

Parental Involvement in Career Development of Youths with Intellectual Disabilities: A Case of Selected Skills Training Institutions in Zambia

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Abstract: This paper discusses the role of parental involvement in career development of youths with intellectual disabilities in selected skills training institutions in Zambia. The descriptive case study was carried out in Kabwe, Chisamba and Ndola districts of Central and Copperbelt Provinces respectively. Purposive sampling was used on a population of 390 to select 60 respondents: 15 youths with intellectual disabilities, their lecturers (15) and their parents (30). Semi-structured interviews, observations and Focus Group Discussions were used to collect data. Data analysis was done thematically. The study revealed that factors that affect parental involvement are income, parenting styles, parental education (knowledge) and parental expectations. As regards the nature of parental involvement, it was found that parents were involved in visitations, support and sponsorship of their children. However, very few were involved. Parental involvement was found to influence career development through being motivational and encouraging. Based on the findings, the study recommends that the government through the Ministry of Education should sensitize parents of children with intellectual disabilities on the importance of being involved in education of their children to foster career development.

Keywords: Career Development, Intellectual Disability, Parent, Involvement

1. INTRODUCTION

Transition to adulthood is both an exciting and challenging time for adolescents especially those with intellectual disabilities. Equally, parents often wonder what their children will do when they are grown up. In the career development process, parents are one of the most important and influential elements but they may not be aware. They have the power and ability to shape, sustain and develop their children's career development through their positive involvement in educational activities of their children.

Involvement of parents in the education of their children is often and especially critical during the transition to life after school and it has been well perceived (Whiston & Keller, 2008; Latashia, 2012). According to Latashia (2012), parental involvement refers to parents helping their children improve their school work by providing support, encouragement and establishing a suitable home environment for career development. It takes many forms including good parenting in the home, provision of a secure and stable environment, intellectual stimulation, parent-child discussion, good models of constructive social, educational values high aspirations relating to personal fulfillment and good citizenship, contact with schools to share information, participation in school events and participation in school governance (McKenna and Millen, 2013). Children with actively involved parents tend to have a more positive attitude towards school and are in a better position to develop careers (Cheung & Pomerrantz, 2012).

However, within each family, the level and nature of involvement can vary, offering either positive or negative influences to career development. The researchers therefore, wonder what the role of parental involvement in the career development of youths with intellectual disabilities is.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Researchers such as Noack, Krackle Gnieuwostz and Dietrick (2010) highlight the influence of parental involvement in career development among adolescents. In Zambia, studies that have been conducted

on parental involvement (Mubanga, 2010; Ndhlovu, 2008; Nzala, 2006) have only focused on the parental involvement in the education of their children. None of these studies has shown how parental involvement translates into career development, yet, Banks, Maître, McCoy and Watson (2016) point out that parental involvement in the education of their children fosters career development and post school outcomes. The study therefore, aimed at establishing the role of parental involvement in career development of youths with intellectual disabilities in selected skills training institutions.

1.2. Purpose

The purpose was to establish the role of parental involvement in career development of youths with intellectual disabilities in selected skills training institutions in Zambia.

1.3. Research Objectives

1. To determine the factors that affect parental involvement.
2. To establish the nature of parental involvement in career development of youths with intellectual disabilities.
3. To determine how parental involvement influences career development of youths with intellectual disabilities.

1.4. Research Questions

1. What are the factors that affect parental involvement?
2. What is the nature of parental involvement in career development of youths with intellectual disabilities?
3. How does parental involvement influence career development of youths with intellectual disabilities?

1.5. Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by the Ecological Systems Theory by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1999) which assumes that development is best understood by examining one's context. Bronfenbrenner believes that career development is a lifelong process of getting ready to choose, choosing and typically continuing to make choices from among many occupations in our society. This depends so much on the heterogeneity of individuals and is influenced by the context in which they live.

