

## **Perspectives of Parents on Challenges Faced in Monitoring Academic Progress of Learners with Hearing Impairments in Kenya: A Case of a Special Secondary School in Kakamega County**

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this study was to establish the perspectives of parents on challenges of monitoring the academic progress of learners with hearing impairments in Kenya. This study adopted a qualitative research approach using a case study research design. The study used purposive and saturated sampling techniques to select a sample of 44 informants and collected data by use of interview schedules, focus group discussion guides and document analysis guides. Data was analyzed using thematic analysis technique as proposed by Braun and Clarke [1]. The study found out that parents held that academic counseling served no purpose, tuition at home and visitations too costly in terms of time and money. The study concluded that most parents did not prioritize monitoring of their children's progress. The findings of this study may be useful to teachers and education stakeholders in understanding the perspectives parents have on monitoring academic progress of learners with hearing impairments.

**Keywords:** Hearing, Impairment, Academic, Progress, Monitoring, Kenya, Parent, Perspective.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The emphasis on parent and school partnership emphasized in the last two provisions of IDEA, is also supported by the Department for Children, School and Families [2] with emphasis on the parents' need to work together with the community and the school.

The Department for Children, School and Families [2] recognizes that whereas raising any child is challenging, raising a child with hearing impairments has more challenges and no parent should dare go at it alone. In addition, another study [3] reviewed the nature and scope of out of school learning focusing on the home as a learning environment which influences the child. The study argued that since parenting is a lifelong learning experience, it was necessary that there be a working partnership between the school and the home; parents, care-givers and professionals on behalf of the children governed by ethics. These studies emphasize the fact that there is need for parents to have working partnerships with their children's schools.

Academic achievements have been related to positive parental participation for many years. In one study [4] authors sought to find out the academic status and progress of students with HI in general education classrooms. The study involved 197 students with mild to profound hearing loss attending general education classes. Data was obtained on students' expressive and receptive communication, classroom participation, communication mode and parental participation. Parental participation was judged on the number of

school-related activities in which parents participated. The study established that high parental participation was positively related to all academic outcomes of learners in general education classroom but did not consider how parental perspectives would affect education of learners with HI. The current study proposed to establish perspectives of parents on challenges of monitoring academic progress of learners with HI in a special school.

Academic progress is monitored both in school and at home. A study conducted in Jordan on 'Raising and educating deaf children', [5] explored the issues of stress experienced by parents of children with HI. The study found out that parents with children with HI experienced higher level of stress directly related to challenges associated with the experiences of raising a child who is having HI. Some of the challenges are associated with the demands of the parenting role that include specific task demands such as; learning and managing amplification devices, educational and communication options, supporting the child's educational progress and access to appropriate services. Parenting stress is a distinct type of stress related to the strain individuals face in their role as parents and can be

defined as undesirable psychological reaction to the demands of being a parent. According to the study [5], higher levels of stress are deemed to interfere with the parents' ability to support their children and implement intervention strategies for their education and development. The reviewed study sought to find out the issues of stress experienced by parents of children with HI generally in Jordan, while the current study focused on the perspectives of parents on challenges of monitoring academic progress of learners with HI in Kenya. Kenya and Jordan are educationally and culturally different.

In a study [6], parents identified certain factors that posed challenges to them as they endeavored to educate their children with HI. Parents noted that there were challenges caused by external barriers and those caused by individual's circumstances. One such was time constraints. Parents complained that they missed out on certain school activities because of lack of time. Parents also raised the fact that they were unable to spend as much time with their children as they should have. Working and single parents felt whenever their busy schedule allowed, they needed to spend quality time with their children bonding rather than doing school work and that a weekly commitment to their child's school was too much, moreover, the parents reasoned that children needed time to rest. In addition, [7], most parents were not able to adequately monitor the academic progress of their children citing; lack of time, lack of know how (no special training to handle these children or their work), poor organization by the school, boring routine that lacked variety and creativity, not being invited or consulted by the school. Parents in this study seemed to point that if the school planned better, they would be able to monitor the academic performance of their children better. While these studies focused on lack of time, knowhow and poor school organization, they did not find out the perspectives of parents on challenges of monitoring educational progress of learners with HI which the current study sought to find out.

