

EMPLOYMENT
OF PERSONS
WITH DISABILITIES

Edited by:
B.A. Adebisi *Ph.D*

Publication of National Resource Centre for the Disabled

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

A STUDY OF VOCATIONAL PREFERENCE OF THE HEARING IMPAIRED STUDENTS

Abiodun .M. Gesinde, Ph. D

INTRODUCTION

The technological advancement in the world over in recent times has greatly increased the number of career opportunities available for people with or without disabilities. It therefore implies that they now have to select a career out of many available ones. There is also the tendency to prefer one career to the other. The preference for a particular career is greatly influenced by one's interest. Interest therefore plays a major determinant role in the preferred career. The objects or activities which command our interests are stimulating, enjoyable and pleasurable whereas the opposite is true in the case of our dislikes (Kochhar, 1999). Hence, interest inventories could be designed to assess one's interest and relate them to those of various occupational areas (Gibson and Mitchell, 1986). The development of vocational interest, in the submission of Kochhar (1999), does not appear all of a sudden during adolescent rather they appear via developmental process.

Interest is very difficult to measure (Okoye, Adejumo and Achebe, 1990). Whenever it is developed it aims at achieving the following purposes according to Kochhar (1999):

- to provide teachers and counsellors with information regarding the student's preference and aversions which will help them acquire better understanding of student's problems;
- to help the testees to identify and clarify their interests in terms of the demands of varied courses and careers and choose work and experiences consistent with their interest;
- to enable teachers, counsellors and parents to know the kinds and intensity of the testee's interests and assist him to prepare his educational and vocational plans consistent with his interests;
- to help channel the energies of the youths in different directions;
- to help in the selection of the right person for the work and thus save frustration, unhappiness and disappointment in the lives of the individuals and increase productive capacity of individuals.

The development of interest tests hinged on the belief that people in a given occupation are characterized by a cluster of common interests that make them differ from people in other profession (Gibson and Mitchell, 1996). Guilford in Kochhar (1999)

has mentioned seven interest factors:

- (a) **Mechanical:** It includes activities that are mechanical or manual in nature with less of emphasis on thinking variable.
- (b) **Business:** This includes business (administration), business (selling), business (contract), verbal expression (development), social sciences and sensory satisfaction.
- (c) **Scientific:** It includes such activities as scientific investigation, scientific theory, mathematical concepts, laboratory work, logical processes, precision in detail, precision in carefulness.
- (d) **Aesthetic:** It includes both aesthetic expression and appreciation. It can be defined as interest in enjoyment of the graphic, literary, dramatic and musical arts.
- (e) **Social:** It includes welfare of others, verbal expression, control of others, office activity, responsibly persuasion.
- (f) **Clerical:** It includes such activities as office work, number manipulation, precision, exactness, and physical activity.
- (g) **Outdoor:** It includes outdoor activity, like agriculture, manual activity, construction as well as manipulation, farming, forestry, construction.

In the same vein, Bakare (1977) classified vocational interest areas into: outdoor; mechanical; computational; scientific; persuasive; artistic; literary; musical; social service and clerical. This classification caters for both the so called abled and disabled individuals. One of such people with disabilities is the hearing impaired individuals.

An individual is said to be hearing impaired when he or she has partially or totally lost the sense of hearing. Those who are experiencing partial loss and can still hear with the assistance of hearing aids are referred to as the – hard – of hearing while the deaf is an umbrella term being used to cover all types of hearing losses. The common features of the deaf according to Olawale (2000) include:

- * lack of response to spoken words;
- * general indifference to sound;
- * response to noise as opposed to words;
- * monotonal quality of voice;
- * lessened laughter;
- * banging of head when emotional problem is invoked;
- * stamping of foot for vibratory sensation;
- * yelling at people because they cannot hear their voices;
- * screeching to express pleasure;
- * alertness to gesture and movement;
- * watching the lips of the speaker instead of his eyes;

- * showing no startle in situations that would normally startle others;
- * turning the head one side in order to catch sounds most of the time;
- * constant rubbing of the ears and complaints of ear-ache;
- * requesting that a question, statement or an order be repeated; and
- * excessive concentration on vision.

The above features and others not mentioned do not, in any way, hinder the hearing impaired individual from developing interest in objects and activities although their interest is sometimes limited by their impairment. Hence, there is probability that they detest some vocations that would involve listening because of their impairment.

Attempts have been made in the past to identify the vocational preference of students. Most of these studies concentrated their efforts on non-handicapped students. Studies that concentrated their efforts on the disabled have shed more lights on the vocational preference of the hearing impaired. For instance, Onwubolu (2005) carried out a study aimed at identifying the vocational preferences of 137 hearing impaired secondary students in Rivers and Imo States and discovered that:

- * Hearing impaired students expressed their vocational interest in the following order: social services (42%); engineering (27%); business (15%); health (11%) and computational (5%);
- * The number of male and female hearing impaired students who showed preference for various vocational areas differ significantly;
- * The number of hard of hearing and deaf students who showed preference for various vocational areas differ significantly;
- * The number of hearing impaired students in the urban and rural areas who showed preference for various vocational areas do not differ significantly.

