



Deaf Education in Africa and America

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Fair Children/Youth Foundation

- Lack of resources
 - Volunteers did not know sign
 - 5-21 years of age
 - 5 year span
 - School Sustained from donation/store
- What are the causes of deafness in Africa and America?
- How does the education for the deaf in Africa compare to that in America?

Hearing Loss

- The most common sensory deficit in childhood
- Permanent hearing loss
 - 1-3 per 1000 young children in the U.S
- Mild to profound
- Severe hearing loss (56-70 dB) and profound hearing loss (>90 dB)
- (Chadha, Chadha & James, 2009)

Causes of Hearing Loss: U.S.

- Genetics
- Congenital (e.g. pre-natal infection)
- Neonatal/Postnatal
Disease/Infection/Injury

(Scheetz, 2012)

Causes of Hearing Loss: Africa

- Same as America with other causes due to lack of medical resources
 - Meningitis
 - Measles and rubella prevalent
 - Lack of iodine, pendred syndrome, fever, congenital syphilis and otitis media

(McPherson & Swart, 1997)

History of Deaf Education in America

- 1600-1700 deaf education recorded
- For children of very wealthy families only
 - Taught by priest or physicians
- No group education lessons
- Oral or written education

(Nomeland & Nomeland, 2012)

Schools for the Deaf

- Several established in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century
- First successful school opened in 1817
 - Dr. Mason Cogswell, Rev. Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, and Laurent Clerc
- Kentucky School for the Deaf in 1823
- 24 others from 1817 to 1911

(Nomeland & Nomeland, 2012)

National Deaf-Mute College

- Advocated by Edward Miner Gallaudet
- Congressional Bill passed and signed by President Abraham Lincoln on April 8, 1864
- Later became Gallaudet University

Early American Sign Language

- Second U.S. census, 1880
 - 1 per nearly 6,000 people deaf
 - 1/155 on Martha's Vineyard
 - 1/25 in Chilmark
 - 1/4 in Chilmark section of Squibnocket
- Signing used by deaf and hearing population

(Nomeland & Nomeland, 2012)

Communication in U.S. Schools for the Deaf

- Many used sign language
 - Others strictly oral
- Bernard Engelsman
 - Opened the New York Institution for the Improved Instruction of Deaf Mutes, 1867
 - Credited as the originator of oral education in America

(Nomeland & Nomeland, 2012)

History of Deaf Education in Africa

- Recognized and documented earlier than in America
- Hieroglyphs in Egypt from 2450 BC
- 16th century BC Ebers papyrus
 - Several words meaning 'to be deaf'
- Early 1500's
 - Records of signing being used throughout Africa

(Miles, 2004)

Formal Education for the Deaf: Africa

- South Africa
 - 1860's by missionaries
- School for the deaf and blind opened in Worcester in 1881.
- Several others opened before 1900 in South Africa, Algiers and Syonfieh, Egypt

(Miles, 2004)

Formal Education for the Deaf: Sub-Saharan Africa

- 19th century
 - Hearing European missionaries
- Contains 54 countries
- Great difficulty to provide education
 - Typically oral/aural-only practices
 - Manual communication not permitted

(Kiyaga & Moores, 2003)

Formal Sign Language in Africa

- David Forbes
 - British missionary in 1917
 - Worked with the deaf and blind in Rumasha, Nigeria
 - Taught sign language to all the students
 - First idea of formal, recognized sign language in Africa

(Miles, 2004)

Andrew Foster

- First African American graduate of Gallaudet University
 - Considered the Father of Deaf Education in Africa
- Established the Christian Mission for Deaf Africans in the U.S. in 1956
- Arrived in Africa in 1957
 - 12 schools for the deaf in all of Africa
- Established 31 schools and 2 centers in 17 countries

(Kiyaga & Moores, 2003)

Government Support

- Foster advocated for government support of deaf education
 - Nigerian government established schools
- Still rare in sub-Saharan Africa
 - One school in Rwanda in 1997
 - Other countries still provide no education for the deaf

(Kiyaga & Moores, 2003)

Sign Language Difficulties in Africa

- Over 2,000 indigenous languages
- Numerous types of sign languages in sub-Saharan Africa reported
- Number of languages causes difficulty in creating a sign dictionary
- African languages largely tonal

(Kiyaga & Moores, 2003)

Sign Language in America

- Easier to establish in America than Africa
- ASL evolved over many years
 - Signs from Martha's Vineyard, earlier educated families, Native Americans, and Europe
- William Stokoe
 - Linguistic structure of Sign Language
 - “American Sign Language”
 - ASL now defined as “a visual-gestural language created by Deaf people in America and in part of Canada”

(Nomeland & Nomeland, 2012)

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

- Came into effect in 1992
- Protects the civil rights of deaf individuals
- Protects deaf students from abuse in school setting

(Americans with disabilities, 1991) (Simms & Thumann, 2007)

Current Use of ASL

- Estimated between half a million and one million people in the American Deaf-World
- ASL is the fourth most commonly used language in the U.S. (*USA Today*, 2012)
- 42 states officially recognized ASL as a language as of 2007

(Nomeland & Nomeland, 2012)

American Schools for the Deaf

- 63 residential schools for the deaf in America
- All schools required to serve deaf students
- Two schools specifically for post-secondary education
 - Gallaudet University
 - The National Technical Institute for the Deaf
 - Opened in 1968, Rochester, N.Y.

("U.S. state residential") (Hurwitz, 2012)

Current Deaf Education in South Africa

- South African Sign Language (SASL) not a Language of Learning and Teaching (LOLT)
- 1/3 of deaf adults are functionally illiterate
- 80% unemployed
- Deaf Federation of South Africa (DeafSA)
 - Founded in 1929
 - Implementation of inclusive education for the Deaf
- SASL needs recognition as LOLT

(Magongwa, 2012)

Current Deaf Education: Sub-Saharan Africa

- Struggling to establish appropriate services
- Lack of professionally trained personnel
 - Priority to general education
- Problems with identification and early intervention
 - Considered early at 3-4 years of age
- (Musengi, Ndofirepi & Shumba, 2012)

Current Deaf Education: Sub-Saharan Africa

- Primary level of education is average
- Nigeria, South Africa, and Kenya
 - Only countries with government support
- Problem: No data on prevalence of hearing loss or deafness

Cultural Attitude Toward Deafness in Africa

- Varies greatly
- Many abused, neglected or abandon
- Most deaf individuals live in poverty
- Females even more isolated

(Kiyaga & Moores, 2003)

Positive Developments in Africa

- Four countries prohibit discrimination
- Four have an official form of sign language
- Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa provide access to secondary education
- Ghana's constitutional commitments
- Universities in Nigeria established the first department of special education, and teacher-training program
- African Annals of the Deaf

(Kiyaga & Moores, 2003)

The Next Step in Africa

- Better teacher training
- Greater medical care
- Recognition of Sign Language as its own language in each country
- Government Support
- More educational settings/opportunities

The Next Step in America

- Teacher preparation programs should provide knowledge of ESL, bilingual education, multicultural education within the Deaf community and ASL linguistics
 - Many programs still English-only centered
- Better understanding of Deaf Community
- Parent-training programs

(Luckner, Muir, Howell, Sebald & Young, 2005)

Necessary Steps in America

- Gallaudet University's program: MAT- Master of Arts in Teaching: ASL/English Bilingual Deaf Education
- Collaboration from the entire community
 - Hearing and Deaf communities must come together, along with researchers, parents, educators, and students to guarantee the most success

(Simms & Thumann, 2007)

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