

"Community Education, Psychology and Social Studies"

The Role of Anticipation Competencies in the Career Planning of Persons with Hearing Impairment in Fako Division, South West Region of Cameroon

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Abstract. Career development challenges for persons with hearing impairment worldwide and Cameroon in particular increases by day. The labor market has been subject to various changes in the last decade caused by strong competition in the market, poverty, insecurity, and advances in technology. In the face of all these, career planning is seen as a favorable tool to facilitate individual's work-related experiences, establishing career objectives and deciding on educational and developmental programs to improve the skills required to achieve career objectives and modifications. Due communication barriers, information deficit, and psychological dependency, many persons with hearing impairment do not follow the actual career planning process. The inability to secure career for themselves live this group of persons in a state of poverty, unable to care for their basic needs, stress and expose them to other mental health challenges. Through a proactive approach, which focuses on mind transformation, this study investigates 'The Role of Anticipation Competencies in the Career Planning of persons with Hearing Impairment in Fako Division, South West Region of Cameroon'. A qualitative case study research design was used. A sample of 20 workers with hearing impairment were purposively selected. The finding revealed that, anticipatory competencies positively influences the career planning of workers with hearing impairment. In demonstrating anticipatory competencies, they express the following; aspiration to be a role model, need to further their education, self-awareness, improved communication strategies, intrinsic motivation, hard work, career exploration, future optimism, resilience, patience and the desire to improve on communication skills. All these positive qualities in turn influences their career planning process absolutely. Thus they established; self-improvement, perceived career development, high interest in learning, skills development, and collaborative relationship. Based on findings, the study recommends

that, other stakeholders should work in collaboration with workers with hearing impairment to develop anticipatory competencies. For these competencies are not developed in isolation.

Key words: The Role, Anticipatory Competencies, Career Planning, Persons with Hearing Impairment.

Introduction

Finding the right career or simply knowing what it might be is not easy, even for highly skilled individuals. Doing so is even more difficult for those who lack adequate training, or face special challenges such as disabilities (Levinson and Palmer, 2005). Persons with hearing-impairment being one of the categories of persons with disabilities, therefore face similar challenges. Due communication barriers, information deficit, and psychological dependency, many persons with hearing impairment do not follow the actual career planning process. Thus living them in a state of career desperation, job insecurity, high level of unemployment, and underemployment. Compared to general population, unemployment rate among the hearing impaired population is four times higher, as hearing impairment poses serious challenges for people in the labour market (Hear-it, 2007). The inability to secure a career for themselves leave this group of persons in a state of poverty, unable to care for their basic needs, stress and expose them to other mental health challenges.

Career planning refers to the process of planning career choices, establishing career objectives and deciding on educational and developmental programs to improve the skills required to achieve career objectives. It's an important part of individual's self-assessment (TalentLyft, 2022). During the process of career planning, different career options are explored in detail. It is the process of making decisions for long term learning, to align personal knowledge, abilities, needs of physical or psychological fulfillment with career opportunities provided by a career option. Career planning involves continuous learning and improvement to build and grow as a worker.

In Cameroon, just like many African countries, De Clerck in Ray, Wallace, Mbuagbaw and Cocburn (2017) revealed that, the career opportunities for persons with hearing impairment are restricted and for those who manage to obtain a career, the situation is often difficult and precarious, leading to a high rate of joblessness, financial barriers and further marginalization, which negatively expose these group of persons to a state of self-doubt and experiences of human rights violations such as sexual abuse as they come beggars in the community. Underscoring the above, Fox (2010) cited that, one population in the city of Buea and Cameroon in general which continues to be unjustifiably under-represented is that of the 'Deaf' community (persons with hearing impairment), as the challenges of regular employment opportunities, leave them in a state of further relegation and poverty with very limited opportunities to become contributors to the Cameroonian society. Through a proactive approach, which focuses on mind transformation, this study investigates 'The Role of Anticipation Competencies in the Career Planning of persons with Hearing Impairment in Fako Division, Soth West Region of Cameroon'

Hearing Impairment

The term "hearing impairment" can also describe hearing loss in adults. "The everyday

meaning of the term ‘hearing impairment’ is that a person cannot hear at a level that is optimal for communication or for the activities of daily life. It can be mild, moderate, or severe, or profound (WebMD, 2022). The type and degree of a person’s hearing loss is often determine the characteristics of their hearing abilities name;

