Subiyantoro et al. (2017) also found out that the knowledge level of the wood artisans for the management of basic concepts is rated as good (71.5%), for business planning, the rating was adequate (69.1%), and for the business organisation, it was also found to be adequate (61.5%). However, for general business management practices, which involve planning your business activities by documenting what you need to be documented, budgeting your purchases by buying stock in bulk (on a wholesale basis), anticipating or foreseeing the possibility of theft in your business, e.g. loss of stock or cash and planning adequately for, in that you can minimise it by taking monthly stock or prevent it by installation CCTV cameras etc., and paying self a fixed salary were all rated below 20%. This is an indication that general business management skills are still lacking in the artisan sector and need to be upgraded for better artisanal sector development.

Therefore, cooperation and linkages between all support organisations, including government agencies, non-governmental organisations, and associations of artisans, need to be enhanced through training, especially business management training to transfer the learnt skills into increased profit turnover and business expansion, Forero-Montaña (2018).

The findings of Kibe, L. (2016,) on the other hand indicate that most of the Jua Kali workers use mentoring to share business knowledge. Language barriers hamper these knowledge-sharing techniques because some mentors or trainees are illiterate and can only communicate in their local languages. Less educated individuals dominate the artisanal sector and most of them can speak only their local dialects; this explains why all training in this sector should be done in the local dialects. Customer Relationship Management is also critical in business management as it relates to many other business strategies, such as technology and relationship benefits, Widian, M. E. (2013), which will ultimately increase customer satisfaction and boost profit. According to Rantšo (2022), although artisans received training in various production skills, the importance of business management is underestimated, resulting in the low performance of most artisanal businesses in the area of business management.

2.2 The Importance of Leadership Training to Artisans

Ogbeifun (2011) concluded that most clients prefer to hire inexperienced and cheap contractors to construct their structures in the construction industry. This is because the cost of hiring such a contractor is cheaper than the experienced one. This phenomenon is indeed eroding the appetite of experienced contractors as they find it difficult to attract jobs. This does not apply to the Construction industry alone; it applies to all the other sectors. Therefore, there is a need to form associations and set association regulations that will guide the operation of the industry. Without these, contractors build houses that collapse at the least interference of natural disasters such as earth quakes and floods. Therefore, the artisans' training should include aspects of the need for associations and collective decision-making and agree on uniform remuneration that artisans will pay for jobs executed, Shabane et al. (2017).

This will boost the quality and quantity of artisans, enhance employability, reduce rural-urban migration and alleviate poverty, Subiyantoro et al. (2017).

Omotayo et al. (2016) postulated that various actors influence knowledge sharing among information and communication technology artisans in Nigeria. Information and knowledge sharing not only help develop the artisanal sector but also help improve the relationships among the artisans and help build a strong network in the sector, which ultimately facilitates referrals and boosts the industry's vibrancy, Smit et al. (2021). If properly harnessed and trained within the industry, leadership will help in collaborations and teamwork across sectors. This will result in the acquisition of joint venture jobs with lots of cash inflows. Besides with a joint effort, the various artisanal sectors can initiate joint proposals which are more likely to be funded as against the individual ones.

3.0 Methodology and Data Collection

This section presents the methodology, data collection instruments and training process. It starts with demography and baseline data, followed by capacity-building intervention. The section ends with a collection of follow-up quantitative data on MCPs to measure the impact of the capacity-building intervention thereof.

3.1 Demography and Baseline Data

Fifty-six (56) artisans were randomly sampled from four hundred and fifty (450) artisans trained in the Ho municipality in PQ. The selection, however covered all the five thematic artisanal areas thus, welding, carpentry, masonry/ building, mechanic repairs and even garment marking/sewing. The educational background of the sample ranged from junior secondary school certificate, through senior secondary certificate to diploma, with the majority being Junior secondary certificate holders. The age group of the sample varies from twenty-one (21) to sixty-four (64) years, with the majority being in their forties. The sample comprised forty-five (45) males and eleven (11) females. All 56 participants understood the local language, so the local language, Ewe, was used as the medium for communication and training.

3.2 Capacity Building Training Intervention

An intensive capacity-building training session was undertaken which touched on the issues found out during the earlier engagements. At the end of the training the participants expressed joy for the new knowledge acquired and how they believe it will help them in their day-to-day activities.

Training Content

Day 1 - Presentations were made, including the showing of videos to support the presentation and individual exercises were undertaken. The presentation touched on;

- Financial management
- Record Keeping
- Job Delivery,
- Conflict Management
- Managing Meetings

The facilitators assessed the individual assignments and supported participants who did not clearly understand the assignments.

Day 2 - The day's presentations were based on videos, group discussions and presentations.

