

**FACILITATORS AND BARRIERS TO ACQUISITION OF LITERACY SKILLS  
AMONG LEARNERS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENTS IN LOWER GRADES: A  
CASE OF CHILANGA PRIMARY SCHOOL SPECIAL UNIT OF CHILANGA  
DISTRICT, LUSAKA, ZAMBIA**

**BY**

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**A Dissertation Submitted the University of Zambia in Partial fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Award of the Master of Education in Special Education Degree.**

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**AUTHORS DECLARATION**

I, **Clementine Chuma Zulu**, do hereby solemnly declare that this dissertation represents my own work and that it has never been previously submitted for a degree at the University of Zambia or at any other University.

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## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband Kevin Chilemu and my three children Tumelo, Natasha and Lilato. I am very grateful for all the support and encouragement that you gave to me. You motivated me to continue my studies during those difficult times when I felt like giving up. Thank you very much for your endless support.

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## ABSTRACT

Hearing impairment has been a major disability challenge globally and is considered to be a threat to quality education in developing countries like Zambia. This dissertation focuses on the facilitators and barriers faced by teachers and learners with hearing impairment in a special school environment in Zambia. The study was conducted in a selected school in Chilanga District, Zambia in 2021. The qualitative research approach was the main method adopted but interviews were used to collect basic demographic data about the respondents. The target groups were hearing impaired students, teachers, senior teachers and head teacher of the selected primary school for special education. In total, 30 respondents participated in the research (20, students, 6 teachers, 3 senior teachers and 1 head teacher). The study revealed that students with special needs education are facing multiple challenges such as; lack of adapted curriculum to suit the HI learners, discrimination and prejudice, absence of sign language qualified teachers, lack of educational materials, disaggregated data research about disability, stigma by community or community attitude, inadequate specialist teachers and resource centers, shortage of specialized teaching and learning resources and assistive devices, ignorance or unawareness of most people that disability is not inability, lack of parental involvement in case of literacy skills knowledge on how to help their children with homework, lack of parental sensitization on the importance of literacy and sign language skills and poor specialized infrastructure for HI learners. These challenges posed both long and short term impact on the academic performance of students attached to the center. This study concludes that disabled students especially those with hearing impairment in Chilanga, Zambia are struggling to attain basic education. It is recommended that the Zambian government improve financial funding and ensure that basic needs for hearing equipment and food supply be made available to all disabled students suffering from hearing impairment. This study serves a baseline for future studies about challenges facing disabled people in Zambia.

**Key Words:** *Hearing Impairment, Disability, Hearing, Special Education, Skills, Sign language, discrimination, stigma*

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

<b>CBR</b>	Community-Based Rehabilitation
<b>CHReP</b>	Community Health Restoration Program
<b>COIHEP</b>	Community Integrated Health Education Program
<b>CRPD</b>	(United Nations) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
<b>CSO</b>	Central Statistical Office
<b>DPO</b>	Disabled People’s Organization
<b>EP</b>	Eastern Province
<b>FGD-PWD</b>	Focus Group Discussion with Person with Disabilities
<b>HI</b>	Hearing Impairments
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization
<b>MCDMCH</b>	Ministry of Community Development, Mother and Child Health
<b>MCDSS</b>	Ministry of Community Development and Social Services
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>NVRC</b>	National Vocational Rehabilitation Centre
<b>PTA</b>	Parent–Teacher Association RA Research Assistant
<b>ST</b>	Senior Teacher
<b>TEVET</b>	Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training

<b>TEVETA</b>	Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Authority
<b>TR</b>	Teacher
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children’s Fund
<b>UNZA</b>	University of Zambia
<b>UTH</b>	University Teaching Hospital
<b>ZAFOD</b>	Zambia Federation of Disability Organizations
<b>ZAPD</b>	Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities

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## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Overview**

Hearing impairment is becoming a public health concern worldwide. Globally, there are about 466 million people (6.1%) with hearing loss, where approximately 34 million (7%) represent children (WHO, 2019). In Sub-Saharan areas the prevalence of hearing impairments among children has been estimated to be around 8.6% (i.e. almost 18 million children) (Stevens, 2013). According to the World Health Organization (WHO), 60% of all hearing loss in children in developing countries is due to lack of preventive measures (WHO, 2019). Children with hearing impairment may have problems in vocabulary, sentence structures, speaking, academic achievements and social functioning (ASLHA, 2005). This study looked at Facilitators and Barriers to Acquisition of Literacy Skills among Learners with Hearing Impairment in Lower Grades in Chilanga District, Lusaka, Zambia.

### **1.2 Background**

Internationally, reading difficulties have been estimated to be at two to five percent among school-going children (Wong, 1998). Findings from the study that was carried out in the United Kingdom among the English speaking children, revealed that, “of the grade two and three children whose reading was assessed, approximately one in twenty, were functioning at a fairly low level for their grade and approximately one in twenty, were hardly able to read at all “ ( Goss , 1995 ,p .143 )

Generally , according to Rayner et al (2001) in Kalundu (2005) , reading is significant in general ways that touch everyone because the ability to read and write is essential ingredient

of success in most societies where so much information is transmitted in written form. Globally the right to education is protected in various articles of milestone documents, including Article 26 of the United Nations General Assembly's Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), and Article 28 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). Furthermore, the right to education for persons with disabilities is distinctly recognized in Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) (2006) and latterly in Goal 4.5 of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, which ensures inclusive and equitable quality education and promotes life-long learning opportunities for all, including persons with disabilities (United Nations, 2015). Though Zambia first ratified the CRPD in 2008, the country has included persons with disabilities in various policies and laws ever since the amended constitution of 1996 (Republic of Zambia, 1996a).

Currently, there are several laws and policies in place that cover persons with disabilities, including some specifically within the field of education, such as the National Policy on Education (Ministry of Education, 1996), the Education Act (Republic of Zambia, 2011) and the Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training (TEVET) Policy (Republic of Zambia, 1996b). Nevertheless, the most important act pertaining to persons with disabilities and influencing education is the Persons with Disabilities Act (Republic of Zambia, 2012). The Persons with Disabilities Act 2012 provides for free primary education, ensures that persons with disabilities are not excluded from accessing secondary and higher education in the communities in which they live, ensures vocational training on the basis of disability and guarantees special schools for persons who cannot be enrolled in schools offering inclusive education.



However, it also ensures physical access to educational institutions, ensures individualized support and access to alternative forms of communication, as well as allowances to cover extra costs attributed to learning. Therefore, these measures fall far short of being implemented.

Currently, the welfare of persons with disabilities is the responsibility of the Ministry of Community Development and Social Services (MCDSS). This ministry has six departments, several of which work (in one way or another) to provide support for persons with disabilities. For instance, while the Mother and Child Health Department in the MCDSS has responsibility for children with disabilities, the Social Welfare Department deals with persons with disabilities who need welfare support, such as cash transfers?

The MCDSS is also responsible for the Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities (ZAPD). Briefly, ZAPD has responsibility for implementing the Persons with Disabilities Act and any policy or national strategy on disability. This agency was established under the Persons with Disabilities Act 1996 and continued under the act of 2012.

Traditionally, Zambia has had special schools for persons with disabilities, such as the University Teaching Hospital (UTH) Special Needs School and Manalo Secondary School in Lusaka, or Magwero Secondary School in Chipata, Eastern Province. These currently fall under the Ministry of Education.

There are now plans to invest in inclusive schools, where all students – including those with disabilities – are taught together. This project is supported by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and other partners. Currently there are five vocational schools in Zambia that have served as pilots for inclusive education: National Vocational Rehabilitation Centre (NVRC)

and Luanshya Trades (both on the Copperbelt Province), Kaoma Trades (Western Province), Mansa Trades (Luapula Province) and Lusaka Business and Technology College.

In line with the TEVET policy of 1996, these vocational schools are the responsibility of the Department of Vocational Education and Training within the Ministry of Higher Education. In 2002, free education was introduced for all children in the first seven years of primary school. This had the direct effect of increasing the net enrolment rate from 68 percent in 2000 to 96 percent in 2006 (Miles, 2011). However, the same trend was not observed among children with disabilities. A 2006 survey of living conditions among persons with disabilities in Zambia reported that, though eligible, around a quarter of all individuals with disabilities did not attend primary school (Eide and Loeb, 2006). However, given the opportunity to attend school, persons with disabilities matched the achievements of those without. The survey also highlighted other substantial challenges faced by persons with disabilities. It found that unemployment rates were significantly higher among persons with disabilities than without.

It also found that there were great gender differences, with women – both with and without disabilities – scoring lower on many indicators. The survey also pointed out problems of social exclusion, including individuals with disabilities not taking part in their own traditional ceremonies, not making decisions about their own lives, not getting married and having children.

Furthermore, in all of the challenges mentioned above, there was a ‘physical disability bias’, where persons with sensory, intellectual and psychological disabilities were worse off on important inclusion indicators, and experienced greater activity limitations and restrictions in social participation.

As far as access to health services was concerned, 20 percent reported not having access to the health services they needed, and major gaps were found in the provision of services needed by persons with disabilities, such as vocational training, welfare services, assistive devices and counselling. When persons with disabilities were asked what type of assistance they needed in daily life, emotional support was mentioned more often than economic support (Eide and Loeb, 2006).

### **1.3 Special educational needs and Special needs education**

Hearing impairment has been a major disability challenge globally, is considered to be a threat to quality education because hearing impairment has become the most frequent sensory deficit in human populations, affecting many people in the world, with consequences that include inability to interpret speech sounds, often producing a reduced ability to communicate, delay in language acquisition, economic and educational disadvantage, social isolation (Ndhlovu, 2008).

Globally, education is considered a fundamental human right for all regardless of socio-economic and physical wellbeing status. Learning opportunities and facilities given to people without hearing impairment ought to be available to those living with disability or Special Educational needs. This however, is hardly the case. Many persons living with deafness have challenges in accessing education and more so the curriculum because of many barriers (Mandyata and Kamukwamba, (2018).

