

Views of Stakeholders on Career Guidance Services Provided to Pupils with Hearing Impairment at Nsonta Secondary School in Kasama District, Zambia

by

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Abstract

The study sought to establish views of stakeholders on career guidance services provided to pupils with hearing impairment at Nsonta Secondary school in Kasama district of Zambia. The study was guided by the following study objectives: to explore views of stakeholders on how career guidance was being provided to pupils with hearing impairment and to describe teachers' ability to communicate in sign language during career guidance activities at Nsonta secondary school. The study was qualitative in nature and used a case study design. Interview guides were used on a sample of 25 pupils with hearing impairment, two career guidance teachers and six subject teachers. The sample was selected using purposive sampling techniques while analysis of data was done thematically. The study revealed that: career guidance services were mostly provided through one on one, in groups and industrial education visits by the career guidance teachers and the subject teachers. It was also revealed that the career guidance teachers dealing with pupils were knowledgeable in sign language, and other three of the subject teachers were not. The study recommended that, teachers needed adequate knowledge and skills in sign language through Continuing Professional Development (CPDs) programs to communicate well with pupils with hearing impairment.

Keywords: *career guidance, hearing impairment, stakeholder*

Background

The provision of career guidance and counseling in Zambia to pupils has been going on since 1970 when the Ministry of Education directed its introduction in schools. The aim of introducing guidance and counselling into the school system was to eliminate overwhelming ignorance in pupils about their career choices and personality maladjustment. Based on these and more, career guidance teachers were appointed to take the responsibilities in sensitizing pupils on the needs for appropriate career choice (MoE, 2001). It has been revealed that career guidance is traditionally provided through personal interviews where a pupil and the career guidance teacher sit together and have a dialogue and sometimes supported with psychometric testing as part of the process of offering guidance for a career decision. This way of providing career guidance has been proven to be expensive when providing to a large group especially in a situation of limited trained guidance teachers (OCED, 2004). Sizable amount of studies suggests that career guidance should not be left only to career guidance teachers and that all teachers must take up active roles in the provision of the service. Debono (2007) in Malta and GRZ (2011) in Zambia affirms that career guidance must be provided by the career department and the subject teachers. All teachers take up active roles in providing the service. Although provision of career guidance has been going on in secondary schools for quite a while, it still encounters a number of challenges arising from several factors ranging from non-availability of resource, ill preparation of career teachers to poor cooperation among pupils and teachers (Makumba, 2013). Banda (2016), Bbuku (2017), Lambwe (2017), and Chikopela et al, (2019) uncovered that career guidance was not provided to expectations because it faced numerous hurdles which include lack of trained personnel.

For these conditions mentioned, Alkahtani (2016) revealed that pupils with Hearing Impairment (HI) were left unprepared for life after secondary school. Luft and Huff (2011) revealed that students had substantial transition competence deficits and that

they did not reach the recommended competence levels as they were leaving secondary school. This problem was linked to teacher preparedness in implementing transition services for pupils with hearing impairment (Alkahtani, 2016; Kigotho, 2016). Teaching of pupils with HI was found to have failed in part as teachers were not able to meet the demands of modifying and delivering an appropriate mode of teaching pupils with hearing impairment. Additionally, Ndhlovu, (2007) reported that pupils with hearing and visual impairments did not adequately access guidance and counseling in schools due to the fact that most guidance teachers did not have skills in sign language and Braille. Realizing that studies in Zambia by Ndhlovu (2007), Ndhlovu (2009), Lambwe (2017) and Chikopela et al, (2019) revealed that most teachers in Zambia's schools did not have skills in sign language and training in guidance and counselling, it became imperative to investigate views of stakeholders regarding the provision career guidance to pupils with hearing impairment.

Today, in Zambia like other countries such as Japan and Malta, career guidance is integrated within the academic curriculum and is required to be provided by all teachers instead of only guidance teachers (MoESVT, 2013); Debono et al (2007). Accordingly, Hooley (2017) stressed that subject teachers should be encouraged to bring careers content into the curriculum to bring the subject to life, making connections between classroom learning and young people's aspirations. For example, teachers teaching learners how to write business letters as part of English curriculum. In addition, the study conducted by Biller et al (1991) asserts that career guidance for handicapped learners is provided by first assessing the vocational aptitudes of the learners followed by considering the interest and the values of that particular learner. The study revealed that programs regarding career guidance for the handicapped learners should be designed as a matching model by ascertaining what best fits the learners and in what occupation can they function well.

