

# **EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR EDUCATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS HEARING IMPAIRED CHILDREN IN MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS**

by

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**DECEMBER 2005**

## **DECLARATION**

**I HEREBY DECLARE THAT: "EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR EDUCATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS HEARING IMPAIRED CHILDREN IN MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS" IS MY OWN WORK AND THAT ALL SOURCES THAT I HAVE USED AND QUOTED HAVE BEEN INDICATED AND ACKNOWLEDGED BY COMPLETE REFERENCE.**

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**DECEMBER 2005**

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## **DEDICATION**

To my husband

***Anné***

and my children

***Jan-Meyer and Sunet.***

Thank you for the sacrifices you made for me.

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**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

This is to certify that I have in my personal capacity on a freelance basis edited the D Ed thesis of Mrs SM Verhoef and can, to the best of my knowledge, declare it free from grammatical errors.

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## CONTENTS: CHAPTERS

### ***Educators' perceptions of their educational responsibility towards hearing impaired children in mainstream schools.***

CHAPTER 1:	ORIENTATION.....	01
CHAPTER 2:	LITERATURE REVIEW.....	22
CHAPTER 3:	PLANNING OF THE RESEARCH.....	67
CHAPTER 4:	PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH DATA.....	89
CHAPTER 5:	SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	146
LIST OF SOURCES	.....	164
LIST OF TABLES & FIGURES	.....	175
APPENDICES	.....	179
SUMMARY	.....	183
OPSOMMING	.....	185

## TABLE OF CONTENT

### CHAPTER 1:

<b>ORIENTATION.....</b>	<b>01</b>
1.1. INTRODUCTION.....	01
1.2. ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM.....	02
1.3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.....	10
1.4. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS.....	10
1.5. AIMS OF THE STUDY.....	11
1.6. METHOD OF RESEARCH.....	11
1.7. CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS.....	12
1.7.1 Gender.....	12
1.7.2 Educator.....	12
1.7.3 Educational responsibility.....	13
1.7.4 Inclusive education.....	13
1.7.5 Hearing impaired children.....	14
1.7.6 Mainstream schools.....	16
1.7.7 Whole school development.....	17
1.7.8 Perception.....	18
1.7.9 Models of disability.....	20
1.8 FURTHER COURSE OF THE STUDY.....	21
1.9 SUMMARY.....	21

### CHAPTER 2:

<b>LITERATURE REVIEW.....</b>	<b>22</b>
2.1 INTRODUCTION.....	22
2.2 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION.....	22
2.2.1 The history of inclusive education.....	22
2.2.2 An inclusive school.....	32
2.2.2.(1) Psychosocial environment.....	32
2.2.2.(2) Physical environment.....	34



2.2.2.(3)	Curriculum.....	34
2.2.2.(4)	Learning support in the school.....	36
2.2.2.(5)	Technical and other support.....	38
2.2.3	An inclusive classroom.....	39
2.2.3.(1)	Educators.....	39
2.2.3.(2)	Environment.....	40
2.2.3.(3)	Organization and planning.....	41
2.2.4.(4)	Curriculum.....	41
2.3	THE HEARING IMPAIRED CHILD.....	44
2.3.1	The hearing impaired child.....	44
2.3.1.(1)	Clinical features.....	44
2.3.1.(2)	The life-world of the hearing impaired child.....	47
2.3.1.(2) (a)	The cognitive life of the hearing impaired child.....	47
2.3.1.(2) (b)	The emotional and social life of the hearing impaired child.....	47
2.3.2	The hearing impaired child as a child in educational distress.....	48
2.3.3	The hearing impaired child as a child at risk.....	50
2.3.3.(1)	Learners who experience barriers to learning and development.....	50
2.3.3.(2)	Causes of barriers to learning and development.....	51
2.4	CHALLENGES FACING THE EDUCATOR OF THE HEARING IMPAIRED CHILD IN MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS..	52
2.4.1	Diagnosing/identifying hearing impaired children.....	52
2.4.2	Classroom manager.....	53
2.4.2.(1)	Principles.....	53
2.4.2.(1) (a)	Totality.....	53
2.4.2.(1) (b)	Individualisation.....	53
2.4.2.(1) (c)	Perception.....	54
2.4.2.(1) (d)	Motivation.....	54
2.4.2.(1) (e)	Tempo differentiation.....	54
2.4.2.(1) (f)	Meta-cognition.....	55

2.4.2.(2)	Methods.....	55
2.4.2.(2) (a)	Physical environment.....	55
2.4.2.(2) (b)	Visual aids.....	55
2.4.2.(2) (c)	Human resources.....	56
2.4.3	Combating stigma, isolation and marginalization.....	56
2.4.4	Care and support.....	57
2.5	ACCOUNTABLE SUPPORT NETWORKS FOR THE EDUCATOR.....	57
2.5.1	Informal support.....	58
2.5.1.(1)	Families and friends.....	58
2.5.1.(2)	Principals and colleagues.....	58
2.5.1.(3)	Parental involvement.....	61
2.5.1.(4)	General education learners.....	62
2.5.2	Formal support.....	63
2.5.2.(1)	School-based support teams.....	63
2.5.2.(2)	District support teams.....	64
2.5.2.(3)	Special schools as resources.....	64
2.5.2.(4)	Higher education institutions.....	64
2.5.2.(5)	School governing bodies.....	65
2.6	SYNTHESIS.....	66

### CHAPTER 3:

	PLANNING OF THE RESEARCH.....	67
3.1	INTRODUCTION.....	67
3.2	PREPARATION FOR AND DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH....	67
3.2.1	Permission.....	67
3.2.2	Selection of respondents.....	68
3.2.3	Sampling.....	69
3.2.3.(1)	Probability sampling.....	69
3.2.3.(2)	Simple random sampling.....	70

3.3	THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT.....	70
3.3.1	The questionnaire as research instrument.....	70
3.3.2	Construction of the questionnaire.....	72
3.3.2 (1)	Type of questions.....	72
3.3.2 (1) (a)	Close-ended questions.....	72
3.3.2 (1) (b)	Open-ended questions.....	73
3.3.2 (1) (c)	Scaled items.....	74
3.3.2 (2)	The questionnaire.....	74
3.3.3	Characteristics of a good questionnaire.....	75
3.3.4	Advantages and disadvantages of the questionnaire.....	76
3.3.4 (1)	Advantages of the written questionnaire.....	77
3.3.4 (2)	Disadvantages of the written questionnaire.....	78
3.3.5	Validity and reliability of the questionnaire.....	79
3.3.5 (1)	Validity of the questionnaire.....	80
3.3.5 (2)	Reliability of the questionnaire.....	82
3.4	ETHICAL MEASURES.....	83
3.5	ADMINISTRATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE.....	85
3.6	PROCESSING OF THE DATA.....	85
3.6.1	Descriptive statistics.....	85
3.6.2	Inferential statistics.....	86
3.6.3	Analysis of data.....	87
3.7	LIMITATIONS OF THE INVESTIGATION.....	87
3.8	SUMMARY.....	88

#### **CHAPTER 4:**

	<b>PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH DATA.....</b>	<b>89</b>
4.1	INTRODUCTION.....	89
4.2	DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS.....	89
4.2.1	Biographical data.....	90
4.2.1.(1)	Gender.....	90
4.2.1.(2)	Age.....	91

4.2.1.(3)	Educational level.....	91
4.2.1.(4)	Post level.....	92
4.2.1.(5)	Mother tongue.....	93
4.2.1.(6)	Teaching experience.....	93
4.2.1.(7)	Average number of learners in class.....	94
4.2.1.(8)	Training received by educators in special education.....	95
4.2.1.(9)	Type of special educational training received.....	95
4.2.1.(10)	Educator level: primary or secondary.....	96
4.2.2	Areas of responsibility and support.....	96
4.2.2.(1)	Identifying learners.....	98
4.2.2.(2)	Record of learners' disabilities.....	100
4.2.2.(3)	School support team.....	100
4.2.2.(4)	District support team.....	101
4.2.2.(5)	Educational resource centre.....	102
4.2.2.(6)	Financial resources.....	103
4.2.2.(7)	School in region.....	104
4.2.2.(8)	Availability of resources.....	105
4.2.2.(9)	Comfortableness with impaired learner in the class.....	106
4.2.2.(10)	Ability to adapt the method of teaching.....	106
4.2.2.(11)	Skills to adapt teaching materials.....	107
4.2.2.(12)	Adapting of assessment strategies.....	108
4.2.2.(13)	Adaption of classroom seating.....	109
4.2.2.(14)	Peer support.....	109
4.2.2.(15)	Social benefit.....	110
4.2.2.(16)	Academic benefit.....	111
4.2.2.(17)	Capability of handling situations.....	112
4.2.2.(18)	Variety of needs.....	113
4.2.2.(19)	Own responsibility.....	114
4.2.2.(20)	Educational distress.....	114
4.2.2.(21)	Appropriately qualified educators.....	115
4.2.2.(22)	Parental involvement.....	116

4.2.2.(23)	Adequate attention.....	116
4.2.2.(24)	Pastoral care.....	117
4.2.2.(25)	Wearing of hearing aid.....	118
4.2.2.(26)	Responsibility to report.....	119
4.2.2.(27)	Personal relationship.....	119
4.2.2.(28)	Principal attitude.....	120
4.2.2.(29)	Colleagues attitudes.....	121
4.2.2.(30)	Governing body procedures.....	121
4.2.2.(31)	Management team accommodation.....	122
4.2.2.(32)	Learner access policy.....	123
4.2.2.(33)	Burdensomeness.....	123
4.2.2.(34)	Sympathy.....	124
4.2.2.(35)	Extra help.....	125
4.3	INFERENTIAL STATISTICS.....	125
4.3.1	Independent variables.....	126
4.3.2	Dependent variables.....	126
4.4	HYPOTHESIS.....	126
4.5	TESTING THE HYPOTHESIS.....	145
4.6	SUMMARY.....	145

## **CHAPTER 5:**

	<b>SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>146</b>
5.1	INTRODUCTION.....	146
5.2	SUMMARY.....	146
5.2.1	Statement of problem.....	146
5.2.2	Theoretical perspectives regarding educators' perspectives of their responsibilities towards hearing impaired children in mainstream schools.....	147
5.2.3	Planning of the research.....	149
5.2.4	Aims of the study.....	150

5.3	FINDINGS.....	150
5.3.1	Findings from the literature study.....	150
5.3.2	Findings from the empirical study.....	152
5.3.2. (1)	Skills and abilities of respondents.....	152
5.3.2. (2)	Support of educators.....	153
5.3.2. (3)	Attitudes towards hearing impaired learners.....	154
5.4	RECOMMENDATIONS.....	155
5.4.1	Improvement of support for educators.....	155
5.4.1.(1)	Motivation.....	155
5.4.1.(2)	Recommendation.....	156
5.4.2	In-service training of educators.....	158
5.4.2.(1)	Motivation.....	158
5.4.2.(2)	Recommendation.....	160
5.4.3	Further research.....	161
5.4.3.(1)	Motivation.....	161
5.4.3.(2)	Recommendation.....	162
5.5	CRITICISM OF THE STUDY.....	162
5.6	CONCLUSION.....	163
LIST OF SOURCES.....		164
LIST OF TABLES & FIGURES.....		175
APPENDIX 1 – Letter requesting permission.....		179
APPENDIX 2 – Letter to undertake research.....		181
APPENDIX 3 – Questionnaire.....		182
SUMMARY .....		183
OPSOMMING .....		185

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **ORIENTATION**

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

In recent years inclusive education has risen to prominence internationally. The issue of inclusion is essentially the relocation of learners, resources and expertise into an equally comprehensive, regular education system. However, in countries such as South Africa, the issue of inclusion entails extension and development, such that the limited educational provision already available can begin to include a wider range of learners (Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker, & Engelbrecht, 1999: 26; Swart, Engelbrecht, Eloff & Pettipher, 2002:175).

The discussion of inclusive education thus takes place within the rights discourse and has as its basis South Africa's new democratic constitution (Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker & Engelbrecht, 1999: 26). Schools are meant to be a reflection of a democratic society in which all members are accepted and diversity is celebrated. Educators will need to work in partnership with parents, learners, other educators, resource centers and community-based organizations in order to successfully implement inclusive education (Campher, 2003:53; Corbett, 2001:118).