According to Mitchell (2012), nonetheless observe that, the term “special educational needs,” replaces the term disability in modern practice, when dealing with the educational aspect of people that are physical, sensory and intellectual challenged. Special needs education on the other hand refers to educational facilities available for learners. These facilities are linked to

difficulties in learning, growth disorder, and behavior, inability to look after themselves, communicate and interact with normal people whom the educational system ought to address. In Zambia, Special Needs Education refer to the education facilities while, special educational need refers to the learning conditions faced by individual learners. For example, learners with hearing impairment come with their own learning needs including a call for alternative mode of communication like use of sign language in the classrooms (Mandyata & Kamukwamba, 2018).

#### **1.4 Brief description of Special Education in Zambia**

In Zambia, the delivery of special education has been in existence for over 100 years, with missionaries leading the first efforts to educate students with disabilities (Chitiyo, Odongo, Itimu, Phiri, Muwana & Lipemba, 2015) focusing mainly on the education of students who had visual and hearing impairments (Lifumbo, 2016). After the Ministry of Education began administering special education in Zambia in 1977, a number of special schools and institutions were built. Like most developing nations, Zambia is experiencing challenges in addressing and delivering educational needs and services (Chitiyo & Chitiyo, 2007). Specific challenges that have been identified as major obstacles in the provision of special education services include a lack of government support, cultural influences, limited resources, and poverty. Despite these challenges, Zambia is taking conscious steps in the provision of special education services (Eunice, Nyanga, & Orodho, 2015; Muwana & Ostrosky, 2014). To this effect, Zambia has seen a gradual increase in the number of special education schools and consequently a rise in the number of students receiving special education services.

According to the Ministry of Education Statistical Bulletin (Ministry of Education, 2009a), the total number of students with disabilities for the years 2004, 2005, and 2009 indicated an

increasing trend in Zambia. Services for students with disabilities are provided in four types of settings: (a) special education schools where only students with disabilities are educated with no opportunities to interact with typically developing peers, (b) special education units, attached to general education schools where students with disabilities are educated separately but have opportunities to interact with typically developing peers during arrival/departure and recess time, (c) mainstreaming , is placing students with special education needs in general education classrooms during specific time periods based on their skills. where students with disabilities have opportunities to interact with typically developing peers during lessons and outside classroom , as well as during teacher planned activities that foster interaction among students with and without disabilities, and (d) inclusive classrooms, where children with and without disabilities are educated in the same classrooms (Ministry of Education, 2009a).

Typically, students with more severe disabilities are placed in special education schools and special education units where they spend most of their time with a special education teacher. Students with mild disabilities typically are placed in mainstream classrooms and inclusive classrooms (A. S. Chandra, personal communication, March 7, 2011).

The Ministry of Education in Zambia recognizes five categories of disability. These categories include: (a) intellectual disability, (b) hearing impairment, (c) visual impairment, (d) physical impairment, and (e) emotional (behavioral) disorders (Ministry of Education, 2009b). As noted, the quality of special education is adversely impacted by the lack of resources and other challenges. Thus, the quality of special education services may not be comparable to developed nations. However, Eunice and Nyanga (2015) noted that “UNESCO and others in the international community have acclaimed Zambia’s efforts to reach out to ‘children with special needs’”.

In many special schools in Zambia including in Chilanga district, it has been noticed that learners with hearing impairment had a trend of having low rates of acquisition of literacy skills due to the barriers (Kanyanta, 2003). Realizing that the acquisition of literacy skills among learners with hearing impairment plays an integral role in the learner 's advancement and instructional needs among others, it is therefore, necessary to design in a manner that excludes barriers and make acquisition of literacy skills much easy and more accessible to all learners with the hearing impairments. With this consideration, learners with hearing impairment can also have the opportunity to demonstrate their attainments. Since the education of learners with hearing impairments' hinges on proper learning of literacy skills, this study needs to be undertaken.

### **1.5 Statement of the Problem**

The literacy education of the learners with hearing impairments has been characterized by challenges, which has resulted in low literacy skills levels. Studies on hearing impairment have focused on inability to communicate on the facilitators and factors affecting teaching and learning for hearing impaired students in schools. Little is known when it comes to experiences and challenges in an inclusive learning setting faced by those with hearing impairments.

Despite the government's efforts to provide education for all learners regardless of the disability, little is known with regard to the facilitators and barriers in acquisition of literacy skills among learners with hearing impairment in Zambian schools. Therefore, the study found it appropriate to make an inquiry into facilitators and barriers in the acquisition of literacy skills among learners with hearing impairments in lower grade in Chilanga district of Zambia.

## **1.6 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of the study was to investigate facilitators and barriers to acquisition of literacy skills among learners with hearing impairments in lower grades, a case study of Chilanga primary school of special education unit

## **1.7 Objectives of the study**

- i. To explore facilitators in the teaching of literacy skills to learners with hearing impairments.
- ii. To identify the barriers faced by both special education teachers and hearing impaired learners in the acquisition of literacy skills.
- iii. To ascertain efforts schools are making in enabling learners with hearing impairment acquire literacy skills in lower grades.

## **1.8 Study Questions**

1. What are the facilitators on the teaching of literacy skills acquisition to learners with hearing impairments in lower grades?
2. What are the barriers faced by both H.I learners and teachers in literacy skills acquisition?
3. What efforts are the schools making in order to improve the acquisition of literacy skills among learners with hearing impairment?

## **1.9 Significance of the study**

This study was cardinal especially this time when Zambia has to examine how much of the millennium goals of education for all have been achieved. Most of the hearing impairments learners in lower grades are without attaining proficiency in literacy skills. It was hoped that the study would be helpful in understanding barriers in the acquisition of literacy skills among learners with hearing impairments, and the study would make a modest but important contribution to special education policy and planning to formulate policy.

Furthermore, the study would inspire other researchers to conduct more researches on issues of literacy education among hearing impaired learners and help bring improvement in literacy acquisition in lower grades. The study would also address on the reading and writing skills that would enable the learners with hearing impaired excel in learning literacy skills.

The education policy makers, educational planners and managers, teachers of literacy education are likely to find the outcome useful. It was hoped that the study would seek to close the gaps by reanalyzing the existing datasets in order to explore facilitators and barriers in the acquisition of literacy skills in lower grades. Above all, the research may equally add more value to literature which other scholars may use.

## **1.10 Delimitations of the study**

Crewell (1994) says that delimitations are used to address how the study is narrowed in scope. Similarly, Msabila and Nalaila, (2013) asserts that delimitation of the study by geographic location, age, sex, population traits population size, or other consideration.



In view of the above, this study was planned to cover one selected primary school of special education unit with a view of establishing acquisition of literacy skills among the learners with hearing impairments in lower grades and what enabled or disabled them to do so.

The study was limited to special education teachers, senior teachers as these are involved in the teaching of literacy skills to children with HI learners. This study was limited to one primary school of special education unit in the district due to the limited resources were as this study was purely funded by the researcher. One primary special unit school was chosen because of the limited special education schools in the district, short study duration and financial constraints by the researcher.

### **1.11 Limitations of the study**

Best and Kahn (2009) states that limitations are those conditions which are beyond the control of the researcher and may also place restrictions on the conclusion of particular study .This study focused on facilitators and barriers in the acquisition of literacy skills among learners with hearing impairment in lower grades. This research study was conducted in one district and one primary school of education special unit which limits the generalization of the results because the sample size is small given the scope of the study. Although the sample size is small, the findings are critical for making a plausible conclusion about the entire population of learners with hearing impairments, teachers who teach these learners of lower grades literacy skills with hearing impairments.

Consequently, the findings of the study have implications for the identification of variables to promote the successful integration of children and youth with hearing loss as well as other forms of communication difficulties.

## **1.12 Theoretical Framework**

The study adopted the thematic approach theory proposed by Freire in 1981 which suggests that learning activities must be developed around generative themes that are part of the students' cultural environment. These generative themes increase students' motivation and allow them to extend their knowledge about the subject, including social and political factors that can contribute to form complete citizens with critical minds (Evandro, 2004).

Thematic approach is the way of teaching and learning where many areas of the curriculum are connected together and integrated within a theme thematic approach to instruction is a powerful tool for integrating the curriculum and eliminating isolated and reductionist nature of teaching it allows learning to be more natural than then fragmented nature of the school activities. Here the students are actively involved and they learn more skills through thematic learning cognitive skills such as reading, thinking, memorizing and writing are put in the context of a real life situation under the broad aim to allow for creative exploration. Thematic instruction is based on the idea that people acquire knowledge, best when learned in the context of a coherent whole and when they can connect what they are learning to the real world (Okoro, 2016).

Thematic learning has different characteristics such as (1) student-centered, (2) direct experience, (3) the separation of subjects is not very clear, (4) presenting concepts from various subjects, (5) flexible, and (6) learning while playing [2]. The Pend Guru Sekolah Dasar (PGSD) Development Team concludes that the characteristics of thematic learning include (1) holistic, which means that the events become the center of attention and do not classify subjects, (2) meaningful, which means the assessment is based on various aspects which allow the students to do meaningful understanding relating to the theme/topic, (3) authentic, meaning thematic

learning allows students to understand the concepts and principles to be learned, and (4) active, meaning thematic learning involves students' activity in the learning process starting from planning, implementation, and evaluation (Isbadrianingtyas, 2019).

This will guide this study provide instructional guidance to promote literacy growth and the acquisition of literacy skills.

### **1.13 Operational Definition of Key Terms**

**Acquisition:** The acquiring of the literacy skills, the auditory-sensory awareness, knowing and recognizing the letter to a phoneme heard and that letters are visually different from each other is a vital indicator for both reading and writing.

**Barriers:** Obstacle that prevents learners with hearing impairment from performing to their full potential.

**Facilitators:** Processes or practices that help in the acquisition of literacy skills.

**Hearing Impairment:** Is a partial or total inability to hear or Being unable to perceive sound with or without amplification.