A qualitative study carried out in the Jordan [8], focused on the challenges of educating students who have HI and obtained data through interviews, observations and reviews of related documents from 34 respondents. The study found out that parents did not monitor their children's academic progress as closely as they should. The principals and teachers interviewed expressed hopelessness concerning their relationship and the parents. Parents rarely responded to invitation by the school to participate in decision making about the education of their child with HI. The study did not report on the perspectives of parents on challenges of monitoring academic progress of learners with HI.

In a study that focused on critical needs of students who have HI in USA [9] it was established that the limited expectations were transferred from the

professionals to the parents and finally to the children. The study population involved seven hundred and seventy five (775) respondents of diverse cultural backgrounds. The expectations set by the professionals, parents and teachers were far too low because they thought the HI was an excuse for not providing opportunities and tools to foster successful achievement. Further, the study revealed that many learners suffered lack of parental involvement and were affected in their motivation, performance and ability to connect to information in class. Many students lacked what they needed in their school lives because they did not have support at home. In addition, lack of literacy in some parents kept them from assisting children with literacy work at home. The study also observed that parental attitude and low expectation was as a result of misinformation that learning American Sign Language would prevent their children from achieving much. The reviewed study reveals that parental expectation and support was an important factor in predicting student achievement. The current study focused on perspectives of parents on challenges faced in monitoring academic progress of learners with HI.

In a review of literature on parental involvement and learner achievement, one study [10] documented some four important findings that: the extent of parental involvement is influenced by social class and material deprivation, the extent of parental involvement is influenced by level of learner achievement, the extent of parental involvement diminishes as the child grows older and that parental involvement in the form of 'at-home good parenting' has a significant positive effect on the children's achievement. The current study sought to find out the perspectives of parents on challenges of monitoring academic progress of learners with HI.

In Japan, parents are reported to face several challenges educating learners with HI in regular settings. A study [11] involving five (5) children with HI, their parents, teachers and classmates identified some of the challenges parents in Japan faced in trying to have their children with HI integrated into regular schools. Through interviews and Focus Group Discussions, the study found out that parents had difficulties securing admission for their children in mainstream schools by themselves, faced tension about their children's ability to cope in the mainstream classroom, had fear of that the teachers might have negative attitude and stress having to do extra coaching at home to enable their children to measure up with the regular learners. The reviewed study focused on the challenges of educating learners with HI in regular settings while the current study focused on perspectives of parents on challenges faced in monitoring academic progress of learners with HI in a special school. Regular schools and special schools are different learning environments in terms of provision of physical facilities and personnel.

In Kenya, the Ministry of education's National Special Education Policy Framework [12] expectation was that the Policy would enhance access, transition rates and retention of learners with Special needs in formal learning institutions. The policy lists parents among the key stakeholders in the education of learners with disabilities. The guiding principles of the policy include; professional delivery of services to learners with special needs and active and pro-active primary role of parents and families as care givers and health providers for their children. It is clear from this policy that parents are expected to play a major role in the lives of children with special needs. In addition, the policy framework also includes what the other stakeholders are expected to do, for instance, the Ministry of Education to promote the development and use of Kenya Sign Language by setting up learning centres; government to create awareness among parents, other learners and the communities about the needs of learners with special needs, the HI included. Though positive progress has been made in the implementation of special needs education policies, the ministry of education admits facing challenges in the process of implementing policies on special needs education. Some of the challenges include but are not limited to financial allocation, delayed disbursement of allocated funds and poor parent involvement of parents in the education of children with special needs [13]. Parents also indicate they have their own set of challenges which include lack of financial support and lack of assistive devices for children with severe disabilities.

