

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I, **Mathatha Viola**, do hereby solemnly declare that this dissertation is my own original work and that it has not been previously submitted for an award of a degree at this or any other university.

SIGNED.....

DATE.....

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This dissertation by Mathatha Viola is approved as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Education in Special Education at the University of Zambia.

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DEDICATION

To my mother Demetria Moyo Mathatha, whose love, understanding, patience and support I will always cherish. To my beloved son Japhet Chitila Jnr and my late daughter, Ketty Njobvu. To my wonderful sisters; Clara, Emelda, Catherine, Anna and the only brother, Dennis, for all the love and sacrifices they made for me.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writing of this dissertation would not have been successful without the support of people, too numerous to mention. My profound and sincere gratitude go to my supervisor, Dr. Daniel Ndhlovu for his excellent academic and professional guidance and mentorship as well as his fatherly encouragement and care.

Many thanks go to Dr. Matafwali Beatrice, my role model for her encouragement, academic assistance and fraternal support. Special thanks go to Mr. Kalima Kalima for helping in the selection of the research topic. Cordial gratitude goes to all my course mates for the light and challenging moments we shared.

My deepest appreciation goes to my wonderful sisters and brother for their love and support in my life. Special appreciation goes to my son Japhet Chitila Jnr, Mr L. Mambwe, Miss S. Mulenga and Mrs C. Mulenga for taking good care of my home while I was away.

Many thanks go to my friend Miyoba Hamusonde Ntabo who has been my study mate both at undergraduate and post graduate. Other thanks go to Mr. Inambao, N.N., Sr, Estella Kasonde, Mr Ntabo, M., Mr Mbale, J., Mrs Bowa, D., Mrs Shumba, Mrs C., Mwenda, G., Mr. Katolo, A. D. Mr G. Mwenda and others too numerous to mention for their encouragement and social support.

The Bible verse strengthening me was Philipians 4: 13 *“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”* It is my hope that my son Japhet will take this degree at my age as a source of inspiration in his academic work, for everything is possible with God. To Him be all the glory and honour as I always depended upon him for guidance and strength.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Author’s declaration.....	i
Copyright declaration.....	ii
Certificate of approval.....	iii
Dedication	iv
Acknowledgements.....	v
Table of contents	vi
Lists of tables.....	x
List of figures	xi
Acronyms.....	xii
Abstract.....	xiii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Background.....	1
1.2 Statement of the problem.....	8
1.3 Purpose of the study.....	8
1.4 Research questions.....	8
1.5 Research objectives.....	8
1.6 Significance of the study.....	9
1.7 Theoretical Framework.....	10
1.8 Limitation of the study.....	12
1.9 Definition of terms.....	13
1.10 Reliability if instruments and validity of instruments.....	15
1.11 Organization of the dissertation.....	15
1.12 Summary.....	16
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	17
2.0 Introduction.....	17

2.1	How learners with visual impairments develop careers.....	17
2.1.1	Participating in work based learning.....	17
2.1.2	Parental influence.....	26
2.1.3	Peers influence.....	27
2.1.4	Identification with role models.....	28
2.1.5	Use of assistive technology.....	29
2.1.6	Career guidance.....	31
2.2	Careers that learners with visual impairments can pursue.....	33
2.3	Factors that limit career choices for learners with visual impairments.....	36
2.4	Summary	42
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY.....		44
3.0	Introduction.....	44
3.1	Research design.....	44
3.2	Research site	45
3.3	Population.....	45
3.4	Sample size.....	45
3.5	Sampling procedure.....	45
3.6	Research instruments.....	46
3.7	Triangulation.....	47
3.8	Data collection procedure.....	47
3.9	Data analysis.....	48
3.10	Ethical consideration.....	48
3.11	Summary.....	49
CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS.....		50
4.0	Introduction.....	50
4.1	Biographical data of respondents.....	50
4.2	How learners develop their careers.....	52
4.2.1	Views of the learners.....	52
4.2.2	Views of the teachers.....	55

