

## Factors Affecting Access to Education: The Experiences of Parents of Children Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

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**Abstract :** The purpose of this research is to examine the experiences of parents of children who are deaf or hard of hearing in supporting their children to access education in Vietnam. Parents play a crucial role in supporting their children to gain full access to education. It was widely reported that parents of those children confronted a range of problems to support their children to access education. To author's best knowledge, there has been a lack of research exploring the experiences of those parents in literature. This research examines factors affecting those parents in supporting their children to access education. To conduct the study, qualitative approach using a phenomenological research design was chosen to explore the central phenomena. Ten parents of children who were diagnosed as deaf or hard of hearing and aged 6-9 years were recruited through the support of the Association of Parents of Children with Hearing Impairment. Participants were interviewed via telephone with a mix of open and closed questions; interviews were audio recorded, transcribed and thematically analysed. The research results show that there are nine main factors that affected the parents in this study in making decisions relating to education for their children including: lack of information resources, perspectives of those parents on communication approaches, the families' financial capacity, the psychological impact on the participants after their children's diagnosis, the attitude of family members, attitude of school administrators, lack of local schools and qualified teachers, and current education system for the deaf in Vietnam. Apart from those factors, the lack of knowledge of the participants' partners about deaf education and the partners' employment are barriers to educational access and successful communication with their child.

**Keywords :** access to education, deaf, hard of hearing, parents experience

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