

Equipment Management And Use In Salons In Ghana: A Test Case Of Safety In Quality Services Delivery Of The Beauty Service Industry In The Upper West Region.

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Abstract: The beauty industry though common in Ghana and source of revenue and employment, attention has not been paid to it. As such there is no formal regulation, education and research on equipment use and management in the sector. This study focused on assessing how equipment use and management promotes safety and quality service provision in the beauty industry. The descriptive studies was adopted with the cross sectional design. A sample size of 211 and 200 respondents for clients and practitioners respectively was used for the data collection while the focus group discussion targeted Beauty Associations. With questionnaires, interviews schedules and focus group discussions, the SPSS was used to convert data into graphs, charts and tables for the analysis. The findings revealed low literacy among beauticians with only apprenticeship as mode of training. Basic safety equipment such as fire extinguishers, first aid boxes existed only in very few salons. The absence of record keeping, occurrence of multiple usage of disposables and cover cloths, non-functioning sterilizers and poor disinfection were common defects. Cuts, burns and breakages were also common with poor knowledge on control measures. Accidents, electric faults, carelessness, overuse and poor quality were causes of equipment damage. There were generally irregular (undesirable) occurrences in salon operations while facilities and equipment availability was poor. However, there was proper equipment storage, high salon cleanliness and Safety feeling among clients. This demands the creation of beauty institutes, prioritizing disinfection, maintenance culture, developing guidelines and stepping up awareness creation for salon operation in the region. Stakeholders needed to set up inspectorate division for monitoring and ensuring compliance with regulations and also promoting collaboration between beauticians and State-related organizations in the region while registering and licensing all salon operators and making prerequisites available for salon businesses.

Introduction

In every work environment, the safety of clients, staff and the general public is of crucial concern to the success of the enterprise. Generally, we seek beauty and constantly looking to improve what we have or give ourselves a whole new look. It is no wonder that hair and salon business remains one of the rapidly growing industries today. According to Service Annual Survey of the Bureau of Census (SASBC) as cited by Fulbright (2004), the U. S in 2001, experienced growth spurts in the hair, nail and skin care with a 78% increases in revenues from 2000. The UK also as indicated by Hair and Beauty Industry Authority (HABIA) (2002) witnessed similar growths in Hairdressing with approximately 36,000 salons comparing 28,590 from 2000. The revenues averaged £4b with about one-quarter of a million employees and about 79m client visits each year. Although most hairdressing salons tend to be small, independently owned outlets, large Salon chains are increasing in number. Despite these developments, hairdressing continues to have a reputation for being 'a simple, unskilled or low-skilled occupation that can be done by anybody' (Eayrs, 1993).

The industry primarily is driven by changing fashion and advances in technology which regularly introduces new hair styling, cutting and colouring techniques and equipment. The equipment for a salon depends largely on the services on offer. Some of the basic equipment required for establishing a hairdressing salon includes washing basin, styling chair, hair driers, supply trolleys and manicure sets and aprons which requires usage understanding. Others may include shampoo spray machines; facial bed, hair steaming machines, other body/skin care and such facilities as sterilizers, waste disposal systems, electricity, fire extinguishers, first aid materials and water supply systems. According to the Health and Safety Executive, a salon is as safe as the owner makes it. This calls for a license system and must also be followed with health inspectors to check everything was in working condition with a high standard for health and safety to make the facility a very safe place (HSE- <http://www.hse.gov.uk/>). According to Steven E. Wolf, Burns are injuries to tissue that result from heat, electricity, radiation, or chemicals. Burns are usually caused by heat (thermal burns) from equipment, such as fire, steam, tar, or hot liquids. Thus, the skin usually sustains most of the damage. Wolf further notes that more than 2 million people in the USA require treatment for burns each year and between 3,000 and 4,000 die of severe burns. These phenomena are not different from experiences in developing countries like Ghana where this research is being carried out.

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Statement of the Problem

The beauty services industry in Ghana is primarily traditional with modest gains towards its development. Though, predominantly hairdressing, many efforts are geared toward developing other services including beauty consultancy services, massage therapy, colouring of the hair among other services such as pedicure and manicure, facials, nail technology, spa services etc. The increasing

growth in the industry has also been accompanied by technological developments not only in equipment but also in cosmetic products and other hair and beauty services products. However, these developments have not been adequately accompanied by the needed changes in developing countries especially on regulatory frameworks, vocational and educational training and the evolution of requisite apprenticeship training in the discipline. Also,

Justification

The beauty services industry in Ghana though fast growing and gaining attention of many more individuals and entrepreneurs especially those of the south, many beauticians remain illiterate or semi-literate practitioners. The equally increasing numbers of unregulated beauty institutes and practices in the country, the seemingly unrecognized positions of the trade by academia and the educational system in Ghana, the largely non-formalized mode of training and absence of the public sector recognition with the many gray areas in terms of research work in the field locally, prompts the need for this investigation. As against the professional requirement of the sector, the potential health dangers and delicate nature of the trade coupled with the fast changes and growth in technology in the sector worldwide and the increasing desire to beautify oneself in modern society require special attention for the beauty trade to be reconsidered and repositioned in our daily endeavours. In the face of all these, the industry cannot be left unattended to. It is for these reasons that this research sought to assess equipment use and management in the beauty trade in the Upper West Region.