Hearing impaired learners constitute an integral part of the group of learners who were labelled disabled and who were taught in separate, special schools. The South African Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996 which was passed in November 1996 states that "... a public school must admit learners and serve their education requirements without unfairly discriminating in any way" (RSA, 1996:6). This means that mainstream public schools may be legally obliged to provide for learners with special educational needs, and thus also hearing impaired learners.

The principles and values contained in the new constitution of South Africa (1996) and in the White Paper on Education and Training (Department of Education, 1995) acknowledge that education should be accessible and all learners are to be given the opportunity to participate in a common education curriculum (Möwes, 2002:47; Oswald, Ackermann & Engelbrecht, 2000:307).

## 1.2 ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM

Inclusive education places the responsibility for meeting special educational needs on the shoulders of *mainstream educators* rather than *special education educators*. Educators who respond positively to inclusive education are educators who “are confident in their own judgment, flexible in their understanding of teaching and learning, and prepared to seek new knowledge and approaches” (Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker & Engelbrecht, 1999:115).

The profile of an *ideal* educator for inclusive education is someone who has excellent skills to work with learners and parents, who has knowledge and skills of *organizational development*, who is schooled in the different models such as the medical model and the eco-systemic model, and who has a caring and considerate attitude towards diversity and the skills to practice tolerance and respect (Hay, 2003:137).

The competencies required to teach in an inclusive setting also involve being able to identify and assess disabling conditions, being able to adapt curricular content and teaching methods to assist learners with special needs, working in collaboration with colleagues, parents and the broader community and being instilled with an optimistic picture of what can be accomplished (Möwes, 2002:63).



The problem is that educators in the South African context are faced with enormous social problems such as poverty, AIDS and crime. They also have to deal with large classes where they have enough issues to deal with such as regular learners who exhibit emotional, disciplinary and behavioral problems (Bothma, Gravett & Swart, 2000:203).

Educators are overwhelmed by these current problems which are aggravated by scarcity of resources and material and a Department that continually changes curriculum and policies. They are struggling to come to grips with *change overload*. The changes seem to come from "the top" with little consideration for the educators' unique situations. Furthermore, the policies do not address and take into account the persistent problem of certain dysfunctional township schools – absenteeism among students and staff, violence, sexual abuse and substance abuse (Hay, 2003:135; Oswald, Ackermann & Engelbrecht, 2000:314-315, Bothma, Gravett & Swart, 2000:203).

Educators are also faced with parents' and other educators' possible negative perceptions concerning inclusive education. The reality is that parents of "normal" children fear their children will receive less attention and stimulation when there are children with special educational needs in their classes. The educator will thus need to motivate learners, parents and other educators to change their behavior towards learners with special educational needs and inclusive education (Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:42; Carrington, 1999:264, Lipsky & Gartner, 1996:786).

Research has shown that educators feel that most of the changes are forced upon them, that they have no say in the changes and that the changes make no meaningful contribution to their professional development. In general, it has been suggested that the imposed educational change since 1994 was too ambitious and far-reaching for educators to cope with. With regards to inclusive education, many educators feel that, had they wanted to work with learners with disabilities,

they would have *chosen* to work with them. They feel inclusive education *forces* them to work with learners with disabilities (Bothma, Gravett & Swart, 2000:201; Swanepoel & Booysse, 2003:94, Prinsloo, 2001:345).

Educators' perceptions of inclusive education are vitally important. Their perceptions of what is expected of them are part of the complex process of inclusive education and could ultimately determine whether this educational philosophy will be successful in practice (Hay, 2003:137; Hay, Smit & Paulsen, 2001:214).

It seems, however, that too often educators' beliefs, attitudes and perceptions are ignored by the policy-makers, who tend to focus on knowledge, skills and practical support without giving much recognition to implicit needs and emotional inhibitions of educators. When policy-makers ignore educators' emotions, the consequences can be disastrous, because emotions enter into all aspects of life. Festering resentment will undermine and overwhelm rationally made decisions; committee work will be poisoned by members with unresolved grudges and grievances, and curriculum planning will become stilted when educators have to plan things they don't care about (Hargreaves, Lieberman, Fullan & Hopkins, 1998:560; Swart, Engelbrecht, Eloff & Pettipher, 2002:178).

Educational transformation may be on its way in terms of policy-making and legislation, but it has not brought about the expected metamorphosis in teaching practice or the schools. Dyson (1999:36-50) says that despite the impression among advocates and non-advocates that full inclusion has swept the educational land, the rhetoric seems to have moved faster than the reality and only a few schools have joined the full inclusion bandwagon.

One of the main reasons appears to be that policy-makers have taken little notice of the perceptions, contexts and conditions of educators as implementers of the policies. Educators make heavy emotional investments in these relationships.

Their sense of success and satisfaction depends on these relationships. Teaching involves emotional labour. This exposes educators, making them vulnerable when the conditions and demands on their work make it difficult for them to do their “emotion work” properly. Educational change initiatives therefore do not only influence educators’ knowledge, skills and problem-solving capacity. They influence a whole web of significant and meaningful relationships that influences the functioning of the school (Campher, 2003:11; Hargreaves, Lieberman, Fullan & Hopkins, 1998:561).

There are a number of factors which influence educators’ perceptions of inclusive education and therefore also the inclusion of hearing impaired children in mainstream schools. These include:

- *Educators’ own fundamental beliefs and knowledge*

Educators’ personal beliefs, attitudes and values regarding establishing “cultures of difference” within schools, equity and inclusion are vital. Research has shown that educators who value democracy tend to be more open, flexible, and person-orientated, and tend to see inclusive education more as a challenge than a hardship. In contrast, authoritarian educators, who tend to value power and hierarchy, are likely to be more task- and achievement-orientated and therefore less receptive of diversity.

Educators’ fundamental beliefs about teaching and learning are a complex issue. Changes to their belief systems could lead to high stress levels. To deal with special needs students educators have to abandon their old teaching strategies, which have withstood the test of time, and experiment with new ones, an experience that is recognized as anxiety evoking. During the process of changing to inclusive education, educators’ beliefs seldom change through a

mere discussion of beliefs, but involve a deep personality-related challenge. Educators will need guidance to explore their concepts and feelings, ambiguities, anxieties and confusions in an open and accepting climate. It is simply not enough to think that unwelcome beliefs will go away. Educators will need safe, professional environments where their attitudes and beliefs can be explored, shared, challenged and restructured (Carrington, 1999:260-264; Swart, Engelbrecht, Eloff & Pettipher, 2002:177-179,185; Schechtman & Or, 1996: 137; Lipsky & Gartner, 1997:131-133; Möwes, 2002:75-86).

- *Feelings of inadequacy*

With the introduction of different educational practices, many experienced regular educators no longer see themselves as experts in their teaching role and they do not like feeling like novices regarding the many new policies that are being introduced. Many educators are of the opinion that their pre-service training did not prepare them adequately to educate learners with special educational needs.

Research has found that educators, who were fully trained special educators, have more realistic views towards placement decisions. Professionals agree that educators would be more willing to accept learners with special educational needs if they had received training in special education. While there appears to be a need for better training of regular educators, researchers differ over whether in-service or pre-service is preferable. Some argue for both (Möwes, 2002:75-86; Swart, Engelbrecht, Eloff & Pettipher, 2002:177-179,185).

- *Inadequate knowledge and skills*

Many educators have limited knowledge of inclusive education and have obtained their information from newspapers, pamphlets, educational programmes and informal discussions. They have not been trained (pre-service or in-service) and they possess little knowledge of official policy documents. Unfortunately lack of knowledge leads to negative attitudes and labelling. Educators' lack of knowledge leads them to having misconceptions and assumptions about disabilities (Hay, Smit & Paulsen, 2001:214; Swart & Pettipher, 2000:85; Möwes, 2002:75-86; Idol, 1997:387-389).

- *School culture*

There are school culture factors that may influence the implementation of inclusion practices: school policy, the way in which students are allocated to classes, the principal's attitude to inclusion and the quality of support offered by the special educator. The schools lack collaborative partnerships and educator support services. The introduction of OBE is conducive to inclusive education as it promotes learning and assessing in individualized ways. Many schools have however not yet successfully implemented OBE and still make use of rigid testing and examination-orientated systems which are counterproductive in terms of inclusive education (Kühnert, 2003:43-47; Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:3,31,43; Ainscow, 1997:5).

- *Insufficient facilities, infrastructure and assistive devices*

Schools lack accessible buildings, appropriate instructional material and equipment. Some schools even have a lack of basic services and resources such as water, electricity and toilet facilities. These factors are related to poverty and unemployment. Large classes are perceived as the most difficult obstacle to the successful implementation of inclusion (Bothma, Gravett & Swart, 2000:203).

- *Views on learning outcomes of inclusion*

Apart from these factors, opponents of inclusive education have voiced other concerns. Many legitimate questions have been asked concerning inclusive education, focusing especially on learning outcomes. Critics argue that inclusive support services are relatively new in many schools, research is limited and their real effectiveness has yet to be proven. They feel that, for years, special education has served an important and effective function in schools so that the most difficult and challenging students could be removed from the classroom, allowing educators to focus on a small band of the student population (Bothma, Gravett & Swart, 2000:203; Möwes, 2002:75-86).

Opponents of inclusive education argue that general education classes are not appropriate learning environments for learners who have problems such as distractibility, poor memory, visual and auditory processing problems and poor self-control. They argue that these learners are likely to fail in larger classrooms because they may not receive the more intensive and individualized instruction which is especially important in elementary grades (Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:14-15).

They also argue that students with disabilities might be penalized by means of inappropriate instruction, insensitive peers, limited attention, and unrealistic expectations from general educators. They feel that a unified system of public education will undermine much of the progress that has been made in special education during the past 40 years (Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:14-15).

A body of research however, has shown positive effects for learners with disabilities in inclusive settings. An improvement in communication and social skills, increase in peer interactions and better educational outcomes and post-school adjustments are reported by research. Not only does it show benefits for disabled learners, but also for non-disabled learners. Fully inclusive settings facilitated learners' development of self-esteem, social skills, self-worth and a sense of pride. It also increased tolerance of other people, appreciation of human diversity and responsiveness to the needs of others (Lipsky & Gartner, 1996:787; Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:16-18).

There are also other factors which pertain specifically to hearing impaired learners which influence educators' perceptions of inclusive education of hearing impaired children (Engelbrecht & Green, 2001: 148-168; Kapp, 1994:350; Davis & Silverman, 1978:325; Hewett & Forness, 1977:12; Lane, 1993:6, Hayes & Gunn, 1988: 31):

- lack of knowledge of hearing impairment;
- the wide range of degree of hearing impairment;
- the current debate internationally about the most effective way to communicate with the hearing impaired child in the educational milieu;

- the fact that, without hearing aids, hearing impairment is not a visible disability and therefore appears less critical;
- with hearing aids, on the other hand, there is a general perception that the hearing impaired child is “cured” and doesn’t need any extra help; and
- persistent stereotypical ideas of deaf children as stubborn.

### **1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The problem that will be investigated in this study concerns the challenges facing the educator of the hearing impaired child in mainstream education. The study attempts to find answers to, *inter alia*, the following questions:

- What are educators’ perceptions of their educational responsibilities towards hearing impaired children in mainstream schools?
- Are educators adequately prepared to educate hearing impaired children in mainstream schools?
- Are schools managing the change to inclusive education effectively?

### **1.4 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS**

According to Rosnow and Rosenthal (1996:74) a “hypothesis” is a premise or supposition that organizes facts and guides observations. In the formulation of the hypothesis, an experimental design is used in which the difference between the researcher’s sample statistic (also known as the experimental group) and the hypothesized value of the population parameters (also known as the group control) is assessed. If the difference between the researcher’s sample statistic and the hypothesized value of population parameter is zero, this hypothesis is referred to as a null hypothesis. In behavioral research, the statistical hypothesis is in most instances a null hypothesis, expressed as “H<sup>0</sup>”. A hypothesis, in which there is a difference between the researcher’s sample statistic and the



hypothesized value of population parameter, is known as a “general hypothesis” and is expressed as “H1”.

The researcher’s hypothesis for this study is formulated by means of a statement of an unknown parameter and is as follows: a relation exists between educator’s perceptions of their responsibilities towards hearing impaired children in mainstream schools and the effective management of the process of inclusive education in their case.

For the purpose of this study the research hypothesis is formulated as a null hypothesis (Ho) as follows: there is no relation between educators’ perceptions of their responsibilities towards hearing impaired children in mainstream schools and the successful implementation of inclusive education in their case.