The theory advocates that the environment has direct influence on an individual's development. It states that a person's ability to reach their potential is dependent on the presence of opportunities in the settings in which he or she lives. Theory argues that individuals better adjust and are more satisfied in environments that match their attitudes, values, goals and experiences, that is, they are more satisfied when there is a fit between themselves and their environment (Schutheiss, Kress, Manzi & Glasscock, 2001). Being congruent with one's parents on career matters reflects a fit between individuals and their environment. Such a fit is likely to facilitate and foster career development (Duffy & Dik, 2009). Incongruity or lack of fit on the other hand is a potential external barrier to career development (Schutheiss, et al., 2001). In addition, real life situations provide either opportunities or barriers to career development. The theory assumes that parents influence career development through interactions, relationships and expectations they create with their children. The more encouraging and nurturing these relationships, interactions and places are, the better the child will be able to develop careers.

The theory has five systems: microsystem, exosystem, mesosystem, macrosystem and chronosystem. These helped understand the role of parental involvement in career development of youths with intellectual disabilities.

1.6. Significance of the Study

Findings may contribute to the knowledge gap of the significant role of parental involvement in career development of youths with intellectual disabilities. Findings may also reveal to policy makers and implementers how they can help parents understand the importance of their involvement in their children's education and career development.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Latashia (2012), parental involvement refers to parents helping their children improve their school work by providing support, encouragement and establishing a suitable home environment for career development. It can also be the degree to which parents are committed to their role as parents and the fostering of optimal child development.

Parental involvement has a primary impact on the career development of young adolescents even more as compared to other factors. Whiston and Keller (2004)'s survey in Latin America on the influence of the family found that parental involvement influenced what children learnt about work and work experiences. In addition, parental involvement reflected parental attitudes about school and work, which in turn had a long-term impact on adolescents' career choices, decisions and plans. The study however, was conducted more than a decade ago in Latin America and leaves a question whether parental involvement would help youths with intellectual disabilities learn about work and prepare for future lives in the African context.

Palo and Drobot (2014) conducted a study on the impact of the family influence on the career choices of adolescents in Romania. The aim was to identify variables from the family environment which have an impact on adolescents' future decisions. The sample consisted of 60 pupils from the final grade. The study used a test portfolio: Parent Career Behaviour Checklist (Keller and Whiston, 2008); EMBU questionnaires (Perris et al., 1980) and Adult Attachment Scale (Collins and Read, 1990). The results showed that parental involvement influence career decision making process of adolescents. However, this study aimed at identifying variables from the family environment that can foster career development but the current study uses the identified variable (parental involvement), to ascertain its role in career development of youths (not pupils) with intellectual disabilities using a descriptive case study.

In the US, Newman (2009) examined involvement of families in the education of secondary school age children with disabilities. The study found that majority of youths with disabilities whose parents expect them to succeed in entering adult roles after high school are helped their parents in their career development. Though conducted over 13 years ago and in the US, the researchers wonder whether similar results would be yielded with youths with intellectual disabilities in Africa and Zambia in particular.

One Finnish study interrelates how adolescents' motivation and what the adolescents thought about career development compared with the degree of their parents' involvement in their career preparation (Dietrich & Salmela-Aro, 2013). Findings indicate that adolescents were more likely to pursue careers they were interested in and motivated to pursue if their parents were involved in supporting and assisting them in their aspirations. In addition, youths whose parents were involved had less stress related to their career decisions. This study differs from the current study in that these are of course Finnish adolescents, who may or may not be descriptive of youths with intellectual disabilities in Africa and precisely, Zambia.

A study was conducted by Rodrigues, Jindal-Snape and Snape (2011) on factors that influenced aspirations for a science career by 14-15 year old youths. The study concluded that the most important factor influencing the aspiration of a science career by adolescents was parental involvement and their indication whether they want their children to pursue such a career. This study illustrates the difficulty of trying to determine if career development and career choice in for example, youth with intellectual disabilities in Zambia is also influenced by the parental involvement. It is also not known whether there is causation involved here in which parents wish their children to pursue a career at a skills training institution for their children aspire to such a career or if these parents would be supportive of whatever career choice their children expressed.