4.2.3	Views of the parents.....	57
4.3	Careers learners with visual impairments can pursue.....	59
4.3.1	Views of the learners.....	57
4.3.2	Views of the teachers.....	61
4.3.3	Views of parents.....	62
4.4	Factors that limit career choices of learners with visual impairments.....	63
4.4.1	Views of the learners.....	63
4.4.2	Views of the teachers.....	65
4.4.3	Views of the parents.....	66
4.5	Summary.....	67
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS.....		68
5.0	Introduction.....	68
5.1	How learners with visual impairments develop their careers.....	68
5.1.1	By admiring those in employment.....	68
5.1.2	By discussing with peers, parents and teachers.....	70
5.1.3	By participating in various chores and school activities.....	75
5.2	Careers learners with visual impairments can pursue.....	83
5.3	Factors that limit career choices of learners with visual impairments.....	84
5.4	Summary.....	94
CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....		96
6.0	Introduction.....	96
6.1	Conclusion	96
6.2	Recommendations.....	97
6.3	Suggestions for future research.....	97
REFERENCES.....		99

APPENDICES.....	109
Appendix 1: Questionnaire for learners with visual impairments.....	109
Appendix 2: Questionnaire for teachers of learners with visual impairments.....	112
Appendix 3: Interview guide for parents of learners with visual impairments.....	114
Appendix 4: Observation schedule of learners with visual impairments.....	116

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Views of learners on the provision of guidance to learners.....	53
Table 2: Whether learners had careers in mind.....	53
Table 3: Learners choices, their advisors, knowledge on source of career services and advisors on the sources.....	55
Table 4: Teachers’ responses on careers that learners with visual impairments can pursue	58
Table 5: Parents’ responses on careers learners with visual impairments can pursue.....	62
Table 6: Learners’ multiple responses on measures to overcome limitations of their career choices.....	65

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Learners' career choices.....	54
Figure 2: Types of guidance services offered to learners with visual impairments.....	56
Figure 3: Learners' responses on they can pursue.....	59
Figure 4: Jobs identified to be mostly performed by persons with visual impairments...	60
Figure 5: Reasons on why some jobs are mostly performed by persons with visual impairments.....	61
Figure 6: Views of learners on factors that limit their career choices.....	64

ACRONYMS

AFB: American Foundation for the Blind

EFA-VI: Education for All Children with Visual Impairments

CDE: Colorado Department of Education

CSEN: Children with Special Education Need

CTIB: Careers Technology Information Bank

ICT: Information and Communication Technology

ILO: International Labour Organisation

IDEA: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

MoE: Ministry of Education

MoH: Ministry of Health

SMoE: Singapore Ministry of Education

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Sciences

TV: Television

UNCRPD: United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Disabled

USA: United States of America

WHO: World Health Organization

ZAPD: Zambia Agency for Persons with Disabilities

ABSTRACT

The study sought to determine how learners with visual impairments develop their careers. The developmental theory by Donald Super (1972) guided the study. The theory established why people choose careers the way they do. The objectives of the study were to; establish how learners with visual impairments develop their careers; determine careers learners with visual impairments can pursue and establish factors that limit career choices among learners with visual impairments.

A case study design was employed. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to collect data from 100 respondents at Lions and Magwero Schools for the visually impaired. Simple random and purposeful sampling were used to select the sample. Data was collected from teachers and learners using questionnaires. Interviews were used to collect data from parents. Observations of learners' activities were made. Thematic analysis was used to analyse qualitative data and the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for quantitative data.

As regards how learners with visual impairments develop their careers, findings revealed that they develop their careers through admiring those in employment, discussing with peers, parents and teachers and participating in chores at home, school and community.

Concerning careers learners with visual impairments can pursue, the following were determined; teaching, switchboard operating, lecturing, preaching, banking, social work, counseling, farming, singing, journalism, economics, business and Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

As regards factors that limit career choices among learners with visual impairments the following were found; inadequate jobs, lack of sight, inadequate career guidance, low levels of education attained, not having learnt Mathematics and Science, other jobs were difficult, lack of government support on job placements, inadequate role models, inadequate assistive technology and negative attitudes of employers towards persons with visual impairments.

Based on the findings, the study recommends the following; schools should provide learners with holistic career guidance that includes vocational, educational and personal guidance, the Ministry of Education, Vocation Training and Early Education should include Mathematics and Science in their curriculum and stake holders should implement the Persons with Disabilities Act of 2012 No. 6, Part V, Division 4 and the Education Act of 2011, Part IV, No. 23 and 24.