- **Conductive Hearing Loss.** Conductive hearing loss, which results from defects in the outer or middle ear. With this type, the sound is not conducted efficiently to the inner ear. All sounds heard thus become weak and/or muffled. Usually such individuals speak softly irrespective of the surrounding environmental noise.
- **Sensorineural Hearing Loss.** Sensorineural hearing loss is caused due to damage or disease of the inner ear or auditory nerve. It could also result as an after effect of infectious diseases like measles, mumps, meningitis and T.B.
- **Mixed Hearing Loss.** Mixed hearing loss is the combination of conductive and sensorineural hearing loss. One of the main causes of this type of loss is the long standing ear infection known as Chronic Suppurative Otitis Media (CSOM). In CSOM, ear discharge in the form of pus, blood or clear water is seen. This starts with conductive loss yielding to sensorineural impairment, if not treated immediately and regularly.
- **Central Hearing Loss.** Central hearing loss is due to a damage, malformation or infections of the neural pathways and the hearing centres in the brain. The child may hear but has difficulty in understanding what he hears. Some of the children classified as learning disabled or slow learners may have this type of hearing loss.
- **Functional Hearing Loss.** Functional hearing loss is due to some psychogenic condition or maybe due to deliberate exaggeration of hearing thresholds for personal gains (Vikaspedia, 2022).

Anticipatory Competencies

Withycombe (2010) explained that, anticipatory competency is the ability to analyse, evaluate and craft a rich “picture” of the future related to sustainability issues and sustainability problem-solving frameworks. He further elaborated that, there are certain key components of the anticipatory competencies which can be grouped under two main headings, namely; Phenomenological Structure of the Future and Constructing the Future.

- **Phenomenological Structure of the Future.** Phenomenological structure of the future can be conceptualized as the ‘future landscape.’ The word “phenomenological” is used to express the idea that it is possible to come across aspects of the future. In chance meeting the future, an individual who possessed the anticipatory competencies does not randomly envision the future. Rather, he/she look at the important and interdependent aspects of the future that need to be understood together to thoroughly hypothesize and construct the ‘future landscape’ in order to best contribute to sustainability research and problem solving. In conceptualising the phenomenological structure of the future, a combination of the following is needed;
 - ✓ Future Generations: Temporal Scale
 - ✓ Possible (scenarios), probable (predictions), and desirable (visions) futures
 - ✓ Future states, pathways, and decisions

- ✓ Stories, numbers, and visuals
- **Constructing the Future.** Anticipatory competencies necessitates the ability to hypothesize and construct the future. It involves two main components namely;
- ✓ Anticipatory methodology and methods.
- ✓ Stakeholder engagement. When anticipating for something, the anticipator should know when to engage other stakeholders. Stakeholders can possess valuable expertise related to the future problems and solutions being investigated.

Gardiner & Rieckmann (2015) supported the above by stating that, anticipatory competencies include the ability to engage multiple futures, manage uncertainty and hold a worldview of the future. It involves the ability to steer toward a more just sustainable path. That is the ability to have a vision and hope is perceived as a necessary constituent for anticipatory competence and comprises decision making, planning and coordination. Anticipatory competencies are the ability to analyse, evaluate, and articulate the long-term future of various sustainability issues, including unintended consequences and inter-generational equity. Anticipatory competence enables forecasting and sustainability visioning that anticipates and prevents harmful unintended consequences (Anderson, 2015).

Methodology

The study employed an exploratory research method, with a qualitative case study research design. This research design provided room for deeper insight into the phenomenon. A sample of 20 persons with hearing impairment was purposively selected, with the help of the South West Regional Delegation of Social Affairs. The persons selected had been certified “Deaf” by an audiologist. An interview guide was used to get information from the respondents. With the help of a sign language interpreter, interviews were conducted. Data was analysis using “Thematic Analysis”, whereby concepts or ideas were grouped under umbrella terms or key words in the context of the study. To ensure validity, the concept of anticipatory competency was further operationalized, and sub-indicators were used to construct the interview guide. The sub-indicators include; future visioning, vision pathways, situational analysis, and information search.

