Career Aspirations of Visually Impaired Secondary School Students in Rivers State

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ABSTRACT
The study investigated the career aspirations of students with visual impairment in senior secondary schools in Rivers State. In order to achieve this task, four research questions and one null hypothesis was formulated to guide the study. A descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The study covered all the senior secondary schools in Rivers State. A total of 192 selected visually impaired students drawn from the selected schools in the 3 senatorial districts. A sample size of 130 was adopted for the study. Mean and standard deviation was used to analyze the research questions, while t-test was used to test the hypothesis. Findings showed that the career aspirations of visually impaired senior secondary school students in Rivers State were mainly in the Arts, Social sciences and Education. While the main sources of career information was from their colleagues and mass media. It was also noted that counselors’ influence was not felt by the students with visual impairment. It was further observed that the inaccessibility to basic facilities such as library, science laboratory among others, is a major factor affecting the career aspirations of students with visual impairment. The researchers noticed that parental influence had a significant effect on the career aspirations of visually impaired students but peer pressure was not a dominant factor affecting their career aspirations. It was also discovered that gender had a significant influence on the career aspirations of senior secondary school students in Rivers State.

Recommendations were made based on the findings. Firstly, counselors and special educators are advised to attend workshops, seminars that will help to broaden their skills and knowledge, especially in the area of handling clients with special needs. Secondly, government should provide the needed accessibility to school facilities for visually impaired students in senior secondary schools, such as library, laboratories and so on. This is to enable them develop interest in the area of Sciences. Thirdly, curriculum planners should as a matter of urgency and necessity address the general science curriculum. With a view to making special adaptations that will soothe the educational needs of students with special needs at all levels of the Nigerian educational system. Areas such as teaching methodology, teaching aids and so on must be reviewed for special adaptations. This may go a long way in making visually impaired students to develop careers in the sciences.

Keyword: Career Aspirations, Visually Impaired

INTRODUCTION
The choice of a career is a crucial decision one makes life, yet such an important decision is made without giving much thought to it. Many secondary school students especially at the senior secondary level are faced with the reality that they are about to enter the occupational world and have to narrow their occupational possibilities to something quite specific. Some students may not even have an inclination of what career they would like to pursue out of the myriads that exist among which are medicine, engineering, education, computer science, architecture, law and business administration among others (Rao, cited in Obura & Ajowi, 2012). This issue becomes more problematic when the student is disabled
or challenged in any way. Recently, many social scientists have paid attention to the plight of disabled students not only in developed but also in developing countries. Although, technological advancement, globalization, internationalization of media and effort made by international institutions, including international non-governmental organizations have created rooms for disabled students to compete equally for jobs with others. The situation unfortunately is still unsatisfactory.

Disability has been given several connotations. According to Ozoii (2005), disability simply refers to loss of ability or loss of functions. Literarily, disability is made up of two words: dis (lack/absence of) and ability. Put in another way, disability means lack of ability. It also means functional limitations or activity restriction or lack of (resulting from impairment) ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being. Disability differs from impairment. The former is disturbance at the activity level while the latter is disturbance at the organ level of an individual. In other words, while one is lack of ability, the other organ damage. However, the two are related. Impairment precedes disability. The Indian National Human Rights Commission (NHRC, 2006) sees disability in three different perspectives. Disability is often defined as the malfunctioning, disturbance or loss in the normal functioning of physical, mental or psychological processes, or difficulty in the ability to learn or adjust socially, which interferes with a person’s normal growth and development.