### **1.5 AIMS OF THE STUDY**

- To pursue a study of relevant literature on inclusive education.
- To undertake an empirical investigation by means of a self-structured questionnaire in order to establish how educators perceive their responsibility towards hearing impaired learners in mainstream education.
- To determine, in the light of the findings obtained, certain guidelines which can assist schools and educators to effectively accommodate hearing impaired learners in mainstream classrooms and manage the process of inclusive education.

### **1.6 METHOD OF RESEARCH**

A study of available, relevant literature will be undertaken to ascertain the extent of knowledge relating to important aspects of the selected topic and to provide a theoretical framework.

An empirical survey comprising a self-structured questionnaire will be completed by educators of primary and secondary schools in the Amanzimtoti Ward, Umbumbulu Circuit, Ethekwini Region. A Likert type scale questionnaire with three response categories (Agree, Disagree, and Uncertain) will be constructed. The three response categories will ensure that the respondent's selections will fall into one of the categories, enabling the measuring of perceptions of mainstream educators regarding their responsibilities towards hearing impaired learners in mainstream education. Descriptive and inferential techniques will be employed for the analysis of data.

Confidentiality, privacy and anonymity will be respected in this research. Certain safeguards will be employed in this research to protect the participants' rights (cf. 3.4 Ethical Measures).

## **1.7 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS**

In the interest of clarity and understanding, certain concepts in this study need to be clarified.

### **1.7.1 Gender**

In this study all references to any gender includes the other gender.

### **1.7.2 Educator**

An educator is someone who takes the responsibility of leading the educand (child) into adulthood. An educator is a scientifically schooled person practicing education on a post-scientific level. An educator is someone who demonstrates authority, trust, expertise and understanding. An educator is concerned with the educand as a totality and not simply with the teaching of a specific subject (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1988:73). According to Van der Westhuizen,

Loots, Mentz, Oosthuizen and Theron, (1992:17) educators are people with specialized knowledge, insights, skills, as well as attitudes who have a unique service to render. For the purpose of this study the educator is viewed as a classroom practitioner.

### **1.7.3 Educational responsibility**

The educator conducts himself responsibly when he adheres to the scientific demands of pedagogy. What are these demands? According to Van den Aardweg & Van Aardweg education can only be responsible "...if it can contribute significantly towards the child becoming a proper adult" (1988:435). This implies that the educator must "...know which responsibilities the child is able to assume" and must gradually lead the child to adulthood (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1988:198).

In the South African Council for Educators Act, 2000 ([www.sace.org.za](http://www.sace.org.za)) the educator's role is described as "...acknowledging the uniqueness, individuality, and specific needs of each learner, guiding and encouraging each to realize his or her potentialities." The educator "...does what is practically possible to keep parents adequately and regularly informed about the well-being and progress of the learner" ([www.sace.org.za](http://www.sace.org.za)). For the purpose of this study educational responsibility implies being answerable, accountable, having a charge, a trust, a duty (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1988:198).

### **1.7.4 Inclusive education**

In inclusive education the aim is to encourage schools to consider their structure, teaching approaches, pupil grouping and use of support so that they respond to the needs of all pupils. Linked to this it is necessary for educators to develop new ways of involving all pupils and to draw on experimentation and reflection. Collaboration is also important (Farrel, 1997:77). An inclusive school is a school

which supports all learners in participating in and experiencing success (Hoskins, 1996:205).

The following factors were identified as characterizing inclusive schools (Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000: 26-46; Lipsky & Gartner, 1997:103):

- A sense of community.
- Visionary leadership.
- High standards.
- Collaboration and co-operation.
- Changing roles and responsibilities – every person is an active participant in the learning process.
- Array of co-ordinated services – health, mental and social.
- Partnerships with parents.
- Flexible learning environments.
- Strategies based on research.
- New forms of accountability – less on standardized tests.
- New forms of assessments.
- Access – making modifications to the building, making available appropriate technology that makes participation possible.
- Continuing professional development.

This study will specifically focus on hearing impaired learners who form an integral part of those who were previously placed in special schools and are now part of the group who are to benefit from inclusive schooling.

#### **1.7.5 Hearing impaired children**

Kapp (1994:320) uses the term *hearing impaired* to denote a group of people with various degrees of hearing loss. Researchers and advocates for people with

disabilities feel that the term *impairment* is negative and reflects on the individual, creating the impression that there is something wrong with the individual. The term *impairment* is derived from the medical model which defines disabilities in terms of deviance, like an illness which should be fixed and cured. Opponents of the medical model advocate for a social model of understanding and for defining disabilities by rather using the term *aurally handicapped*. According to this model, society has to adapt to accommodate the disabled individual and remove these barriers (Watson, Gregory & Powers, 1999:3; Verhoef, 2001:21-26; Engelbrecht & Green, 2001:150; Ross & Deverell, 2004:12).

The researcher agrees more with the social model and the term *aurally handicapped*, but the focus group for the questionnaires might not be familiar with the term and might find it confusing. For the purpose of this study, the term hearing impairment/hearing impaired will therefore be used instead of *aurally handicapped*.

It has become the established pattern in South Africa to distinguish between three categories of children according to degree of hearing loss. These determine the education they receive, namely:

- partially hearing children;
- hard-of-hearing children; and
- deaf children (Kapp, 1994:320, Ross & Deverell, 2004:142):

*Partially hearing children* have a hearing loss less than 35dB within the limits of speech frequency. These children's loss of hearing is such that they can be educated in a regular school (Kapp, 1994:320).

*Hard-of-hearing children* have a hearing loss between 35dB and 65dB. These children are usually taught in schools for hard of hearing or they are accommodated in schools for the deaf, but in separate divisions or classes (Kapp, 1994:320).

*Deaf children* have a hearing loss of 65dB and over. These children are taught in schools for the deaf, which primarily use visual teaching methods and sign language (Kapp, 1994:320).

In this study, the focus is primarily on children that are hard-of hearing and partially hearing children, who wear hearing aids and who are integrated in mainstream schools. The issue of deaf children being integrated is a separate study with separate issues. With the increase of cochlear implants, more and more children who previously were seen as *deaf* are able to hear better and are also capable of being mainstreamed (Watson, Gregory & Powers, 2001:2). The study of their integration would be similar in some instances, but will have to cover specific issues such as the higher degree of visibility of the implant as opposed to a hearing aid, etc. In this study, the focus will therefore only be on hard-of –hearing and partially hearing learners.

#### **1.7.6 Mainstream schools**

Mainstream schools are regular schools as opposed to special schools. Special schools cater specifically for learners with special educational needs, for example schools for the blind, schools for the deaf and schools for the physically challenged. Mainstream schools traditionally cater for non-disabled regular learners who do not have special needs (Engelbrecht, Kriegler & Booyesen, 1996:15).

The traditional make-up of regular/mainstream schools in South Africa has however changed over the past decade. The theory and practice of inclusive education gained ground simultaneously with the transformation of the education system through the implementation of OBE (Outcomes-based education). Large numbers of children are also being mainstreamed by default, mainly in places of learning of the former Department of Education (Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker & Engelbrecht, 1999: 20).

The term mainstream school is not to be confused with the term “mainstreaming” which refers to the placement - often part-time/temporary - of students with disabilities into general class settings. As inclusive education gains momentum, the term *mainstream* school will in all probability become passé and schools will probably be referred to as inclusive schools or places of learning!

For the purpose of this study, the term mainstream school refers to the general education school where the classroom is the responsibility of the general classroom educator (Mastropieri & Scruggs, 2000:8).

### **1.7.7 Whole school development**

Within a whole school development framework, schools need to develop the skills to engage in their own development planning and to plot their own progress towards obtaining the characteristics that make quality schools. These are (Campher, 2003:36):

- The identification of problem areas and ownership.
- The development of a vision, proactive planning strategies, and structures that facilitate school development.
- The planning of a process for assessing the development needs, involving a range of activities.
- Functional management structures that are participatory, consultative and collaborative.
- School-based initiatives to improve quality.
- Partnerships between schools, companies and communities.
- A holistic approach to quality improvement, balancing the development of physical and human resource systems in schools.
- The development of a culture of teaching and learning.
- The development of a school policy including a code of conduct, grievance and disciplinary procedures.

- Setting up of staff development structures.
- Active involvement of parents in school activities and the education of their children.
- *Active involvement of staff in school activities.*
- Development of self-evaluation structures in the school.

Whole school development focuses simultaneously on the professional and personal development of educators and on the organizational development of the school.

### **1.7.8 Perception**

Perceptual development is the developing ability to interpret what is perceived by the senses (Louw, 1985:251). According to Jordaan & Jordaan (1988:294) there is a difference between being aware and perception. A person can be aware that there is light or noise. But perception is on a higher level of information processing, for example a person can perceive the light as being the light of a car or the noise as that which a car makes.

The study of perception can be approached from two different points of view. A physiological-neurological approach focuses mainly on the mechanics of perception and the five sensory systems (taste, touch, smell, hearing, sight). Mader & Mader (1990:36) view perception as the process by which we select, organize and interpret external and internal stimuli. The external stimuli are the sensations that bombard us almost constantly, sensations that come to us through sight, smell, touch, hearing and taste. The internal stimuli can either be physiological (*nervous system*) or psychological (*motivation, interest and desire*) (Nel & Urbani, 1991:53-64).



The second view is that perception can not merely be explained without taking into consideration the perceiving person in his situational relationships. According to Nel & Urbani (1991:53-64) perceptual constancies are essentially built on affects, norms, values, attributes and ideas. Perceiving shows a close relationship to the affectivity. The affective system and the perceptual system do not exist as separate systems in the infant. But as a child develops, affect and perceiving function more and more independently. Affect does have an influence on what is perceived but it does not alter the fundamental way in which a person perceives. If an adult sees a serious accident, his affective involvement will largely determine what he perceives of the accident. The extent and nature to which one is affectively involved is determined by the measure of cognitive control over the affectivity (Nel & Urbani, 1991:53-64).

Jordaan & Jordaan (1988:302) maintain that research has shown that if one is exposed to certain stimuli which for some reason caused stress in your past, the viewing of these stimuli will again cause you stress and anxiety, to such an extent that the meaning of these stimuli might not even *get through* to your consciousness. There is a kind of defence mechanism at work to protect your mind. This is known as perceptual defensiveness (Jordaan & Jordaan, 1988:302).

According to Nel & Urbani (1991:62) perceiving is an act of solidarity. Therefore, even at the basic level of communicating through perceiving, we will find differences between different cultural groups, different socio-economic groups and different professions.

Perception may be defined as the way people react and respond to others, in thought, feelings and action. Perception seems to result from the weighing and integrating of a whole host of factors. The factors introduced in the weighing process are those that are largely unconscious from past experiences. A perception may thus be defined as an implicit awareness of the probable

consequences an action might have (Cook, 1979:2). The latter description will apply in this study.

### **1.7.9 Models of disability**

Disability can be understood in different ways. Disabilities are, for example, often described either in terms of the nature of the disability, or the causes of the disability or the experience of disability (Oliver, 1996:129)

The nature of the disability is often described by comparing the disabled person's development with the development of a "normal" person's development. The causes of the disability are often seen as illness or diseases. If one views disability as a medical problem and the solution as a medical one, one makes use of the medical model. The biomedical model conceptualises disability as a personal problem, directly caused by disease, trauma or other health conditions, which requires medical care provided in the form of individual treatment by professionals (Ross & Deverell, 2004:12; Oliver, 1996:129).

The nature of the disability and the causes can however also be psycho-social. The high incidence of alcohol fetal babies in the Cape is a social problem, which can be addressed by social measures. If one sees disabilities as handicaps which lie not only within the disabled person, but also as handicaps which society places on the person, one would see the solution to handicaps as a process of addressing social inequalities and problems. This way of thinking is called the psycho-social model. The issue is thus an attitudinal one requiring social change, which at the political level becomes a question of human rights. Disability becomes, in short, a political issue (Oliver, 1996:129; Harris, 2000:96; Ross & Deverell, 2004: 12).

Both the biomedical model and the psycho-social model are scientific models that provide complementary explanations rather than alternative or competing ones. Ideally, they should be combined to form the biopscho-socio-environmental model. On the one hand, medical intervention and a medical understanding of disability are necessary to improve treatment of disabilities, but on the other hand, the barriers that are placed by society should also be addressed and removed. The responsibility is not only the disabled person's, but also society's responsibility (Ross & Deverell, 2004: 12; Oliver, 1996:129; Harris, 2000:96).