The presentations included videos on;

- General business management
- Conflict management (followed by group work and discussions)
- Team Dynamics and Development (followed by group work and discussions)
- Customer Relations and Attitude and collaboration (followed by group discussions)
- Participatory decision-making and
- Communication and informing

The facilitators discussed the road map regarding the visitations, coaching and feedback reviews by the middle of June. The executives present agreed to continuously engage with the facilitators through phone calls as well as in-person visitation to ensure that all their members are visited and called to ensure that all lessons learnt during the training have been implemented and also to get the feedback needed from the MCPs.

Follow-up visits

Follow-up visits and coaching were done to engage the MCPs in their transformational journey further. Scheduled and unscheduled visitations were conducted to assess the level and depth of knowledge uptake. In all, the MCPs displayed positive signs of incorporating most of the issues taught at the training.

3.3 Collection of Follow-up Quantitative Data on MCPs

Follow-up quantitative data on MCPs were collected eight (8) months after the capacity-building training intervention in March 2022. In sum, 56 MCPs were interviewed, and their views were

collated and analysed. The follow-up survey undertaken after 8 months measured the impact of the intervention.

4.0 Analysis of the Capacity Building Training Intervention Impact

4.1 Phase - I Business Management Training Impact

The impact of the training was computed based on the changes between the baseline and follow states. The difference in the percentage agreement computed is presented in Figure 4.1. Overall, the percentage change ranged from 18% for marketing skills, 23% for customer relation skills, 80% for record-keeping skills, 83% for general business management, and **100%** for financial management.

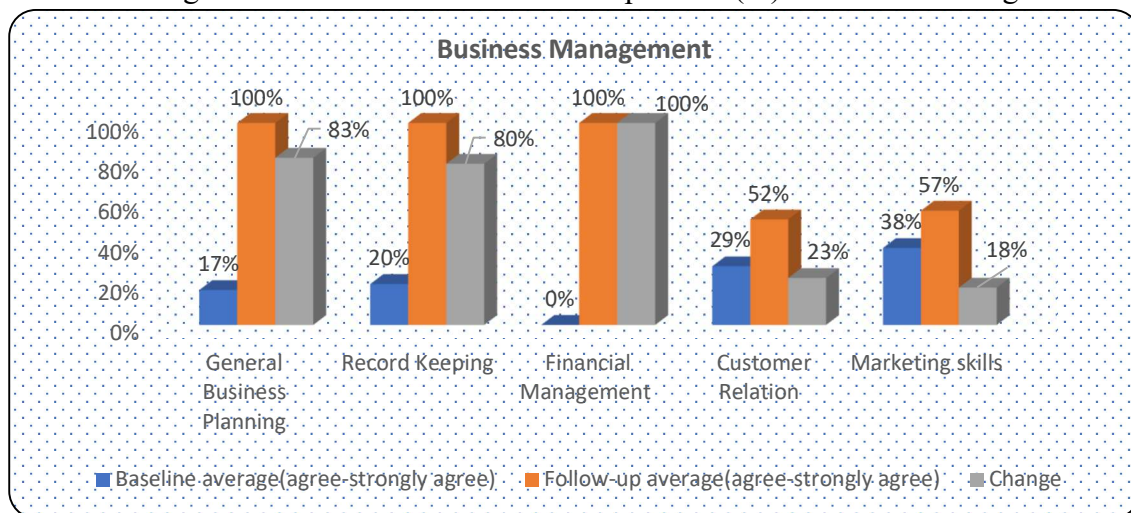
4.2 Phase 2 Leadership Skills Training Impact

For the leadership skills training, the impact of the training was computed, and the difference in the percentage agreement is presented in Figure 4.2. In all, the percentage change ranged from **15%** for Self-awareness and self-confidence, **21%** for gaining consensus among group members, **25%** for choosing effective followers and delegating responsibilities, **26%** for participative decision-making, **50%** for leading change, **51%** for building and managing interpersonal relationships, to **79%** for informing and **85%** for motivating people. Please see Table 1.3 below for details.