The researchers views disability as a functional limitation in performing certain tasks, due to organ damage or constituted social barriers. There are an estimated 24 million disabled people in Nigeria (Okoli, 2006). Visual disability on the other hand, means loss or lack of ability to execute tasks requiring adequate visual acuity. According to Obakhume (2009), the visually impaired are those whose sense of vision is defective and this could range from ability to see a little to total blindness. It includes those who cannot perform visual tasks like print reading, see a far object or near object. They include the blind and the partially sighted. For this study, the visually impaired include those who did not have any light perception - both eyes taken together and those who had light perception but could not correctly count the fingers of the hand from a distance of 3 metres (or 10 feet) in good day light with both eyes open. Night blindness is not considered as visual disability. It is also important to note that for the purpose of this study, visual disability and visual impairment will be used interchangeably to the same thing. One of the major ways through which persons with disability can contribute meaningfully to the national economy is involvement in career activities. Several authors have tried to define career.

According to Omele (2007), career is a progress or general course of action of a person through life or through some phase of life. He further saw career as the totality of occupation which an individual occupies throughout his life or the totality of occupation, job positions throughout a person’s working life. Also Eze (2010) sees career as the series of work, roles or position one has assumed in a chosen field of work and pursued in a lifetime. The researcher views career as the sum total of life activities, which begins with professional training that is geared towards the world of work and later life activities. It is the totality of human tasks from cradle to grave. This involves practical skill acquisition, job or duty and lifelong occupation or vocation. Therefore, career cannot be complete without employment. According to Olubela (2003), persons with disabilities generally can be employed in government establishment (skilled, semi-skilled and menial jobs), non government organizations, private business establishments, private home keeping jobs and self-employment. However, the story of employment for disabled persons in Nigeria is not a very good one. The then military head of state in his 1986 budget speech to the nation made a policy statement that 2% of the government workforce should be reserved for persons with disabilities. This was also reechoed in the Nigerians with disabilities decree of 1993, which proposed 10% of the government workforce to be reserved for persons with disabilities. However, the picture remains bleak for many disabled persons. In every part of Nigeria, there are persons with special needs who are begging on the streets. Okafor (2003) maintained that majority of these disabled beggars whether young or old cannot read or write. Even those who can read and write are forced to beg because they have no opportunity for employment. This is because the society may feel that their deformities will limit their abilities to work or contribute in any way to the economy of the nation. Unemployment is now regarded as one of the greatest problems in our country because anybody including a person with special needs
who has no regular trade or profession for which he is paid at a regular interval is regarded as unemployed. There are several beliefs responsible for the negative attitudes revolving around children with disabilities in Nigeria.

These beliefs cut across the Nigerian society and hence have a similar impact on the citizens’ attitudes on learners with disabilities. According to Eskay, Onu, Igbo, Obiyo and Ugwuanyi (2012), the causes of such negative perceptions on learners with disabilities were related to:

- A curse from God (due to gross disobedience to God’s commandments);
- Ancestral violation of societal norms (e.g., due to stealing);
- Offenses against gods of the land (e.g., fighting within the society);
- Breaking laws and family sins (e.g., stealing and denying);
- Misfortune (e.g., due to marriage incest);
- Witches and wizards (e.g., society saw them as witches and wizards);
- Adultery (a major abomination);
- A warning from the gods of the land (due to pollution of water and the land);
- Arguing and fighting with the elders (a societal taboo);
- Misdeed in a previous life (such as stealing);
- Illegal or unapproved manage by the societal elders (arguing and fighting against the elderly advice in marriage);
- Possession by evil spirits (due to gross societal disobedience); and many others.