Latasha (2012) investigated the impact of family involvement on career development of college students at a metropolitan university in the Southeastern United States. The study used quantitative and qualitative research methods to obtain a deeper understanding of parental involvement in college students' career decision-making and its influences on their career readiness and development. College students provided information on their parents' involvement and influence during their secondary education. The study also sought to identify the nature of parental involvement in different

activities, academic achievement and choosing a career. In addition, the Career Involvement and Influence Questionnaire (CIIQ) and the Career Development Inventory (CDI) were used to collect data. Findings showed that parental involvement had influence on career development of college students. The current study uses youths with intellectual disabilities, their parents and lecturers to provide data using qualitative methods.

Hafiz, Tehsin, Malik, Muhammad and Muhammad (2013)'s research aimed at exploring the effect of parental involvement in the academic achievement of their children in AllamaIqbal Town, Lahore city. A total of 150 students (boys and girls) of 9th class of secondary schools (public and private) were taken as respondents. Four schools were selected through simple random sampling which included one boy and one girl from each of the public and private schools for equal representation. A Survey questionnaire was used to collect data. Findings revealed that parental involvement has significant effect and better academic performance of children. However, this study was on academic performance while the current one is in career development.

Lindstrom, Benz and Doren (2004) examined the influence of parents in career development of women with learning disabilities. The qualitative study examined students' perspectives of the family involvement in transition planning. Findings indicated that many students expressed careers similar to those of a close family member. The implication of this finding is that the presence of parents in career planning provided role models that children emulated and they developed careers. The researchers wonder whether such results would be replicated with youths with intellectual disabilities in Zambia.

Madueke and Oyenike (2010) carried out a study to identify patterns or modes of parental involvement in their children's literacy development in the light of what obtained around the world. 200 parents sampled from 10 basic schools of Lagos, Nigeria participated in the study. Findings showed a positive change in family literacy practices. This emerged in form of increased confidence in parents to act as models. The study suggested the need to imbed literacy in the everyday lives of families. Multiple improvement strategies for enhancing this were offered. In subjecting the above study to deeper analysis, its strength was in its search for parental involvement in children's attainment of literacy skills. However, the weakness of this study is that it failed to link literacy to career development and post school outcomes. This could have been an immeasurable help to strengthening of the findings of the study.

In her study on parental involvement in the education of intellectually challenged children in selected special units in Lusaka District of Zambia, Nzala (2006) found that there were a number of barriers that hindered parents from being involved in the education of their children. The most prominent were negative attitudes towards the children by parents themselves and lack of skills to apply in their quest to help their children. The 2006 study focused on factors that affected parental involvement in education. It did not show how this parental involvement influences career development of such children.

Ndhlovu (2008) conducted a study on the involvement of parents in the education of the visually impaired learners in selected schools in Lusaka District of Zambia. Among some constraints that this study revealed were; lack of trust in parent-teacher collaborations, escalating illiteracy levels among parents and misconceptions by parents that education for the visually impaired children was a sole responsibility of the government. Ndhlovu's study looked at learners with visual impairments in one district only and focused on parental involvement in education. On the contrary, the current study looks at youths with intellectual disabilities in selected skills training institutions focusing on the role of parental involvement in career development. It is also not known whether parents have the same challenges and whether they think that the education of children with intellectual disabilities is a sole responsibility of the government.