## **1.8 FURTHER COURSE OF THE STUDY**

Chapter 2 will focus on the conceptual and theoretical issues surrounding inclusive education, hearing impaired children and support services to educators in mainstream education.

Chapter 3 will discuss the research methodology to be utilized.

Chapter 4 will include the presentation and analysis of the research data.

Chapter 5 will offer a summary, findings and recommendations.

## **1.9 SUMMARY**

An explanation of the problem, statement of the problem and the aims of this study were presented in this chapter. The method of research was explained and certain relevant concepts were elucidated. In conclusion the further course of the study was provided.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to review the literature, nationally and internationally, on hearing impaired children in mainstream schools. The point is to develop a clear and thorough theoretical, conceptual and practical understanding of hearing impaired children in inclusive education.

#### 2.2 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

##### 2.2.1 History of inclusive education

In South Africa the development of specialized education has followed the same trend as in most other countries. It started with the initiatives of mainly religious organizations. The state then became increasingly involved and new types of schools were added. More and more forms of disabilities were diagnosed. Eventually there was a growing awareness that these children should not be isolated but included in the mainstream of education (Engelbrecht, Kriegler & Booysen, 1996:7; Kühnert, 2003:44).

In South Africa, during the twentieth century, the policy of *Separate Development* (Apartheid) led to education departments based on race and ethnology, which in turn caused great inequalities in terms of facilities, professional services and quality of education (Hay, Smit & Paulsen, 2001:213; Campher, 2003:1; Engelbrecht, Kriegler & Booysen, 1996:11; Christie, 1999: 161).

For decades, education was compulsory for white children, but not for black children. The discrepancies in facilities, services and quality of education were also apparent in the area of specialized education. Special schools for African children were mostly established and run by missionaries. The discrepancies have been well documented in the *Report of the Work Committee: Children with special educational needs* (1981) and further research was undertaken by the HSRC during the Year of the Disabled in its report, *Education for the black disabled* (1987) (Christie, 1999:161-162; Engelbrecht, Kriegler & Booysen, 1996: 11; Forlin & Engelbrecht, 1998:216-217). With the change to democracy, the South African government and education department focused on addressing these inequalities. One of the first tasks of the ANC-led alliance, before it assumed government, was to develop a new Constitution and Bill of Rights which aimed at healing the divisions of the past and establishing a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental rights.

The Constitution enshrined liberal rights such as equality, human dignity, and freedom, and outlawed discrimination on the basis of race, gender, sex, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, age, disability, culture, and language (Christie, 1999:161).

Internationally, the schools in America and Europe transformed their policies of specialized education to initially mainstreaming, and later inclusion. From the 1960's to the 1980's, a series of socio-economic and cultural transformations occurred, for example the explosion of media technologies, political and ideological shifts (such as the fall of the Berlin wall). Changes in world views occurred and society gradually became more open and social relations less formal (Jenkinson, 1997:140; Wade, 2000: 7; Friend & Bursuck, 1999: 3-5; Engelbrecht, Kriegler & Booysen, 1996:7).

Commitment to the democratic values of liberty, equality and civic rights, and a wider notion of inclusion in a participatory democracy led to reforms in education where schools were seen as a reflection of society which should celebrate diversity and promote equality of opportunity. During the same time, a new notion of disability was being formed, one which focused on abilities rather than disabilities and on social justice rather than isolation and neglect. The combination of civil right laws, education laws, research, parent and professional advocacies and specific court cases influenced special education practices (Friend & Bursuck, 1999: 5; Engelbrecht, Kriegler & Booysen, 1996:7).

Mainstreaming was the first step. The rationale behind mainstreaming was that certain learners with special needs tended to do better in mainstream placements. Students with disabilities were placed in general education settings only when they could meet traditional academic expectations with minimal assistance. Special needs learners were thus integrated on the basis of their abilities. There were different placement options that were seen in terms of a scale of least restrictive (the regular classroom) to totally restrictive (separate residential facility). Mainstream options included being part of a regular class, part of the day, and another part of the day in the resource room. It also included a separate class placement, but mixing during breaks and sport. Many different combinations were experimented with. The decisions made by the professionals were on the basis of balance of advantage for learners and impact on the schools (Friend & Bursuck, 1999:3; Lewis & Doorlag, 1995: 535).

As mainstreaming became a common practice, many mistakes were made. Mainstreaming participants such as general education educators, the students themselves and the parents were not adequately informed. Many students were placed in regular classes and not adequately supported. Advocates for learners with special needs also felt that differences were still accentuated, e.g. separate instruction time in separate settings (Lewis & Doorlag, 1995:536; Engelbrecht,

Green, Naicker & Engelbrecht, 1999:8; Friend & Bursuck, 1999:3; Jenkinson, 1997:150).

Inclusive education grew from mainstreaming. The movement towards inclusive education gained momentum in 1990 after the World Conference on Education for All, held in Jomtien, Thailand. The real thrust came with the issuing of the Salamanca Statement in 1994 after an international conference on Special Needs Education in Salamanca, Spain. Essentially, the Salamanca Statement proclaims five principles, which embody the rights of learners in education (Lipsky & Gartner, 1996:762; Kühnert, 2003: 45; Oswald, Ackermann & Engelbrecht, 2000:307):

- every learner has a fundamental right to education and must be given the opportunity to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of learning;
- every learner has unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs;
- educational systems should be designed, and educational programmes implemented, to take into account the diversity of these characteristics and needs;
- those with special educational needs must have access to regular schools, which should accommodate them within a learner-centered pedagogy capable of meeting those needs; and
- regular schools with this inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society, and achieving education for all; moreover, they provide an effective education to the majority of learners, and improve the efficiency and, ultimately, the cost-effectiveness of the entire educational system.

Inclusion sees the issue of integration as a matter of human rights. It asks how mainstream schools can be restructured continually in order to respond positively to all learners as individuals. Inclusive education is not an ideal state or idea, but an unending set of dynamic processes. It does not try to integrate pupils based on assessments and systematic programmes of intervention (Ainscow, 1997: 3; Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker & Engelbrecht, 1999: 8).

In influential reports published even before the new government came to power, some general trends regarding the future of specialized education were already noticeable. In the White Paper on Education and Training in democratic South Africa, it is specified that the education of LSEN and the Educational Support Services must be an integral part of regular education and not a separate section. The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 stated the following concerning admission to public schools: Par 5. (1) "A public school must admit learners and serve their educational requirements without unfairly discriminating in any way." In Par 5.(2): "In determining the placement of a learner with special educational needs, the Head of Department and Principal must take into account the rights and wishes of the parents of such a learner." At the end of 1997, the National Commission on Special Education Needs and Training (NCSNET) and the National Committee for Education Support Services (NCESS) drafted a *White Paper on Education and Training* which proposed (Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker & Engelbrecht, 1999:19):

- the basic right to education, irrespective of race, class, gender, creed and age;
- a single education system;
- the need for support services (educators with specialized competencies, parents, community homes, community-based transportation, NGO's, lay community resources, and dedicated posts of personnel in all sections of the education department);
- the retraining of all personnel over a ten-year period; and



- the possibility of moving from one phase to another, from one site of learning to another.

The following key policy documents, task team reports and legislation, stress the principles, as entrenched in the Constitution and Bill of Rights, of equality, of access, the right of every learner to quality education, and establish procedures for the democratic governance of public schools (Campher, 2003:5-6):

- African National Congress (1994) A Policy Framework for Education and Training.
- White Paper on Education and Training (Department of National Education, March 1995).
- Department of Education (1995) South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act, notice 1521.
- Department of Education and Training (1996a) Life long learning through a National Qualifications Framework.
- White Paper 2: Organization, Governance and Funding of Schools (Department of National Education, November 1996d).
- White Paper on an Integrated National Disability Strategy (Office of the Deputy President, 1996b).
- South African Schools Act of 1996, Government Gazette No.84 of 1996.
- Department of National Education, 1997b, Quality Education for All: Overcoming barriers to learning and development. Report of the National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training (NCSNET).
- The campaign on culture and learning (COLTS) February 1997.
- Department of National Education 2000d, Implementation Plan for Trisano, January 2000-December 2004.
- The White Paper on Education and Training (Department of National Education, 2001).
- White Paper 6: Developing District Support Teams: Guidelines for Practice (Department of National Education, 2002).

The new outcomes-based education (OBE) as prescribed in Curriculum 2005 is seen as the new curriculum to facilitate the transformation of the education system in general. The traditional system created constraints for learners relating to time, calendars, grades, passing and failing. The OBE system does not consider these aspects important. It proposes that all learners perform successfully, but not at the same pace, that each successful learning experience is a stepping stone to more success and that schools are pivotal in creating conditions for success at schools. This outcomes-based, learner-centered approach to education implies that every learner's strengths and needs will be known and accommodated in the teaching-learning-assessment cycle. Curriculum 2005 therefore upholds the Constitution, which enshrines the right of all to education (Kühnert, 2003, 49; Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker & Engelbrecht, 1999: 21).

Curriculum 2005 and Education White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education emphasize that any practice must be consistent with the following (Kühnert, 2003:50):

- All learners can learn given the necessary support.
- OBE is learner paced and learner based.
- Schools create the conditions for learners to succeed.
- A shift from categorizing/labelling learners according to disability towards addressing barriers experienced by individual learners.
- Provision should be based on the levels of support needed to address a range of barriers to learning.

Table 2.1 illustrates the major differences between the 1995 education policy on special educational needs and previous policies (Engelbrecht, Kriegler & Booyesen 1996:18).

**TABLE 2.1: Comparison of policies.**

<b>Areas of comparison</b>	<b>Previous education policies on special educational needs</b>	<b>1995 education policy on special educational needs</b>
Educational policy	Discrimination on racial lines	Non-racial, non-sexist policy
Education system	Fragmented – separate systems for various population groups and separate systems for regular and special education	Unitary education system
Education, health and welfare services	Separate functioning of education, health and welfare departments and services	Holistic and integrated educational, health and social services
Administration	Centralized	Provincial
Educational approach	Clinical/curative	Systems/preventative approach
Placement	Separate schools for different categories of special needs	Progressive mainstreaming
Parent and community involvement in decision-making	Minimum involvement	Maximum involvement
Access to education	Compulsory education for some disabled learners only	Compulsory education for all disabled learners.

During the past ten years, rapid and dramatic changes have taken place in South Africa. The notion of inclusion currently operates as a "rallying cry", and has energized policy-makers across the world. It is however naïve to think that the South African education system will be able to put into place exactly the same form of inclusive education that rich countries can (Engelbrecht, Kriegler & Booysen, 1996:40).

In a country where the school - the structure set up to provide education for children- has in so many ways failed to do so we have to look beyond the individual child and his or her characteristics and start to reform schools as a whole. The withdrawal approach, the remedial approach and the mainstreaming approach to special education, although they have different methods and strategies, continue to perceive the problem as being the child's. In attempting to conceptualize educational difficulty in a more positive way, it will be better to see pupils experiencing difficulties as indicators of the need for reform (Jenkinson, 1997:141; Foreman, 1996:28-35; Engelbrecht, Kriegler & Booysen, 1996:45; Friend & Bursuck, 1999:3-5).

In this country, the majority of black scholars are scholastically under-achieving due to environmental, socio-economic and cultural deprivation. The question is therefore whether we can afford the luxury and the waste of providing special services for those with "specific learning disabilities" in a country where we have not succeeded in achieving functional literacy for the masses (Christie, 1999:162; Engelbrecht, Kriegler & Booysen, 1996:45; Kriegler, 1989:166).

A more sustainable approach would be the "whole school movement" or "regular education initiative" which sees special educational needs as a fundamental aspect of school improvement and attempts to improve the quality of schooling for all pupils. In South Africa, whole school evaluation was introduced in January 2001 and is underpinned by the National Educational Policy Act, No.27 of 1996 and the South African Schools Act, Act No. 84 of 1996. These acts authorize the

Minister of Education to monitor standards of education provision, delivery, and performance. The movement draws information from psychology, sociology, political theory, curriculum studies, and the research on effective schools, school improvement, classroom practice and staff development (Campher, 2003:36).