**Literacy Skills:** All the skills needed for reading and writing. They include such things as awareness of the sounds of language, awareness of print, and the relationship between letters and sounds. Young writers need to develop the ability to use the structure of language in an appropriate and mature manner. This ability takes several to emerge. It is

further argued that writing and reading have long been thought of as complementary skills.

**Reading:** This is a term used to refer to a deliberate process of looking at and understanding written language (Williams, 1998 in Kalindi, 2005).

**Sign language;** the natural language predominantly used by hearing impaired learner which has its own distinct vocabulary and grammar predominantly used by the hearing impaired learners.

**Special Education Needs:** Refers to children or individuals who have difficulties or disabilities that makes it harder for them to learn than most children of the same age.

**Unit;** A section or department in a mainstream school which caters for the affairs of the hearing impaired learners.

## **1.14 Chapter Summary**

Learners with hearing impairment have continued to pose a challenge to the successful education completion due to their unsatisfactory performance. The chapter has elaborated the background of the study which gave an insight of the study; the statement of the problem is intended to help and clearly identify the goals of the project and outline the scope of a project. The purpose of the study is to investigate facilitators and barriers in the acquisition of literacy skills among the learners with hearing impairment in lower grades. The significance of the study is to understand barriers in the acquisition of literacy skills among learners with hearing impairments, and study would make a modest important contribution to special education policy and planning to

formulate policy. The study will use one of the schools in Chilanga district as a delimitation due to easy access to the researcher. Emerging Literacy Theory is used to this study to amplify the acquisition of literacy skills among the learners with hearing impairments.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Overview**

The chapter reviews available literatures on facilitators and barriers in the acquisition of literacy skills among learners with hearing impairments. This chapter covers literacy skills and performance of the learners with hearing impairments (deaf), facilitators, reviews on barriers, other related literature reviews, and the research gaps.

### **2.2 Acquisition of Literacy skills among Hearing impaired learners**

Literacy skills are important language skills affecting the development of humanity. In general, language skills are primary mental. Literacy skills, namely reading and writing skills, are acquired through complicated mental and physical processes. There are many factors affecting this process. The cognitive process affects the development of the language and the development in the language affects the cognitive skills. During the process of acquiring literacy; children develop themselves in various sub-areas such as phonetics, alphabetic awareness, form-syllable, vocabulary recognition, reading comprehension, and writing skills.

Literacy is a salient goal of schooling and is required in the performance of daily activities such as sending an email, withdrawing money at a bank, making a phone call to a friend and so on. Howell and Lucker (2003), state that many students who encounter difficulties in learning how to read and write tend to fail to fully take part in classroom learning activities, under perform in final school leaving examinations and fail to find skilled jobs. Research has revealed that for children with complete or partial hearing loss reading is one of the major challenges they encounter. Spiral et al (2005) have also stated that children who have challenges in learning how

to read and comprehend texts tend to have difficulties having high academic achievements. These related studies indicate the knowledge gap in this their studies.

Mitchell (2011) have also argued that children with deafness exhibit delays in developing reading comprehension abilities which make them leave school with reading comprehension skills commensurate to those of 9-year-old children of normal hearing. This view is supported by the research study of Kyle and Cain (2015), which compared the reading comprehension abilities of the deaf with that of children with normal hearing. In this study, it was found that pupils who are deaf demonstrated reading comprehension skills that were lower than both chronological age and reading age matched controls, but their skills corresponded with poor comprehends of normal hearing. It should be noted, it is the knowledge gap established as that despite performing poorer in reading comprehension tests as compared to the children of normal hearing, and deaf children did well in comprehending literal questions as opposed to inferential questions.

### **2.3 Facilitators in Acquisition of literacy skills among hearing impaired learners**

The literature reviewed under this part shed light on the facilitators that exist in the acquisition of literacy skills of learners with hearing impairment. Studies observed that students who are deaf utilize different accommodations in their acquisition of literacy skills. Andrew (2000) postulates that there is a variety of live captioning services available to support students with hearing and hard of hearing impairment in reading and writing founded on the fact that learners who are deaf or hard of hearing often use vision of receiving information. However, the researcher concluded that due to the lack of facilitators have created the barriers in the acquisition of literacy skills among the learners with hearing impairment. Due to the challenges pose by the facilitators, there is need to undertake this study.

Spiral et al (2005), observed that facilitators help hearing impaired learners to comprehend in the acquisition of literacy skills. The research conducted concluded that one of the captioning services is computer aided real-time translation. This service uses trained stenographers to provide alternative transcripts of the content of the acquisition of the literacy skills.

A computer conveys written information to the deaf and hard of hearing so that they can communicate fully. In a quest to continue helping individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing write their examinations fairly, closed captions that have time-texts are displayed on video that includes both speech and essential non-speech sounds or simply sign language.

Kanyanta (2003), Studies in Zambia reviewed that facilitators such as closed captions videos help deaf students in the acquisition of literacy skills. Closed captioned videos help deaf student test takers to maintain concentration which provides a better experience for viewing of literacy skills. With the dominance of reality television, information becomes less articulate and more unscripted. Because of that closed captions have improved comprehension for hearing impaired situation. The method has further improved literacy skills.

In relation to the study the acquisition of literacy skills and watching a video is more passive. As when deaf students watch a video they receive more information in their visual and auditory centers and information is processed faster for acquisition of literacy skills (Kanyanta, 2003).

#### **2.4 Barriers in the Acquisition of Literacy skills among Hearing Impaired learners**

In virtually every school, there could be a learner with a reading difficulty. As such ,during their career ,every teacher meets several learners for whom reading is laborious , and even learners who think that they cannot read .Teaching these learners is a challenge for the special



education teachers and the entire school ( Panned , et . al.,2009) Classroom effectiveness of teachers heavily depend on their knowledge of the subject matter and their pedagogical skills.

Unfortunately, most teachers are not oriented towards helping poor readers in their classes. In their training, they are not adequately prepared to teach literacy skills according to HI needs. Therefore, even in cases where reading materials are adequate, reading skills of poor readers are not improved the most important person, who is the teacher in this case does not know how to help the poor readers (Kalundu ,2005)

According to Andrew (2000), studies conducted have identified range of barriers that affect the acquisition of literacy skills among the learners with hearing impairments. Factors such as teacher's speech rate, the frequently rapid pace of classroom discussion that is without sufficient pause between speaker turns, and teachers providing written information and speaking simultaneously for instance, in writing literacy skills, writing on the whiteboard while talking and signing the language, have been shown to impact on communication accessibility. According to Ndhlovu (2008), the hearing barriers that affect learners with impairment to acquire literacy and literacy skills includes the non-suitability of the school curriculum to the hearing impaired learners, inadequate teaching and learning materials and failure to complete the syllabus content as they still follow the general one for regular school learners.

Studies in Zambia, has reviewed that although the goal of inclusive education is to promote the academic and social integration of students, regardless of hearing status, hearing impaired students in public institutions often face social isolation and difficulties in academic participation and this creates the barrier in the acquisition of literacy skills. Participation by hearing impaired students in higher education classrooms may relate to the approach employed to communicate course content. Inclusion was found to have failed in part because instructors were unable to

meet the demands of modifying and delivering an appropriate mode of teaching students with hearing impairment (Kanyanta, 2003).

The study conducted by Venn (2007), observed that lack of sign language interpreters is the barrier in the acquisition of literacy skills among the learners with hearing impairments. One of the most salient characteristics of learning by hearing impaired students in mainstream classrooms is the students' dependence on a third party to provide access to information. Therefore, information is received by the student through interpreting and real-time captioning during class sessions, or through notes (note taking or printouts) outside of class. Content knowledge by instructors, however, appears to be highly valued by hearing impaired students, but perceptions of the importance of the interpreters' familiarity with content material have also not been investigated (Venn, 2007).

According to Matafwali in her dissertation, while acknowledging the rich literacy program in schools such as the New Break Through to Literacy (NBTL) at grade one level; Step Into English (SITE) at grade two level; and the Read On Course (ROC) at grade three and subsequent grades, it is also important to realize that even with excellent and intensive instructions in place, some children will fail to make satisfactory progress in reading as documented by the current study. These children will therefore need a different instructional approach that will promote skills (such as alphabetic principle, phonological awareness and fluency) that are known to predict future reading achievement. There is also need to provide these children with an, individualized Educational Program (IEP) if they are to make progress in reading.

Hence, the need to reduce the teacher- pupil ratio in class. It is important to bear in mind that, teachers have been working under difficult circumstances such as, too many pupils in a classroom, erratic learner attendance and others (MOE, 1992). When there are too many learners

in a classroom, it becomes difficult for the teacher to give individual attention especially to those who may be lagging behind in reading skills.

Furthermore, serious shortage of teaching and learning materials, as well as poor staffing especially in remote areas also make it a challenge for teachers in teaching reading skills (MOE, 2008). A teacher may have the required skills in teaching literacy, but it becomes difficult for him / her to teach effectively if the necessary teaching and learning materials are not in place. Poor staffing levels means teachers have to attend to more than one class hence being overburdened. In return, they will not be able to pay particular attention to those learners have difficulties in literacy skills.

Research has also demonstrated that the process of learning to read is a lengthy one that begins early in the child's life. Based on this, it is highly recommended that children be provided with early childhood educational environments that foster language and literacy development. In developing countries measures of home environment include quality of housing and kind of resources of facilities such as water, light and fuel (Aria & Vos ,1996; Arimah, 1992, Ngorosho ,2009).

The Ministry of Education should therefore introduce pre-school classes in basic schools. Therefore, this will help in reducing the number of children entering school with inadequate literacy skills and above all reducing the magnitude of reading problems that schools are currently facing.

Teachers play a critical role in promoting reading skills in children. Based on this, it is highly recommended that the New Primary Reading Program (PRP) be introduced at pre-service

teachers training college level in order to equip teachers with necessary knowledge and skills to teach emergent reading skills in children.