Findings

Research Question: What is the role of anticipatory competencies on the career planning of persons with hearing impairment in Fako Division, South West Region Cameroon?

A) The vision persons with hearing impairment have for their career.

Findings revealed that, persons with hearing impairment have a positive career vision as they aspire for a better career. They wish they could have the opportunity to further their education as they expressed in these quotations; *“I wish to be a renowned seamstress” “I do not want to stay in this my career, I will like to be an engineer, “I am doing this fishing because I am facing great financial challenges and a need to support my family” “I want to become a teacher in the university and teach students with hearing impairment.” “I like my present career but will only continue in this path, if things get better” “I do not want to end my career at this level. I which to go to Legos in Nigeria and further my education.” “I wish*

I had the opportunity to go to school and improve on my career.”

Adding to the above, persons with hearing impairment wish they can be role models for others and want to sustain their legacy as seen in these citations; *“Yes, I always think about the future of my career. Most often I feel I want to be a better person in relation to my career, I want to do things which others will admire and learn from me.” “I wish my career to grow to the level where I will be an example for other persons with hearing impairment” “I wish to collaborate with others and work for others to learn from me.” “I want to teach children who will know better than me” “I want to be a designers and teach my children” “I don’t want what I know to decay. I want others to copy from me.”*

Finally, they strive for recognition and intent to sustain their legacy as quoted; *“I wish to work and be known for what I am doing” “I wish to be an effective seamstress, who will be known by many people”*

B) How persons with hearing impairments plan to achieve career vision

In responding to how persons with hearing impairment plan to achieve career vision, they plan to further education as expressed in these quotations *“I plan to go back to school and further my education” “I want to go back to school.” “To achieve what I want to be, I need to learn.”* They use collaborative learning strategies, which is learning from their colleagues as they work daily *“to achieve this vision, I try to learn by all course even though interacting with others who do not understand me is not easy.”* They also plan to develop skills and improve on their abilities as quoted by one of them *“To achieve this vision, I try to learn by all cost”. “I try to learn, because I want to be a great person in future.”* The responses were supplemented as findings reveal characteristics of being daring and hard working as quoted *“This guide me to compare things from different point of view. Because I want to succeed, I try many things. For those which I find interesting, I continue, for those which are difficult, I give up or abandon. I will be trying different things, because it is generally not easy.”* To proceed, they plan to improve on their communication skills as it was reported; *“I want to communicate, not only with people in my career, but to learn on how to communicate with the wider population.”*

Finally, these persons with hearing impairment, cited that they need to be committed to their job and said they need to be patient as quoted; *“I need to be persistent and focus on my business. I need to invest money in to my business” “Sometimes, if you are not patient you can give up. So I try to be patient in my career as a hair dresser”*

C) How the plan to achieve one’s career vision influence the skills development of persons with hearing impairment

In responding to this, persons with hearing impairment revealed that, the plan to achieve their career aspiration, help them to be patient, that is waiting for things to happen at the right time *“I have the mind of working gradually, to see my career succeed.”* Adding to that, the plan to achieve one’s career vision inspire them to be resilient, which is the ability to bounce back or not to give up in the face of challenges *“I struggle to learn, but it is generally not easy. I plan to just continue to work. Sometimes, people are surprised with the things I can do. And this is a great motivation for me”.* They further expressed that, planning to achieve their career vision makes bring out the spirit of hard work as cited in these quotations; *“planning to achieve in my career make to be busy, more active, try to be hard*

working” *“I want to work hard every day so that my employer will be satisfied with my work.”*

Adding to the above, findings revealed that, the plan to achieve career vision makes them to have an intrinsic motivation, and develop new skills *“I work with happiness, people come and see what I have done are happy with hard work.”* It equally give them a sense of humility, which is exhibited in their humility to learn *“this change my relationship with people because I want to learn”* and improve on their desire to be role model *“I want to work in a way others will learn from me”*

Finally, the plan to achieve career vision improves on the self-adjustment of persons with hearing impairment and also make them to be curious as expressed by them respectively as seen in these quotations: *“this change my relationship with people because I want to learn”*. *“I ask questions from other people because I cannot work alone”*. To add to the above, the plan to achieve career vision, help persons with hearing impairment, to develop a collaborative relationship with others as cited: *“I cannot work alone. I show love to my customers, so that they will always come back to me.”*