Mubanga (2010) investigated parental involvement in education of children in rural areas of the Central Province of Zambia. 60 participants were involved: 12 school managers; 10 teachers and 40 parents. Findings revealed that most parents were involved in the education of their children. It also revealed various ways in which parents were involved such as attending P.T.A meetings, providing books, uniforms, school fees for the children, assisting with homework and building of school infrastructure. The significance of home-school partnerships was that they helped in the improvement

of academic performance. The strength of the study is that it managed to meet its objective of establishing parental involvement in children's education. However, it did not indicate whether this academic performance led to better post school outcomes considering that academic performance, as posited by Banks et al., (2016), is linked to better post school outcomes. The study focused only on the rural areas of one province while this study draws youths with intellectual disabilities from across the country.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

The study was a case study design a brain child of qualitative method. Consistent with Yin (2012), a case study is more suitable when the goal is to provide and answer to "how" and "why" questions which aim to explain a certain phenomenon. The design helped understand the role of parental involvement in career development of youths with intellectual disabilities.

3.2. Research Sites

The study was conducted at Chipembi Farm College, Chisambain Central Province, Kabwe School for Continuing Education, Kabwe in Central Province and the National Vocational Rehabilitation Centre, Ndola on the Copper belt Province where youths with intellectual disabilities from across the country are offered skills training.

3.3. Target Population, Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

The population consisted of all youths with intellectual disabilities at the named sites, their lecturers and their parents. The target population was 390. The sample comprised sixty (60) respondents; fifteen (15) youths with intellectual disabilities, their parents (30) and their lecturers (15).

3.4. Research Instruments and Data Collection Procedures

The study used semi-structured interviews, observations and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) to collect data. These were deemed appropriate because interpretive researchers favour to interact and to dialogue with the studied participants (Wahyumi, 2012). Semi-structured interviews were administered to all respondents. FGDs were conducted to youths only. Observation was employed to assess the self-esteem of youths. For triangulation purposes, other sources of information such as documentary study were consulted.

3.5. Data Analysis

Data analysis commenced in the field. The descriptive method was used to analyze it. Data collected was categorized into emerging themes.

3.6. Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations such as; seeking permission from the university ethical committee and site authorities, respondent issues of confidentiality and other basic research conventions were taken into account. All respondents were given chance to consent their participation in the study and their identity was kept anonymous. For youths with intellectual disabilities, consent was sought from site authorities.

3.7. Validity

As a way to validate contents, the report was peer reviewed.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Factors that Affect Parental Involvement

The study revealed that parental involvement is affected by factors such as income. To this effect, one lecturer had this to say;

...most parents claim that they do not have money....

This finding mirrors that of Kibera and Kamikoti (2007) who found that low socioeconomic families are least likely to be involved in their children's education. This indicates economic vulnerability and is an indicator of poverty and deprivation on the part of the parents (Banks et al., 2016). The implication of this finding is that when parents are financially stable, they are better positioned to be

involved in the education and career development of their children. Likewise, they (2007) found that parents who had high income had the capacity and willingness to support their children's education. Similarly, Brofenbrenner's macrosystem encompasses the parental social economic status which offers the opportunity for parents to spend on a child or use the family's income to provide for the developing child (Krishnan, 2010). It should be noted that the better the parental economic status, the better the involvement and the better the development of the child. However, the use of the word 'claim' raises concern as to whether parents really have low income or it is just an attitude they have emanating from the presence of the disability in their children.

Parental expectations are also found to affect parental involvement. This finding mirrors that of Latashia (2012) who also found that parental involvement is affected by parental expectations. It is obvious that all parents have expectations of their children which they communicate verbally or non-verbally. These expectations are communicated through discussions of various natures such as explanations, advice, persuasions or warning. Messages contain different underlying messages such as '*Don't make the same mistakes that I did*'. For example as a warning, one youth said;

"Ba uncle benabalilandaatitabalefwayandeshungulukapa n'ganda... balefwayanainenkalebomba."(My uncle said that he does not want me to be loitering at home ...he wants me to be working)

When parents have expectations, they are normally involved in the education and activities of their children and the opposite is true. However, parental expectations in this case seemed to be very low. For example, one parent pointed out;

...Kailiababananzelunin'gono so benangubamaamongapalibevamene bangachite. (...because of the inadequate intellectual functioning of the children, some parents have low expectations).