On the premise of the fact that studies on the vocational interest is scanty despite the fact that interests are crucial in making success and anticipated satisfaction in any job (Kemjika, 1995) this study intends to determine vocational preference of individuals with hearing impairment. It is hope that the outcome of the study would enhance our understanding of their career development and serves as guide for counsellors.

Research Question

In what order would the hearing impaired students demonstrate preference for the following vocational areas: outdoor; mechanical; computational; scientific; persuasive; artistic; literary; music; social; and clerical.

Methodology

Design

The study utilized descriptive survey design method.

Sample

The population for the study consisted of all the hearing impaired students of federal college of education during the 2004/2005. The sample used for the study consisted of 100 hearing impaired students randomly selected from all the class stratification. The breakdown is hereunder presented in Table I:

Level	Male	Female	Total
Prelim	08	07	15
NCE 1	25	06	21
NCE 2	25	18	33
NCE 3	20	11	31
Total	58	42	100

Their age ranges from 19 to 30.

Instrument

The Vocational Interest Inventory developed by Bakare (1977) was adopted for the study. The first part of the inventory sought information on name, date, class, age, and school while the second part is divided into A- J sections. Each of these sections comprises of 10 items in 5 Likert format ranging from Like very much (5) to Dislike very much (1). The scoring is done by adding all items 1 from A to J to get the score for outdoor while all items 2 from a to J is added together to get the score for mechanical and so on. The maximum score obtainable for each of the vocational area is 50 while the least mark obtainable is 10. The higher the score the more the interest of the respondent in a particular vocational area. For the purpose of this study, the test-retest reliability of the inventory was found to be 0.68 administered on 30 students comprising of 15 males and 15 females.

Data Administration and Collection

The inventory was administered in groups to the selected students of Federal College of Education (Special) Oyo and was collected on the same day.

Data Analysis

The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation.

Results

Table II: Mean and Standard Deviation Score of the Hearing Impaired Students on the Vocational Interest Inventory (No = 100).

S/N	Vocational Interest Area	Mean	SD	Rank
1	Outdoor	33.16	5.62	10th
2	Mechanical	35.94	6.50	6th
3	Computational	36.98	6.18	2nd
4	Scientific	33.68	6.98	9th
5	Persuasive	36.29	7.45	4th
6	Artistic	36.14	7.12	5th
7	Literary	39.51	6.87	1st
8	Music	34.17	6.32	8th
9	Social	35.50	5.66	7 th
10	Clerical	36.96	6.34	3rd

The conclusion that could be drawn from the above table II is that the vocational interest of the hearing impaired student followed the following order: literary; computational; clerical; persuasive; artistic; mechanical; social; music; science; and outdoor.

Discussion

The analysis of the data for this study has shown that literary work tops the list of preferred vocation while outdoor was least preferred. This outcome negates Onwubolu (2005) finding which showed that the most preferred vocation was social work while computational was the least. The reason for the difference might be on the subjects of the study. While this study used students in higher institution Onwubolu study utilized secondary students. The difference in academic ability and exposure could create differences in interest area. The fact that this study reveal that the most preferred area of vocation by the subjects of the study is literary did not come as a surprise. This is because what literary represents in this context include activities that does not necessarily involve verbal communication like being the editor of an academic magazine; read many novels; write short stories; read manuscripts of books to be published; read a book on how to become a writer; review book for a magazine; join in an essay contest; join a literary and debating society; and report news for a local newspaper. The least preferred vocation which is outdoor would definitely create the need for the hearing impaired to associate with others who are not hearing impaired. This might be responsible for lack of interest. The hearing impaired individuals, most often, are more comfortable with people who understand their language.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The preference of one vocation to the other is influenced by interest. This study has shown that the hearing impaired preference of vocation is determined by their nature of disability and interest. It is therefore recommended that:

- Ø counsellors should use the hearing impaired preference in a vocation to increase their productivity.
- Ø Counsellors should ensure that the interest in a particular profession is used to match a desired vocation.

References

- Bakare, C.G. M. (1977). *Vocational Interest Inventory*. Ibadan: Psycho-educational Research Productions.
- Gibson, R.L. and Mitchell, M.H. (1986) *Introduction to Counselling and Guidance*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company.
- Kemjika, O K. (1995) *Theories and Practices of Career Development in Nigerian Education*. Onitsha: Fabson Printing and Publishing Co. Ltd.
- Kochhar, S. K (1999). *Guidance and Counselling in Colleges and Universities*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Pvt Ltd.
- Okoye, N.N., Adejumo, D, & Achebe, C. (1990) *Fundamentals of Guidance and Counselling*. Abeokuta: Heinemann Educational Books (Nigeria) Ltd.
- Olawale, S. G.(2000). *Counselling Execeptional Children*.Ibadan: HMS Publication (INC)
- Onwubolu, C. O. (2005) Vocational Preference of Hearing Impaired Students. A paper presented at the 15th Annual National Coference of the National Council for Exceptional Children (NCEC) from 8th-11th at the University of Ibadan.