

Possible Career Paths - Introduction

Dear Friends,

Let me begin this article, the very first one of 2024, with greetings to you, on behalf of myself and that of my family, but most especially from the community of Akrampa, about whom and for whom, these articles are written.

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR CHERISHED READERS. May the New Year bring the fulfilment of your expectations, and the realization of your wishes. May the Gracious God, the Father of our Lord and Savior, reach out to each and every one, to give you hope and prosper you in all of your endeavors. *'And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of His glory in Christ Jesus.'* (Philippians 4:19)

This article, which is the introduction to our next series, **Possible Career Paths**, is developed out of concern for the graduates of the Akrampa School, and their struggle to settle down in life, and be economically positioned to take care of their own lives. As in any culture or country, the level of one's education and experience make a tremendous impact on their ability to take care of themselves in adulthood. Throughout the country, Ghana's students (and adults) have varied levels of education, based on both the educational system and other socioeconomic factors.

Avenues of opportunity to enhance their own prospects of success and purpose in life exist in Ghana for graduates of each level of schooling, but are still dependent upon motivation of the student, family support, finances, and other factors.

As we all know, a child goes to school to get the requisite education and qualification, to survive in this *fast paced, highly competitive and technological world*, which is even now becoming more and more threatened with **AI (Artificial Intelligence)**. Currently, the Ghanaian school curricular for primary and secondary schools, is not tailored to bringing children up with the requisite capability and knowledge to survive in this highly technological world. Although this is through no fault of the Student/Learner, it does pose many challenges to their future.

As a consequence of the Ghanaian school systems lagging behind, there have been dire consequences to some of our young people and to our society. We find some primary and secondary school graduates who for any number of reasons were *unable* to continue on to the vocational schools, or college, are ending up on the streets. They find themselves in gangs and with other groups that fill the society with vices that harass peace loving citizens. This menace is a phenomenon described as *street children*. Among these young people, one will find drug addicts, armed robbers, sexual perverts, etc., which is really a huge challenge for the society and the government. Some of these young people are further challenged by lack of adequate knowledge of the English language at their limited education level.

For those students who are **unable to go beyond the 9th Grade**, vocational training is their main opportunity toward independence. Our school in Akrampa is Kindergarten through 9th Grade only. This is why we encourage our students to work hard toward the goal of further education, or a trade, that could be pursued.

The opportunity to get the requisite vocational training is offered by the government, with its oversight education development institution, called the Ministry of Education. It is through the facility known as the **National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI)**. This government department was set up in 1967 with the purpose of serving the manpower needs of factories that needed low skilled workers. For this reason, it is the government that has the main means to help young school *dropouts* to become well positioned in this hectic life. The government provides this service by providing a bursary (funding) so those who come for training are not tuned away or become deprived of getting help because they are financially incapable.

This facility (NVTI) offers young ones who are motivated the opportunity to receive the training needed to acquire apprenticeship skills and qualifications to become economically relevant. This program was developed into branches and specialized departments that offer training and certification in *trades* such as *masonry, mechanics (basic knowledge in repair of vehicles), cookery and homemaking arts*. At the end of the training, they are awarded with certificates. Stay tuned for the rest of this series discussing possible career paths, based on different levels of education.

■ Blessings - Pastor Ben