This finding mirrors that of Newman (2009) who found that parents of children with intellectual disabilities have low expectations. When parents have low or no expectations at all, their involvement is negatively affected. Therefore, it can be deduced that most parents in this study had low expectations originating from the presence of the disability. This could explain why they were not so involved. Brofenbrenner's mesosystem also assumes that beliefs about disability negatively affect parental expectations and how parents relate with the child impacting negatively on career development. The theory also assumes that parental expectations depend on the context in which the family finds itself in such as resources or supportive neighbours.

The other factor that affects parental involvement in the education and career development of children is time. For example, one male parent in business said:

I am a very busy person, I do not have time go there, but I take him there when schools open....

This finding mirrors that of the Scottish Government (2009) which found that parents reported that some barriers such as lack of time especially those working and single parents affected their involvement in the education of their children. In this study, since most of the parents were not in employment, it would mean that they were busy trying to take care of the family and had no time to participate in their children's education. As for those that were in employment, it can be assumed that their jobs preoccupied them.

The study also found that parental involvement is affected by parental education or parental knowledge levels on disability. Howard (2010) also reported that usually, parents lacked knowledge on how to help and support their children. Similar findings were reported by Nzala (2006) and Banks et al., (2016). It should be noted that at the time of diagnosis of the child's disability, parents find their expectations being shattered. When there is a disability, in spite of the strengths of the child, the disappointed parents develop negative attitudes and their expectations are thwarted (Chandramuki, Krishnan and Mysore, 2012). The possible explanation for this is development that parents lack comprehensive information on the condition of their children. Consistent with Brofenbrenner's exosystem, if parents lack knowledge about a disability, it will negatively affect their family functioning and consequently their involvement in their children's activities.

The other factor that influences parental involvement in the career development is distance to the training institutions. One parent complained;

The institution is very far from here and transport money is equally a problem.

Since most of the parents were not in employment and a few were civil servants, it would mean that their income could not allow them to go visiting at the institutions which were also reportedly far. When parents have enough resources, the distance cannot be an issue. However, the claim that parents were barred by distance might also be attributed to the negative attitude they could have had towards children with disabilities. Surprisingly, it was noted that some parents were within reach.

Findings showed that parenting styles affect parental involvement. This finding is in concurrence with that of Olaosebikan and Olusakin (2014) who found that child rearing practices determine the way parents support or get involved in the education of their children. Parents who are less responsive may not be involved in the education and career development of their children not because they have no resources but because they might be of the neglectful style. Sadock and Sadock (2003) observe that neglectful parents are characterized by low responsiveness and low demandingness. In addition, they are more passive, of low warmth, rejecting, not attached and give little or no input in many important decisions made by adolescents. Therefore, it is likely that even if some parents in this study had resources, they were not involved in the education of their children possibly because of not only low expectations, negative attitudes but their parenting styles as well.

It can be deduced that some parents in this study were authoritarians. Authoritarian parenting style according to Armstrong (2014) is characterized by high demands, unresponsiveness and expectancy. Such parents want their children to follow unexplained rules failure to conform leads to harsh punishment. In addition, such parents are less cheerful, are irritable, passive and arrogant. For example, some parents simply told their children to train in certain courses or simply took them for training without getting their children's views. One youth complained;

I was just told by my daddy to come and train here in General Agriculture. I did not want this course. ... I wanted to be a Police Officer.

In this study, some parents seemed to be authoritative. Authoritative parents according to Sadock and Sadock (2003), are both demanding and responsive which implies that they balance clear and high expectations with emotional support and recognition of the children's autonomy. The style is marked by shared decisions made in a warm and loving environment which result in self-reliance, high self-esteem and a sense of social responsibility (Armstrong, 2014). Consistent with the Bronfenbrenner's theory used in this study, the microsystem constitutes child rearing practices. Parenting style has been suggested to reinforce children's career exploration which in turn impacts' an increasingly differentiation of interests with grade (Noack et al., 2010). In addition, at the mesosystem, evidence suggests that effective parenting, good home climate and well perceived social support from parents facilitate children's career exploration and career decisionness (Ibid, 2010).