D) How the career vision of persons with hearing impairment, influence their search for new knowledge at work

In responding to the above, persons with hearing impairment revealed that, their career vision help them to learn from others and to work collaboratively as stated: *“I observe what is happening around me in order to learn”*. *“I stay calm in the workshop, to observe what others are doing and I learn every day”* *“My career vision makes me work with others, because I cannot achieve it alone.”* *“I need to always ask from others.”* *“I share my vision with my colleagues, because we need to work together.”* They added that, their career vision encourages them to be humble, and inspire them to be hardworking as seen in these quotations; *“I have decided not to get angry most of the time, to learn from others, to work with all my mind and to be serious”* *“I am humble to learn from others”* *“I do not get tired of working.”* *“I work to improve on myself.”* *“To work with all my mind and to be serious”* Findings further revealed that, the career vision of persons with hearing impairment make them explore their career more and improve on their search for new knowledge as quoted by of them: *“Since I know myself very well, I go to a friend of mine, to find out if there are new development in my career”* *“To achieve my vision, I need to find out more about my career.”* *“I find out more about my career.”*

E) What persons with hearing impairment do, to understand a situation from a diverse point of view?

The responses revealed that, for persons with hearing impairment to understand situations from a diverse point of view, they try to be curious and empathetic as seen in these extracts of theirs respectively: *“I ask a lot of questions in order to understand a situation from different points of view.”* *“I am curious to learn from others.”* *“I observe what others are doing, in order to learn from them.”* *“I try to put myself in another person’s position.”* *“I try not to be too fast to give judgement.”* *“I wait for others to tell me their own side of the story.”* *“I try to understand others.”*

Adding to the above, to understand a situation from different points of view, persons with hearing impairment try to be humble, control their emotions and to be patient. As expressed

by them respectively; *“To achieve this, I need to learn from others and keep on searching for new knowledge at all time” “I have decided not to get angry most of the time, to learn from others, to work with all my mind and to be serious”. “I decided not to get angry most of the time” “I manage my feelings not to get angry with people”. “And be patient when communicating with people in other not to break communication barriers and pass across my information and learn from them.” “I learn every day from friends and even the population”.*

F) How understanding a situation from a diverse point of view, influence the skills development of persons with hearing impairment

Persons with hearing impairment revealed that, understanding a situation from diverse points of view, positively influence their skills development, by helping them to be hardworking and envision development as seen in these quotations by them respectively: *“It not easy to succeed in life. I need to word hard every day” “I work without getting tired because I want to make it”. “Sometimes the challenges are many, but I just need to work very hard” “I work very hard.” “I want to see my career grow from strength to strength.”*

To continue, finding added that, understanding a situation from different points of view, help persons with hearing impairment to be self-confident and improve on their skills development as recited by them respectively: *“Because I look at a situation from different points of view, I turn to be confident of myself.” “I do not feel inferior in the midst of others” “knowing that I have gathered more information, I am certain with my decision.” “I need to go back to school in order to become a better person” “I need to learn more from others about hair dressing” “understanding things from different point of view, help me develop more.”*

G) What guides the decisions persons with hearing impairment make about their career

In responding as to what guides the decision persons with hearing impairment make, they stated that, they are guided by, their love to grow and perceive development as something important: *“I take certain decisions about my career, because I want to grow”. “I want to learn from others and become a better person”. “I take certain decisions, in order to improve on myself”.* Persons with hearing impairment further revealed that, their decisions are guided by their optimism and their internal locus of control as perceived in these lines: *“I make decision based on my understanding of the situation”. “I stay calm in the workshop, to observe what others are doing and I learn every day” “My career vision makes me work with others, because I cannot achieve it alone.” “I need to always ask from others.” “I share my vision with my colleagues, because we need to work together.”*

H) How the ability to make decisions, influences the skills development of persons with hearing impairment