Objectives of the Study

Broad objective:

To assess how equipment use and management promote quality service provision and prevention of infections in Beauty industry in Upper West Region.

Specific Objectives:

1. To determine the effects of the mode of training on equipment use in the Upper West Region
2. To find out the quality of equipment in use by salon operators in the upper west region
3. To Assess whether equipment are sterilized or disinfected in beauty salon operations
4. To find out the availability of basic facilities in salons in the region

Research Questions

1. How does the mode of training in the beauty business affect equipment use?
2. Do types of beauty services availability influence equipment use in the salon?
3. How do beauticians use and care for tools in salons in Upper West Region?
4. Do beauticians sterilize or disinfect their tools?
5. What are the causes for occurrence of irregularities?
6. Are salons in Upper West Region equipped with basic facilities?

many private institutions are springing up and several efforts are being made to train educated youth in the beauty trade, are mostly concentrated in the south. Also the requisite qualification to professionalize the industry cannot easily be acquired locally. This therefore requires numerous efforts including investigations in the trade to ensure adequate understanding of the sector which has the potentials of contributing to the economy of Ghana.

Methodology

The research was basically descriptive studies and employed the cross sectional design for the investigation. A cross-section of salon operators in eight districts was sampled for the investigation using the simple random sampling.

Data Collection Technique and Tools:

The research employed a mix of tools and techniques including observation, focus group discussions, structured questionnaire and the interview guide. The salon operators and apprentices responded to questions from structured questionnaire and the interview guide while alongside, researchers observed the practices and behaviours of clients, service providers and the environment.

- The interview – the interview guide/structured questionnaire were prepared and guided interviewers in their interaction and information retrieval from respondents. This provided a pattern for salon respondents who responded to same questions to unearth the exact nature of salon operation in the Upper West Region.
- Observation – a non-participant observation was carried out while the interview was in progress. Particular interest was focused on the clients' behaviour at the salon, salon operator's observance of work ethics, conduct and the environment of operation with particular interest in clients care, safety measures and other disturbances.
- Focus group discussions – this was focused on the associations of various salon operators. Thorough discussions on the research concerns were conducted in three districts comprising Sisala East, Wa Municipal and the Jirapa Districts.

The information from the association of salon operators were recorded and transcribed for the purpose of the analysis.

Sampling:

The study adopted a variety of sampling methods for the investigation. The simple random sampling was used to select salons in each locality while the purposive sampling targeted individual clients. In all, a representative sample size of 200 and 211 respondents were considered for both practitioners and clients respectively for all the districts for the investigation.

- A sample size for the salon operators was determined by contacting the various District Assemblies, National Association of Beauticians and hairdressers (NABH), GHABA (Ghana

Beauticians Association) and other hairdressers associations to know the total number of salon operators in each district. This became very difficult for some areas and the snowball was used to identify the total salon operators in some areas.

- For the clients, it was assumed that at least every individual visits the salon in one's life time either for a hair shape or dressing.

Results and Discussions

Socio-Demographic Trends of Respondents

The age range for majority (93.8% and 100%) of the beauticians' was between eighteen and thirty five for both salon 'masters' and apprentices respectively and that of clients between ten to fifty years. The youthful nature in this research supports findings by Druker, J., Stanworth, C. and White, G. (2003) that the sector is characterized by a high proportion of young people between the ages of fifteen to thirty four. Also the sex composition favoured the female sex for both clients (66.8%) and practitioners (79.05%). The literacy status of the practitioners is highest for illiterate (52.75%) and early school leavers (46.9%) that could probably have influence in the use of equipment in the salon business. The client respondents also portrayed a mix of illiterate and varying literacy from primary to tertiary.

Table 1 Background of Respondents

Variable	Practitioners		% of Clients N = 211
	% of Owner (master) N = 160	% of Apprentice N = 40	
Sex			
Male	41.9	0.0	33.2
Female	58.1	100.0	66.8
Age (years)			
Below 18	1.2	0.0	28.0
18 – 35	93.8	100.0	68.7
35 and above	5.0	0.0	3.3
Education level			
No formal education	10.5	95.0	22.3
Primary	12.5	5.0	10.4
JHS	44.4	0.0	21.3
SSS	31.3	0.0	21.8
Tertiary	1.3	0.0	24.2
Marital status			
Single	0.0	68.1	
Married	95.0	31.9	
Divorced	5.0	0.0	

source: MOHAMMED IMORO, 2010

Table 1 displays the demographic distribution of respondents for the study. The respondents were made up of 160 owners of salons, 40 apprentices and 211 clients.