4.2. Nature of Parental Involvement in the Career Development of Youths with Intellectual Disabilities?

Findings show that some (8) parents were involved in the education and career development of their children though few through taking their children to school, visitations, support and encouragement. One female parent explained:

We take her to school and ensure that someone picks her if we are committed....of course we also buy her groceries, though they may not be enough. This type of support helps her develop the desire to work later in life.

Parents that participated in school programs such as taking and visiting their children at school, helping or providing activities which influence children's thinking, attending to school activities or programmes. Similar findings were reported by Mubanga (2010). It was clear from the findings that most (22) parents were not fully involved in the education of their children. Such parents never attended school programs or activities which are vital for career development. One lecturer noted;

We have days that parents are supposed to visit their children but very few come....

Since parents never took part in school programmes or activities. This obviously deprived youths of the desired motivation and encouragement needed for career development. It also deprived parents of the instructional goals for them to provide resources and support necessary for their children's career development. It should be noted that the more parents involve in children schooling, the better in performance habits the children are and the better the post school outcomes.

This finding contradicts that of Cheung and Pomerrantz (2012) who found that parents took time to attend to school programs such as visitations and meetings. Attending to school programmes and visitations are basic loving and supportive parent behaviors which are encouraging and motivating for career development (Whiston & Keller, 2008). This entails that most youths missed important supportive and encouragement that would have enhanced career development. The absence of support and encouragement can lead to floundering, the ability to develop and pursue a specific career focus. Consistently, Bronfenbrenner's theory notes that parental workplace schedules and child rearing practices affect processes that occur in the family and affect the development of the child. If parents cannot get time off and attend meetings or school programmes at the institutions, they will have limited interactions with educators thereby inhibiting youths' career development.

4.3. How Parental Involvement Influences Career Development of Youths with Intellectual Disabilities.

Findings indicate that parental involvement influence career development through support which is an encouraging as well as being a motivating factor. A male lecturer had this to say:

When parents are involved in the education or any activity of their children, they encourage and monitor the progress. In turn children develop skills that are career related.

In addition, a female lecturer observed:

When parents are involved in whatever their children are doing, they monitor and guide and reinforce accordingly. This makes children to feel loved, cared for, motivated and thereby fostering career development.

This finding is consistent with that of Palo and Drobot (2010) who found that when parents are involved in the education of their children, they monitor their children's performance and encourage them accordingly resulting in career development. During visits parents engaged in productive discussions with educators and their children. They also encouraged their children who in turn felt motivated to perform better. This obviously enhanced their career development. A lecturer noted;

For the parents that visit, some of them take time to inquire from lecturers how their children are doing. By so doing, the children know their parents are concerned about their welfare...Others simply see their children give them whatever they will have brought and leave.

When parents are involved, they develop good relationships with educators from whom they get information about their children's performance and progression. Consistently, this information affects how they in turn relate with the child fostering or inhibiting career development. As such, McKenna and Millen (2013) also note that a positive relationship between the parent and the teacher consists of regular teacher communication with the parent regarding the child's performance and is established on respect and mutual goal of success of the child. Conversely, Bronfenbrenner's mesosystem assumes that parents' involvement in the education of their children if mutual result in microsystems functioning well leading to positive career development.

Cheung and Pomerrantz (2012) observe that children with actively involved parents tend to have more positive attitudes towards school and are conscious of their parents' high expectations. It therefore follows that when children have positive attitudes and are aware of parental expectations, they are likely to perform well leading to career development and better post outcomes. Similarly, when children know their parental expectations, they also diligently work to achieve their career goals thereby developing careers.