According to Education Act 2011 and Career Guidance Guidelines of 2014, "career guidance is an essential component

of school curriculum and general learner's welfare at all levels of the education and training" (MoESVT, 2013). However, with the presence of guidance teachers who have no skills in Sign language and training in career guidance (Ndhlovu, 2007; Ndhlovu, 2009; Ndhlovu, 2015; and Chikopela et al, 2019), it is not clear how stakeholders view the career guidance services provided to learners with hearing impairment at Nsonta secondary school in Kasama district of Zambia. This development creates a knowledge gap which the study sought to fill up.

The study was guided by the Social Cognitive Career Theory which explains the process through which people form interest, make choices and achieve varying levels of success in education and occupational pursuits (Lent, Brown and Hackett, 1994). The theory is grounded from Albert Bandura's general social cognitive theory, an influential theory of cognitive and motivational processes that has been extended to the study of many areas of psychosocial functioning, such as academic performance, health behavior, and organizational development.

This theory is aimed at explaining three interrelated aspects of career development. These are: how basic academic and career interests develop; how educational and career choices are made; and how academic and career success is obtained. Also, the theory incorporates a variety of concepts such as interests, abilities, values, environmental factors. These concepts appear in a number of career theories and have been found to affect career development. It is from these concepts that the study is hankered by this theory. For a career guidance service to be deemed relevant to the hearing impaired students, the providers must tailor it to the extent that it establishes the learners' interests, ability, and values as they focus on the nature of the career a learner may enter into. Career guidance teachers should help learners identify, clarify and develop appropriate career goals by exposing them to different careers. This is in line with Holland's theory on career choice who stressed that people who choose to work in an environment similar to their personality type are more successful and satisfied.

Furthermore, SCCT is linked to three variables which

comprise self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations, and goals. These variables serve as the basic building blocks of Social Cognitive Career Theory according to Lent, Brown and Hackett (2000). According to Betz and Hackett (1981) self-efficacy refers to an individual's personal beliefs about his or her capabilities to perform particular behaviors or courses of action. The more a learner achieves a performed task the higher the self-efficacy while the less they are successful the lower the self-efficacy. From the self-efficacy interests are born. People vary in their self-efficacy regarding the behaviors required in different occupational domains. For example, one person might feel very confident in being able to accomplish tasks for successful entry into, and performance in, scientific fields but feel much less confident about his or her abilities in social or enterprising fields, such as sales. SCCT assumes that people are likely to become interested in, choose to pursue, and perform better at activities at which they have strong self-efficacy beliefs, as long as they also have necessary skills and environmental supports to pursue these activities (Betz and Hackett, 1981). It is from this sizable amount of studies that career guidance provided to the learners with hearing impairment shall be rendered relevant to them.

Thus, this theory has been used in this research as it marries well with the research at hand in exploring the relevance of career guidance services provided to pupils with hearing impairment. The theory was used as a yardstick to determine whether or not the career guidance provided to the learners with hearing impairment was relevant by establishing whether the service regarded the interests and abilities as a process of learners to arrive a career choice.

Cardinal to Social Cognitive Career Theory, and by means making it more relevant to the current study are its three basic interrelated concepts of career development which are; how interests develop, how career choices are made and how academic and career success is obtained.

Objectives of the study

- (i). To explore views of stakeholders on how career guidance was being provided to learners with hearing impairment at Nsonta secondary school.
- (ii). To describe teachers' ability to communicate in sign language during career guidance activities at Nsonta secondary school.

Methodology

Research Design

This was a qualitative study, employing a case study research design. This was suitable for learning more about a little known or poorly understood state on stakeholders' views on career guidance services for the hearing impaired pupils. Case studies often provide an opportunity for researchers to develop insights into basic aspects of human behaviour. This study used this design over other designs to enable the researchers obtain in depth information which could be used to facilitate the generalization of findings to the larger population.

Study population

The study targeted career guidance teachers, subject teachers as stakeholders that delivered the services and the pupils with hearing impairment as recipients of career guidance services at Nsonta secondary school.