With the arrival of the Christian missionaries, things began to change. Various schools for disabled children were established in the mid 1950’s and early 1960’s by various Christian missions (Ozoji, 2005). Societal perception began to change with the advent of these special schools. These persons with various forms of disabilities were being trained in the skills of basket making, weaving of foot mats, cane chairs and other simple handicrafts. Recently, persons with visual Impairment in Rivers State, Nigeria, are diving deep into the formal education system. This scenario has witnessed persons with visual impairment acquiring university education mainly in the art, social sciences and education faculties. It is also important to note that the physical sciences and engineering fields of study are not widely open to persons with visual impairment, particularly in Nigeria. In addition, the military and paramilitary fields of endeavour are no-go areas for persons with visual impairment, even though Bitrus Gani, a visually impaired person has contributed immensely to the field of physiotherapy and was head of department of Physiotherapy, Amadu Bello University, Zaria (Abang, 2003). The present situation where the majority of persons with special needs are condemned to a life of total dependence on charity or begging cannot be justified because they can be self-reliant if they are properly educated. There is no reason to indicate that persons with special needs are destined to live a life of total dependence on others because evidence abound of many disabled people who are self-reliant because of the type of education or training they were given (Okafor, 2003). As a result, disabled people are one group that is disadvantaged through limited access to the labour market and are three times more likely to be out of work and when employed earn much less than their non-disabled counterparts (Doyle in Obani, 2003).