Other curriculum and institutional initiatives include the “health promoting schools perspective” where a school is ideally seen as a place where all members of the community work together to develop a supporting learning environment. It includes the development of healthy policies, a safe and supportive environment, personal skills development, support for community action and involvement, and re-orientated support services (DNE, 1997:43)

The focus on quality improvement is reflected by a campaign in 1995, which was designed to enhance the culture of learning, teaching and service (COLTS). It emphasized the improvement of physical infrastructure, the development of school management and governance capacities, and the importance of changing learners’ and educators’ attitudes towards learning and teaching. Currently whole school improvement strategies are being put on the agenda (Campher, 2003: 4, Engelbrecht, Kriegler & Booysen, 1996: 43).

The Department of Education’s new policy on building an inclusive education and training system (DNE, 2001) commits itself to establishing district support teams as a central part of the overall strengthening of education support services in South Africa. The education support system in South Africa includes the following levels of support (Campher, 2003:64):

- National, provincial and regional “head office” management and support.
- District support teams.
- Institutional-level support teams at schools and other education institutions.

### 2.2.2 An inclusive school

It is argued that one needs to understand the school as teaching and learning environment in order to understand the challenges one faces when building an inclusive school. Researchers describe the psychosocial environment, the physical environment, the curricula, the learning support and the technical support as the main aspects that form a framework for building an inclusive school environment (Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker & Engelbrecht, 1999:45):

#### (1) Psychosocial environment

The psychosocial environment of a school can act either as a barrier to or an opportunity for learning and development. The general culture and ethos of the school need to reflect norms and values, which embody the principles of inclusion. It is important that these norms and values are formulated in school policies, but more importantly, that they will play themselves out in practice through all other aspects of school life (Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:27; Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker & Engelbrecht, 1999:48; Ferreira, 2002:35).

Prejudice concerning social class, gender, race and disability acts as a major barrier to inclusion. The focus is too often only on the physical barriers that disabled learners' experience, while there are often barriers relating to class, ethnicity, gender and sexuality within the dominant culture. Where a school community is sensitive to its sub-cultures and gives them value and respect, it is an inclusive community (Hall, 2002:32; Corbett, 2001:13).

Relations between educators, between educators and learners, between educators and parents all act as "modelling" factors. An inclusive school operates as a collaborative community. Effective collaboration is based on the ongoing participation of two or more individuals who are committed to working together to

achieve common goals. The ethos in a collaborative community is one of sharing skills and supporting one another. There is not a strong sense of hierarchy and differential power relationships. Professionals agree that effective and ongoing collaboration among stakeholders is an essential feature of effective inclusion (Corbett, 2001:86; Lipsky & Gartner, 1997:101; Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:5,11,28; Hoskins, 1996:193-195; Ferreira, 2002:35).

Linked to the above, but of separate concern, is that of leadership and management in the school. The psychosocial environment of a school is strongly affected by the style and manner of leadership and management. Critical elements of effective leadership include the ability to establish direction, align key participants, motivate and inspire others, and produce useful changes in the organization (Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:30).

School principals and educators are in critical positions to influence the change process. As instructional leaders, principals articulate school missions, promote an *instructional climate*, manage curriculum and instruction, supervise teaching, and monitor student progress. They can support inclusion through organizing and (re)deploying the staff; scheduling the necessary time for educators to plan and learn new skills; involving the parents of all the children in school; ensuring access to staff development; and taking time to be involved with the outcomes of all the students in the school (Lipsky & Gartner, 1997:134-135; Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000: 30).

Inclusive programmes are most effective when shared leadership prevails. For meaningful improvements to occur, educators and principals must become change agents. The role of leadership and management is crucial in ensuring that the school goes "the route of inclusion", and is managed or "held together" in such a way that this is possible. Research based on a study of 32 schools in America that were implementing inclusive educational opportunities for students,

reported that among both general and special educators, the degree of administrative support emerged as the most powerful predictor of positive attitudes toward full inclusion (Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:28; Corbett, 2001:10; Lipsky & Gartner, 1997:103; Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker & Engelbrecht, 1999 49).

## (2) Physical environment

Physical environment includes the school buildings, classrooms, equipment and the surrounding terrain. It could include a number of barriers such as flights of stairs, inaccessible service points (e.g. telephones), inaccessible entrances, and problematic interior design (e.g. fixed seats, or inadequate floor space). Attention should be given to hoists, ramps, seating, and hygiene suites. Not only disabled learners, but all learners need classrooms with sufficient space as well as flexibility of space regarding tables, chairs and other equipment. An inclusive physical environment should ensure a safe and healthy environment, for example: buildings and classrooms should have sufficient ventilation, lighting, and space. However, researchers caution schools to remember that physical environment, although important, is no substitute for a climate of acceptance. Support should also be given when needed – like pushing a wheelchair, opening a door, or helping to read a notice (Lipsky & Gartner, 1997:103; Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker & Engelbrecht, 1999: 50; Flavell, 2001:26; Jenkinson, 1997:151).

## (3) Curriculum

All aspects of the curriculum need to be developed to ensure that the diverse needs of the learner population are addressed. While some of these can be done at macro-levels, educators at schools need to work at addressing the diverse needs of learners. OBE emphasizes the educator's role in curriculum development, highlighting the need for educators to develop their competence to identify and respond to local needs. Classroom practices that have been reported



as supporting inclusive education include co-operative learning, multilevel instruction, activity-based learning, mastery learning, the use of instructional technology, peer support as well as tutoring programmes (Lipsky & Gartner, 1997:102; Corbett, 2001:23; Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker & Engelbrecht, 1999:51).

Professionals propose a differentiated classroom where differentiation takes place with various aspects of curriculum and instruction, including the type of knowledge emphasized (basic to transformational), the representational level of materials or ideas (concrete to abstract), pacing of instruction (slow to quick), task level (simple to complex), structure of the lesson or activity (more to less), and student independence required for completion and mastery (less to greater). Use of flexible groupings, different assignments and projects, learning or interest centers, varied texts and resource materials, multiple media, and technology can all facilitate the differentiation process (Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:233).

The greater the range of learner differences, the greater the differentiation of content, process, and products needed to address those differences. Another principle is to use age-appropriate materials and activities. For example, asking a 16-year old to throw darts at a dart-board is more appropriate than asking him or her to throw beanbags into the clown's mouth (Foreman, 1996:34; Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:233).

Successful educators recognize and respond to these differences by being student-centered, pro-active in planning and instruction, and open to a variety of instructional strategies, arrangements and supports. Inclusive education is grounded in who you are as a person, in how you learn, and values affective factors, which relate to self-esteem, external influences and the school culture. Differentiation respects the dignity of the individual, regardless of the level of

ability/disability (Corbett, 2001: 26; Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:233; Foreman, 1996:34).

(4) Learning support in the school

Each school has its own unique problems requiring unique support systems, processes and structures. A school-based support team is an 'internal' support team, which is co-ordinated by a member of staff, preferably someone who has received training in either life skills education, counselling or learning support (remedial). The team is made up of students, their parents, educators and representatives from the community organizations, NGOs, neighbouring schools and education institutions, and other indigenous support systems (Foreman, 1996:377; Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker & Engelbrecht, 1999:53). The primary function of these teams will be to put in place co-ordinated learner and educator support services. These services will support the learning and teaching process by identifying and addressing learner, educator and institutional needs (DNE, 2001:15).

Establishing a team within a particular school enables the team to address the specific needs of that school and community. The team can, through collaborative consultation that is problem solving orientated, bring about changes to curriculum as well as create a positive and caring educational environment (Lipsky & Gartner, 1997: 135; Foreman, 1996:377; Campher, 2003:38; Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:141).

It is imperative that school-based support teams become an integral part of the educational system. The team's focus should be prevention, rehabilitation, social integration and equalization of opportunities. The school-based support team is not there to remove the 'problem' learner from the classroom but acts as a support system to empower the educator to succeed within the bounds of the classroom. The functions of the school-based support team are as follows

(Lipsky & Gartner, 1997: 135; Foreman, 1996:377; Campher, 2003:38; Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:141):

- To serve as a core team, to support educators.
- To meet on a weekly basis with educators who request support. A team member usually collects relevant information about the educator's concern before the meeting.
- To deal with one case per meeting: it is either a new request or a follow-up.
- To keep confidential notes about cases to enable follow-up work to be carried out in an efficient way.

Once the team is established, the team members themselves need ongoing support and professional development to enable them to support the educators in their schools. Educators involved in meetings need to have some time release from other responsibilities, and the principles and practical aspects of the school-based support team need the full support of the staff and the principal (Campher, 2003:74).

When there is a need for more specialist advice and intervention, the *district support team (support professionals)*, who consist of a core of education support personnel, will be capable of offering support and advice. These teams can consist of school psychologists, special educators, guidance counsellors, speech and language specialists, occupational therapists and even doctors and nurses. The ideal is that the process of working with district support teams is done collaboratively rather than prescriptively where the "expert" prescribes the educators what to do (Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:181).

In the past the role of the district support teams /support professionals was curative, fragmented and problem-orientated. It has changed to being preventative, health promotive and developmental. There are several consultation approaches (Engelbrecht, 2001:25; Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:181; Campher 2003:61):

- Behavioral consultation as an efficient means of implementing behavioral intervention.
- *Clinical consultation for identifying and assessing learner problems and describing specific strategies for resolution.*
- Organizational consultation and facilitating within a whole school approach, assessing the entire system and assisting educators to resolve identified concerns.
- Mental health approach, which ensures the development of 'health promoting schools'. It includes accountability, legal and ethical practices and collaborative and consultative skills.

In South Africa, the process of Whole School Evaluation has led to the formation of teams which evaluate schools for their strengths, weaknesses and progresses in terms of changing over to the New Curriculum as well as changing to inclusive education (Campher, 2003: 38).

#### (5) Technical and other support

Technical support includes administration, financial and other resource allocation and control. Ensuring that the technical support in a school is sufficient to facilitate inclusion is a challenge. It means ensuring that resources required by the school or some learners are available. In South Africa the main problem will be lack of funding. Schools will most probably have to raise their own funds to adapt their school buildings or to give learners with disabilities assistive technological devices. People will argue that a small number of children require a

great deal of resources. The counter argument is that this also occurs within a family. If one person is critically ill, a great deal of time and money may be needed to take care of them. The focus should remain on a sense of family and community within inclusive education. This will involve visionary leadership (Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker & Engelbrecht, 1999: 65; Hoskins, 1996:197).

### **2.2.3 An inclusive classroom**

As more learners with disabilities and learning breakdowns are accommodated in ordinary classrooms, teaching is likely to become more demanding. The challenge is to share expertise between remedial and mainstream teaching so that educators gradually acquire skills and confidence to work with learners with special needs (Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker & Engelbrecht, 1999: 65; Hayes & Gunn, 1988:31).

#### **(1) Educators**

Educators as implementers of the changes are required to deal with complex issues both in and out of the classroom. They are expected to sustain the values that underpin democracy which requires from them to shift from one set of assumptions, beliefs, norms, values, relationships, behaviors and practices to another. This entails fundamental re-culturing of learning and teaching (Campher, 2003:61).

Lipsky & Gartner (1997:137) list the following 10 strategies for general education educators:

- Get a little help from your friends.
- Welcome the student in your classroom.
- Be the educator of all the students.
- Make sure everyone belongs to the classroom community.
- Clarify shared expectations with team members.

- Adapt activities to the students' needs.
- Provide active and participatory learning experiences.
- Adapt classroom arrangements, materials, and strategies.
- Make sure support services help.
- Evaluate your teaching.

In the classroom, the focus should be on fostering the development of (1) caring relationships and genuine friendships, (2) a sense of belonging for all students and (3) holistic, heterogeneous, and flexible learning opportunities. (Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:181)

## (2) Environment

Part of the planning for inclusive education involves rethinking the physical environment, namely the classroom. Firstly, it has to be accessible for learners with disabilities, and secondly, it has to be adapted in terms of space, seating, routines, rules, rewards and transitions from one task to the other for the different needs of all the disabilities (Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:236).

Opportunities for inclusive schooling have been greatly enhanced by the increased use of technology in the classroom. Technology has helped to provide access to the curriculum by giving many students a means of communication that compensates for the loss of a sensory or physical function, for example speech synthesizers for students with visual impairments or speech recognition devices for students with hearing impairments. Educators should however ensure that interaction between the students and the educator and the student and other learners is not diminished and that the technology does not become an end in itself. The technology would also probably determine adaptations in terms of space, seating, rules and transitions from one task to the other (Jenkinson, 1997:145).