Responses revealed that, decision making improves on the skills development of persons with hearing impairment by helping them to be optimistic, that is, the spirit of being positive towards achieving what you wish to. As seen in these quotations expressed by them; *“I have hopes that my career will grow from strength to strength.” It also help them to build a collaborative relationship with others and to be hard working “My hopefulness make me active, forgive others, and not to be angry when people are not clear with my way of doing*

things. Hopefulness keeps me focused, work fast and be smart” *“Because I have hopes, every day, I work very hard, effective, learn from colleagues and the people I meet on a daily basis.”* In doing all this, they keep a good customer relationship: *“take out time to attend to my customers and work with them in a way that will make them to always come back to me.”*

To add, the ability to make decisions help persons with hearing impairment, by building in them a high interest to learn and be resilient as cited by them correspondingly; *“take out time to attend to my customers and work with them in a way that will make them to always come back to me”* *“Knowing this opportunities, make to go to work every day and not to give up”*

I) What persons with hearing impairment do, in order to gain information about their career

Findings revealed that, to get information about ones' career, persons with hearing impairment try to be curious and do career exploration as grasped in these quotations expressed by them: *“I try to find out from my colleagues if they have any information about my career.”* *“I learn from others as we interact together.”* *“I need to learn every day”* *“I use every opportunity to find out information about my career.”* *“I learn from others the different career opportunities I may have.”* *“I use every opportunity to learn about my career.”* *“Find out career options.”* Adding to this, persons with hearing impairment tend to be hard working and learn from themselves as revealed by them: *“I do not get tired of working, so I learn from my hard work.”* *“Work hard”* *“I do a lot of investigation about my career on my own.”* *“I use my provide time to read, so I get to learn a lot on my own.”* *“I try to solve some of my career challenges by myself, so I learn a lot on my own.”*

Adding to the above, they revealed that, to gain more information about their career, they try to understand themselves and control their emotions: *“Knowing whom I am”* *“to gain information about my career, I try to understand myself.”* *“I need to avoid being angry because when I am angry, people run away from me and I do not learn”* *“when I get angry, my colleague run away from me, so I avoid getting angry.”* *“I have realized that my anger is a problem, so I avoid it.”* *“People work effectively with me when I avoid getting angry.”*

J) The influence of knowledge gained on the career growth of persons with hearing impairment.

Findings revealed that, knowledge gained, help persons with hearing impairment to be well-informed, curious and optimize their potentials as seen in these expressions expressed by them respectively; *“I ask a lot of questions, in order to know more about my career”.* *“Because I have the right information, I make use of the opportunities I have.”* *“I do things in a better way, because I have the necessary information.”* *“Use my strength”* *“The hopes I have for my career make me to be positive and not to give up at any point in time.”*

Adding to the above, was revealed that, gaining career information help them develop skills and be hard working *“I work very hard, because I know what is needed from me.”* *“I do not relent in my effort because I want to succeed.”* *“I feel I need to learn”* *“I develop in my skills and improve on the way I do things.”* *“Work hard”* *“having the right information, make me work very hard daily.* Gaining knowledge about ones' career also help persons with hearing impairment develop an internal locus of control and be resilient, as quoted by

them respectively *“I do not wait for others to do certain things in the office, because I have the right information.” “I work without fear, because I am sure of myself.” “I take it upon myself to do certain things at my job place without waiting for others.” I rely on myself, because I know what I need to do and can do.” “The hopes I have for my career make me to be positive and not to give up at any point in time.”*

To continue, persons with hearing impairment revealed that, gaining knowledge about their career help them to develop self-awareness. They state that, it helps them to work collaboratively with others and control their emotions, as quoted; *“Getting the right career information, also help me understand myself.” “Knowing whom I am” “I relate with others in order to learn from them” “we work together with others to succeed.” “I need to be friendly.” “I need to avoid being angry because when I am angry people run away from me”*

Conclusion

Summarily, persons with hearing impairment expressed certain characteristics, which revealed the anticipation they have for their career and the influence the ability to anticipate had for their career development. Some of the characteristics of anticipatory competencies expressed by persons with hearing impairment were; the desire to further education, wanting to be a role model, anticipation for a better career, sustenance of legacy, collaborative learning, skills development, ability to endure, the ability to be hardworking, the ability to improve communication skills, to be job commitment, patience, the ability to learn more and to explore their career.