In Nigeria, disabled people are more likely to be employed through informal arrangements that are not covered by formal contracts and legislations without prospects of promotion. However the major cause of unemployment of persons with disabilities as articulated by Obani (2003) is the assumed low level work skith and professional training available to persons with disabilities. In other words, it is presumed that persons with disabilities are not able to aspire for professionally demanding skills needed to enhance their career or occupational opportunities. The term ‘aspiration’ is widely used to capture the various desires and ambitions held by young people about their future. Aspirations may centre on lifestyle or self-fulfillment, or revolve around roles in the family or community (such as occupying a caring or leadership function). Interests are sometimes used interchangeably with aspirations. However, Rojewski (2005) emphasized that “Aspirations represent individual goals given ideal conditions, while interests reflect an individual’s emotional disposition toward particular career options”. On the other hand, career aspirations
of some individuals may be to learn and grow in terms of knowledge and experience in a given field, grow up the corporate ladder and join the top management team. Others may tend towards improving their professional skills, enhancing their capabilities and advancing in the organizations hierarchy level (Rojcwnski, 2005). Career aspirations also refer to the goals that one has set out to achieve in either the current profession, or another desired profession. They are usually future oriented and aim to provide personal satisfaction (Kintrea, Raff, St Clair & Houston, 2011). The researcher views career aspiration as a desire to achieve personally spelt out occupational goals. It is a desired and willing intention made towards specific life activities which gives satisfaction to the individuals involved. In other words, students with disabilities at the secondary school level are expected to formulate and desire their goals in terms of making career choice, as they advance towards tertiary education. This could be in the arts, social sciences, education, physical sciences and engineering fields respectively. At the senior secondary school level, students are supposed to be exposed or given adequate career information. Omeje (2007) explained that career information is valid and usable data given to an individual to become purposeful and effective in his career-related behaviour. Career information provides exposure and experiences for students to enable them to make more appropriate educational and vocational decisions when required. Career information is that necessary information or education that can be offered to a student to make him or her be aware of his or her natural call to perform a particular function or play a particular role in the work environment. Also, as observed by Uba in Omeje (2007), career information is used to help the individual to understand the need to plan for a career rather than to drift, to broaden his outlook, and to increase his appreciation of alternatives and their consequences so that he may choose wisely and consciously control his behaviour. Omeje (2007) outlined the following as major sources of career information; career brochures, mass media, school bulletin board, morning assembly, field trip or excursion, orientation, career day or career week among others. The school guidance counsellor is charged with the responsibility of making career information available to all students. In the western world however, persons with disabilities have made their marks in the field of sciences and engineering. For instance, Nicholas Saunderson (1682-1739) was so brilliant that he surpassed his entire lecturers. He advanced the “Palpable Arithmetic” which is a forerunner of the present day arithmetic Board for the blind. Leonard Euler (1707-1783) left his foot prints in Switzerland. As a blind person, he became a great mathematician, credited with first evolving the calculus of variation. One of the greatest inventions that ever were made by modern man is the invention of the Telephone. This feat was achieved by Alexander Graham Bell (1847-1922) who was deaf, imagine a world without telephones. Think of all that have come out of this single invention, such as e-mail services, fax and internet services to mention a few which has come in be as a result of this invention. Louis Braille (1804-1924) was a blind man who made the most impressive technological innovations in the world of music, education, economic and social problem in the world through his invention of the Braille alphabets. Through this invention, a New World was opened to the blind (Abang, 2003). In more recent times, it has been revealed that students with visual impairment in Europe and the United States have generally excelled in the physical sciences and engineering fields in addition to the field of humanities. Notable among which are: Dr. D. Kent Cullers, the National American Space Agency (NASA) scientist who developed the computer software radio which astronomers use to hunt for alien microwave signals in the SETI project (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence), has been blind since birth. Cullers heads the SETI Institute’s Project Phoenix search of nearby Sun-like stars and has devoted most of his professional life to seeking evidence of life elsewhere so the Universe. W. G. Bickley, professor of mathematics at Imperial College, became blind at about 1960, but he quickly learned Braille and continued to work in his held. In 1959, Stephen Smale astonished mathematicians by proving a sphere which could be turned inside out in a smooth manner but he did not find a way of actually performing the equation. The blind mathematician Bernard Moon soon constructed his renowned sequence of about 20 smooth transformations, which shows how a sphere can he turned inside out. Another famous visually impaired scientist was the Belgian physicist Joseph Plateau (1801-1883), who was the inventor of the stroboscope. He interpreted the results in a great work “Statique experimental et theoretiqne des liquides soumis aux
seules forces moléculaires‖, where he was the first to enunciate the role of intermolecular forces in film stability. Also, Geerat J.V. appeared in a ‘New Scientist’ supplement (2 November 1996, pp. 10), a professor of Geology at the University of California in Davis, who studied marine molluscs by touch. He became blind when he was six. He has written several scientific books and a biography. “Privileged Hands” published in 1997. He has received several awards for his scientific work. Other perceived challenges to the career aspirations of persons with visual disability are the main agents of socialization. The family, school and peer are social forces whose influence on human activities cannot be overlooked. Disabled people have always been discriminated and stigmatized across cultures for thousands of years (Livenah, 1999). The attitude of students without disability towards disabled ones is stigmatizing and discriminating. Negative attitudes of peers have a tremendous impact on the life of an individual with handicap. The person’s self-concept, cognitive and social development, academic performance, and general psychological health may be largely affected. When an individual is not accepted by his or her peers, the educational environment and social opportunities in the school, community and work may greatly suffer (Woodard, 1995). Also in line with Ann Roes postulation where she identified three types of parental rearing practices in the home. These rearing practices are majorly responsible for the child’s vocation later in life. With this assertion, it is possible that the career aspirations of visually impaired students especially towards the physical sciences and engineering may have been negatively affected by the social environment where they live, in a related development, a report on violence against physically challenged persons by United Nations International Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF) at United Nations (UN) Headquarters in New York shows that children who live with a physical, sensory, intellectual or mental health disability are among the most stigmatized and marginalized of all the world’s children. While all children are at risk of being victims of violence, disabled children find themselves at significantly increased risk because of stigma, negative traditional beliefs and ignorance (Idrees & Ilyas, 2012).

Another lingering issue is the constraint posed by gender in the Nigerian society for persons with disability. In the words of Olokesusi (2003), gender is a social creation emanating from institutions like the family, school, state and other socio-cultural and religious institutions in the environment. Gender relations have to do with unequal power relationship between men and women. Obviously, women are placed at a disadvantaged position even as disabled persons. The society defines for men and women their expected roles. Men and women have expectation of how they should relate and behave. Gender relations and roles have their roots in patriarchy perpetuating male dominance and control at whatever level in the society believing falsely that women are inferior even as it affects such things as career aspiration and opportunities for job placement among others. Like many other developing and emerging economies, Nigeria sees investment in services for the disabled as a luxury. As a result, a great number of people with disabilities are dependent on their families where no family members are available to help provide the enabling environment at to achieve their career aspiration in any chosen field, the disabled often are forced to become street beggars.