Laying emphasis on the impact of management of visiting days, a study [14] was carried out a study in Lugari District, Kenya. The study targeted a population of 13,236 students and a sample of 1,303. The study found out that though the schools had no universal policy on managing visiting days, they were important to students. The study revealed that students who were not visited often felt frustrated and withdrew to the dormitories, others cried, lost interest in learning or resorted to indiscipline. The reviewed study focused on management of visiting days in secondary schools and the possible effect on learners' welfare while the current study sought to establish the view parents have on challenges faced in monitoring academic progress.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study used qualitative research approach adopting case study design. The consent of the respondents was sought individually and each informant signed a consent form. Data collection instruments were; interview schedules, focus group discussion guides and document analysis guides. Data was analyzed thematically and presented according to emerging themes.

## RESULTS

### Attendance of school activities and learners' academic progress

Results from interview with parents revealed that few parents attended all academic days planned by the school and had regular discussions with teachers on the learners' academic progress during visiting days. However, parents observed that the academic performance of learners with HI remained low as compared to their hearing counterparts. The parents said the learners would complain that the subjects were difficult. Parents did not understand what aspect or concepts were difficult. Parents' reported that discussions with the teachers were not fruitful so most parents just gave up. Most parents did not attend academic days because in their perspective, they had not been beneficial. Parents found academic days rather routine and not innovative in any way. Some had attended many for two or three years and though the questions remained the same through the years, nothing seemed to change. Parents' sentiments are represented in the following statement:

*When learners complain to us that subjects are difficult, the best thing to do is to find the teachers and discuss the matter with them. If things do not change after that, where else can we go? Then, I think that academic days are important if they serve the right purpose. As parents we want to see improvement in the performance, that's why we attend academic days. However, if there is no change we get discouraged... (IP022).*

A few parents indicated that they left the teachers to handle all matters of academics. They did not attend any academic days for a variety of reasons; some cited lack of time, their children were only in form one or two and according to them, academic days were for parents whose children were in form four and travelling expenses. The parents who cited lack of time reasoned that they usually took one day off at the beginning of the term to bring the children to school and another day to collect them when schools closed. Therefore, they would not take another one to come for academic days. One parent explained;

*'I have to work to earn a living. I let the teachers deal with academic things, that's their work, isn't it? Any day I miss work, I earn nothing yet I have other children to feed and educate.'* (IP007).

In the interview with the teachers, the study established that parents whose children were sponsored rarely attended academic days but instead would send social workers appointed by the sponsor. These parents stated that they were out of touch with the children's academic progress except what they saw in the report card at the end of the term. However, some would make effort to talk to teachers during visiting days.

Unfortunately, visiting days always fell on weekends and only a few teachers would be available.

*The sponsor requires a regular report on the learner which only the social worker or the sponsor's staff can write. Some parents only attend a few times but mostly, it is the sponsor's representative who visits...* (IT013).

Interview with the Quality Assurance and Standards Officer (QUASO) revealed that though attendances during academic days were poor, the education office did not understand why. In the observation of the QUASO, academic days were comparatively better attended in regular schools.

*I do not seem to see the enthusiasm I expect of parents in this school. Every parent's chief concern is the academic welfare of their children. I have wondered whether parents are too busy or too poor to attend such important school events.* (QUASO).

Results from Focus Group Discussion with parents revealed that some parents held the view that academic counseling was an important activity for monitoring learners' progress but had divergent views on how regularly they were willing to participate if at all. Some felt that once a term was adequate while others felt that it was important to schedule one in first term and another in second term. Other still felt that once a year was enough as they did not have time to keep on coming to school every now and then.

*'I am not learning. I am working to get money to pay fees. Surely you don't want me to be on the road always coming to school?'* (PFG).