Sample size and Sampling technique

The total sample of participants in this study was 33 respondents, broken down as follows: 25 pupils with hearing impairment two career guidance teachers and six subject teachers. This sample was drawn from one school. The school has two career guidance teachers who all took part in the study. All the pupils with hearing impairment were drawn from the senior grades; grade eleven and twelve as the school gave higher attention to pupils about to leave

the institution. Therefore, the learners in the senior grades were believed to be in a better position to provide the lived experience on the relevance of career guidance to learners with hearing impairment. All the participants in the study were purposively selected.

Research Instruments

Interview guides were used to generate data from guidance teachers, subject teachers and pupils. These were semi structured in nature which had a few guiding questions. The guiding questions made it possible to obtain the data required to meet the specific objectives of the study.

Data Analysis

The analysis of data was done through thematic analysis by identifying common themes from the participants. Data was arranged into phrases or sentences which reflected a single, specific thought and these phrases or sentences were further grouped into categories that reflected the various aspects of meanings.

Findings

Provision of career guidance to pupils with hearing impairment Results revealed that career guidance is provided by the career guidance teachers who are assisted by the subject teachers. Interviews with the participants revealed that career guidance is provided in groups, on one-on-one and through industrial education visits. Regarding group sessions, the service was provided to the pupils in groups such as in classes as per grade, groups which were organized by the teachers and the career guidance teachers and sometimes it was provided to all the pupils with hearing impairment at a goal in the biggest room of the school which is the dining hall. The following were the statements coming from the pupils succeeding the provision of career guidance in groups. “Pupil 1 (P1)” explained that career guidance was provided in a big group where all grades of pupils with Hearing impairment were present and given guidance at the same time. The following

was stated by the pupil: *Sometimes career guidance is given to us in one big group when the guidance teacher combines us with all the pupils with hearing impairment from grade eight to grade twelve.*

“P10” one of the male pupils also affirmed that the service is offered to them in classes per grade. It was discovered that this way of providing career guidance helped the pupils share information about careers and at the same time enabled the pupils seek clarification from the facilitators (guidance teacher or subject teachers).

Six out of the seven subject teachers who participated in the study also mentioned that the services were delivered through the three means above. “Subject Teacher 1 (SBT1)” stated: *It is provided by the guidance and counselling department. But since they are only the two of them in the department, we as teachers assist so that all the pupils are catered for.*

Another teacher “SBT2” said:

The career guidance teachers and a few selected subject teachers go around classes especially in the morning before the classes start. We go to different grades of the pupils on different days that we have shared amongst ourselves and provide career guidance.

Interviews with the guidance teachers furthermore revealed that the reason for providing career guidance in different places such as dining hall depended on the topics being taught. Topics that were intended for all the students demanded for a bigger venue which at the school was the dining hall. “Guidance Teacher (GT1)” had this to say:

Some topics such as comprehensive sexuality are meant for all the learners with hearing impairment because as adolescent learners with hearing impairment they are more likely to engage in unsafe sex which could hold back their career endeavours. Therefore, such topics are provided in the dining hall.

Regarding industrial educational tours, all six teachers and guidance teachers exposed that industrial visits helped to deliver

career guidance to the pupils but rarely took place because of limited resources. “SBT4” stated the following:

It is not all the time that we provide career guidance from their respective classes. Sometimes we invite different officers' especially civil servant such as the soldiers, nurses and those from ministry of agriculture to come and have a word with pupils. And this happens with the help of sign language interpreters. At times we have educational tours, but it does not take place often because of limited funds at the school.

Content of the school guidance programme

As regards content of career guidance provided to pupils with HI at Nsonta secondary school, the guidance teachers, subject teachers and the pupils were interviewed. A presentation of the findings to this is given below. It begins with views of pupils then followed by that of the guidance teachers and the subject teachers.

Views of Pupils

The study exposed a number of topics contained in the services provided to the pupils with HI. The pupils revealed that choosing friends, managing time, comprehensive sexuality and knowing ones abilities and interests were among the content they had been exposed to. As with regards to choosing a career, career talks or conferences about different types of careers are held by the school were either teachers or the guidance teacher presents on one or variety of careers. One of the pupils, “P6” availed by stating the following:

Choosing a career is one of the things we have learnt in the career guidance we receive. I have learnt how to be more productive in life. I have learnt how to bake scones and how to make a pie. Therefore, I want to own a bakery when I finish school.

Similarly, another pupil “P7” mentioned that: “*Choosing a career is one of the contents of career guidance that we have come across at our school*”.