In Nigeria, there are almost no facilities for the disabled in schools, no wheelchair access for street crossings or public buildings, and no special provisions for public transportation. Affordable and practical mobility aids are rare. Though some government rehabilitation centres do exist, they are limited in number and their training programmes have little relevance in helping disabled people with opportunities for personal and social growth (Okoli, 2006). Despite these challenges facing the career life of persons with disabilities in general and persons with visual disabilities in particular, they are expected to aspire towards their career. This is especially so for those who are literate and possess the necessary means for educational advancement. However, judging from experience, it has been revealed that students with visual impairments in Nigeria were admitted more ii the faculties of arts, social sciences and education, the reason for this trend is not yet known or fully understood.

**Statement of the Problem**

It has been noted from available literature that in the more developed countries, persons with visual Impairment or visual disability have made their marks in physical sciences, engineering, humanities, and
the likes. In Nigeria however, most of the students with visual impairment end up studying courses or disciplines in the arts, social sciences and education faculties and not in the physical sciences or engineering. Reasons may not be far from societal stigmatization of visually impaired persons or lack of basic study facilities in the schools for the visually impaired students among others. The questions then arise: what are the career aspirations of the visually impaired? Were they influenced in their aspiration by their disability; their parents or family, peer pressure or school facilities? These are some of the questions and problems that necessitated this study.

**Purpose of the Study**

The general purpose of this research work is to determine the career aspirations of visually impaired secondary school students in Rivers State. Specifically, the study:

1. Identified the career aspirations of the visually impaired senior secondary school students in Rivers State.
2. Found out the various sources of career information available to students with visual impairment in the study area.
3. Determined the factors that affect the career aspiration of visually impaired Senior secondary school student in Rivers State.
4. Determined the extent of gender influence on the career aspirations of students with visual impairment in senior secondary schools in Rivers State.

**Research Questions**

The following research questions guided this study;

1. What are the career aspirations of the visually impaired senior secondary school students in Rivers State?
2. What are the sources of career information available to visually impaired senior secondary school students in Rivers State?
3. What are the factors that affect the career aspirations of visually impaired senior secondary school students in Rivers State?
4. To what extent does gender influence the career aspirations of visually impaired secondary school students in Rivers State?

**Hypothesis**

One null hypothesis raised for the study was tested at (p<0.05) level of significance:

$H_0$: Gender has no significant influence on the career aspirations of students with visual impairment.

**METHODOLOGY**

This chapter described the producers that were adopted in carrying out this study. It specifically outlines the research method under the following headings; design of the study, area of the study, population of the study, sample and sampling techniques, instrument for data collection, validation of the instrument, reliability of the instrument, method of data collection and method of data analysis.

**Design of the Study**

A descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. Nworgu (2006:77) observed that descriptive surveys "Are those studies which aim at collecting data on and describing in a systematic manner, the characteristics, features or facts about a given population". Descriptive survey design therefore has the quality of revealing current conditions of issues in order to illustrate areas where there is need for adjustment. This design is appropriate as it would thus seek the opinion of respondents on their attended careers and the factors affecting their career aspiration.

**Population of the Study**

The population of the study consisted of all the senior secondary schools in the three senatorial districts of Rivers State. A total of 192 visually impaired students are drawn from the selected schools in the 3 senatorial districts. The breakdown of the population is as follows: Rivers West senatorial Districts: County Grammar School, Ahoada (5 boys); Government Secondary School, Abua (10 girls) and (4 boys), Rivers East – CSS, Nkpogu (7 girls) and (9 boys), GCSS, Borokiri (12 girls) and (8 boys); Enitona High
School, (15 boys) and (20 girls); GGSS, Rumuokonta (12 girls) and (13 boys) and Okrika Grammar School (13 boys). Rivers South East, CSS, Nonwa, Tai (15 boys) and (5 girls); BMGS, Bori (11 boys) and (10 girls); CSS, Alode (12 boys) and (11 girls) respectively making a total of 192 students. Total for boys 105, girls 87 respectively.