The study by Mitchell (2012), reviewed that social barriers bears a challenge in acquisition of literacy skills among the learners with hearing impairment. Social barriers would be in the form of discrimination and isolation from peers, lack of participation in integrated social forums, negative attitude from faculty and administration staff and lack of guidance on course choice. Another study by Spiral et al (2005), find out about the institutional based barriers are in form of lecturers without an understanding of hearing impairment, when learners are not encouraged to participate, interpreters who do not understand course content, inadequate infrastructure and resources, ill-motivated lectures and learners without learning incentives.

## **2.5 Efforts to improve access to literacy skills among the hearing impaired learners**

Learning how to read is a process which begins early in the life of a child., (Torgesen, Wagner and Roshotte, 1994) Even before a child reaches school going age, parents and others care givers usually try to teach the child to master letters of alphabet. Therefore, a child is taught how to read words and so on until he/ she starts going to pre-school or primary school, for those children who might not have an opportunity to attend pre- school.

Other related literature observed to determine the effects of the mode of communication at home on the acquisition of reading skills of grade one learners with hearing impairments, to determine the effects of the mode of communication at school on the learning of reading skills by grade one learners with hearing impairments and to establish how teacher competences affect the learning of reading skills of grade one learners with hearing impairments.

Literature observes that many learners are not developing proper reading skills. The main reason why learners may develop difficulties in learning to read could be that learners are not fluent enough in the language of instruction or have little knowledge, if any; experience at looking at books (children's books). The learners may also lack motivation because they have neither seen their parents read, so reading is foreign to them. It is not known whether or not the learners with hearing impairments in Lusaka, Zambia experience the same.

As soon as parents or teachers notice that the child is having difficulties in reading and number recognition. It is important to put the necessary measures in place. Interventions must be started as soon as possible before the problem gets out of hand. One effort is by remediation program used in countries like Finland is the 'Ekapeli 'which is a computer based learning game which helps the child to become fluent in letter sound connections. The Ekapeli was developed by Professor Heikki Lyytinen in 2003. This game is now widely used and other language versions of the game have been tested (Kachenga, 2008).

According to research evidence, it is very difficult to catch up or become fluent reader once learners lag behind in language- based skills of reading unless intensive measures are put in place (Matafwali, 2005) Early intervention is very cardinal as it can help in ameliorating the problem rather than waiting until it is too late.

Therefore, need to know the causes of reading and writing difficulties before intervening. It is very difficult for a problem to be solved without understanding its cause. For example, if it is found that the cause of the reading difficulty is lack of phonological awareness and skills in alphabetical coding , there is need for the teachers to be trained on the letter sound correspondence methods of teaching which are based on alphabetical codes (Mando, 2008).Therefore , the teachers will in turn help the learners with reading difficulties with the use

of sign language and writing of words on the chalkboard , using flash cards and picture books to illustrate the concept taught in a lesson.

The relationship between deafness and low reading skills is complex and appears to be related to a variety of factors including academic achievement of teachers and parents of the children with hearing impairments, language competence of parents of children with hearing impairments, and the family background of children with hearing impairments. Kyle and Cain (2015), in their study on language acquisition by eye argued that reading development is contingent on a fully developed primary language, and that incomplete or inconsistent signed or spoken language may affect the development of reading proficiency.

Others researches indicates that most children with hearing impairments have difficulty with reading. For instance, where a hearing child brings to the reading process a substantial knowledge base resulting from a wide variety of infant and early childhood experiences which have been internalized through the spoken language acquired by interaction with parents and significant others, the child with hearing impairment brings to the same process a very impoverished knowledge base. This is not always due to lack of exposure to early experiences, but often to lack of a fluent language and communication systems with which to signify and internalize those experiences in some manipulated code (Howell and Lucker, 2003). To elaborate further, Howell and Lucker (2003) claim that because of lack of a substantial knowledge base, children with hearing impairments are often lacking in inferential skills and figurative language and other linguistic skills which develop automatically in most hearing learners.

In other words, learners with hearing impairments do not have the experiential, cognitive, and linguistic base needed to learn to read fluently and this makes reading a basic language learning process for these children.

## **2.6 Identified Knowledge Gaps**

Available literature suggest that the method of assessing learners with hearing impairment using closed captioned videos, and Real-time captioning seem not to be used in Zambia and it calls for investigations to establish where, and how the methods are used to order to enhance the acquisition of literacy skills for the of learners.

It has been observed that despite the importance of sign language interpretation for deaf learners, there is surprisingly little research concerning its effectiveness in the classroom. Therefore, there is need to evaluate the relationship of interpreting to learning in the acquisition of literacy skills among the learners with hearing impairments in lower grades.

There is a lack of administrators and faculty members in the schools often resulting in none supportive environment for students with disabilities; many instructors interact with students with hearing impairment but tend to create these barriers unintentionally.

Literature shows that academic and social/personal characteristics of the hearing impaired students present obstacles to their success in higher institutional programs and also have their roots in both inadequate early intervention (in infancy and childhood), and lack of preparation for higher education schooling. Thus there is need to establish the social and personal barriers in the acquisition of literacy skills among the impaired learners.

The above literature which focuses on the hearing impaired learners alludes to the communication challenges, limited access to information and the assessment tools used as being the factors at play influencing the acquisition of literacy skills. Contrary to this view, there are possibilities that issues of educational policy and the other mentioned factors may not be applicable in the Zambian setting. Reason being that it appears to be no sufficient literature to

substantiate these claims. It is therefore, in order to investigate this phenomenon from the curriculum specialist officers, teachers and item writers to establish the correct position.

## **2.7 Summary Chapter**

Literatures reviewed that the acquisition of literacy skills are important language skills affecting the development of humanity. Children with hearing impairments face challenges and barriers in the acquisition of education literacy and literacy skills. The literatures indicate that facilitators that exist in the acquisition of literacy skills of learners with hearing impairments have created the barriers in the acquisition of literacy skills among the learners with hearing impairments.

However, literatures have noted that barriers that affect learners with impairment to acquire literacy and literacy skills includes the non-suitability of the school curriculum to the hearing impaired learners, inadequate teaching and learning materials and failure to complete the syllabus content. The literature shows that it has identified the existing research gaps.



## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Overview**

A research methodology is the blue print that describes the methods applied in carrying out the research study; it answers how a research would be conducted (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). This chapter therefore provides the Research Design, Pilot Study, Target population, Sample Size, Sampling Procedure, Data Collection Instruments, Data Analysis and Ethical Considerations. It has ended with a summary of the chapter.

### **3.2 Research Design**

Kombo and Tromp (2006) describes a research design as a plan on how a study will be carried out or a detailed outline of how a research will take place. Borg and Gall (1989) stated that a research design refers to “all the procedures selected by the researcher for studying a particular set of questions or hypothesis,” That indicates that a research design is program that guides the researcher as he/she collects, analysis and interprets data.

It is a logical model that of proof that allows the researcher to draw inference concerning causal relationship among the variables under investigation. Similarly, Kothari (2004) explains that a research design is a pre-plan of the methods that are to be used for the data collection. It takes account of techniques to be adopted in the adhering to research objectives, time or monetary resource available. Ghosh (2003) points out a research design is not a rigid plan to be followed without deviation, but a series of flexible guide posts to help the research maintain the focus of the study.

Creswell (2009,) postulated that a research design entails the entire research process. The study will have adopted a case study design supported by qualitative approach to data collection. A case study design was help in gaining in-depth understanding of the facilitators and barriers in acquisition of literacy skills among the learners with hearing impairment in lower grades. Gosh (2003), defines a case study as a method of collecting information about an individual, a family, and an institution, a group of persons that can know precisely the factors and causes of a practical phenomenon. A case study design is chosen over other designs to allow in depth investigation of complex social units in specific tendencies. In this study qualitative method will be adopted as it centres on individuals and opinions and it will aim to describe events and persons in detail to achieve a deeper, holistic understanding of the phenomenon under study.

### **3.3 Pilot Study**

Before the main study was conducted a pilot study was carried out in June, 2021. However, the objectives of the pilot study were to test the assessment tools in the following ways;

- Acquaintance with the assessment tools.
- To ensure that the instructions were clearly understood by the respondents.
- Reactions of respondents to the use of assessment tools (whether with interest or difficulty)
- Their relevance to the objective of the study.

According to Keat (1981) it is important to pre-test the tools because it helps the researcher redesign the tools in case he/she does not seem to get the right information from the participants.

The total number of nine (9) respondents were included in the pilot study, that is one (1) deputy head teacher, one (1) senior teacher, two (2) special education teachers and five (5) HI learners from the special unit.

The response from the deputy head teacher, the senior teachers, special education teachers and the HI learners was good despite the focus group questions which were bulkier for the sign language interpreter during the focus group discussions with the hearing impaired learners. It was time consuming but worthwhile because all the questions were relevant to the objective of the study. The respondents showed interest in the study and were cooperative.

The only challenge was the special education teacher's inconsistent usage in sign language which made the researcher to bring in a sign language interpreter to get reliable and validated data from the HI learners.

### **3.4 Target population**

The target population is the total group of individuals from which the sample might be drawn (Brooke 2006). This study comprised of one (1) head teacher, three (3) senior teachers, six (6) special education teachers and (20) hearing impaired learners. The target population was chosen because they are deemed to provide credible information necessary for the study under review. The unit of analysis was the individual students with hearing impairments.

### **3.5 Sample Size**

Sample size refers to the number of participants selected from the universe to constitute a desired sample (Brooke 2006). The study sample was thirty (30) respondents and this included twenty

(20) learners with hearing impairments, six (6) special education teachers, three (3), senior teachers and one (1) head teacher.

### **3.6 Sampling Procedure**

A sampling method is a procedure for selecting sample members from a given selecting sample members from a given population (Brooke, 2006). The study used purposive sampling technique to select the special education teachers and learners. The teachers were included in the study because of the pivotal role they play in teaching and monitoring the progress. All that is needed is relatively small, clearly defined population.