On the contrary, some parents insisted that it was the responsibility of the teacher and maybe the sponsor to monitor the academic progress of the learners with HI. Parents argued that there were many things they did not understand about the education of the HI and so they wanted teachers to continue assisting the learners. Most parents also said they avoided academic counseling because of lack of language to effectively communicate with the learners. The following representative statement shows what the parents thought:

*Indeed, teachers are the ones who know what these learners should learn and the language the learners understand. Even I depend on the teacher to interpret for me what the child is saying and to tell the child what I am saying whenever I visit. I have also attended the so called academic counseling days faithfully since my child was in form one. I have not seen any improvement at all, in fact it got worse. I don't think these help at all. Yes, my child maybe position five but with a grade as low as a D+ while the best had a C-. This is not good at all, teachers should think of different strategies to*

*involve parents in academic support other than these meetings...* (PFG).

Results from Teachers' Focus Group Discussion revealed that most parents had problems with the level of academic performance they saw in learners with HI in the school. Many teachers reported that many parents had indicated to them that they were very discouraged by the results they saw every year. As a result, parents began to view education for learners with HI as not beneficial. Some parents complained that it was the teachers of the HI who were not putting in enough effort. Teachers also reported that there were many occasions when some parents showed an attitude of negligence. Sometimes the school had sourced sponsors to pay fees for needy learners then the parents of these learners just abandoned the responsibilities of buying uniforms, personal effects, providing pocket money and fare, causing the learners to suffer greatly. Parents' complaint about lack of time to come for school activities was also raised by the teachers. Many parents often gave teachers the excuse that they were busy working to raise funds to educate the learners. The following representative statement reveals parents perspectives:

*Parents regularly ask us questions meant to imply that we don't teach. It is very difficult to convince a parent that you have taught anything when the learner cannot answer any examination questions. Those parents who do not visit or attend academic days say that sponsors are responsible.* (TFG).

Most teachers noted that learners with HI whose parents frequently visited and attended academic days were more relaxed, confident, disciplined, enjoyed learning and worked hard in academic tasks.

*Learners who are visited regularly feel cared for. Those who do not see their parents come to school to visit or attend other functions, feel neglected and become uncooperative. However, when we call parents for discipline cases and the learners are counseled, they often change...* (TFG).

This study analyzed the minutes of the Annual General Meetings (AGMs) of 2013, 2014 and 2015. The minutes recorded sentiments from several speakers that parents should make efforts to attend academic counseling days and visit their children in school. It was noted that many parents skipped academic and visiting days for various personal reasons. The speakers argued that visiting could assist parents to bond with the learners, learn sign language and motivate learners in their academic work and life in general. The academic days were specifically designed to assist parents in monitoring academic progress of the learners. The Principal, Parents/Teachers Association (PTA) chairman and the representative of the Educational Assessment and Resource Centre (EARC) office

emphasized the fact that it was important for parents to make use of academic and visiting days to monitor the general progress of the learners. This confirmed the complaint raised by teachers that many parents did not visit learners or attend academic days regularly and the point raised by various parents on the reasons they were not able to visit the learners as regularly as was expected. The teachers attributed this to parents' humble backgrounds or low socio-economic status. This

further affected the frequency with which some parents visited the learners. Many parents expressed inability to visit the learners regularly because their homes were far from school and it was too expensive for them to travel to and from school every visiting day. The study also analyzed registers for visiting, academic and parent days. A summary of each are presented in tables. The trend of parents' visitation during the years 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 is illustrated in Table 1.1

**Table-1: Visiting day registration**

Year	Total no. of parents	Average No. of parents visiting
2012	123	22 (17.8%)
2013	145	26 (17.9%)
2014	140	23 (16.4%)
2015	150	27 (18.0%)

Source: SSE Parents visiting day registration book

From Table 1 the findings of this study show that parents' attendance usually ranged from a low of 16.8% to a high of 18.0% over a four year period. A similar trend was recorded for Academic day attendance

with the exception of parents of form one learners. Table 2 summarizes academic days' attendance registration over a four year period.