Mode of Training on Equipment use and Availability

The knowledge source of the respondents showed a 91.5% for apprenticeship from their 'masters' while 8.5% indicated natural. This may be supportive of the commonness of skill gaps across all sectors of the industry in the findings by HABIA in many fronts and may probably affect equipment use and management. About 91% of the practitioners learnt the trade within their own environs and could be suggestive of a common pattern of equipment use. The 24.5% response for refresher training availability in **fig. 6** is also reflective of the modes of learning and training of the beauty trade in the region. This portrays a high gap for professional growth for the beauty profession within the region. Besides, access to training that could also improve management and use of equipment in the profession was lacking. However, majority (87.5%) (**fig. 6**) of the respondents being in favour of the institution of both

refresher and regular training programmes were positive indications of better training possibilities for the beauty trade and the possibility of enhancing efficient equipment management. The professional skill gap which coincides with HABIA's findings of varied skill gaps in the industry is accentuated by the complete absence of formal training openings in the region that could affect equipment use.

Availability of Beauty Services and Types

The study revealed that hairdressing runs alongside other services except male hair cutting and thus formed the major beauty services available in the region. Other services such as massage, skin care, hair colouring, tattooing, bleaching among others were not available in all salons of practicing respondents. This may have influence on the type of equipment use which may in turn affect the broader service availability. Again the types of services clients' accessed

confirmed the limitation of beauty service availability to hairdressing (49.6%) and barbering (35.4%). The limited beauty services result from the absence of any structured form of training available to beauticians and the availability, access, knowledge and use of equipment in the region. The low level of varied beauty services know-how of

practitioners and the unavailability and inaccessibility of refresher programmes to enhance the knowledge of practitioners and apprentices in the trade were contributory factors to the limited beauty services in the region. Hence, the limited knowledge base could adversely affect equipment use and management.

Fig. 1 Types of Beauty Services on Offer

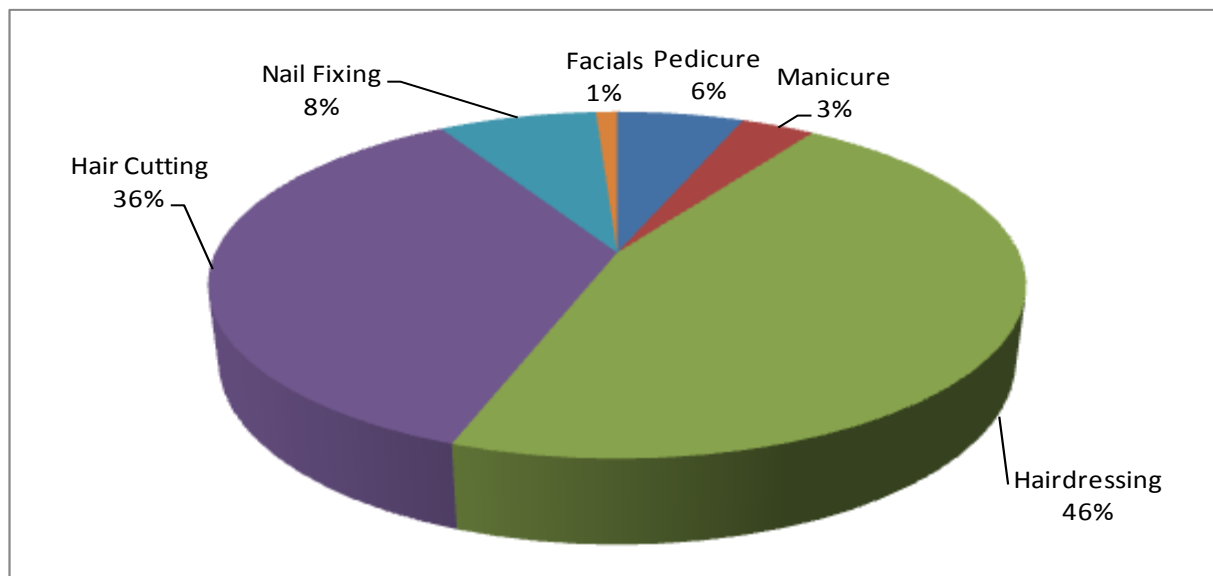


Fig 1: Kinds of Beauty Services Available
source: MOHAMMED IMORO, 2010

Fig 1 shows the types of beauty services commonly rendered or available in the region as pedicure (6%), manicure (3.0%), barbering (36%), nail fixing (8%), facials (1%) and hairdressing (46%).