### **3.7 Data Collection Instruments**

The researcher used Focus group discussion and interview guides as for data collection. Bryman (2008) defines research interview as a professional conversation of daily life where knowledge is constructed in the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee.

Therefore, interview guides will be used to elicit in-depth information from the special education teachers on emerging factors on facilitators and barriers in the acquisition of literacy skills among the learners with hearing impairments because, it reduces biased opinions of potential candidates. Focus group discussion enabled the researcher to collect data through face to face interaction with learners with hearing impairments.

### **3.8 Data Collation Procedures**

To enable the researcher to collect the needed data from the sampled participants, the researcher obtained an introductory letter from the Assistant Dean for Postgraduate Studies School of Education and DGRS ethical clearance at the University of Zambia.

The researcher used the introductory letter to further seek and obtain permission from the head teacher, senior teacher, special education teachers and parents of hearing impaired learners, on one to one basis following the interview guide while the focus group discussion was used by the researcher in the HI learners, special education teachers and senior teachers group discussions with the help of the sign language interpreter for HI.

### **3.9 Data Analysis**

Singh (2006) describes data analysis as a process of studying the organized materials so as to determine inherent or meaning. However, it involves breaking down complex factors into simpler ones and parting the parts together in new arrangement for the purpose of interpretation. In relation to this study, thematic analysis was used to analyze all the responses obtained on the topic.

Rice and (1999) say that thematic analysis involves the identification of themes. Responses to open ended questions which were recorded and then grouped into categories or themes the emerged and these were interpreted in line with the research objectives. The emerging themes became the categories for analysis. The research carefully categorized data looked for key words, trends, themes, or ideas that helped to outline the analysis. Therefore, emerging themes were identified and reported in a narrative form as finding of the study.

Data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data (Gosh, 2003). Data analysis attempts to make sense of the collected data and will be analyzed qualitatively. This study will use thematic analysis which is more connected to qualitative stance. Thematic analysis was done in line with the study objectives. Thematic analysis as a method involved: identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within

data. The reasons for using thematic analysis are that: it is user-friendly; this approach is unsupervised, allows a lot of flexibility in interpreting the data, and allows the approach large data sets more easily by sorting them into broad theme. Furthermore, frequencies and percentages were generated by the use of Microsoft excel based on the responses in each theme.

### **3.10 Trustworthiness**

Data was collected through interviews which was be recorded. The data was put according to the themes emanating from the research questions and will be pre-set before data collection began. Themes were emerged while the study was being conducted. The themes were thereafter sub divided into thematic groups to enable analysis of the themes in connection with the study research questions. The themes involved institutional barriers such as mode of instruction, sign language interpreters, resources and social integration barriers.

### **3.11 Ethical Considerations**

Matters of ethical were highly considered in this study. Cohen (2007) cites Canvas who defines ethical issues as, "...a matter principal sensitivity to the rights of others and that while truth is good, respect for human dignity is better," Therefore, permission was sought from The University of Zambia Research Ethics Committee (UNZA REC) to go ahead with the study. However, permission was obtained from the Provincial Education Officer, Lusaka province, (PEO), the District Education Board Secretary in Chilanga (DEBS) and Chilanga primary school for using the school for the study. At the school level, the head teacher gave consent for the hearing impaired learners to participate in the study. The teachers who were part of the sample also gave consent to participate. According to Madge (1994) ethical research is one that gains

information and consent from respondents. Respects the right of individual under the study and does not cause any harm to them.

The aim of the study was clearly explained to the hearing impaired learners through the use of sign language, special education teachers, senior teachers and the head teacher prior to the commencement of the study. In addition, the measures undertaken to ensure compliance with ethical issues included using the data from the respondents strictly for academic purposes and notified the respondents that participation was voluntary and respondent's identity was protected ,while confidentiality was assured by not recording the names of the participants.

### **3.12 Summary of the Chapter**

The chapter explained in detail the research design, pilot study, target population, sample size of the study, sampling, and the research instruments adopted in the study stated as interviews guides, Focus group discussion. The chapter further discussed the data collection procedures and also highlighted clearly on issues of validity and reliability. The chapter thoroughly tackled data analysis and ethical considerations.

## CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

### 4.1 Overview

This chapter presents the research findings. Findings are the principal outcomes of a research project; what the project suggested, revealed or indicated. This usually refers to the totality of outcomes, rather than the conclusions or recommendations drawn from them.

### 4.2 Age Range

Through surveying age ranges and using appropriate survey questions to identify the age demographic of the people who took the survey, it helps potentially gain a lot of valuable detail during analysis of their feedback to reveal if there is a strong correlation between age and subsequent opinions and behavioral.

The table below shows the age range of participants in the study. From the table, 4 (13%) participants were 9 years and below, 10 (33%) were between 10 – 15 years, 6 (20%) were between 16 – 20 years and 9 (30%) were 31 years and above and only 1 (3%) between 26 – 30 years.

**Table 1: Age Range**

	<b>Hard of hearing</b>	<b>Spatial of Hearing</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Senior Teacher</b>	<b>Head Teacher</b>
9 and below	1	3	0	0	0
10 - 15 years	2	8	0	0	0
16 - 20 years	1	5	0	0	0
21 - 25 years	0	0	0	0	0
26 - 30 years	0	0	1	0	0
31 and above	0	0	5	3	1



### 4.3 Gender

Table 2. Below show the gender participants. From the table, 14 (46%) were males of which 11 (79%) were spatial of hearing, 1 (7%) hard of hearing, 1 (7%) teacher and 1 (7%) senior teacher. 16 (53%) participants were females of which 5 (31%) were spatial of hearing and teachers respectively, 3 (19%) were hard of hearing and senior teacher respectively.

**Table 2: Gender**

	<b>Hard of Hearing</b>	<b>Spatial of Hearing</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Senior Teacher</b>	<b>Head Teacher</b>
Male	1	11	1	0	1
Female	3	5	5	3	0

### 4.4 Qualifications

Table 3. Shows the qualifications of the teachers. The table shows that 1 (10%) has a certificate in a teaching, 3 (30%) are diploma holders, and 6 (60%) are degree holders.

**Table 3: Qualifications**

	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Senior Teacher</b>	<b>Head Teacher</b>
Certificate	0	1	0
Diploma	2	1	0
Degree	4	1	1
Master's	0	0	0

Degree			
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#### 4.5 Experience

The table shows the experience of teachers in teaching HI learners. The table shows that all teachers have 16 years and above experience.

**Table 4: Experience**

	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Senior Teacher</b>	<b>Head Teacher</b>
0 - 5 years	0	0	0
6 - 10 years	0	0	0
11 - 15 years	0	0	0
16 and above years	6	3	1

#### 4.6 Special Teachers

The table below shows special teachers at one of the schools with hearing impaired learners. Only 2 (33%) teachers know sign language, 1 (17%) trained in literacy skills and 3 (50%) are untrained in either sign language or literacy skills.

**Table 5: Special Teachers**

	<b>Sign Language</b>	<b>Literacy Skills</b>	<b>Untrained</b>
Male	0	1	1
Female	2	0	2

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#### **4.7 Facilitators in the Acquisition of Literacy Skills among Learners with Hearing Impairments.**

In this research, the factors that help hearing impaired learners to acquire literacy skills and reach their full potential are known as facilitators in learning processes. The facilitators to literacy skills acquisition are as follows:

- Special teachers using sign language as medium of instruction in teaching HI learners.

On the same, one female 5 TR observed that; “Notable that signs are developed according to understanding of the child and the home environment”.

Teaching of literacy skills in localized signs language in the classroom was working well and they were able follow signs correctly.

It is evident that facilitators to literacy skills acquisition among HI learners can be achieved by teachers using sign language as a medium of instruction in a classroom. It is also believed that localized and notable signs are developed according understanding of the learner or child.

#### **School administrators to be knowledgeable on literacy skills acquisition for learners with hearing impairments**

A female HI learner said;

“I went to collect our classroom keys and talking in sign language to the head teacher but no response, hence I failed to interact further”

It was reviewed that the hearing impaired learners felt not loved, if the school administrators did not respond to their greetings or by not greeting them. Hence, it is vital for administrators to have knowledge in literacy skills for interaction and special unit monitoring purposes.

### **Special teachers to be given double class allowances for motivation.**

A female ST commented that;

“I would work extra more if this government would increase our salaries or be given double class allowance.”

It was evident from the findings that teachers were prepared to offer extra lessons if they were remunerated beyond their minimum wages if they taught literacy skills acquisition to learners with hearing impairments.

### **Learners to be taught using localized teaching and learning aids.**

Therefore, localized teaching and learning aids are very important in the lesson delivery in literacy skills acquisition. The study revealed that were able to grasp concepts as they were learning from known to the unknown and some teachers only used sign english even if books are not written in local language.

## **4.8 Barriers Faced by Learners with Hearing Impairments in The Acquisition of Literacy Skills.**

The factors that lead to learning breakdown and prevent learner from reaching their full potential are known as barriers to learning and development. Below are the barriers to the acquisition of literacy skills by HI learners:

### **Lack of adapted curriculum to suit HI learners.**

In support, the school manager complained that:

“In most cases HI learners are not familiar with the western charts that we have in schools. Hence it is wise to use local materials in teaching and learning to suit their environment and easy understanding of grasping concepts in learning”.

### **Discrimination, bullying and teasing.**

Regular learners from the mainstream sometimes teased the HI. The findings obtained through the discussions revealed that there was lack of social skills in the HI as the regular learners do not socially interact with each other fully,

A Female HI learner from the unit reported that they were bullied about their physical appearance and she said the following in sign language;

“I think sometimes to myself that I should stop playing with regular learners in the school because my speech sounds not appealing to them. I have decided to use sign language even when I can hear what they are saying and pretend not to hear, ooh yes.”

Female TR said the following;

“Regular teachers tease us special teachers with our HI learners that we are not normal, and that why most of special teachers are counted to be learned even when they have degrees compared to mathematics or other teachers in the school systems.”