**Table-2: Academic Day Registration**

Date	Class	No. of parents expected	No. of parents attending	% Attendance
11 <sup>th</sup> May 2012	Form 1	33	21	63.63
9 <sup>th</sup> March 2012	Form 2	43	15	23.25
10 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2012	Form 3	29	10	27.58
17 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2012	Form 4	18	03	16.66
10 <sup>th</sup> May 2013	Form 1	36	20	55.55
8 <sup>th</sup> March 2013	Form 2	37	10	27.02
8 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2013	Form 3	45	16	35.55
25 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2013	Form 4	27	04	14.81
16 <sup>th</sup> March 2014	Form 1	39	30	76.92
10 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2014	Form 2	45	15	33.33
18 <sup>th</sup> May 2014	Form 3	41	13	31.70
13 <sup>th</sup> July 2014	Form 4	25	03	12.00
8 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2015	Form 3	40	07	17.50
8 <sup>th</sup> March 2015	Form 4	41	08	19.51
10 <sup>th</sup> May 2015	Form 1	31	18	58.06
7 <sup>th</sup> June 2015	Form 2	38	12	31.57

Source: Director of studies' SSE parents' attendance records (2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015)

Table 2 reveals that though the percentage of parents who attended academic days during the four year period ranged between twelve to seventy six (12-76%), the highest percentages were recorded from parents of form ones. Table 1.2 shows that parents of form one learners attended academic days in larger numbers (55.55%, 58.06%, 63.63% and 76.92%) as compared to parents of learners in forms two, three and four. Attendance of form four parents was the lowest

(11.11% to 19.51%) while that of parents of learners in forms two and three ranged between a low of 17.50% to a high of 35.70%.

A similar trend was also observed in the parents' day attendance. The parents of form one learners seemed to attend in larger numbers than parents of forms two, three and four. Table 3 illustrates this:

**Table-3: Parents' Day Registration**

Date	Class	No. of parents expected	No. of parents attending	Percentage %
2012	Form 1	33	14	42.42
	Form 2	43	11	25.55
	Form 3	29	07	24.13
	Form 4	18	02	11.11
2013	Form 1	36	17	47.22
	Form 2	37	08	21.62
	Form 3	45	09	20.00
	Form 4	27	06	22.22
2014	Form 1	39	20	51.28
	Form 2	45	13	28.88
	Form 3	41	09	21.95
	Form 4	25	05	20.00
2015	Form 1	31	17	54.83
	Form 2	38	09	23.68
	Form 3	40	06	15.00
	Form 4	41	07	17.07

Source: School SSE: Parents' Day Registration (2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015)

From Table 3 the parents of form one learners attended parents' days in larger numbers 42.42%, 47.22%, 51.28% and 54.83% during the four year period (2012-2015). Parents of learners in forms two, three and four had the lowest turn up ranging from eleven percent to twenty eight point eighty eight percent (11.11% to 28.88%).

Despite the evidenced low attendance of school activities, parents expected good performance from the learners. However, this was not forthcoming as illustrated in Table 1.4 showing K.C.S.E results over a period of four years:

**Table-4: K.C.S.E Results**

Year	Mean Score	Mean Grade
2012	3.37	D
2013	3.36	D
2014	2.47	D
2015	2.9	D

Source: SSE Director of studies' Academic records file

Table 1.4 presents National examination results over a period of four years. The mean score changed very minimally over the years. In the year 2013 there was a mean score decline of 0.01 though the mean grade remained constant at D (Plain). In the year 2014, there was a further mean score decline of 0.89 and a mean grade of D (Plain). However, in 2015, the mean score went up from 2.47 to 2.9 thus recording a mean score improvement of 0.43 but the mean grade remained at D (Plain). Therefore, for four years, the best mean score was 3.37 and the worst 2.47 all within the range of D (Plain) mean grade. Parents complained about the performance of their children because they were not observing any significant improvement despite the efforts they made.