The study revealed that interests, values and abilities were

topics that were offered to the learners in career guidance. Pupil “P12” expressed that one element contained in the career guidance offered is handling one’s emotions. To confirm this, the following was said: *“We are taught how to handle ourselves from our physical appearance to our own emotions”*.

While choosing a career was one of the contents of the career guidance offered to pupils with hearing impairment, Learner “P3” revealed that such a topic was sometimes coupled with knowing your ability. The following is what was said: *“Choosing a career is one of the big things that are in career guidance and our teachers have taught us to consider our abilities and interests when choosing a career”*.

Views of career guidance teachers

Responses from the guidance teachers on the content of the career guidance provided were consistent with the views of the pupils. It was revealed that the school did not have a syllabus for career guidance, however, the guidance teachers taught at random what they thought was helpful to the pupils. It was disclosed that among the topics contained in the services provided to the pupils with HI is comprehensive sexuality, time management, choosing a career, knowing ones’ ability, choosing friends. One career guidance teacher “GT2” had this to say:

Regarding content, I would say there isn’t much; I just depend on what I have learnt at school and what I feel can help the learners. This is because we do not have the syllabus. So I have taught them about careers, choosing friends, comprehensive sexuality, being discipline, and always teach them to consider their abilities to the careers they would like to do. For example, there is this kid who did very well at his grade nine and was supposed to go to a technical school but couldn’t because of the disability. This pupil wanted to be a medical doctor but settled for teaching because most institutions do not provide learning instructions in sign language.

The other guidance teacher “GT1” emphasized that comprehensive

sexuality was one of the topics taught consistently every term to the pupils with hearing impairment. He revealed that this topic was constantly taught because pupils with HI were said to be very sexually active and the intention of educating them on sex related topics was; as adolescent learners with hearing impairment they were more likely to engage in unsafe sex which could hold back their career endeavours. The guidance teacher “GT1” had this to say:

One of the programs contained in the activities offered to the learners with HI is comprehensive sexuality and among others, there is choosing a career, knowing one’s, ability anger management, answering ECZ questions, managing time, understanding my interests and values and choosing friends.

The table below summarizes the content of career guidance program

Grades	Content
8 to12	Managing time Choosing a career (career information) Knowing your ability Anger management Understanding my values and interests Studying techniques Answering ECZ questions Choosing the right friends

Furthermore, the study revealed that most of the content of the service provided to pupils with hearing impairment was centred on vocational career skills. The interview with the guidance teacher uncovered that majority of the pupils with HI did not attend post-secondary education or either keep or find a job at all because of

their condition. The following was said by the guidance teacher “GT1”:

Majority of our learners are incapable to follow the academic pathway, however, we try our best to help them become familiar with vocational skills where they are exposed to practical subjects such as home economics and woodwork, so that at the end of two years they are examined by TEVETA and provided with a trade license.

Furthermore, the guidance teacher explained that career guidance is mostly focused on vocational skills because most of the learners with HI at Nsonta had learning difficulties that placed them on a disadvantage to thrive in the academic pathway. To prove this, the guidance teacher “GT1” said the following:

Other HI learners also have Learning Disabilities. Of course, these learners can cross from primary school to secondary school but they automatically find themselves struggling so much in their path to grade twelve. For such pupils, we have done our best to teach but they do not pass. So what we do after screening is that we place them where they will be taking vocational subjects like Home Economics and Woodwork

Views of the subject teachers

The contents as viewed by the subject teachers were similar to the views of the guidance teacher and the pupils. Subject teachers also revealed that it contained career choices, knowing your abilities, discipline, choosing right friends studying techniques and answering exam questions. “SBT6” said the following:

We teach them about career choices, discipline if they want to achieve their goals, how to relate with friends, managing time, understanding their interests, values and so on. We also give health talks incorporated with comprehensive sexuality education. In summary, most of what is taught to the pupils is in line with vocational guidance.

“SBT3” stated the following:

We teach them content that will help them build self confidence in themselves as you know there is a lot of stigma against people with hearing impairment out there; hence a lot of them feel shy to incorporate themselves with daily activities that would help them sustain their lives

Ability to communicate in sign language during career guidance activities

Regarding the views of the stakeholders on how familiar the career guidance teachers/subject teachers are with sign language, it was exposed that the career guidance teachers were able to communicate in sign language without challenges. Conversely, since the service was also provided by other subject teachers, pupils expressed concern that they did not fully understand the lessons presented by other teachers because they were not very competent in Sign language. To confirm this, “P11” exhorted the guidance teacher by stating the following:

Our career guidance teacher is perfect when it comes to sign language. The only problem is that not all the teachers are able to communicate the way he does. So it is a problem when you are given another teacher to help you with career information.