Table 2: Types of Beauty Services Clients' Access

Types of services accessed	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Hairdressing	122	49.6
Barbering/hair cutting	87	35.4
Facials	3	1.2
Manicure	6	2.4
Pedicure	11	4.5
Nail fixing	17	6.9
Others	-	0.0
Totals	246	100

source: MOHAMMED IMORO, 2010

Table 2. showing client access pattern of beauty services in the region with responses of 49.6%, 35.4%, 1.2, 2.4, 4.5, 6.9 respectively for hairdressing, barbering, facial, manicure and nail fixing

Equipment Quality, Use and Care in Beauty Salon Business

Generally, about 77.5% of equipment in the salon businesses was in good shape. However, about 62% of respondents ever experienced equipment damages in their operations. These damages were generally attributed to overuse (13.7%), accidents (35.5%), carelessness (10.5%), electrical faults (9.7%) and poor quality (12.9%) with 17.7% unable to identify causal agents. This exhibits a high level poor equipment management in beauty business operation in the region. The evidence of poor use of tools was also exposed with the high multiple usage (57.5%) of disposables in the operation. This could result in poor

health promotion behaviours in the practice of beauty business. The findings also implied that all was not well with management of tools in the salon following a 22.5% intimation of poor condition of tools and a 12.9% for poor quality from practitioners' responses. Among the factors observed to be affecting equipment condition at work place included attitudes, ethics, observance of safety precautions and skill level. Though there existed high level of proper tools keeping in **fig 2**, the incidence of keeping tools anywhere (3%) might also have contributed to the incidence of inappropriate care for tools in the salons. Thus this condition calls for the development and adoption of salon safety guidelines as applicable in many developed

professional beauty and hairdressing economies. The current state of equipment management and use may also be caused by limited knowledge and skill shortage and absence of any formal training in the operations of salons in the region. This implied that the safety of some clients may not be guaranteed. The predisposing factors for this state in

salon operations may be due to the low level of practitioners' education, poor salon management skills and non observance of work ethics within the salon businesses. Table 3 and Fig 2 display responses on tools quality and care by practitioners in salons and clients observance and awareness of these practices in the salon.

Table 3: Quality of Equipment Used by the Salon Operators

Variable	Frequency (N = 200)	Percentage (%)
Equipment		
In good shape	155	77.5
In bad shape	45	22.5
Usage of disposables		
One per client	85	42.5
One per two clients	54	27.0
One per three clients	10	5.0
Daily	25	12.5
Weekly	26	13.0
Damaged equipment	124	62.0
Causes of equipment damaged	(n=124)	
Overuse	17	13.7
Accidents	44	35.5
Carelessness	13	10.5
Electric faults	12	9.7
Poor quality	16	12.9
Inability to identify cause	22	17.7

source: MOHAMMED IMORO, 2010

Table 3. shows equipment quality , disposable usage and equipment condition and causes of damages in the salon operations with 77.5% being in good shape; multiple usage of about 57.5; 62% experienced damages with varying causes of overuse, accidents, carelessness electric faults and poor quality

Storage and Care of Tools in Salon

Grouping tools by function and keeping them in containers (44.5%), in sterilizers (13.5%), on tables (22.5%), and combination of places (16%) showed how respondents kept tools at the right place in line with work place ethics. The proper keeping and maintenance of tools including general settings in the salon could probably boost clients attraction and retention in the business; what Egyar describes as the physical environment as a means of attracting customers (Table 4 and Fig. 2 below). This generally promotes safety, hygiene and sanitation. The high thorough cleaning (58%) and the use of drying (18%), sterilizing(12.5%), and boiling (2.5%), for care of tools before use or rendering a service as part of ways of handling tools before use (Table 4) was suggestive of high adherence to good work place ethics which is a precursor to safety in the salon. Again, returning tools to their designated places which included responses as per **fig. 2** below portrayed a high sense of proper care for tools in the salon. However, the absence of record keeping for tools exposes defects in the proper care for tools in beauty salon operations in the region.