4.3 Establishing the direction and the magnitude of the Training Impact

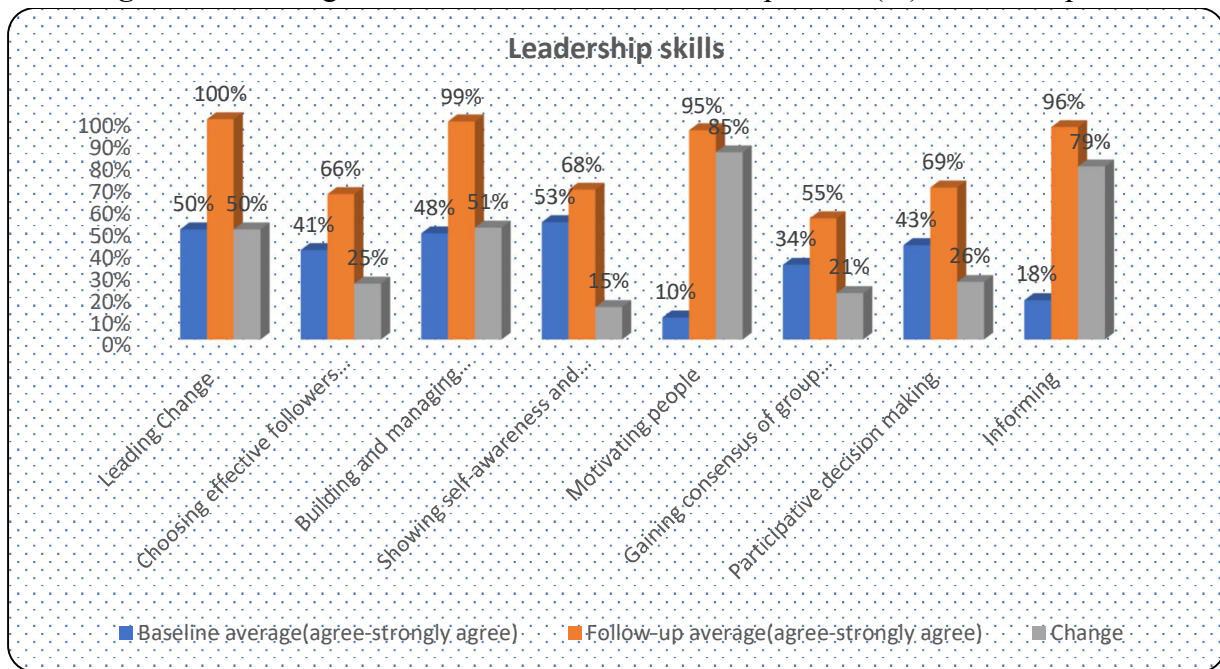
One main finding from this study is that the impact was positive and considerably large for both business management and leadership training intervention, as indicated in figures 4.1 and 4.2. For example, for general business panning in Figure 4.1, the direction of the impact was positive, and its magnitude was 85%. Also, for the leadership training in Figure 4.2, the direction of the impact was positive, and the magnitude was 50%.

Figure 4.1: Change between Baseline and Follow-up States (%)- Business Management



Source: Computed by authors

Figure 4.2: Change between Baseline and Follow-up States (%) -Leadership skill



Source: Computed by authors

4.4 Establishing the Statistical Significance of the Training Impact

Another key finding, as shown in Table 4.3, is that all other constructs under business management were statistically significant except for marketing skills. Also, for the impact of the leadership training, as shown in Figure 4.3 all the constructs were statistically significant except for showing self-awareness and self-confidence.

Table 4.3 Computing P-values to establish the statistical significance of change/impact (%)

Indicator	N	Baseline State	Follow-up State	Change (Δ)	P-Value	Significance
Phase 1: Business Management						
1 General business planning	56	17%	100%	+83%	< 0.0001	***
2 Record keeping	56	20%	100%	+80%	< 0.0001	***
3 Financial management	56	0%	100%	+100%	< 0.0001	***
4 Customer relation	56	29%	52%	+23%	0.0145	**
5 Marketing skills	56	38%	57%	+19%	0.0648	Not significant
Phase 2: Leadership Skills						

6	Leading change	56	50%	100%	+50%	< 0.0001	***
7	Choosing effective followers and delegation of responsibility	56	41%	66%	+25%	0.0203	**
8	Building and managing interpersonal relationships within the group	56	48%	99%	+51%	< 0.0001	***
9	Showing self-awareness and self-confidence	56	53%	68%	+15%	0.2031	Not statistically sig
10	Motivating people	56	10%	95%	+85%	< 0.0001	***
11	Gaining consensus of group members	56	34%	55%	+21%	0.0340	**
12	Participative decision making	56	43%	69%	+26%	0.0182	**
13	Informing	56	18%	96%	+78%	< 0.0001	***

Source: Computed by authors using McNemar's test

Box 4.1: Significance level as related to Table 4.3

Significance Level	Specification
$p > 0.05$	not significant
$p \leq 0.05$ (5%)	significant
$p \leq 0.01$ (1%)	very significant
$p \leq 0.001$ (0.1%)	highly significant

5.0 Summary and Conclusions

This paper sought to measure and understand the early impact (8- months after the training intervention) to ascertain the direction, magnitude and statistical significance of the training intervention, if any. The results did not only indicate that the training intervention yielded the needed impact but also led to other unintended impacts of interest to the MCPs. The key finding is that, indeed, business management, leadership and training intervention are critical for the success of the businesses of MCPs. We conclude that for the PQ training to have its desired impact, it must be implemented in tandem with the business management and leadership training interventions.

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