It is sad to note that though parental involvement is vital for career development, most parents were reported not to visit their children while most (22) had their children paid for by Non Governmental organizations or Churches. As regards visitations, one male youth said;

Iyayi, sibamabwelako. (No, they do not come).

A lecturer also said:

We have days that parents are supposed to visit their children but very few come. We emphasize on the need for them to visit but there is apathy from most parents....

This finding is consistent with that of Nzala (2010) who found that the most prominent were negative attitudes towards the children by parents themselves. There is no doubt that if parents have negative attitudes on visiting and supporting their children at school. This lack of visits and support can be attributed to negative attitudes and low expectations resulting from the disability. As put by Chandramuki et al.,(2012), the birth of a child with intellectual disability is often a shock for families as they undergo hostiles stages like shock denial and anger before accepting the child. Attitudes about school, work, career goals or aspirations and values have a long-term impact on youths career choices, decisions and plans. Likewise, Cheung and Pomerrantz (2012) notes that the more parents are involved in children's schooling, the better in performance habits the children are and the better the post school outcomes. When children feel loved or supported by their parents, they develop more skills in thinking about careers and the world of work than when they are not loved and supported. A positive environment in the family such as support in career choices and guidance is linked to positive outcomes in career development (Whiston& Keller, 2008). Brofenbrenner's theory also assumes that the more supportive the neighbours or community are to the family, the better the family will function to the advantage of the developing child. This calls for the need to sensitize the communities on issues of disabilities.

The study revealed reasons such as time, distance and lack of income as factors that influence parental involvement. For example, one lecturer explained:

...most of them claim that they do not have money, others its time, while others have no reasons at all. The issue of money or time is not true, it is just apathy they have towards children with intellectual disabilities. You find that such parents will visit another child at another school and ignore the one with intellectual disabilities here.

A parent in business said:

I am a very busy person, I do not have time go there but I take him there when schools open. And I also pick him up when am free or I make arrangements for him when going or when coming back.

Similar findings were reported by Latashia (2012) who found that one of the most contributing factors to parental involvement was their socio-economic status. Kibera and Kamikoti (2007) found that parents who are financially sound are able to take their children to school, support them and provide all the resources needed. When children feel loved or supported by their parents, they develop more skills in thinking about careers and the world of work. A positive environment in the family such as support at school, in career choices and guidance are linked to career development and positive outcomes (Whiston& Keller, 2008). It can therefore be deduced that most youths in this study lacked the encouraging and motivating factor that would enhance their career development. This calls for the need for parents to be proactive in the education of their children.

Consistent with the ecological theory, if parents take an active role in the child's school, career development is fostered because elements of the mesosystem are working together (Roundy, 2015). Parental involvement also characterizes parents' values and attitudes regarding education and the aspirations they hold for their children. In this study parental involvement is conceptualized as a product of the interaction between the influences of school and home settings by providing continuity between the two environments (Tracey, Lent, Brown, Soresi and Nota, 2006). For example, if parents are aware of educators' instructional goals, they may provide resources and support for those learning aims at home there by fostering career development.

Furthermore, parent involvement bridges two key contexts in children's early development, namely the home and school settings. Within an ecological framework, the home and school contexts are characterized as autonomous microsystems and parent involvement is conceptualized as a mesosystem, which is made up of interactions between key Microsystems (Krishnan, 2010). Accumulating evidence suggests that these parenting practices are associated with higher academic success and better post school outcomes (Olaosebikan and Olusakin (2014).

The way parents bring up their children influence career development. It would appear that in the study, there were authoritarian parents. This type of parents style according to Armstrong (2014), characterized by high demands, unresponsiveness and expectancy is authoritarian. Parents want children to follow unexplained rules and failure to conform leads to harsh punishment. In addition,

such parents are less cheerful, more irritable, passive and arrogant. It seemed that most youths under study had authoritarian parents. It was noted that most youths were neither free with nor attached to their parents. It is no doubt that this negatively affected their career development. Yet, the family environment in which children grow is a predictor of future outcomes. Parents who reported high levels of conflict with their child or those who reported not being close to their child had lower educational expectations for their child and were not involved (Krishnan, 2010). This calls for the need for parents to exhibit good parenting styles.