Fig 2: Care of Tools in Salons

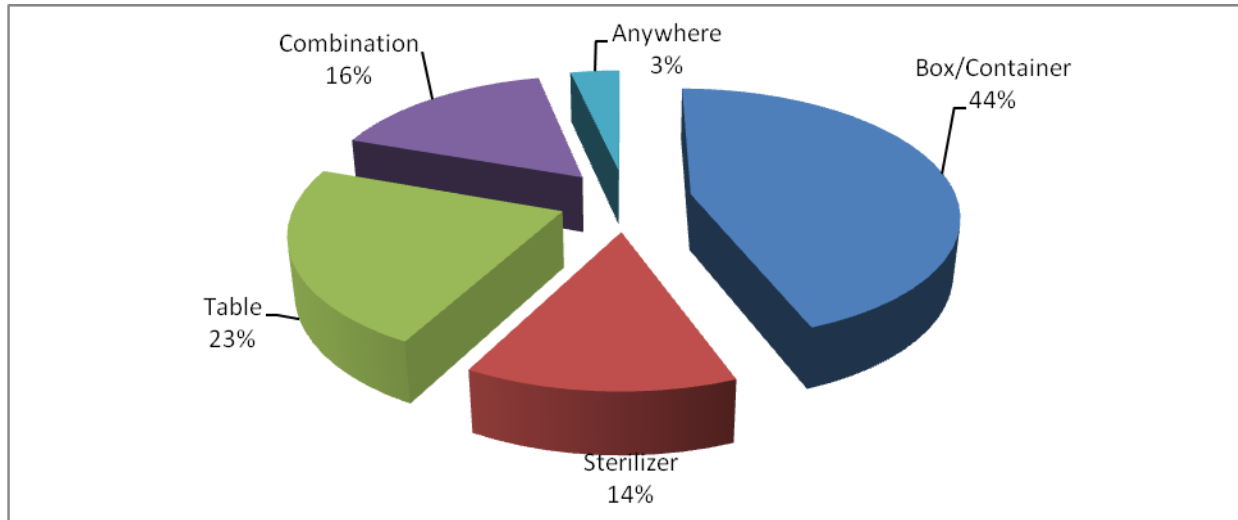


Fig 2 indicates that beauticians kept their tools in boxes (44%), sterilizer (14%), on tables (23%), anywhere (3%) and a combination of these taking 16%.

Disinfection and Sanitizing Salon Equipment: Treatment and Safety of Tools

The seventy seven percent (77.7%) of the client respondents' awareness of disinfections in the salon were indications of high health consciousness. This was shown by the responses of the clients' awareness of practitioners' disinfection of tools before use. However, 27.5% disclosure of non-disinfection of tools before use and the 22.3% clients' non-awareness may imply serious health risk to a section of the society. Further, the disclosure of non-functioning sterilizers in salons also showed a high level defects in equipment use and management in the

profession (FGD). This may require special attention and responsibility for practitioners and clients alike to ensure that tools were disinfected before and after rendering services. Again, the high level of knowledge and awareness about types of disinfectants used (fig 4) as Spirit (15.2%), Sterilizer (2.8%), Dettol (7.1%), parasol (3.3%) and water (11.8%) with a mix of two or more of these items (37%) for equipment and the environment portrays a high sense of good management of equipment. This meant that practitioners in the beauty industry observed good sanitation, safety and hygiene practices in the Upper West Region.

Fig. 3 Equipment Disinfection and Awareness in Salon

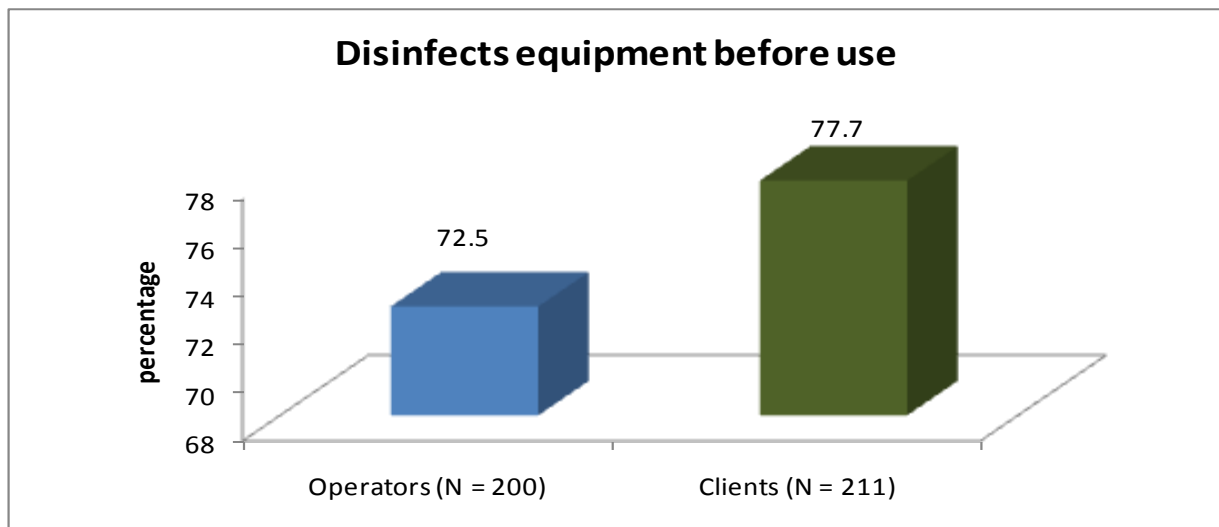


Fig 3: Disinfection of Tools before Use
source: MOHAMMED IMORO, 2010

Fig 3 reveals disinfection and its awareness within the beauty trade which indicates 72.5% beauticians disinfecting tools before use with 77.7% clients been aware of tools disinfection by practitioners.