**Sample and Sampling Technique**
The sample size consisted of 130 students who were visually impaired were used for the study.

**Sampling Technique**
The research adopted the descriptive survey design for the study. The obtained the sample size from the population by utilizing the cluster sampling methods to form a cluster all the public secondary schools in the 23 Local Government Areas were grouped within the three senatorial districts. Each senatorial district is a cluster in which schools were selected for use.

**Description of the Instrument**
The instrument that was used for data collection is a structured questionnaire designed by Ebifa, Samuel Eny (2014) titled Visual Impairment and Career Aspiration (VICA) questionnaire. This questionnaire adopted a four point scale. The instrument is divided into two sections A and B. Section A dealt with the demographic variables, while B contains 18 items in 3 clusters. Cluster A which dealt on their career aspiration has given items, while cluster B which identified sources of career information, in the study area has four items. Cluster C which looked at the various factors affecting career aspiration of the visually impaired, has nine items. The respondents were provided on response pattern of strongly Agree (SA) = 4 points, Agree (A) = 3 points, Disagree (D) = 2 points, and strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 point.

**Reliability of the Instrument**
In order to ascertain the reliability of the instrument for the study, 15 copies of the instrument was trial tested in special school for the blind in Afara, Umuahia North Local Government Area of Abia State, which is outside the study area. The instrument was administered to senior class students in the school. The internal consistency was determined using Cronbach Alpha. The internal consistency reliability estimate scores obtained were as follows: Cluster A (0.73), Cluster B (0.76), Cluster C (0.68). The overall internal reliability estimate was 0.76. These coefficient values were considered satisfactory to attest to the reliability of the instrument. The rationale for using Cronbach Alpha procedure is on the fact that the items are not dichotomous items.

**RESULTS**
This chapter presents the results of the study. The data analyzed are presented in tables based on the research questions and hypotheses which guided the study.

**Research Questions 1**
*What are the career aspirations of the visually impaired senior secondary school students in Rivers State?*

**Table: 1: Mean and standard deviation (SD) ratings of career aspirations of the visually impaired senior secondary school students in Rivers State.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>I will love to be an engineer</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>I will love to be a medical practitioner</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>I will love to be a journalist</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>I will love to be a social worker</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>I will love to be a teacher</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Mean</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2.57</strong></td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The result from Table 4.1 indicates that items one and two on career aspirations of the visually impaired which captured careers in Engineering and medical fields are not acceptable among the careers chosen by visually impaired students in Rivers State which items 3, 4 and 5 had accepted mean of 2.53, 3.11 and 2.87 respectively. The grand mean for the entire items was 2.57 which was above the acceptable level of 2.50, which implies that visually impaired students preferred courses in Arts, Social Science and Education. The results therefore indicated that career aspirations of the visually impaired senior secondary school students in Rivers State in grossly agreed to items i3, 4, and 5 respectively.

**Research Questions 2**

*What are the sources of career information available to visually impaired senior secondary school students in Rivers State?*