Male TR complained of statements from his fellow male teachers from the mainstream;

“Why did you choose to teach persons with disabilities out of all courses in colleges or maybe it was cheap, boi (mate) special education teacher sure”.

During the Focus Group Discussion, both teachers and HI were not treated fairly hence the lost self-esteem in the process of teaching and learning literacy skills.

Female ST said their head teacher urged regular teachers to support the activities in the special unit.

A male 2 HI learner did not hold back as he complained that:

“We are not considered in most other activities in school, hence we feel left out in the school activities”.

From the above findings it is evident that in the special unit class, HI learners do not socialize easily with learners from the mainstream resulting in negative social experiences.

Another Female 3 HI learner complained that:

“The teacher's in the mainstream don't like teaching us whenever they are called upon to teach us literacy skills, they even use insults for sign language and don't give chance to the interpret to explain to us nicely”.

On the other hand, HI learners observed that there was lack of awareness on the disability is not inability to reach oneself s potential in life.

### **Absence of qualified special teachers in sign language.**

Sign language as a medium of instruction to HI learners in classroom or learning environment is very vital, hence it important as administrators, senior teachers, teachers and the learners to be able interact and easy the learning process in the acquisition of literacy skills in lower grades.

The head teacher reported that;

“The HI learners looked stressed due to having less qualified sign language teachers, as it required to be taught by the same teachers even in literacy skills that were not trained in. However, “I have written to District Education Secretary requesting for a special education teacher for the HI learners to lessen the job for only teacher”.

A female 4 HI learner complained that;

“The teachers were not teaching literacy skills regularly due to in consistence in sign language usage, hence the writing of words on the board and ask us to copy due to challenges in using sign language instructions were the order of the days. Therefore, the teaching and learning aids were left to us without proper explanation on the concept to be taught on words or numeracy.”

A female 7TR remarked that;

“I fail to teach literacy using sign language due to HI learners in the class who often use different types of sign language, However, it is noticed that different home environment have they own sign language. Hence, the HI learners face challenges in communication until they get used at the new signing.”

A female 1SR commented that;

“Some teachers failed to plan lessons due to lack of content and knowledge in literacy skills and sign language. Therefore, it leads to inadequate lesson delivery to learners to be able to acquire literacy skills.”

During the Focus Group Discussion with the learners and teachers it was revealed in consistence of sign language was a worry in both teachers and HI learners.

### **Lack of educational materials**

A female ST said the following;

“HI learners would do well in literacy skills acquisition, but the school does not have suitable education materials. Hence this problem has badly affected the literacy performance for the early grades.”

A female TR said the following;

“HI learners do not like sharing education materials with other learners in the unit, hence us teachers find it very difficult to use the available education materials to use in the literacy skills acquisition lessons in lower grades.”

Another female TR agreed with the Female TR and this is what she had to say;

“HI learners would want to learn using few available educational materials for non HI learners, that can be of help to them in literacy acquisition. But the HI learners like to be among themselves, hence not wanting to use the that materials that other are using to learn.”

The head teacher complained on the levels of special teachers not wanting to use educational localized materials, as they can be very useful in understanding the teaching concepts easily. This can enhance HI learners’ understandings as most of the teaching and learning material are western or foreign produced.



Overall, the findings show that although HI learners were generally lacking educational materials in teaching and learning but some foreign education materials were used in teaching literacy skills acquisition. Aspect that the HI learners not wanting to share the education materials for other learners in the unit.

### **Poor specialized infrastructure and modified Classrooms.**

During the Focus Group Discussion teachers were asked to mention the barriers in the classroom. Generally, it was reported that especially poor specialized infrastructure and modified classroom were not available for the HI learners to acquire literacy skills. They lacked proper windows for lighting purposes and enough space for standing when signing the language.

A male TR said:

“lack of infrastructure or modified buildings for the HI learner's pose a challenge to us as sign language should be conducted where there is enough light, as we know HI learners depend on Light to see the signing”.

A male HI learner said;

“It is very difficult to see what the teacher is signing in the presences of other learners making unnecessary movements in the unit classroom during a lesson. The teacher makes sure that chalkboard is used but in the process other learners within the unit classroom playing near the chalk board, hence makes the destruction to me in the learning process. However, this has affected me a lot in acquiring literacy skills for years now.”

The head teacher complained of the lack of infrastructure and modified classroom in the school and that it has both affected the teachers and the learners in the literacy skills acquisition in lower grades for the HI learners.

### **Lack of parental involvement**

A male HI learner said;

“There was a general feeling that parents to the HI learners had no interest in the academic work for their children or ward. This can be seen in the statements below from the HI learners who participated in the discussion.”

During this Focus Group Discussion, a female TR complained about the negative attitudes of some parents towards their children\wards academic progress.

One of the female ST said;

“Some parents do not help their HI learners with homework, saying that as if this academic work will take my child anywhere in life. I bring this child here to socialize and nothing else.”

Another female TR complained;

“Some parents have very bad attitudes towards their own children, for example, one parent told me not be giving his child home work on drawings because he likes painting the walls. He warned to report me to the head teacher if I insist on doing things that are against his will for his son. The learner had developed fear and that made him to lose interest in literacy skills acquisition.”

The head teacher commented;

“Most of the parents with hearing impairments just enroll their children in school and show no interest in their academic welfare. Mainly hearing impaired learners come to school without food and proper school requirements for learning purposes. Hence, this has greatly affected their literacy acquisition process.”

**Lack of parental sensitization on the importance of literacy skills and sign language skills.**

During interviews with the teachers and the senior teachers, it was reported that there was lack of parental sensitization on the importance of literacy skills and sign language. And it seemed to affect the performance in literacy acquisition in lower grades among the HI learners.

Another male HI learner reported that;

“My father told me to be using one exercise book because am not heading anyway in my academic progression in life. Hence buying of many exercise and text books is a share waste of money; instead the money can be used on two young sisters.”

The head teacher had this to say;

“One parent came to my office and asked if he can bring his child for two days in a week in the special unit, while they are looking for a maid to remain with their 12 years old HI child. This situation showed that the parent had no knowledge on the ability of this child in society. After having a conversation with this parent he enrolled the child in the special class and she is progressing well academically.”

A female TR complained that;

The in consistence of using different sign language for the learners was lack of parental sensitization on school sign language meant in teaching and learning purposes. The collaboration in sign language between the parents, HI learners and teachers would enhance acquisition of literacy skills performance in learners.

It is clear from the findings that there was lack of sensitization on literacy skills and sign language to the parent's. Hence; this affected the performance on literacy skills acquisition among learners with hearing impairments. Therefore, parents could not know that the HI learners can progress and achieve their dreams if assisted with proper literacy skills and sign language guidance, because a disability is not inability to perform in certain skill.

### **Stigma by the community**

This is still high in the community as one female TR put that:

“There is need to sensitize the community and especially care givers. Lack of sensitization on the parents and the care givers on the disability knowledge is high”.

A male HI learner complained that;

“Many are times learners with hearing impairments are neglected in terms of being involved in community activities as role plays and games that children of our age do, on the expense of being HI children. However, such activities would be very helpful in developing us acquire literacy skills.”

The head teacher reported that;

“Most of the HI learners in the school feel isolated because of negative attitude that they receive from both home and within the school environment. However, this has lead to their low performance in literacy skills. As they feel not accepted in society, including that of classroom environment.”

It is observed that HI learners are misunderstood in their community, hence community groups should be formed to offer sensitization and support with the help through the District Commission’s office under the council district, to be able to educate the communities on the inclusion of persons with hearing impairments in society.

### **Lack of assistive devices**

Assistive devices are important to learners with hearing impairments in the hearing process of learning, if they are recommended and used correctly by the learner.

A male HI learner complained that;

“My parents could not afford to buy me an ear in plant, hence my condition has worsened to this stage and making it very difficult to acquire literacy skills as I only see but not understand very well the sign language being used by the teachers in the classroom.”

Another female HI learner commented that;

“Ever since, my hearing aids got lost. I have been unable to pay attention in class due to teachers in consistence in use of sign language, hence it is very difficult to understand

literacy concepts through the teacher in consistence signing of words and letters in sign language”.

A female TR reported that;

“One of the hearing impaired learners have challenges in learning through sign language instruction in class. And when the parents were approached to have their child to get medical attention pertaining to his ear problem. The mother said I don’t have where to get such an amount of money to buy ear devices, when am failing to feed him two full meals a day.”

During interviews with the teachers and hearing impaired learners, it was revealed that teachers were being helpful by lobbying for assistive devices on behalf of the learners to assist them in the literacy skill acquisition. Teachers taught literacy skills to hearing impaired learners by using flip charts, words cards, pictures and chalk board to avoid the in consistence of sign language usage by some teachers as it is a challenge to access assistive devices.

### **Lack of sign language and literacy skills knowledge on the administrators.**

A female TR commented that;

“We have challenges in the unit as our head teacher is not familiar with the methodology as he comes for monitoring the progress for learners with hearing impairments.” Hence, this poses a challenge as to some teachers who are not seriously in the implementation of literacy acquisition for learners.

A female ST revealed that;

“Specialists teachers in sign language and literacy skills have several times engaged the administrators date (head teacher and the deputy head) on the importance of them being trained, but of no avail up to.”

It is evident that the two top administrators were not interested in learning sign language and literacy skills knowledge that would enhance their school monitoring skills competence in the special unit. However, teachers were putting their best in teaching of learners with hearing impairments literacy skills acquisition despite having challenges from administrators.

#### **4.8 Efforts school is making in enabling learners with hearing impairments acquire literacy skills.**

**Conduct workshops three times in a year, for the enhancement of sign language skills and knowledge for the teachers in the school.**

This has improved the skills and knowledge among the teachers in the school. The head teacher reported that;

‘The regular teachers in the school have also been part of the training workshops in sign language skills and knowledge. Therefore, this has been helpful in interaction between the learners with hearing impairments and the regular teachers. It has not only improved the socialization aspect but these teachers are now willing to teach literacy skills to the hearing impaired learners in cases were need arises.’