Fig. 4: types of disinfectants and Awareness in Salon Operations

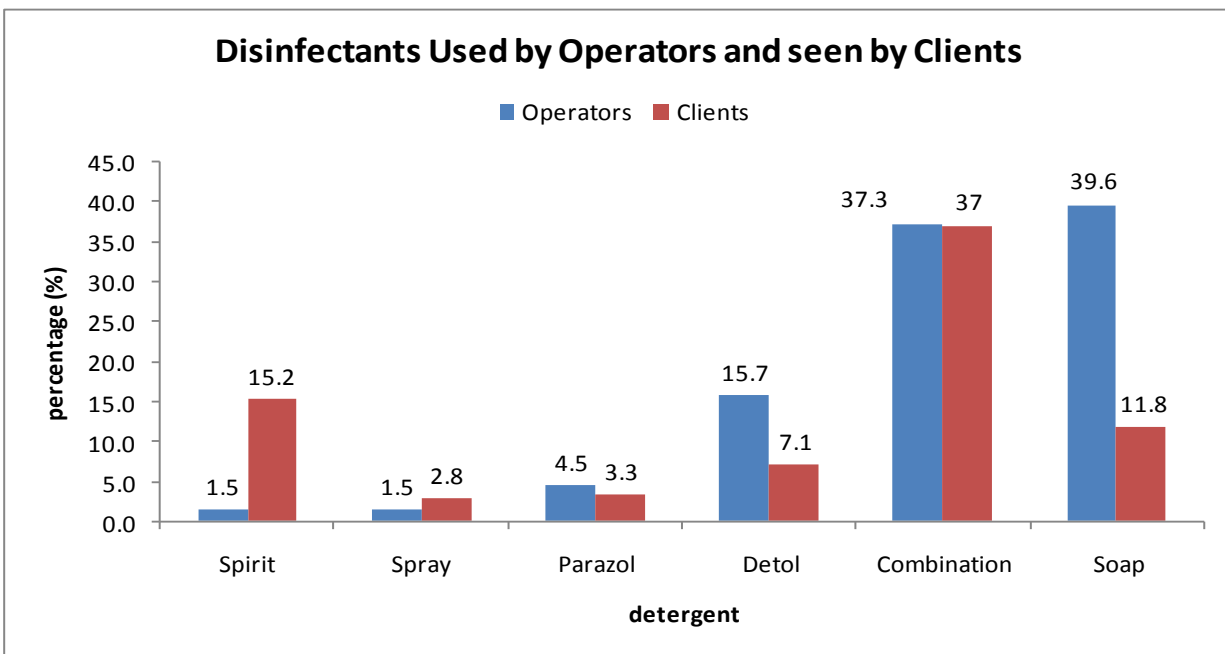


Fig 4 Salon care practices and cleanliness
source: MOHAMMED IMORO, 2010

Fig 4 above shows types of disinfectants used and being aware by beauticians and clients respectively as 1.5%-15.2%, 1.5%-2.8%, 4.5%-3.3%, 15.7%-7.1%, 37.3%-37%, and 39.6%-11.8% for spirit, spray, parasol, dettol, combination and soap correspondingly.

Table 4: Care of Tools

Variable	Frequency (N = 200)	Percentage (%)
Care of equipment before use		
Cleaning	116	58.0
Boiling	5	2.5
Sterilized	25	12.5
Drying	36	18.0
Nothing	18	9.0
Care of equipment after use		
Box	50	25.0
Sterilizer	11	5.5
On a table	35	17.5
In a basket	20	10.0
In a container	7	3.5
On the shelves	9	4.5
In a bag	4	2.0
Anywhere	64	32.0

Table 4 showing the before and after user care of tools
source: MOHAMMED IMORO, 2010

Table 4 portrays the care of tools before use as cleaning, boiling, sterilizing, drying and doing nothing recorded 58%, 2.5%, 12.5%, 18%, and 9% respectively. The after use care also recorded 25%, 5.5%, 17.5%, 10%, 3.55, 4.5%, 2% and 32% for box, sterilizer, table, basket, container, shelves, bag and anywhere respectively.

Client Safety Assurance

The high (83.4%) rate of client safety feeling in service access demonstrated safety assurance in the operation of salons in the region. However, the 24.2% experiences of infection and reactions after service access may be indication of irregularities within the salon business. This could partly be attributed to the incidence of non-disinfected tools.