#### Assistance with assignments at home

At home, parents struggled to ensure the learners studied effectively. Some parents engaged the younger or older siblings to assist with home work because they knew sign language better than the parents. Other parents got reports on the learners' progress through their teachers but did not know what

to do because of communication challenge. Due to communication barrier, many parents found it challenging to engage the learner in meaningful academic discussions.

*It has been difficult trying to assist the child with HI with school work. I have the will but I don't have the language. The siblings know more signs than I do, so I let them help... (IP 016).*

Results from the teachers' interview revealed that a few parents engaged teachers to tutor learners during the holiday. However most parents were not able to engage teachers to tutor the child at home because there were no teachers in the vicinity who knew sign language and they could not afford to pay. Parents felt that their children were disadvantaged academically because they were HI and parents did not know enough sign language to monitor their academic progress.

*Parents tell us that it is so easy to find a teacher in any subject hearing children but the teachers for learners with hearing impairments are so rare. In addition,*

*parents say that they cannot afford to pay holiday tuition for children with HI... (IT06).*

It was noted from the teachers' response that many parents viewed their participation in the education of learners with HI as important and beneficial. However, some of the teachers expressed that they noted that many parents were unable to participate in assisting learners with academic work at home because they lacked the language of communication.

*Parents depend mainly on the information they get from us (teachers). Some read the work the learner has brought home, understand and even know the required content, but they are handicapped by lack of sign language... (IT09).*

In the effort to provide the best, the parents always tried to provide extra study material but weren't sure if those were the correct ones and communication from the school on the same matter had been poor. Parents noted that the learners used some materials more than others. When they tried complaining and pushing the learners to read all the books, the learners only got stressed and felt the parents hated them. On the contrary, there were parents who had never tried to assist or even find out if there was any assignment at all.

*The learner is particularly weak in English and by buying books I had hoped that she would improve. The learner particularly needs help in reading and I can't help her because of lack of knowledge in sign language. Honestly, I feel quite helpless that I cannot assist my own child in her studies... (PFG).*

A few parents raised additional ways of assisting learners with HI with their assignments. Parents explained that they gave learners time to do school work in the morning or evening. Some added that they bought equipment for learners to use for practical work at home. As one parent said;

*My daughter likes home science so we have bought her a sewing machine to use for practice at home. With the skills she has learnt in school, she is able to do clothe repairs for the siblings and neighbors and raise some pocket money. I am happy with her progress... (PFG).*

Teachers' focus group discussion results confirmed that there was little study taking place at home during the holidays. Teachers noted that most of the assignments they gave learners for the holiday were either returned undone or poorly done. When asked why they did not ask the parents to help, learners would respond that parents were always busy and had no time to assist them.

## DISCUSSION

### Academic Days' Attendance, Visiting and Level of Performance

Findings from interviews and focus group discussion revealed that parents were unhappy with the academic performance of learners with HI and some blamed the poor performance on the teachers. Results showed that poor examination results led to parents' loss of confidence in educating learners with hearing impairments. Many parents cited poor academic performance of learners as a major source of discouragement and a reason why some of them avoided academic counseling sessions. Parents wondered how learners would perform in the national examination when they did so poorly in internal examinations. There were parents who felt that education was not beneficial to the HI since they had never seen anyone employ a person with HI.

The study also found out that many parents cited lack of time as a challenge they had in attending academic and visiting days. Other parents cited boring routines and lack of creativity as reasons why they avoided attending academic days. This was in agreement with the findings of studies from other continents [6,7] which reported that some of the challenges parents faced in educating their children with HI were time constraint, lack of creativity, boring routines and lack of invitation by the school. In their report, some parents complained of lack of time to attend school activities and to spend with their children at home. This meant that some parents needed to work most of the time to raise finances to sustain the family. However, these findings are negated by the findings of another study [4] which submitted that when parental participation is high, academic outcomes are likely to be better.