There is no doubt that having a child with a disability presents a significant threat to the parents' attachment and their ability to provide the appropriate care for development. The presence of a disability may be associated with guilty, blame or reduced self esteem affecting family functioning. In turn, this has repercussions on the quality of relationship between the parent and the developing child.

Howard (2010) also observes that sometimes parents could have wrong information as regards their children's condition. This affects their expectations, support, attitude and involvement. In this regard, families with limited economic resources tend to direct them first to children without disabilities, giving less hope and encouragement to those with intellectual disabilities. This calls for the need for parents to be provided with information about intellectual disability, career options available and guidance on support to their children to enhance career development.

Findings also indicated that some parents were too involved in their children's lives that they provided whatever their children wanted. Such parents would be in the class of the permissive parenting style. According to Armstrong (2014), this style is more responsive, less demanding, extremely relaxed and has give take relationship. It also has more communication, a friendly approach and allows children to regulate their behavior. Furthermore, permissive parents rarely punish, have no control, are nontraditional, are lenient, avoid confrontation, do not have any expectations from children, allow children to make their own decisions and accepts good or bad behavior. Therefore, it is possible that parents who wanted to maintain friendships with their children neglected their role of monitoring and guiding children in preparation for their futures.

As earlier alluded to, most parents were not involved in the education of their children. These could have been of the neglectful or uninvolved parenting style. According to Sadock and Sadock (2003), **uninvolved** parents neglect their child by putting their own life before the child's. They do provide for the child's basic needs but show little interaction to the child. As the name suggests in uninvolved parenting, involvement in this parenting process is zero. Parents do not communicate effectively with their children or get involved in their grooming and leave children to grow on their own. However, uninvolved parenting does not mean that parents leave the children to grow as orphans but that responsibility is much lower. Parents from this style have busy schedules and their lifestyle keeps them away from their children (Armstrong, 2014). They seldom find time to spend with children. Experts warn that people should not use this style as it is a highly destructive to children. On the contrary, children who have secure attachments engage in greater levels of environments and self exploratory activities. Secure and comfortable relationships are critical in helping youths take risks necessary in exploring new settings and roles. This scenario entails that the environment some youths lived in was not nurturing enough to promote career development. As such this calls for the need of enlightening parents on the best child rearing practices.

Consistent with the Bronfenbrenner's theory used in this study, the microsystem constitutes child rearing practices. Good parenting style has been suggested to reinforce children's career exploration which in turn impacts' an increasingly differentiation of interests with grade (Tracey et al., 2006). At the mesosystem level, evidence suggest that effective parenting, good home climate and well perceived social support from parents facilitate children's career exploration and career decideness (Noack et al., 2010). As such, Bronfenbrenner advocated that by strengthening human relationships within supportive environments, it is possible to increase the extent of career development and positive future outcomes.

5. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that parental involvement is affected by income, parenting styles, education or lack of knowledge on intellectual disability, parental expectations and the child's disability. Findings indicated that the nature of parental involvement were visitations to school, monitoring children's performance, provision of groceries and payment of fees. However, this was done by a minute

number. Findings also show that parental involvement influences career development of youths with intellectual disabilities through being motivational and encouraging. However, although parental involvement is key to career development, most (22) parents were not involved in the education of their children. This was attributed to low expectations resulting from negative attitudes based on intellectual disability.

Based on these findings the following is recommended;

1. The Ministry of Education should sensitize parents of children with intellectual disabilities on intellectual disability.
2. Education providers should strengthen collaborations with parents to easy interactions that would foster attitude change.

6. FUTURE RESEARCH

Research should investigate how personal attributes of youths with intellectual disabilities influence parental involvement in career development.

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