Table 6 Clients Safety at Saloons

Variables	Frequency N = 211	Percentage (%)
Satisfaction with reception		
Satisfied	191	90.5
Not satisfied	17	8.1
Indifference	3	1.4
Client Safety feeling in salons		
Feels safe at the saloon	176	83.4
Experienced infection or reaction after service	51	24.2

Table 6 showing clients receptions and safety satisfaction

MOHAMMED IMORO, 2010

Occurrence of Irregularities in Salon Operations

The incidence of chemical effects (1.5%), disease infection (3%), electricity shocks (4.5%), fire outbreaks (5.5%), breakages (20%), burns (28.5%) and cuts (34%) during rendering and accessing services may partially have relationship with equipment use and maintenance and were probably contributory factors towards irregularities and possible occurrence of disease infection and transmission in the region. Other incidence such as the existence of usage of non-sterilized tools among others could possibly have caused the incidence of disease transmission (fig. 9). These occurrences in the salon were intolerable conditions in the beauty profession; hence the need for extra safety measures to ensure reduction in the incidence of cuts, burns, breakages, disease infection among others. This required public awareness creation or education, and the need for the promulgation of bye-laws by appropriate state agencies for the operation of salon businesses and inspection of salon facilities in accordance with regulations so established. The development of salon safety guidelines and regulatory frameworks for the operation of all salons

and minimum equipment and facilities maintenance within the beauty business in the region is crucial for both safety and risk reduction in professional beauty practices.

Possible Control measures for irregularities

Control measures for irregular occurrences, depending on type of irregularity to include first aid, first aids and hospital, cautious at work, replacement, inappropriate first aids applications, precautionary methods, apologies on occurrence and doing nothing, showed varied ways of Practitioners view point of mitigation (Table 8). The doing nothing component (3%) and the inappropriate first aid methods (20.5%) suggested by practitioners would not promote good health practices in the salon business. This requires interventions from the Food and Drugs Board, District Assemblies, Ghana Red Cross Society, Ghana National Fire Service, Volta River Authority and the Ghana Health Service on awareness creation for the general public on the strategies for reduction or elimination of irregular occurrences in salons.

Fig. 9 Irregular Occurrences in the Operations of Beauty Salons

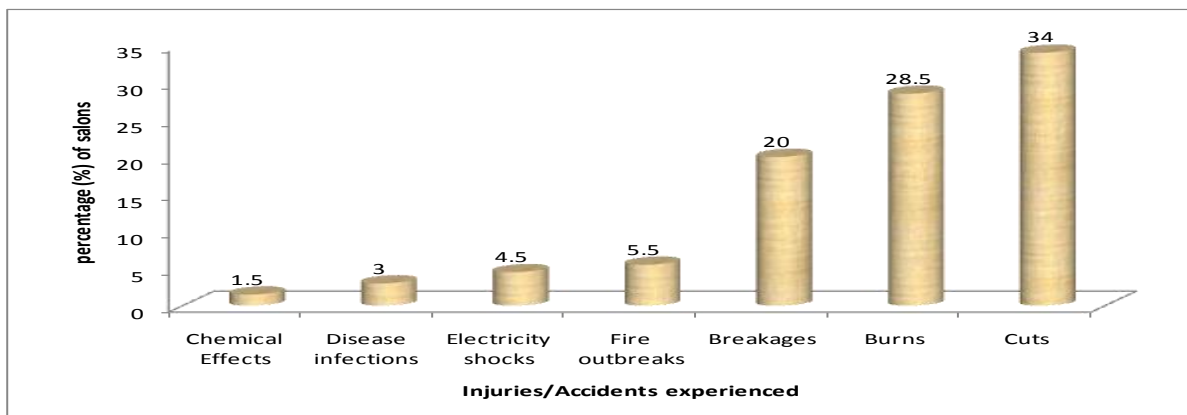


Fig 9 Incidence of irregularities at Saloons (N = 200)

source: MOHAMMED IMORO, 2010

Fig 9 shows salon irregularities recordings for chemical effects (1.5%), disease infection (3%), electricity shocks (4.5%), fire outbreaks (5.5%), breakages (20%), burns (28.5%) and cuts (34%).

Table 8: General Measures to Control Irregularities

Would be Undertaken Actions	Frequency	Percent (%)
First Aid	22	11
First Aid + Hospital	42	21
Cautious at Work	20	10
Replacement	7	3.5
Inappropriate First Aid	41	20.5
Precautions- sterilize	26	13
Apologies	3	1.5
Nothing	6	3

Table 8: Approaches for correction of irregularity occurrences

source: MOHAMMED IMORO, 2010

Facilities and Equipment Availability for Smooth Operation and Safety in Salons

The availability of electricity (73.9%), disposal facility (86.3%) and water supply (26.1%) in general and the sterilizer (80.6%), fire extinguisher (2.8%) and first aid box (24.2%) in particular imply that facilities such as water supply, fire extinguisher, and first aids have not been given prior attention though these are vital for safety and hygiene

condition and for abating possible outbreak of disasters within the salon environment. The high existence of other facilities such as electricity, disposal systems and sterilizer on the other hand was indicative of possible smooth operation of salon businesses and may promote client safety assurance in the salon. However, the FGD revelation of non-functioning sterilizers reduced the positive effect of safety efforts in the salon operations in the region.