### (3) Organization and planning

In the planning phase of instruction, educators select content to be covered in the unit or lessons as well as specify learning objectives, pre-test students with some form of curriculum-based assessment, select presentation and practice activities, determine needed resources, group students, and allocate instructional time. Consultation and co-teaching may be needed when demands increase because of the complexity of the subject matter, learner needs, required resources, and the like (Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:236).

Co-teaching/team-teaching involves two or more educators who work together in the same classroom, sharing responsibility for instruction. Team-teaching allows educators to develop their own professional skills by learning from each other. Educators also broaden their perspectives (Wade, 2000:87).

### (4) Curriculum

The physical presence of learners in a classroom is no guarantee for their involvement in class and school activities. It is through the curriculum that inclusion truly takes place. A school's curriculum is all those activities designed or encouraged within its organizational framework to promote the intellectual, personal, social and physical development of its learners. The curriculum should be broad, balanced, relevant and (as discussed in 2.2.2.(3)) educators will have to differentiate content in terms of learners' abilities/disabilities. Curricula should be adapted to learners' needs and not vice versa (Möwes, 2002:59).

Table 2.2 demonstrates potential accommodations to be considered during lesson planning (Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:239).

**TABLE 2.2: Potential accommodations to be considered during lesson planning.**

- Develop instructional posters, bulletin boards, notebooks and centers.
- Develop and/or adapt presentation and practice materials by changing the size, format, font, number of problems, and/or complexity of problems.
- Design flexible student grouping arrangements to facilitate individual, small-group, and large-group instruction and support.
- Provide concept, lesson, and unit organizers (e.g., unit study guides, weekly lecture outlines, and graphic organizers).
- Use instructional resources such as films, guest speakers, labs, field trips, computer software and audio-taped texts and materials on related topics.
- Use more examples, modelling, or a simpler explanation; facilitate accelerated students' completion of in-depth projects on the same topic.
- Cover less material in smaller steps and ensure mastery of essential pre-requisite skills before moving on to the next concept or skill.
- Teach problem-based learning through educator role plays, models, class demonstrations, simulation activities, or experiments.
- Teach students to use adaptive and assistive technology and software for composition, outlining, graphics, databases, presentation, and information searching: teach keyboarding skills.
- Teach cognitive strategies (e.g. mnemonics, comprehension, self-monitoring, paraphrasing, test taking) and study skills (e.g. highlighter use, note cards, notebook organization, and time management).

When presenting new material, educators can use various methods to engage students, namely (1) choral responding, (2) think-pair-share, (3) note-taking techniques and (4) the PAUSE strategy. (Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:236).



When practicing new skills, there are also various methods, namely (a) peer-mediated practice which involves (1) partner learning, (2) paired reading, (3) peer tutoring, (4) co-operative learning as well as (b) independent practice. Co-operative learning is the key to successful inclusion. Co-operative learning in small groups requires positive interdependence. Each student is responsible for his or her contribution to the group. Co-operative learning has been demonstrated to promote greater interpersonal attraction between students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers, more positive interactions, greater self-esteem and greater cohesiveness of students within classes, compared to competitive, individualistic learning situations (Jenkinson, 1997:145; Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:236).

Inclusive education also affects assessment strategies. Educators can make use of (1) curriculum-based assessment, (2) portfolio assessment and (3) alternate grading. The process of assessment in the classroom is continuous and made up of a variety of methods, techniques and procedures for gathering information about learners and their learning in many different contexts. Assessment has three main purposes, namely to (1) assist learners in the learning process by stimulating self-evaluation and reflection, (2) assisting the educator in creating appropriate learning experiences by providing information on learners' needs and (3) assisting others, for example parents, colleagues and policy-makers concerned with education and training. Educators also need to take cognizance of the approach to intelligence that focuses on different types of intelligence, which enables all learners in inclusive classrooms to achieve their optimal potential. The seven types of intelligence are linguistic, logical-mathematical, bodily-kinesthetic, spatial, musical, interpersonal and intra-personal intelligence. To assess these types of intelligence an educator needs to observe the way they spend their free time as well as how they misbehave. These are diagnostic indicators of how students need to be taught (Kühnert, 2003: 50; Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:236).

When dealing with learners with severe disabilities, it may be necessary to follow a core curriculum which concentrates on functionality. It focuses on a range of skills that students will require when they leave school, such as choosing a career, finding a place to live, running a household, and budgeting. Examples of content are: reading advertisements, translating abbreviations in advertisements, comparing and contrasting choices, and developing questions to ask the landlord. Critics of this kind of approach fear that following a different kind of curriculum might be viewed as discriminatory. Other suggestions and ways in which educators internationally have addressed curriculum matters with respect to special educational needs include: (Foreman, 1996:381; Möwes, 2002:59)

- The exemption from some subjects.
- Adapting individual learning programmes within the context of the mainstream.
- Differentiation in output, input, mode of delivery, tasks and context.
- Generic life skills and functional independence courses to complement key learning areas.

In South Africa, outcomes-based education supports inclusive education by stressing learning achievement of learners and their progress through the curriculum. Individual adaptations are easily made by means of outcomes-based strategies and assessment (Kühnert, 2003:49; Möwes, 2002:59).

## **2.3 THE HEARING IMPAIRED CHILD**

### **2.3.1 The hearing impaired child**

#### **(1) Clinical features**

It has become the established pattern in South Africa to distinguish between three categories of children according to hearing loss, namely (Kapp, 1994:320):

- *partially hearing children*;
- *hard-of-hearing children*; and
- *deaf children*.

*Partially hearing children* have a hearing loss less than 35dB within the limits of speech frequency. These children's loss of hearing is such that they can be educated in a regular school.

*Hard-of-hearing children* have a hearing loss between 35dB and 65dB. These children are usually taught in schools for hard of hearing or they are also accommodated in schools for the deaf, but in separate divisions or classes (Kapp, 1994:320).

*Deaf children* have a hearing loss of 65dB and over. These children are taught in schools for the deaf who primarily make use of visual teaching methods and sign language (Kapp, 1994:320).

In this study, the focus is primarily on **children that are partially hearing and hard-of-hearing, who wear hearing aids, who are not deaf and who are integrated in mainstream schools.**

The sooner hearing loss is identified, the sooner the necessary didactic measures can be taken to avoid the possibility of subsequent learning problems. The following are indications of possible hearing loss (Watson, Gregory & Powers, 1999: 13; Gouws 1981; Kapp, 1994:347, Engelbrecht & Green, 2001:149):

- Despite general intelligent behavior, the learner experiences difficulty. The learner performs under average, especially in languages. Vocabulary is limited and words in sentences and letters in words are left out.

- *Sentence construction is not correct and there is a tendency to leave out the articles.*
- Spelling mistakes are made and consonants are left out at the end of sentences.
- The intelligence quotients for verbal intelligence are significantly lower than the non-verbal quotient.
- Poor pronunciation.
- The learner reads with great difficulty.
- In the child's essays, the language is not alive and vibrant. Usually there is *a lack of knowledge of idioms and punctuation is weak.*
- The child's voice might either be very loud and he might even have to shout to hear himself, or the child might speak very softly, because he only hears other people vaguely - depending on the type of hearing loss.
- Apparent misbehaviour, especially failure to do homework. Often when homework is only given verbally, the hearing impaired child tends to miss out and not write it down.
- The learner's personality is also often described as shy and withdrawn and he has a tendency to daydream. He is also sensitive and suspicious.
- When the learner often complains of colds, allergies, tonsillitis and ear infection, especially at a young age, it is important to be aware of the possibility of a hearing loss.
- Deafness or hearing loss in the family.
- The learner has a tendency to turn his head to use the ear with the least hearing loss. The child might often look confused but is also too shy to ask questions or to ask that instructions be repeated.
- They react slowly to explanations, questions and tasks.
- The child with a hearing loss might appear to be lip-reading.

(2) *The life-world of the hearing impaired child*

(a) *The cognitive life of the hearing impaired child*

As a child acquires language, the world takes on meaning for him and his thinking will be more orderly. Eventually, the higher cognitive abilities are activated and language progresses to a higher level. The language of thought results in greater control of the child's actions. The use of language leads the child into the world of symbols and promotes conceptualisation (Kapp, 1994:335; Lombaard, 1975:20).

Hearing impaired children often experience language in a restricted way – qualitatively and quantitatively. Quantitatively, because of less experience as a result of the absence or limitation of hearing, and qualitatively, because his language deficiency makes it difficult for him to think in the abstract. When a deaf child learns sign language, this limitation is lessened, because sign language is a fully developed language with the ability to communicate abstract thoughts. However, a hearing impaired child is usually only exposed to verbal language (Kapp, 1994:336).

Language and intelligence are of service to one another. This means that as a result of the deficiency in his language the hearing impaired child might experience problems in actualizing his intelligence (Kapp, 1994:336).

(b) *The emotional and social life of the hearing impaired child*

Research has pointed out that the child's emotional development is greatly influenced by his cognitive development. In the case of the hearing impaired child where a lack of language hampers the actualization of the cognitive intentionalities, an image emerges of a poorly developed emotional life. Language provides a core around which the child's feelings, desires and

emotions are organized. By verbalising feelings, a child is able, on the one hand, not merely to be conscious of them, but on the other hand, to control them effectively (Kapp, 1994:335; Engelbrecht & Green, 2001:153).

A poorly developed self-concept, a lack of self-confidence and initiative, impulsiveness, dependence and egocentricity, a strong inclination to rigidity, feelings of anxiety, uncertainty in life, loneliness and inferiority occur in isolated cases of hearing impaired children and are associated with the way other people, and especially the parents of the hearing impaired child, react to the child's impairment and with their parenting skills (Kapp, 1994:336; Lombaard, 1975:27; Engelbrecht & Green, 2001:153).

### **2.3.2 The hearing impaired child as a child in educational distress**

Within the educational situation, the child receives guidance in giving meaning to life, as well as guidance in the formation of his moral consciousness or his sensibility to moral values, assistance toward acquiring moral self-determination, independence, personal freedom and responsibility. In learning, the child therefore constantly raises the level upon which he communicates with life, takes up his responsibilities, makes his decisions and choices, actualises moral values and generally gives meaning to his world. By way of lived-experiences the child takes up an emotional and intellectual stance towards that which he has to learn and gives personal meaning to it. The affective life of the child is, therefore, integrally fused with his total personal being and is particularly affected by education (Van Niekerk, 1982:3)

A review of literature shows that a learner whose affective needs were not met was previously defined as "a child in distress" in terms of the educational situation. Van Niekerk (1982:11) describes the type of educational situation where things go wrong as follows: "Usually it is because there is not a positive or intimate relationship with the educator. A distressful educational situation gives

rise to experiences fraught with unfavourable meanings for the child, e.g. with feelings of extreme and uncalled for anxiety, loneliness, insecurity, helplessness and uncertainty. The child is consequently impeded in his progress towards learning and adulthood.”

Van Niekerk (1982:11) lists the following factors that cause communication between the educator and the child to be disturbed: anti-authoritative education, poverty, poor housing, deprivation (whenever parents are absent), setting too high or too low a standard, hunger, inconsistency (from parents or educator), indoctrination, lack of love, overtaxing, underestimation, illness, permissiveness, exaggerated ambition and a disregard of challenges.

Even though the phrase “learners in educational distress” seems emotionally laden and perhaps melodramatic, Van Niekerk gives a sensitive description of the emotional life of a learner with special educational needs. Such descriptions are scarce in modern literature.

The following is an example of such a description by Van Niekerk (1982:41): “When a sensory or physical handicap prevents a child from subjectively experiencing that he is progressively tightening his grip on the realities of life (contents of life), he gradually comes to feel and believe that he is incapable as a person. These feelings may readily intensify to the point where the child refuses to make any effort, because “it doesn’t serve any purpose anyway”.

Van Niekerk (1982:142) goes further and explains that a child’s impairment is not in itself a developmental or learning problem. It is his experience of his impairment that can impede his process. Special aid is necessary to help the child become an adult and to cope in life despite his impairment. Current literature calls his experience of his impairment a “barrier to learning”.

According to Van Niekerk's description a hearing impaired child is therefore a child in educational distress. The feelings of powerlessness and frustration in his life can easily result in a state of hopelessness and despair and the child might even give up trying. Under-actualising of the child's psychological life in the event of dysfunctional upbringing leads to inadequate exploration, inadequate emancipation, inadequate distantiation, inadequate differentiation, inadequate objectivation and inadequate learning (Van Niekerk, 1982:20-33).