**Table 4.2:** Means score and standard deviation ratings on sources of career information available to visually impaired senior secondary school students in Rivers State.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>The counselor in my school gives career talk on regular basis</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>I heard other students talk about career</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>I heard of career from the media</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>I was informed of my career from the local library</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Grand Mean</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2.48</strong></td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results from Table 4.2 above indicate that the highest rated item is item 7 with a means score of 2.66. This item indicated that sources of career information or awareness for visually impaired senior secondary school students in Rivers State comes from their fellow counterparts and also items 6 and 8 which captured information from the counselor and the media with mean scores of 2.33 and 2.38 respectively and are disagreed by the respondents as sources of career information available to the visually impaired students in senior secondary school students in Rivers State. The grand mean was 2.48 which was below decision mean of 2.50. By implication the available sources of career information to visually impaired students in Rivers State is relatively few.
Research Question 3
What are the factors that affect the career aspiration of visually impaired senior secondary school students in Rivers State?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>STD</th>
<th>Decision</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>My choice of career is influenced by my friends</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>It is safer to choose career already chosen by others.</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>My friends always shout at me when I talk about my career.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>The lab in my school is not accessible to students with visual impairment.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>There is no special education teacher in my school</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>The school library is not accessible to students with visual impairment</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>My parents asked me to choose a career on the basis of my interest.</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>I prefer to choose the same career as my parents</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>My parents encourage me to choose a career of their choice</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of the analysis in Table 4.3 above indicated that apart from items 12 and 18 with mean responses below the criterion mean of 2.50, every other item were rated positive and had a mean score above 2.50. This shows that the majority factors affecting career aspirations of students with visual impairment are inaccessible school facilities and parental factors. The highest rated items in the table are items 13, 16, 14 respectively which indicated that the highest factor affecting career aspiration of visually impaired is that, the lab in the schools is not accessible to students with visual impairment. On the other hand, item 12 which is the least rated item, shows that peer influence is not a significant factor affecting the career aspirations of students with visual impairment. Above all, the grand mean was 2.80 with standard deviation of 1.85 which is above the criterion mean of 2.50.

Hypothesis Testing
The null hypothesis raised for the study was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis 1
There is no significant relationship between gender and career aspiration of students with visual impairment of senior secondary school in Rivers State.
Table 4: t-test Analysis on the influence of gender on career aspiration of students with visual impairment of senior secondary school in Rivers State.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig</th>
<th>Decision of P ≤ 0.05</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>8.33</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>0.035</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The t-test analysis in table 4 above has shown that gender has a significant influence on career aspiration of students with visual impairment. From the analysis, it was observed that 0.035 significant value at 128 degree of freedom was less that 0.05 probability level. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significant influence of gender on career, aspiration of students with visual impairment was rejected. This shows that the male visually impaired students have career more aspirations than their female counterparts. Therefore, gender was a significant factor in the career aspiration of students with visual impairment of senior secondary school in Rivers State.

SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

Results presented in this study revealed the following:

1. None of the visually impaired students agreed to choose Engineering and medical profession as their career aspiration. From table 1 of the research question 1 all the respondents agreed with journalism, social work and teaching profession as their career choice.

2. From the mean ratings on sources of career information for visually impaired students of research question 2, most of the respondents agreed that their sources of career information come from the media, and their friends; counselors was not accepted. And in table 3, on mean and standard deviation (SD) ratings on factors affecting career aspirations of the visually impaired secondary school students in Rivers State, items 12 and 18 identified peer and family factors as major factors affecting career aspiration adversely; whereas the rest factors were supportive.

3. On the other hand, Table 4, t-test analysis on the influence of gender on career aspiration of students with visual impairment of senior secondary school in Rivers State, discovered that gender has a significance influence on the career aspiration of students with visual impairment.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Career aspiration of visually impaired senior secondary school students