A female TR said that;

“With the regular sign language workshops, it has made me acquire sign language knowledge and competence, that now am able to teach literacy and numeracy concepts to the hearing impaired learners without challenges.”

Teachers of learners with hearing impairments felt that the regular sign language skills and knowledge workshops should continue to impart knowledge and change the scenario of negative attitude towards learners with disabilities to progress effectively in the literacy skills acquisition in the lower grades. Hence, it is necessary for all the teachers in the school to acquire basic skills for classroom instruction in sign language.

**Teacher group meetings (TGMs) to share on their individual classroom experiences, knowledge and teach each other on various areas of need in their teaching pre – requisites.**

A female ST commented that;

“The teacher group meetings have been very helpful to both special and regular teachers in the school. However, many issues concerning learners with hearing impairments have been discussed in a positive way and I believe that this will change the levels of literacy skills acquisition in our school.”

It is therefore, evident that efforts made in TGMs has helped teachers deal with some of their classroom challenges using other teachers experience and methods in literacy skills acquisition for the hearing impaired learners.



The school has made it mandatory for the special unit department to be engaging persons with hearing impairment, who are experts in teaching to deliver lessons once in term to just develop self-esteem in the hearing impaired learners.

The head teacher said that;

“The learners with hearing impairments have enjoyed the presence of HI teaching experts their classroom. This has motivated them in literacy acquisition and sign language knowledge. The hearing impaired learners have changed their behavior drastically”

The findings of the study show that the engagement of persons with hearing impairments has helped to improve in the way they looked at themselves and reduced their absenteeism from school. Hence, this will enhance their interest in learning literacy skills and gain their self esteem and able to socialize fully with other learners in the school and back home.

#### **Breakfast feeding program for the HI learners using the Production Unit (PU) resources.**

With the challenge of coming late to class, the feeding program has helped to reduce absenteeism and improve early coming to class.

When respondents were asked on how they support the breakfast feeding program, the head teacher said;

Among the teachers (TR) interviewed (5) five out of (6) six teachers acknowledged the positive support by the head teacher in terms of financial and material support to the special unit. To this effect, one HI learner said;

The head teacher contributes to the breakfast feeding program for the HI learners in the unit, by allocating some money from the school production unit project to create an enabling environment for them in the unit classroom. Hence this has led to the enhancement of literacy skill acquisition in the unit classroom.

As regards the teachers to further in lobbying for support and partnering with non-governmental organizations (NGO) such as Sports in Action and Snow Spar, and companies like Lafarge cement Chilanga plant for HI learner's supportive services. This has helped to acquire some learning and teaching materials for both HI learners and teachers.

On the failure of parental and community involvement the school came up with a policy to give parents of HI learners, leaders in the church and people of influence positions in the parents and teachers association (PTA), so that they can be directly involved in the HI learner's welfare and challenges be dealt in the quickest time it deserves.

A female TR said this;

“The head teacher contributed to the provision of policy of parental and community involvement by providing an enabling environment in which parents were directly involved in the affairs of the school.”

Therefore, the efforts of the school had seen some improvement in parents, guardians and leaders from different Organizations within the community as some churches are now using sign language during church services and literacy skills acquisition in lower grades is being sensitized by community members.

## **4.9 Summery**

According to the study objectives, this chapter presented the findings of the study. It looked at the demographic details of the participants, acquisition of knowledge by the teachers, barriers to the acquisition of skills and the efforts the school has made to improve the situation.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

### **5.1 Overview**

This chapter will discuss the research findings according to the research objectives. The purpose of the discussion is to interpret and describe the significance of the findings in light of what was already known about the research problem being investigated and to explain any new understanding or insights that emerged as a result of the study of the problem. This study was based on the following objectives:

- a. To explore facilitators in the teaching of literacy skills to learners with hearing impairments.
- b. To establish the barriers faced by both teachers and learners with hearing impairments in the acquisition of literacy skills.
- c. To ascertain efforts school is making in enabling learners with hearing impairment acquire literacy skills.

### **5.2 Facilitators knowledge, literacy skill and experience levels in teaching of literacy skills to learners with hearing impairment**

The first objective of the study was to explore facilitator's knowledge levels, literacy skills and experience in teaching literacy skills to children with hearing impairment. To answer this objective, qualifications and experience were considered. In addition, the study also considered the number of special teachers available.

The study reviewed that 10% of the teachers had a certificate in a teaching course, 30% had a diploma in a teaching course, and 60% had a degree in a teaching course. It further reviewed that all teachers had 16 years and above experience in teaching children with hearing impairment. When it comes to special teachers, the study reviewed that 33% of teachers know sign language, 17% are trained in literacy skills and 50% are untrained in either sign language or literacy skills.

From the findings, the teachers have the knowledge in teaching and experience when it comes to teaching children with hearing impairment. Even though teachers seem to have knowledge in this area, the majority are not trained in either sign language or literacy skills which are among the needed skills to properly deliver lessons to HI learners. 17% of teachers trained in sign language or literacy skills is still low.

### **5.3 Barriers faced by both teachers and learners with hearing impairment in the acquisition of literacy skills**

The second objective of this study was to establish barriers faced by both teachers and learners with hearing impairment in the acquisition of literacy skills. A number of barriers were identified from both the teachers and the learners, namely: lack of adapted curriculum to suit the HI learners, Discrimination, bullying and teasing. Absence of qualified sign language teachers. Lack of educational materials. Poor community attitude towards both teachers and HI learners. Inadequate specialist education teachers and resources, Lack of assistive devices for HI learners, Lack of knowledge or unawareness of most people that a disability is not inability. Lack of parental involvement in case of literacy skills knowledge on how to help their children with homework, Lack of parental sensitization on the importance of literacy and sign language skills and Poor specialized infrastructure and modified buildings for HI learners.

When participants were asked on what would have influenced the hearing impaired learners low literacy skills acquisition in lower grades. The number of barriers were identified from both teachers and hearing impaired learners. The findings were quite diverse on literacy skills acquisition among learners with hearing impairments. The study revealed that head teacher, senior teachers, special teachers and hearing impaired learners themselves felt that the sign language as a medium of instruction in the classroom affected the literacy skills acquisition performance in lower grades. .As a result, teachers and senior teachers were not able to communicate fully, blend the different local language signs to support literacy skills acquisition in classroom. Partly this was attributed to hearing impaired learners coming from different oral language background with use of different local language signs which made it difficult for the teachers to effectively use sign language.

Further, it was evident by Maambo (2011), who noticed that the challenges ranges from different local signs which children bring from their homes and the difficulties teachers find in using one of these in teaching reading and writing in primary school.

#### **5.4 Lack of adapted curriculum to suit the HI learners**

In education, a curriculum is broadly defined as the totality of student experiences that occur in the educational process. The term often refers specifically to a planned sequence of instruction, or to a view of the student's experiences in terms of the educator's or school's instructional goals.

During a focus group discussion, teacher A and B complained that Lack of adapted curriculum to suit the HI learners makes it very difficult for them to prepare lessons, hence they plan lessons under very difficult circumstance and that affects their performance of hearing impaired learners in grasping the intended concept during lessons.

The curriculum gives guide to a teacher at every stage for a continuous development or advancement. Especially that the school has no expert special teachers in sign language and literacy skills for lower grades, it is very difficult for them to come up with lessons that has all the pre-quests.

#### **5.4.1 Discrimination, Bullying and Teasing**

This study revealed that learners with hearing impairments were being discriminated, bullied, and teased by the normal learners and teachers in the mainstream classes. However, this treatment made them feel belittled and shun away from socializing freely in the school environment .The study established similar responses from special education teachers, senior teachers and the head teacher.

The normal learners made fun of the HI learners .For instance they laughed at them because of their physical appearance, some of their friends told them that they make a lot of noise and looked funny when using sign language. This experience made the HI learners not to be comfortable and isolated themselves from the normal regular learners in school. It is true that socially learners had lost their self-esteem same applied to the special education teachers, from focus groups with HI learners and special education teachers, the study reviewed that with HI learners and special education teachers were often bullied by their counterparts.

On the other hand another senior teacher reported that HI learners socialized with people who accepted the way they were but not those who laughed at them. Therefore, this has affected their class attendance for learning regularly due to discrimination, bullying and teasing. Hence this has leads to poor performance in literacy skills for HI learners.

Swart and Pettiepher (2005) in Human (2020) argued that regular schools with an inclusive orientation were the most effective means for all. Learners could not really be counted as included if they did not acquire the skills they needed to participate in the society or if the skills gap between them and their peers grew too wide ( Dyson ,2001 ). In this sense, the HI learners would only have the positive social and academic experiences if they were being accepted in an inclusive environment school .For instance social skills could be acquired as they interact with their fellow normal regular learners from the mainstream.

The study further reviewed that learners who experience discrimination from peers and adults have challenges associating with others and this effect is seen even in class.

#### **5.4.2 Absence of qualified special teachers in sign language and literacy skills.**

Non expert in sign language special teachers find it very hard to teach and control learners as reviewed during the focus groups. Untrained teachers admit that they have a challenge starting with preparation of lessons to lesson delivery and class control.

It also emerged from the study that the absence of qualified special teachers has a big negative impact on learners. During focus group discussions, teachers complained that it is hard for them to communicate to learners especially when you need to use sign language as their skills are not good and them are using local sign language from home.



## **5.5 Lack of educational materials**

Teachers need educational materials to deliver lessons better. The study reviewed that special schools have no proper educational material to use when delivering lessons. This has a negative effect on the learners as they don't receive proper lessons that need specialized educational materials.

### **5.5.1 Lack of parental sensitization on the importance of literacy and sign language skills.**

Parents and guardians play a very important role in the learning process. Learners need help when they are away from school and parents who don't know the importance of literacy and sign language skills don't take their children lessons seriously.