Current literature on special educational needs does not contain prose-like descriptions such as Van Niekerk's. One could argue that phrases such as "educational distress" evoke images of the learner as a drowning person and in need of the educator to "save" him. The current notion of educational needs as "barriers" seems to be more practical. The learner who experiences too many barriers is then defined as a child at risk of not achieving his true educational potential (Pallas, 1989:20; Reglin, 1993:10).

### **2.3.3 The hearing impaired child as a child at risk**

#### **(1) Learners who experience barriers to learning and development**

The joint commission of the National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training and the National Committee for Education Support Services preferred the term "learners who experience barriers to learning and development" to "learners with special educational needs". The term "special needs" in education refers to the needs of an individual person or the system which should be addressed. These special needs, however, are caused by barriers within the person himself or herself, within the curriculum, the centre of learning (the school), the education system and the broader social context. For the learner to progress optimally these barriers should then be minimized, removed or prevented (Sonnekus, Gouws & Hugo, 1998:151).



(2) Causes of barriers to learning and development

Permanent barriers such as disabilities can be identified early and can be addressed through enabling and effective devices and processes. Barriers consist of inter alia the following:

- Socio-economic barriers such as lack of access to basic services, poverty and underdevelopment.
- Discriminatory attitudes. Labelling has a harmful effect on learners' self-esteem. Inadequate knowledge of disabilities and diseases such as AIDS can lead to categorisation.
- Inflexible curricula which may not meet the diverse needs of all learners in class.
- Language and communication. Learners are taught through their second or third language, which inhibits learning and communication.
- Inaccessible and unsafe building environment, which makes it impossible for physically disabled learners to have access to centers of learning.
- Inappropriate and inadequate provision of support services. In rural areas, support services are virtually non-existent.
- Lack of enabling and protective legislation and policy.
- Lack of parental recognition and involvement where negative attitudes toward parental involvement exists.
- Disability. However, if learners use assistive devices the barriers may be removed.
- Lack of human resource development strategies may lead to low self-esteem in educators, insecurity and lack of innovative practices in the classroom, which could create barriers to learning.

The hearing impaired learner with no hearing aid has a severe barrier. With a hearing aid, there is still a barrier of language when his language is delayed. In many cases discriminatory attitudes and inappropriate provision of support

services may also be barriers. These barriers require different interventions or strategies to prevent them from causing learning breakdown or excluding learners from the system. This can be done by effective monitoring and meeting of the different needs of hearing impaired learners (and others) and effective monitoring of the system as a whole (Sonnekus, Gouws & Hugo, 1998:151).

## **2.4 CHALLENGES FACING THE EDUCATOR OF THE HEARING IMPAIRED CHILD IN MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS**

### **2.4.1 Diagnosing/identifying hearing impaired children**

The sooner hearing loss is identified, the sooner the necessary didactic measures can be taken to avoid the possibility of subsequent learning problems. There are a number of behaviour manifestations which are indicative of a hearing problem. If the educator notices any sign of a hearing problem, it is his duty to inform the necessary person/people, e.g. the school support team, subject head or principal. The parents should be notified and the necessary arrangements made for a thorough audiometric examination.

If the child was diagnosed at primary school, it is absolutely vital to pass this information on to the school which the child will later attend. The parent should ensure that the information is passed on year after year, especially in the higher grades. Without this information, educators might never know that the child has a hearing problem, especially if the child tries to hide it, as is sometimes the case, with subsequent unhappy results for the child (Kapp, 1994:347) Educators will need to be informed as to the behaviour manifestations of the hearing impaired child. Learners in the secondary phase will try to hide it because of fear of rejection by peers. Educators will need to stay informed of learners' personal information and record cards in order to pick up on any information regarding hearing impairment (Kapp, 1994:347).

### 2.4.2 Classroom manager

There are various didactic principles which are generally used, but can be emphasised or accentuated when teaching learners who are hearing impaired (Kapp, 1994:347; Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker & Engelbrecht, 1999:78, Kühnert, 2003:49).

#### (1) Principles

##### (a) Totality

The child must acquire speech or his speech has to be remedied, his residual hearing should be developed, his perceptual-motor development should be improved and his career planned. This means that integration should take place and all role-players should work together towards the development of the child as a totality. In South Africa, Outcomes-Based Education encourages the principle that learning should not be compartmentalised into separate subjects, but should be integrated in cross-curricular teaching.

##### (b) Individualization

There are differences which distinguish one hearing impaired child from another and should be kept in mind when teaching the child. These differences occur in:

- the cause of the hearing loss;
- the age of onset;
- the degree of hearing loss;
- the manner in which the child experiences his handicap;
- the degree of parental involvement and support.

Outcomes-based education encourages programmes, which are learner-centered, tailored to suit the needs of all learners in the class, as well as accommodating those who have particular needs.

(c) Perception

Although the teaching of hearing impaired children should understandably be supported by visual aids, it should not be used in excess. If the teaching is excessively visual, it could impede the development of abstract thinking and the learner will lack insight in verbal and symbolic subject matter.

(d) Motivation

It takes initiative to arouse and sustain the interest of the hearing impaired child in the learning of academic content. Concrete activities and observable forms of motivation are important. The learner also has to be taught, taking into account his language ability. Every lesson is also a language lesson and every subject offers the opportunity for improvement and development of language.

(e) Tempo differentiation

Every learner should be allowed to actualize his potential in his own time. In the case of the hearing impaired learner this would mean creating opportunities to set individual learning objectives and paying sufficient attention to his learning weakness. In South Africa, outcomes-based education supports making individual adaptations for learners by means of outcomes-based strategies and assessment.

(f) Meta-cognition

Meta-cognition refers to the self-monitoring, self-regulating mode of thinking. Meta-cognitive processes involve self-evaluation, self-monitoring, self-recording, self-goal setting and self-reinforcement. Learners who experience difficulty in learning usually lack the ability to structure themselves. Many problems which learners experience are related to meta-cognitive deficits. A method of gaining structure is to develop learners' own strategies so that they feel in control of their own thought processes and can curb their impulsivity. The educator as mediator can foster the development of meta-cognition in learners.

(2) Methods

As the classroom manager, the educator will have to adapt certain methods of organisation in order to effectively help the hearing impaired learner to learn. Some methods that are recommended include (Engelbrecht, Green, Naicker & Engelbrecht, 1999:73; Hargreaves, 1998:559; Carrington, 1999:264):

(a) Physical environment

Ideally, the hearing impaired learner should be seated in the second row from the front, in the middle, so that he can hear and see optimally. More severe hearing impaired learners can be fitted with a "radio hearing aid". This requires the educator to wear a semi-microphone and the learner a "radio" receiver, which amplifies the educators' voice.

(b) Visual aids

Visual aids are of great help to emphasise content and help learners to focus on main ideas. Class notes should ideally always be available in written form so that the hearing impaired learner can look it over again. Computers can compensate

for physical disabilities. The lesson might even be made visually available on computer for the hearing impaired learner. Many hearing impaired learners have specific spelling problems which can also be overcome by using special spelling programmes on the computer. The problem with regards to technology in South African schools is the expense attached to it. Security and storage of such items may also be problematic in some schools.

(c) Human resources

Specialists recommend using a “buddy system” to support the hearing impaired learner. This means that a non-hearing impaired learner acts as a “buddy” to the hearing impaired learner. The most important role of this “buddy” is to help ensure that the hearing impaired learner heard important instructions, especially homework if it was given orally. Ideally, the “buddy” should be rotated so that one specific learner does not get burdened unnecessarily.

### **2.4.3 Combating stigma, isolation and marginalization**

Educators are agents for change. They are role-models to learners. Good educators are emotional, enthusiastic people who are passionate about ideas, learning and their relationships with students. In this sense, educators have a responsibility to play a role in creating a more tolerant society, which accepts diversity. The educator is the ultimate key to educational change and school improvement. It is what educators believe and what educators do at the level of the class that ultimately shapes the kind of learning young people get.

Educators need training to develop a critical understanding of common stereotypes and prejudices related to disability and reflect on how these have influenced their own attitudes. Clarity about their own strengths, vulnerabilities and needs, is necessary. Inclusion requires that learners with disabilities are not

simply thought of with pity, but viewed positively in terms of their abilities rather than their disabilities.

#### **2.4.4 Care and support**

The majority of educators regard caring for learners and supporting learners as an integral part of their work. Classrooms would be barren and boring places without care and support. Many educators' relationships with their students are significantly emotional in nature. Emotional relationships with students, matter for the social outcomes educators try to achieve as well as for establishing an appropriate emotional climate in which other types of learning can take place. Catering for a wide range of differences is technically and emotionally challenging work. The emotional bond educators have with their students is central to how they teach them, evaluate them, what types of curriculum they plan and select, and what types of organisational structures they adopt.

### **2.5 ACCOUNTABLE SUPPORT NETWORKS FOR THE EDUCATOR**

Any education system requires adequate support to ensure that quality education is provided. It is imperative that support delivery is defined as needs-based and needs-driven. Emerging national and international policies with regard to support development, propose a community-based approach to support, building support structures within schools and communities to ensure that support is available as close as possible to the point of need. A community-based approach to support implies accessing resources and drawing on the strengths in the community to develop and support education provision through structured community participation approach (Campher, 2003:63).

### 2.5.1 Informal support

#### (1) Families and friends

Professionals have personal lives that transcend the boundaries of the schools. Members of immediate and extended families, close friends, and trusted colleagues can be an intimate and powerful circle of support. Many times, all that is needed is a good sounding board, moral support, affirmation and encouragement (Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:81).

#### (2) Principals and colleagues

Schools require a wide spectrum of support services. Support can be given directly in the form of school-based teams or class assistants or indirectly. Principals can support inclusion in an indirect/informal way by making essential changes. Indirect support can take the form of (Möwes, 2002:64; Idol, 1997:390):

- Smaller class sizes.
- The reduction of educator: student ratios.
- Scheduling the principal and other support staff to teach a period a day or on a regular basis.
- Utilizing cross-age or same-age peer tutors with fewer supervising staff members.
- Utilizing student educators who offer lessons approved by master educators.
- Utilizing central office administrative and supervisory staff for occasional teaching stints.
- Using parent volunteers to teach brief units on study skills or to teach the students a speciality that a parent has to offer.



Most educators are committed to having or developing a broad repertoire of teaching strategies. How they implement them is shaped by their relationships with students, their feelings about what will excite and engage students emotionally, and their feelings about what will excite and engage themselves as educators. Building and maintaining such excitement and enjoyment is at the heart of the emotional labour of teaching, of what makes educators want to change and develop pedagogically, and what gives them pride. Any kind of change and form of support needs to build on these emotional aspects (Hargreaves, Lieberman, Fullan & Hopkins, 1998:572; Flavell, 2001:23; Idol, 1997:387).

The principal's style of leadership and his/her willingness to take responsibility for the leadership of all of the staff members is a critical variable in inclusive education. If the principal actively embodies the democratic values of inclusive education, and supports educators by taking cognizance of their beliefs, feelings and perceptions, and works collaboratively, it will have a significant impact on the process of implementing inclusive education (Lipsky & Gartner, 1997:135).

Collaborative functions involve joint planning, decision making, communication, problem solving, and include sharing learner progress information, sharing diagnostic information, sharing responsibility for grading, participating in collaborative long-term and short-term educational planning and meeting with parents. Collaborative teamwork is an empowering, supportive and affirming experience where individuals' contributions are valued and skills appreciated (Wade, 2000:86, Campher, 2003:66. Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:186).

An in-service educator program that aims at successful collaboration should include in its design the active participation of various role players, time provision to accommodate collaboration, the consideration of emotional (attitudes), cognitive (knowledge and skills), interpersonal (support and help) and

educational needs of educators in times of change, and the training of educators in communication, consulting, joint planning, team teaching, problem solving, conflict control and leadership skills. Suggestions for promoting a spirit of co-operation are: coaching, collaborative problem-solving, group problem-solving, in-service education, demonstration of methods and materials, case study discussion, guest speakers and conferences, newsletters and co-teaching (Hall, 2002:36; Schectman & Or, 1996:137; Campher, 2003:68; Swart, Engelbrecht, Eloff, Pettipher, 2002:186; Engelbrecht & Green, 2001:41).

Ideally, colleagues can support each other by working together and sharing responsibility. Co-teaching involves working together towards a specific goal. When true collaboration takes place, educators can capitalize on the diverse and specialized knowledge of colleagues, which will ensure quality-learning support (Wade, 2000:86, Campher, 2003:66. Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:186).