The findings in this study showed that, students with visual impairment preferred to aspire towards careers in the arts, social sciences and education. While disillusionment towards careers in the field of engineering and physical sciences. This is in sharp contrast to their counterparts in the western world, as noted by Abang (2002), who cited the fact that visually impaired persons in the western world were excelling in the areas of science and engineering, while the visually impaired persons in Nigeria were lagging behind. Supporting the findings, Okoro (2001) explained that disabled students generally are not gaining from the general science curriculum. This may be because many teachers who teach science to the exceptional children. This makes it difficult for them to understand the psychology of disability; hence they apply the same method used for normal children in the teaching of science to the exceptional children. The study noted that the major sources of career information available to students with visual impairment were the media and discussion from peers. This findings agrees with the assertion of Okoro (2001) who said that students find it easier to get career information from their colleagues, i.e. Taking career counseling from their peers instead of going to their teachers or guidance counselors. Also supporting the finding, Omeje (2007) explained that media is a veritable and relevant source for career information. This information may be in print or electronic media and in several forms such as career talk, career education workshops among others. Furthermore, the study revealed that inaccessible school
facilities and the family were major factors affecting the career aspirations of students with visual impairment. This is in line with the views of Okoro (2007) who stated that parents project their ambition into the careers of their children, dictating the type of career they want for their children, while peer influence was not a significant factor affecting the career aspirations of students with visual impairment. This is in sharp contrast with the assertions of Woodard (1995), which stated that peer pressure, had significant influence in the career aspirations of individuals. From the findings, it was noted that child rearing pattern by parents may be responsible for their aspirations towards various vocations in life, as postulated by Anne Row.

In a related development, Durojaiye (1976) noted that parents are known to have high level of aspiration and motivation quite in appropriate to their children’s interest, personality and intellectual capabilities. Also as supported by Okoro, (2001) it is important to note that, school infrastructures such as, science laboratories, workshops, libraries, recreational facilities and so on, should be made accessible to students with visual impairment in Rivers State. Gender influence on the career aspirations of visually impaired senior secondary school students the study revealed that gender has a significant influence on the career aspirations of students with visual impairment. From the analysis, it was observed that the male visually impaired students have higher career aspirations than their female counterparts. Therefore, gender was a significant factor on the career aspirations of visually impaired senior secondary school students in Rivers State. It is in the light of this, that (Olokesusi, 2003), observed that special educationists should devote more time and expertise on disability and gender related issues in order to avert any form of gender related discrimination.

CONCLUSION
This research study has identified the career aspirations of visually impaired senior secondary school students, their sources of career information and factors affecting their aspirations. As a result of the findings, the following conclusions were made.
1. That the career aspirations of students with visual impairment in Rivers State was in the Arts and Social Sciences, this is in sharp contrast to their counterparts in the Western World.
2. That the major sources of career information available to visually impaired students are from their fellow colleagues and the mass media. However, the influence of school counsellors and library as sources of career information available to students with visual impairment was not felt.
3. That the major factors affecting the career aspirations of students with visual impairment can be outlined thus; inaccessible school infrastructure, lack of efficient or effective manpower and family or parental factors.
4. That gender has significant influence on the career aspirations of students with visual impairment.

RECOMMENDATIONS
The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study: Firstly, counsellors and special educators are advised to attend workshops, seminars that will help to broaden their skills and knowledge, especially in the area of handling clients with special needs. Secondly, government should provide the needed accessibility to school facilities for visually impaired students in senior secondary schools, such as libraries, laboratories and on. This is to enable them develop interest in the area of Sciences. Also, curriculum planners should as a matter of urgency and necessity address the general science curriculum. With a view to making special adaptations that will soothe the educational needs of students with special needs at all levels of the Nigerian educational system. Areas such as teaching methodology, teaching aids and so on must be reviewed for special adaptations. This may go a long way in making visually impaired students to develop careers in the sciences. In addition, students with visual impairment should be encouraged to visit counselling unit whenever the need arises, students should be acquainted with the services rendered by the program so as to be properly guided in their academic and social lives.
Finally, parents should be made to be aware of the right child rearing pattern especially when they have to deal with children with special needs. It should be noted that all necessary support services from the counsellors and special educators should be made available to parents and, at all times. This will help them to know their children’s abilities in order not to jeopardise their career aspirations.

REFERENCES


Ozorji, E.D. (2005), Special Needs Education and Rehabilitation for Beginners Professionals.


Richardson, M. S. (19%). From Career Counselling to Counselling/Psychotherapy and Work, Jobs and Career.