In a similar view pupil “P5” a grade twelve pupil mentioned that:

The guidance teachers are very good in sign language but the challenge is when subject teachers who do not know Sign language present us a lesson about a career; we do not understand anything.

The views of the career guidance teachers matched those of the pupils as they described themselves as competent in sign language. To affirm this, the guidance teacher “GT1” said this: “I cannot say I am excellent but I am good enough. I can sign considerably well enough to communicate and offer guidance to pupils with hearing impairment”.

The other guidance teacher “GT2” also disclosed that she was very familiar with sign language and further stated that

some teachers involved in providing the service to the pupils with hearing impairment were not familiar with the mode of communication. The following is what “GT2” said:

Most of the teachers here are familiar with sign language but not all. For example there is a teacher who is dedicated to providing career guidance to pupils but she is not very conversant to the Zambian Sign Language. With her, she didn't do special education but found herself at a special school. But with our help she is learning to communicate with pupils with hearing impairment.

The study further revealed that failure to communicate in sign language by some teachers was not attributed to lack of training. All the six subject teachers and the two career guidance teachers had obtained training in special education. It was also revealed by three subject teachers that they were familiar with the mode of communication (Sign language) while the remaining three felt that they were not very confident with sign language. The participant who were not familiar with sign language claimed to have skills in braille as opposed to sign language. Furthermore, following this situation, the guidance teachers/subject teachers were asked how the service is provided by the teachers who were not very conversant with sign language. In response, it was established that some teachers provided career guidance with the help of sign language interpreter. One of the subject teachers, “SBT6” confirmed by stating the following:

I am not very confident with my skills in sign language so I would present a topic with the help of a Sign language interpreter who happens to be a pupil who is partially deaf to translate what is said and the questions from the students. But some of the pupils are able to get something from my speech when I talk loud.

“GT2” stated the following:

To be honest, there isn't much understanding between the teachers who are not familiar with sign language and the pupils and that's the reason why some pupils

even complain. By the way, we have a lot of teachers that have done special education but they cannot communicate fluently with the learners with hearing impairment. So for them they just write and let the learners read. But in this case learners complain that they don't get anything.

The study further revealed that Sign language was not the only means of communication because some pupils with hearing impairment did not understand it fully as a result of acquiring the disability at a later stage. Nonetheless, some pupils come from the mainstream setting where Sign language was never an option. For this reason, together with Sign language, it was revealed by the guidance teachers that there were three other ways that teachers used to communicate with the pupils hearing impaired. These included lip reading, writing on the board and speaking loudly. 20 out of 25 pupils understood sign language while lip reading and speaking loudly was understood by the other 5 pupils. This mode of communication is called total communication. The respondent reported that within one class of pupils with hearing impairment, there are those that do not fully communicate in Sign language. Among a senior class of 16 pupils, 11 pupils understood sign language comprehensively, four could hear by speaking loud while one was able to read the lips of the speaker. As a consideration of what is mentioned above, the guidance teacher "GT1" said the following:

When it comes to our learners with HI in our institution, there is not one means of communication simply because they are categories of learners within HI. Some were born deaf while others just acquired the problem due to disasters such as illnesses. For example we have pupils in grade 10 HI and grade 12 HI who got this condition from suffering from cerebral malaria. However, the ones that acquired the disability due to illnesses can understand normal language with the aid of speaking aloud and looking at the movements of the mouth and are the one that make up the category of lip reading and loud speaking.

“GT2” further supported his statement with an example by saying:

For example, there was a girl who was in grade nine at a regular school who had an illness which led to deafness. When this girl came to our school in grade ten, they were communication difficulties. This and many more cases when learners from different schools join our school find it difficult to understand signs language.