The responses from parents seem to suggest that parents considered visits to school focused only on learners. They did not seem to view these school activities as providing them an opportunity to meet and assist the teachers too. According to another study [15], if schools provide a welcoming environment, contact with parents should be an integral part of school life and that the government should encourage schools establishing and maintaining relationships with parents by liaising with parents for learning support for learners with special needs in education. Further, the same study [15] submitted that schools had found home-school contracts to be of significant benefit in involving parents constructively in considering all educational plans.

Results from document analysis showed that parents attendance of visiting days, academic days and parents days were low. Most parents had mentioned in their interviews and group discussions that they either were too busy or lacked finances to attend school activities. Visiting days recorded a maximum of 18.0%

attendance in the period 2012 to 2015. Table 1.3 shows that academic day attendance registered the highest number from form one parents (55.55% to 76.92%). However, although attendance of form two and three parents was low, the form four parents registered the lowest attendance of twelve percent (12.00%) in 2014. It can be implied that parents visited their children more when they were in form one because they were younger and new to the school system and less as they grew older and got used to the system. According to one study [4] participation of parents in education leads to better results. An analysis of the KCSE results indicated that the best mean grade in four years (2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015) was D (plain). It can be implied that diminishing parental participation could have contributed to learners' lack of interest in learning and thus the low level of performance [14]. (See Table 4)

These findings point to the possibility that parents when parents do not interact with or attend academic functions for their children with HI regularly, the academic outcomes are likely to be lower than if they attended. The findings are in contradiction to the findings of one study [10] in which the findings indicated that the more the parent is involved, the better the performance but agree with their finding that the extent of parental involvement diminishes as children grow older.

#### **Assistance with Assignments at Home**

The findings of this study reveal that most parents could not assist learners with studies at home citing; lack of language for instruction, lack of time, lack of money and lack of expertise. This therefore means that parents were willing to assist their children in their studies but had challenges doing so since their children had hearing impairments.

The view parents had of assisting learners with school work is closely related to a study carried out in Zimbabwe [16] which reported that some parents were willing to assist in classroom work provided they were given guidance on how to master the requirements for their assistance. However, in the same study, other parents were reluctant to participate in classroom activities citing lack of knowledge and expertise in the general area of education. In this study parents' lack of language to explain concepts was a limiting factor in offering assistance with school work. This study also found out that many parents who did not assist their children in studies at home complained of lack of time to do so. This is supported by the findings of one study [7] who in their study found out that most parents did not assist their children with home work because of lack of time and know how. This is further supported by another study [11] who also submitted that many parents were unable to offer extra coaching to their children because they had neither the time nor the skills to do so.

There were a few parents who admitted they were willing to assist learners with school work during the holidays but were limited by lack of language. This view was negated by a study by a study from another continent [17] which reported that educators considered parents as the child's first teacher and that if education were to be effective, families had to be involved. This therefore meant that if parents had challenges in monitoring academic progress of learners it would affect their performance negatively.

In view of the findings, it could be implied that most parents had a willingness to assist learners with HI with school work but could not because they viewed themselves as lacking the language, time and skills. Therefore, it could mean that learners with HI did not perform as well as they should have because they were not assisted in their studies at home by parents. The parents in this study saw themselves as incompetent in assisting learners with academic work.

#### **CONCLUSION**

##### **In view of the findings the study concluded that**

Most parents could not monitor the academic progress of their children with HI claiming lack of time, finances, distance from school, lack of language of communication or lack of skills for teaching learners with HI and lack of creativity in organization of school activities rendering them routine and boring. Some of the parents also left monitoring to the teachers and sponsors. Therefore, it is evident that most parents did not take monitoring of academic progress as a priority in the education of learners with HI therefore learners were unlikely to improve in their academic performance. Parents therefore did not monitor the academic progress of their children with HI effectively leading to unsatisfactory examination results and parents' discouragement.

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