Fig. 6: Basic Equipment and Facilities Availability in Beauty Salons

Fig 6 showing facility availability in salons

source: MOHAMMED IMORO, 2010

Figure 6 reveals facility availability in salons with recordings of electricity supply (73.9%), water supply (26.1%), and disposable facility (86.3%), sterilizer (80.6%) fire extinguisher (2.8%) and first aid box (24.2%).

Conclusions:

Socio-demographics trends of respondents

- Majority of Beauticians in the Upper West Region are within the active age group of eighteen to thirty five years range of whom majority were female. There was generally poor literacy among beauticians in the region.

Mode of Training on Equipment Use in the Upper West

- The beauty industry is fast growing in the Upper West Region within the past one decade and

employs mainly apprenticeship as the mode of training.

- The complete absence of any form of refresher and regular training programmes for practitioners in the region accounted for non-specific training in equipment use and management in the salon.

Beauty Services Availability

- Generally, beauticians' knowledge of beauty services was very limited. The services rendered in the region were equally limited to only hairdressing and barbering with minor presence of nail fixing, manicure, pedicure and facials. This contributed to

the type of equipment use in the beauty salon business.

sterilizers in the operations of beauty salons in the region need to be stepped up.

Care, Use and Quality of Equipment in Beauty Salons in Upper West

- The incidence of equipment damage was generally the cause of accidents, overuse, carelessness, poor quality and occasional electrical faults.
- Multiple usage of disposables was found prevalent in salon operations in the region hence total safety for beauticians and clients could not be guaranteed.
- Equipment storage was found to be highly organized in the salon operations though the absence of record keeping on tools was a defect.
- Sanitizing tools was generally poor among practitioners as disinfection was low with some disclosure of non-functioning sterilizer in salons.
- The commonly used disinfectants included spirit, dettol, parasol and sometimes shampoo and sterilizers.
- There was generally high salon care practices (cleanliness) including equipment among salon operations in the Upper West Region

Occurrence of Irregularities

- Cuts, burns and breakages associated with equipment use were most common in salon operations in the Upper West Region. Other occurrences included fire outbreaks, electric shocks, disease infections and chemical effects.
- Knowledge on control measures were potentially inadequate and needed intervention.

Knowledge (skills) and capacity issues

- There was complete absence of refresher training for beauticians in the region. What pertained was annual occasional conference for executives where refresher packages were inclusive. This affected equipment care and usage in most salon operations because the executives did not transfer the knowledge acquired to other operators.
- The call for the institution of training packages was generally high among the beauty practitioners in the region and this could have positive impact on equipment use and management in the salons.

Basic facilities availability in salons

- The low existence of basic facilities such as fire extinguisher and first aid box for preventive and first hand care did not auger well for safety in the use and management of equipment.
- The insufficiency of water supply systems among salon operations affected the use of treated water as a means of sanitizing equipment.
- The high presence of electricity was however fertile grounds for the establishment of modern salon enterprises with enhanced usage of equipment in the salon.
- The availability of non-functioning sterilizers in most salons posed significant health threats. Efforts towards ensuring the use of functioning

Recommendations:

The Regional Coordinating Council, Municipal / District Assemblies, the Cosmetology Department of Wa Polytechnic and All Stakeholders, Other Agencies / Development Partners should help in:

- Creating and developing beauty training institutes for refresher, short course and diploma course with integrated lessons in equipment use, management, maintenance and safety in salons. This would help expand types of services on offer through developing course contents and programmes in all aspects of the beauty therapy and cosmetology industry and developing outreach programmes to reach all beauticians in the region.
- Reducing risk factors and equipment damage in salon operation through awareness creation, refresher training packages and short courses modules as well as the developing and promoting work place safety precautionary activities and ethical guidelines for use by all practitioners in the beauty industry.
- Develop guidelines documents for use by all salon operators and for all salon equipment and ensuring inspection and compliance through supervisory roles by District Assemblies in the various districts.
- Establishing inspectorate division in the various assemblies to monitor, ensure the availability of basic facilities and ensuring compliance to all guidelines and regulations for salon operation in the region.
- The district assemblies to initiate and coordinate collaboration between beauticians and all stakeholders including state related organizations to enhance professionalism and efficiency in salon operation and management in the region. Infusion of the culture of disinfection and salon management and record keeping practices in salon operations in the region could be handled by collaborative works of the Environmental Health Division of the District Assemblies, the Food and Drugs Board, the Ghana Standards Board and the District Health Directorates.
- The beautician associations should encourage the training of its members on effective and efficient use and management of equipment. Specific training on equipment use and management should be encouraged and instituted biennially for all practicing beauticians in the region.
- Micro-credit schemes be instituted and made available to beauticians for the purchase of equipment on flexible repayment schedule. This would enhance expanded services in the industry.

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