Discussion of findings

Provision of career guidance to pupils with hearing impairment

The first study objective sought to establish how career guidance was provided to pupils with hearing impairment at Nsonta secondary school. The study found that career guidance was provided by career guidance teachers and subject teachers to pupils with Hearing impairment. The researcher discovered that the school had two guidance teachers that spearheaded all the career related activities in the school while they were assisted by subject teachers. Therefore, the study brought to light that career guidance was provided on one-on-one basis, in groups and through industrial visits. It was revealed that one-on-one counselling seldom took place on pupils' voluntary base as the pupils were deemed to be shy to approach the office. This consistent with Mweemba (2016) and Bbuku (2017) who documented that shyness among learners led to them not seeking career guidance on a personal foundation. Despite the assertion by scholars, the researcher observed a lack of sensitization by guidance teachers on pupils seeking career guidance at their time of convenience. Furthermore, it was established that one-on-one guidance was frequently provided to pupils who seemed not to be doing well in academics. This translated that one on one counselling was given to those HI pupils that stood out differently and needed extra attention by the career guidance teacher. These findings are in not agreement with Mweemba (2016) who revealed that career guidance service was provided on one-on-one basis and in

group sessions, with the majority of pupils having preference to individual mode.

The current study further established that career guidance was provided to pupils with hearing impairment in groups which were formulated by the guidance teachers by following the abilities and interests of pupils. The above assertion arose from the fact that other pupils had learning difficulties to an extent that they were not able to read therefore experiencing difficulties in getting what the teachers and the guidance teacher was teaching, others were slower than their peers. In other words, the initiative of groups was as a result of the differences in the intellectual level of the pupils. The research participant exposed that several assessments were performed in order to draw together the pupils in different groups. This finding is consistent with Biller and Horn (1991) who documented that the school based career guidance program for the handicapped and were designed as matching models in which career guidance begin by examining the pupils' abilities and interests as well as dealing with questions such as what level can a particular pupil best function and in what occupation or field can they find satisfaction. This is also in harmony with the social cognitive theory which advocates for the learner's ability and interests (Lent et al, 1994).

Career guidance was sometimes delivered right from the pupils' classes in their various grades as group counselling while at times it is offered to all the HI learners in the dining hall. It was revealed that the meeting of the pupils in large groups depended on the topics under discussion, for instance topics that affected all the learners such as Comprehensive Sexuality was provided in large masses in the dining hall.

The finding is not consistent with Debono et al (2007) who exposed that the provision of career guidance should start early enough and should be delivered as workshops, seminars and other activities supervised by the career guidance teacher.

They further stressed that collaboration with professionals is very vital and makes the service relevant because it complements the lessons in the guidance field. Collaboration with professionals

help expose the learners to the people who are in different fields and gives a platform for the learners to ask questions and clarify a lot of misconceptions related to their desired careers.

The study revealed that the provision of career guidance was done by the guidance teachers and assisted by subject teachers in the school. The researcher observed that there was collaboration among stakeholders in the provision of the service. This was evidenced when the school involved other professionals such as nurses and police officers to come to the school and share information about their careers. This confirms with Debono et al (2007) who stated that guidance teachers work closely with the subject teachers to ensure continuity between career education lessons delivered within the career guidance programme and other lessons. Although this was the case, the researchers observed that pupils with hearing impairment found it challenging to work people who were familiar with sign language.

In this regard, the school system needs a Continuous Professional Development studies that can help teachers who are not sign language. This is consistent with Makojo (2013) and Mawire (2011) who revealed that school guidance teachers needed staff development to be professionally groomed in career guidance services provisions while Lau and Suk-Chun (2008) posits that in Japan school counsellors receive continuous in-service training to earn enough credits to keep up their credentials as school career guidance. Further, Career guidance capacity building initiatives could be enhanced through the use of ICT as advocated by Chipili, Ndhlovu & Simui (2018) and Simui, Nyaruwata and Kasonde-Ngandu (2017) given the digital space within which learners live (Muleya, Kakana, Simui, Mwewa, Mundende & Namangala, 2019).

Content of the school guidance programme

As regards to the content of career guidance, the study revealed that the career guidance provided to the learners with hearing impairment contained a number of elements such as choosing a career, knowing your ability, understanding my values and interests, managing time, comprehensive sexuality, studying

techniques and choosing the right friends. The content is in conformity with Bari et al (2013) who put it that a typical content of a career guidance program should include, decision making, self-awareness, opportunity awareness and transitional skills. This implies that each of the four contents mentioned open opportunities for the learners with hearing impairment to explore various aspects of the world of work. In line with the Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT), the content of the programme at Nsonta is deemed relevant since it was revealed that the service integrates interests, the ability of the learners and decision making (choosing a career). Referring to Lent et al (1994) SCCT assumes that people are likely to become interested in, choose to pursue, and perform better at activities at which they have strong self-efficacy beliefs, as long as they also have necessary skills and environmental supports to pursue these activities. Such content according to Whiston and Sexton (1998) in Lambwe (2017) exposes the learners with hearing impairment to come to learn about their skills, talents that result in an informed decision on their careers and the world of work. Additionally, the results of the study are again in conformity with the findings of Ndhlovu (2007) who stressed that a guidance program should contain and expose learners to occupational and employment information, career education and career counselling.