Teachers reviewed that many children don't get help from their guardians because it is not important to them. Some learners also reviewed that their guardians don't take their lessons seriously and they cannot even help them with homework. This creates a dependency on teachers who don't have enough educational materials to teach them.

### **5.5.2 Poor specialized infrastructure and modified building for HI learners.**

Learners with HI learners need specialized infrastructure to meet their needs such as buildings with very good lighting for easy communication. During interviews with the head teacher and the special education teachers, it was reported that modern infrastructure for HI learners is needed to improve the learning process.

## **5.6 Efforts made by the school in enabling learners with hearing impairment acquire literacy skills**

The study found that the school is lacking qualified special teachers in sign language and literacy skills which made the school management to start conducting workshops three times in a year, for the enhancement of sign language skills and knowledge for the teachers in the school. It was reported that this strategy has helped special education teachers to improve their teaching experience, specially the untrained teacher. This has also improved their literacy skills for them to deliver lessons. Teacher group meetings (TGMs) are done to share on their individual classroom experiences, knowledge and teach each other on various areas of need in their teaching pre-requisites has improved the way teaching is handled.

To motivate the students, the school has made it mandatory for the special unit department to be engaging persons with hearing impairments, who are experts in teaching to deliver lessons once in term to just develop self-esteem in the HI learners.

The study found that many learners were lacking good diet and came late to class because of late preparation of meals in homes. The school introduced breakfast feeding program for the HI learners using the Production Unit (PU) resources which has also helped to reduce absenteeism by learners. Because of the poor nutrition, many learners have problems with concentration in the classroom and this program is making a positive impact in the learners.

The study found that there was lack of parental sensitization on the importance of literacy and sign language skills. The institution sensitizes leaders in the church and people of influence positions in the parents and teachers association (PTA), so that they can be directly involved in the HI learner's welfare and challenges be dealt in the quickest time it deserves.

## **CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter will present the opinion reached by the researcher after considering the findings of the study. This chapter will also make recommendations to relevant authorities and policy makers to improve the learning process of HI learners.

### **6.2 Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study, it is evident that student with hearing impairment are faced with multiple challenges in the special unit. These challenges include; lack of adapted curriculum to suit the HI learners, discrimination , bullying and teasing , absence of qualified teachers, lack of educational materials, disaggregated data research about disability, poor community attitude to both HI learners and special education teachers , inadequate specialist special education teachers and resource centers, shortage of specialized teaching and learning resources and lack of assistive devices, lack or unawareness of most people that a disability is not inability, lack of parental involvement in case of literacy skills knowledge on how to help their children with homework, lack of parental sensitization on the importance of literacy and sign language skills and poor specialized infrastructure and modified buildings for HI learners. The geographical location of the school also serves as a barrier in executing special needs education programs for the disable.

The economic situation of Zambia has direct and indirect impacts on the welfare and management of the institutions for the deaf. Going forward, a conducive environment has to be created for hearing impairment learners to be successful in the learning process by providing

solutions to the challenges highlighted by the study. The study recommends that the Zambian government improve financial funding and ensure that basic needs be made available to all students suffering from hearing impairment.

### **6.3 Recommendations**

Recommendations presented are based on the barriers identified during the study. The Zambian government should review relevant policies connected with disabilities in the country. To overcome the barriers, the following recommendations have been suggested;

- The Ministry of Education should come up with a curriculum that suits the HI learners.
- Sensitization of the community about HI learners and the importance of education of their education.
- The government should promote more colleges and universities to introduce special education courses.
- Government should increase funding to schools that handle HI learners for them to procure adequate educational materials and provide food supplements.
- Data research about disability should be well aggregated for reference and to improve the situations on disability knowledge.
- Government and the private sector should train more special education teachers and increase resource centers.
- People need to be sensitized that disability is not an inability.
- Parents and guardians should be involved for them to receive literacy skills for them to be able to communicate well with HI persons within their care.

- Parents need to create a literacy home environment for their children to be able continue with the literacy skills acquisition at home.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1. Written Consent for the Respondents (Hearing impaired learners)

Good morning/afternoon, my name is Clementine Chuma Zulu, am a masters student in Special Education at the University of Zambia. I am carrying out a case study on facilitators and barriers faced by students with hearing impairments in Chilanga district, Zambia. You have been purposively selected as an informant in this study by virtue of being a hearing impaired student at one of the selected school in Zambia.

The information obtained will purely be for the purpose of this research and will be treated with confidentiality and will be used for academic purposes only in fulfillment of my research project. Your participation is completely voluntary and your input will assist me to know the barriers that students with hearing impairment face at your school. There is no right or wrong answer in this study.

Do you have any concerns or questions about your participation in this exercise?

If yes, please tick the box

If no , kindly sign below as evidence of your informed consent.

Sign\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you for your cooperation.*

## **Appendix 2: Interview Guide for the Hearing impaired learners (Focus Group Discussion)**

- (1) What activities do you do in school?
- (2) Do you understand what they teach?
- (3) Is it easy for you to learn what they teach you?
- (4) What makes things difficult when learning?
- (5) What do you think teachers can do for you to learn better?

### **Appendix 3: Interview guide for Special Education Teachers (Focus Group Discussion)**

- (1) What is your level of education?
- (2) What is your specialty? Answers above
- (3) What are the barriers teachers face when teaching hearing impaired learners in literacy at lower grades in schools.
- (4) What efforts are the teachers putting in to improve on the acquisition of literacy skills among HI learners.

#### **Appendix 4: Interview Guide for the Senior Teachers**

- (1) What is your level of education (3 teacher's data?)
- (2) What are the barriers faced in teaching literacy skills to HI learners in lower grades in school?
- (3) What changes would you like to see in teaching literacy skills among HI learners.
- (4) What efforts have been put in place by the school to enhance the acquisition of literacy levels for the HI learners?

## **Appendix 5: Interview Guide for the Head Teacher**

- (1) What is your education level?
- (2) For how long has been a head teacher?
- (3) What are the barriers the school is facing when teaching literacy skills to the HI learners.
- (4) What efforts is the school putting in to improve the levels of literacy skills acquisition among the HI learners.
- (5) Do you have any help from government or well-wishers to combat the challenges?
- (6) Any suggestions to overcome these challenges\barriers?

## **Appendix 6: Consent from the School Head Teacher**

### **FACILITATORS AND BARRIERS TO ACQUISITION OF LITERACY SKILLS AMONG LEARNERS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENTS IN LOWER GRADES: A CASE OF CHILANGA PRIMARY SCHOOL SPECIAL UNIT OF CHILANGA DISTRICT, LUSAKA, ZAMBIA.**

#### **Consent to take part in research**

- I..... voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.
- I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.
- I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.
- I understand that participation involves answering questions and giving testimonies.
- I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.
- I agree to my interview being audio-recorded.
- I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.
- I understand that in any report on the results of this research my identity will remain anonymous. This will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of my interview which may reveal my identity or the identity of people I speak about.
- I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in thesis, conference presentation, published papers etc.].



- I understand that if I inform the researcher that myself or someone else is at risk of harm they may have to report this to the relevant authorities - they will discuss this with me first but may be required to report with or without my permission.

- I understand that signed consent forms and original audio recordings will be retained in [specify location, security arrangements and who has access to data] until [specific relevant period – for students this will be until the exam board confirms the results of their dissertation].

- I understand that a transcript of my interview in which all identifying information has been removed will be retained for two years from the date of the exam board.

- I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information. Names, degrees, affiliations and contact details of researchers (and academic supervisors when relevant).

Signature of research participant ..... Date .....

***Signature of researcher***

I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study

Signature of researcher ..... Date .....

All Correspondence should be addressed to  
The Headteacher



In Reply quote

Ref: \_\_\_\_\_

**REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA**  
**MINISTRY OF GENERAL EDUCATION**

Chilanga Primary School  
P.O. Box 350013  
CHILANGA  
Telephone # 0978 717060/0977749638  
chilangaprimarieschool@gmail

13<sup>th</sup> October, 2021

Dear Sir/Madam,


**RE: CONFIRMATION LETTER: ZULU CHUMA CLEMENTINE, COMPUTER  
NUMBER-19000863.**

With reference to the captioned subject above,

This serves to confirm that *Zulu Chuma Clementine*, Computer Number-19000863, did her research at Chilanga Primary School, Masters in Special Education.

This was made possible because the School offers Special Education.

Yours faithfully,

  
**Lungu Dickson**  
(Headteacher)



**Appendix 7: Research Permit**



**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA**

**DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES**

**HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**

Telephone: +260-211-290258/293937

P O Box 32379

Fax: +260-211-290258/293937

Lusaka,

Zambia

E-mail [drgs@unza.zm](mailto:drgs@unza.zm)

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**APPROVAL OF STUDY**

29<sup>rd</sup> October, 2021

Ms Clementine Chuma Zulu

C/o University of Zambia

School of Education

**LUSAKA**

Dear Ms Zulu

**RE: APPROVAL - RESEARCH ETHICAL WAIVER - (HSSREC-2021-OCT-026).**  
**“FACILITATORS AND THE BARRIERS TO ACQUISITION OF LITERACY**  
**SKILLS AMONG LEARNERS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT IN LOWER**  
**GRADES – A CASE STUDY OF CHILANGA PRIMARY SCHOOL OF SPECIAL**  
**EDUCATION UNIT OF CHILANGA DISTRICT, LUSAKA, ZAMBIA”**

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Reference is made to your request for waiver of ethical approval of the study.

The University of Zambia Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee IRB has approved the study noting that there are no ethical concerns.

On behalf of The University of Zambia Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee IRB, we would like to wish you all the success as you carry out your study. In future ensure that you submit an application for ethical approval early enough.

Yours faithfully



Dr. J. L. I. Zia

**ACTING CHAIRPERSON**  
**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA HUMANITIES AND**  
**SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE - IRB**

cc: Director  
Acting Assistant Director - Research  
Assistant Registrar - Research  
Senior Administrative Officer - Research