

Educating Children Who Are Deaf and Hearing Impaired in Southern Africa: Challenges and Triumphs

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Abstract : There is a global move to integrate children who are Deaf and Hearing Impaired into regular classrooms with their hearing peers with an inclusive education framework. This paper examines the current education situation for children who are Deaf and Hearing Impaired in South Africa, Madagascar, Malawi, Zimbabwe, and Namibia. Qualitative data for this paper was obtained from the author's experiences working as the Southern African Education Advisor for an international organization funding disability projects. It examines some of the challenges facing these children and their teachers relating to education. Challenges include cultural stigma relating to disability and deafness, a lack of hearing screening and early identification of deafness, schools in rural areas, special schools, specialist teacher training, equipment, understanding of how to implement policy, support, appropriate teaching methodologies, and sign language training and proficiency. On the other hand, in spite of the challenges some teachers are able to provide quality education to children who are Deaf and Hearing Impaired. This paper examines both the challenges as well as what teachers are doing to overcome these.

Keywords : education of children who are deaf and hearing impaired, Southern African experiences, challenges, triumphs

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