These qualities of anticipatory competencies, encouraged certain positive behaviour from persons with hearing impairment which also improve on their career development by making them to be patient, hardworking, intrinsic motivated, humble, aspire to be role a model, self-adjustment, improve on curiosity, develop a collaborative working relationship, emotional control, develop an internal locus of control, optimise their potentials, increase their interest to learn and develop a positive relationship with customers. All these, guides their career planning constructive. Though the frequency of occurrences of the various concept may differ, each concept has the same value. The existence of ideas were therefore consider more important than the percentage, frequency or grounding. All these was summarised in the conceptual diagram.

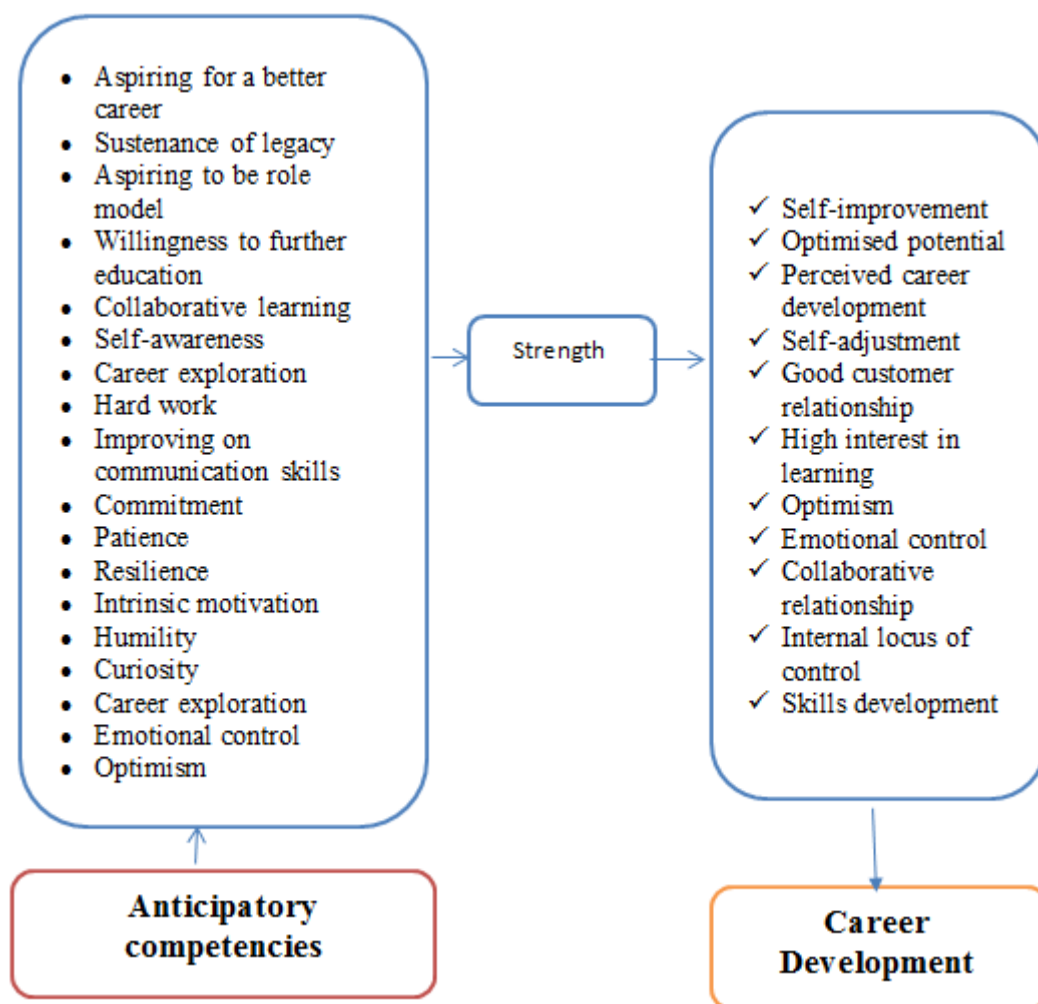


Figure 1: Conceptual diagram depicting the influence of anticipatory competencies on the career development of persons with hearing impairment in Fako Division South West Region of Cameroon

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