It was revealed that comprehensive sexuality was an element of focus in the services provided. The study showed that hearing impaired learners had high sexual desire which meant that they were most likely to engage in unsafe sex which may hinder their career endeavours. However, they were taught about the consequences of sex, HIV/AIDS related issues and how to stay away from the activity. This finding is in line with Chikopela et al (2019) who revealed that pupils sought guidance and counselling on HIV and sex topics from peers unlike the teachers who are adults because they find it a taboo and inappropriate to consult guidance teachers on such issues. Hearing-impaired students were also more likely to engage in unprotected sex compared with the hearing students. This calls for health providers to design

comprehensive sexuality education including counselling on safer sex practices for students with hearing impairments.

Choosing careers was one component associated with the program offered to the learners. It was revealed that such a topic was complemented by other topics such as knowing your ability and knowing your interests. It is evident that it is from these two topics that choosing a career is mainly centred on. This is in line with social cognitive career theory according to Lent et al (2000) which posits that interests are unlikely to develop in activities for which people doubt their competence and expect negative outcomes. SCCT posits that for interests to blossom in areas for which people have talent, their environments must expose them to the types of direct, vicarious, and persuasive experiences that can give rise to robust efficacy beliefs and positive outcome expectations.

Ability to communicate in sign language during career guidance activities

The study revealed that the two career guidance teachers and three of the subject teachers were familiar with sign language while three of the subject teachers were not familiar. It was revealed that the teachers that were familiar with sign language provided the service without challenges while those who were not stirred a sense of worry in pupils with hearing impairment because they did not understand anything. This finding is in conformity with Chikopela et al (2019) who revealed that most teachers in charge of career guidance cannot communicate in sign language, a prerequisite to counselling most pupils with hearing impairment thereby creating a barrier to effective programme delivery. The researchers observed that this situation sufficiently places pupils with hearing impairment at a disadvantage. Sibanda (2015) indicated that teachers of pupils with hearing impairment lacked Sign Language proficiency; therefore, learning of the pupils with HI in schools is heavily compromised. The findings of the current study were also in conformity with Ndhlovu (2007) who reported that pupils with hearing impairment did not adequately receive career guidance because the guidance

teachers were not very familiar to Sign language. His findings further revealed that this was the situation even to pupils with visual impairment whose guidance teachers lacked the skills in braille hence affected the provision of the service. Accordingly, Nyaata, M. K. (2018) uncovered that those teachers who are not familiar in Sign language hindered the effectiveness of learning of pupils with hearing impairment and limited them from their academic transition.

In addition, in a study done by Chikopela et al (2019), it was revealed that career guidance teachers were not able to communicate in sign language and as a result pupils with hearing impairment did not benefit from the counselling; however, they provided the service with the presence of hearing pupils who were familiar with sign language in the counselling room to interpret. In contention of the above, the current study established that the career guidance teachers were able to communicate in sign language while a few subject teachers were not. This shows that communication in a language understood by hearing impaired pupils and guidance teachers paves way to effective programme delivery.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

The study concluded that at Nsonta secondary school career guidance is provided through group sessions, on individual basis and through industrial educational visits. The services were provided by the career guidance teachers and the subject teachers which implied that there was collaboration in the provision of the services for pupils with hearing impairment at the study school. This was evidenced by the involvement of other professionals such as nurses, police officers and those from ministry of agriculture during group sessions. It was also concluded that individual or one-on-one sessions of providing career guidance were less than group sessions while industrial educational tours rarely took place because of limited funds. It was further concluded that not all teachers involved in the provision of the services were familiar

with sign language while the career guidance teachers and some subject teachers were familiar and provided the services to the pupils with less difficulties.

Recommendations

1. The school should ensure that all teachers must have knowledge in sign language through Continuing Professional Development (CPD) so that all pupils with hearing impairment should benefit from their teaching.
2. The school to promote a lot of industrial tours so that pupils are exposed and have a feel of different careers for them to have a better informed career decision.

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