There are several ways to engage in co-teaching, namely (Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000: 189-195):

- Parallel teaching where the class is split and each educator delivers the lesson to a smaller group at the same time,
- Alternative teaching when one educator teaches to a small group of learners while the other instructs the large group in some other activity
- Station teaching when educators co-plan instructional activities that are presented in stations or learning centers, and interactive teaching where both partners have opportunities to share the teaching 'stage' in the classroom

Research shows that the following are characteristics of general educators and specialists that make good co-educators (Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000: 189-195):

- Professional competence.
- Personal confidence.
- Respect from colleagues.
- Professional enthusiasm.
- Respect for colleagues' skills and contributions.
- Good communication and problem-solving skills.
- Personal interest in professional growth.
- Flexibility and openness to new ideas.
- Effective organizational skills.
- Previous experience teaming with others.
- Willingness to invest extra time in the process as needed.
- Commitment to weekly planning with partner.
- Voluntary participation in co-teaching.

Involving educators in co-teaching increases the availability and appropriateness of classroom support that schools can provide. (Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000: 189-195).

### (3) Parental involvement

A crucial component to the community-based approach to change, is parental involvement. The focus on family involvement should however not be limited to parents only, but should also involve other family members and even close family friends. For the purpose of this study, the term parental involvement is used (Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:75).

Parents of both disabled and non-disabled learners need to see inclusive education as a positive component of their child's education. Parents need to be made aware of school philosophy changes, and administrators and educators should host information-sharing forums. It is important to host face-to-face forums in addition to written correspondence (Möwes, 2002:68; Flavell, 2001:24).

Professionals propose a focus on the following aspects of parental involvement (Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:75):

- Communicating – communication between home and school is regular, two-way and meaningful.
- Parenting – parenting skills are promoted and supported.
- Student learning – families play an integral role in assisting student learning.
- Volunteering – families are welcome in schools and their support and assistance are sought.
- School decision making and advocacy – families are full partners in the decisions that affect children and families.
- Collaborating with the community – community resources are used to strengthen schools, families and student learning.

When educators partner with families in these ways, they become important sources of support for one another. Collaboration between families and school personnel enables the exchange of valuable resources and ideas for improving the quality of education for all students (Möwes, 2002:68; Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:75).

#### (4) General education learners

The preparation of general education (mainstream) learners for inclusion involves more than merely giving them direct information in the form of photos or videos or pamphlets. If they are adequately prepared by the principal, educators, parents and even by their peers, the process is less traumatic and lessens the demands on the classroom educator to motivate them. The process of change needs to be managed properly, focusing also on the needs of the 'general' learner (Flavell, 2001:23-26; Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:55).

### 2.5.2 Formal support

The Department of Education's policy on building an inclusive education and training system (Department of National Education, 2001) commits itself to establishing district support teams as a central part of the overall strengthening of education support services in South Africa. The education support system in South Africa includes the following levels of support:

- National, provincial and regional 'head office' management and support.
- District support teams.
- Institutional-level (school-based) support teams.

In this study, the focus is primarily on school-based teams and district support teams.

#### (1) School-based support teams

School-based teams should be developed as the mechanism, structure, system and process for the development of educator support within a school- and community-based approach to support. In a South African context, with limited funds, it is difficult to envision that classroom assistants are a feasible form of support. Only a few privileged schools will be able to afford this kind of support. Empowering educators by means of school-based teams is a more realistic option. A school-based team also has the advantage above a district-support team, that it can respond to the learner's needs as soon as they arise (Flavell, 2001:22; Campher, 2003:68).

In the school, the school-based support team is therefore an ongoing 'training' process for educators, enabling and empowering them to become more independent in addressing difficulties. If not needed for guidance, it is still there

for emotional support and peer discussions to enhance professional development (Campher, 2003:75; Lipsky & Gartner, 1996:780-781).

(2) District support teams

According to the White Paper 6 on Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (DNE, 2001), the Department of Education commits itself to the establishment of support teams that consist of staff from provincial, regional, head offices and special schools, thus pooling limited available resources. The key focus areas are: supporting the capacity building of schools, identifying learning needs and barriers to learning and identifying the support needed to address these challenges. In the provision of support to schools these teams are involved with on-the-job training of educators in developing aspects of schools, which will bring about a culture of learning and teaching (Campher, 2003:75; Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Williams, 2000:83

(3) Special schools as resources

Specialized centers of learning should move away from being large institutionalised facilities and rather become smaller community-based centers of learning that foster the active involvement and participation of local communities from which the learners come. These specialised schools are to play an advisory and in-service training role for ordinary educators as part of their role change. They could render specialist consultative services to address barriers to learning.

(4) Higher education institutions

Higher education institutions are expected to establish institutionalised support for students experiencing barriers to learning. There are Disabled Student Support units at WITS, UCT, Stellenbosch and the University of the North, which

can render specialist consultative services to schools as well as support students at the university.

(5) School governing bodies

School governing bodies should stay informed as to the latest policies, which support inclusive education. This includes projects and initiatives such as:

- Health-promoting initiatives.
- Whole school development.
- Inclusive education pilot projects.
- Various parent empowerment programmes.
- Community-based projects.
- Children, youth and adults 'at risk' programmes.
- Life-skills education.
- Transition to work/partnerships.

Governing bodies should also undergo development programmes to ensure that they are able to effectively lead and govern schools to become inclusive communities. Innovative programmes and practices that support the development of a more responsive system should be supported at all levels. Organised representative structures of 'learners with special needs' should also be developed to facilitate participation of those learning in school governing bodies. School governing bodies should help create the ideal physical environment for inclusive education by removing barriers to learning and by, for example, building ramps, bigger doors and making the school building more accessible (DNE, 1997:61).

## **2.6 SYNTHESIS**

In this chapter the theoretical and contextual background to the implementing of inclusive education was discussed. From the literature it is clear that transformation is never easy or simple. The analysis focused on the conditions and contexts of educators in South Africa. By 1999, transformation in terms of policy was in place, but the challenge of implementation remained, as mandated policy by itself does not lead to institutional change. Whereas this chapter focused on the need to address educators' perceptions, the next chapter will discuss the qualitative research process.



## **CHAPTER 3**

### **PLANNING OF THE RESEARCH**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

In the preceding chapters the conceptual and theoretical issues relating to inclusive education and the hearing impaired learner were examined. It is the intention of the researcher to establish further in quantifiable terms what the perceptions of educators are of their responsibility towards hearing impaired children in mainstream schools.

In this chapter the research methodology used in the investigation of the perceptions of educators of their responsibility towards hearing impaired children in mainstream schools will be described.

#### **3.2 PREPARATION FOR AND DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH**

##### **3.2.1 Permission**

After having selected the schools for the research, it was required to first request permission from the appropriate authorities in order to administer the questionnaire to educators of secondary schools in the Amanzimtoti Ward, Umbumbulu Circuit. Permission was needed (cf. Appendix 1) from the Ward Manager, Dr Janse van Rensburg, of the Amanzimtoti Ward of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and Culture (Umbumbulu Circuit, Umlazi District, Ethekwini Region). A copy of the preliminary questionnaire (cf. Appendix 3) for the Ward Manager's approval was enclosed with the letter. Approval for research was given (cf. Appendix 2).

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Permission was granted by the Ward Manager who also accompanied the researcher to the schools, introducing the researcher to the principals and educators, thereby indicating interest and enthusiasm for the research. A letter to the educator (cf. Appendix 3) together with the questionnaire, were in this way delivered personally to all schools. Arrangements for administering the questionnaire to the educators were made and they were handed back to Dr Janse van Rensburg within a week's time.

### **3.2.2 Selection of respondents**

The empirical investigation was conducted in the Umbumbulu Circuit. For the purpose of this study educators in all HOD secondary schools in the Umbumbulu Circuit were randomly selected as the research group. The target population was defined by the following considerations:

- |                     |                               |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Type of school    | Secondary and Primary schools |
| • Geographical area | Umbumbulu Circuit             |
| • Population        | All educators                 |
| • Age               | 20-60 years and above         |
| • Gender            | Male and female               |
| • Years of teaching | 1 year and more               |

Seven secondary schools were identified in accordance with the defined population. From each of the seven schools, educators were used in the sample in order to produce statistical dependable results. This provided the researcher with a sample of 150 educators as respondents, which may be considered an adequate sample for reliable data analysis. Borg and Gall (1989:542) states that a successful study depends on the skills in selecting groups that are homogenous with respect to certain critical variables.

### 3.2.3 Sampling

According to De Vos (2001:191) a sample is the element of the population considered for actual inclusion in a study. Or it can be viewed as a subset of measurements drawn from a population in which one is interested. A sample is a small portion of the total set of objects, events or persons, which together comprise the subject of the study.

The major reason for sampling is feasibility (De Vos, 2001:191). It is often impossible to identify all members of a population of interest. The use of samples may result in more accurate information than might have been obtained if one had studied the entire population. This is so because, with a sample, time, money and effort can be concentrated to produce better quality research – better instruments, more in-depth information and better trained interviewers or observers.

The size of the sample will be influenced by the relative homogeneity or heterogeneity of the population and the desired degree of reliability for the purposes of the investigation (Cilliers, 1973:111; Huysamen, 1993:50-51).

#### (1) Probability sampling

A probability sample is one in which each person in the population has the same known probability of being selected. The kinds of probability sampling are simple random, systematic, stratified random, cluster and panel sampling (De Vos, 2001:195-196). The simple random sampling method was used for this study. In this situation each individual in the population theoretically has an equal chance to be selected for the sample.

(2) Simple random sampling

In random sampling a sample of a population is drawn in such a way that each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected. All possible samples of fixed size have the same probability of being selected. The researcher used a table of random numbers to select the sample, and thereafter used every alternate number.

### **3.3 THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT**

#### **3.3.1 The questionnaire as research instrument**

Data is any kind of information researchers can identify and accumulate to facilitate answers to their queries (Van Wyk, 1996:130). The questionnaire is regarded as the most widely used data collection technique (De Vaus, 1996:80). De Vos (2001:152) defines a questionnaire as “a set of questions on a form which is completed by the respondent in respect of a research project”. Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1988:10) define the questionnaire as “a prepared question form submitted to certain persons (respondents) with a view to obtaining information”. Van Rensburg, Landman and Bodenstein (1994:504) define a questionnaire as “a set of questions dealing with some topic or related group of topics given to a group of individuals for the purpose of gathering data on a problem under consideration”. Churchill and Peter (Schnetler, 1993:77) have shown that the measuring instrument has the greatest influence on the reliability of research data. The careful construction of the questionnaire best controls the characteristics of measurement.

According to De Vos (2001:153) questionnaires include mailed questionnaires, telephonic questionnaires, personal questionnaires, questionnaires delivered by hand and group-administered questionnaires. Factors such as time limitations, financial aspects, availability of manpower and infrastructure normally play a

crucial role in the choice of the type of questionnaire selected. Questionnaires can only be used if respondents can read, can be motivated to read the questions carefully and respond honestly and if they are knowledgeable on the issues which are addressed in the questionnaire.

A well-designed questionnaire is the culmination of a long process of planning the objective of the research, formulating the problem and generating the hypothesis. A poorly designed questionnaire can invalidate any research results notwithstanding the merit of the sample, the field workers and the statistical techniques (Huysamen, 1989:2). According to McMillan and Schumacher (1993:42) a well-designed questionnaire can boost the reliability and validity of the data to acceptable tolerances. Questionnaire design, therefore, does not take place in a vacuum.

According to Dane (1990:315-319) the length of individual questions, the number of response options and the format and wording of questions are determined by the following:

- Choice of the subject to be researched.
- Aim of the research.
- Size of the research sample.
- Method of data collection.
- Analysis of the data.

Against this background the researcher looked at the principles that determine whether the questionnaire is well designed or not. It is thus necessary to draw a distinction between questionnaire content, question format, question order, type of questions, formulation of questions and validity and reliability of questions.

### 3.3.2 Construction of the questionnaire

The questionnaire requires sufficient time and careful consideration in its construction. Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1988:198) state that the researcher should consult and seek advice from specialists and colleagues at all times during the construction of the questionnaire. The questionnaire should be pre-tested to eliminate possible errors.

Kidder and Judd (1986:243-245) and De Vos (2001:158) emphasise that adequate time should be allocated by the researcher in order to construct and test the questionnaire. The questionnaire design, therefore, is time-consuming and requires effort. The researcher has to keep in mind that the questionnaire will be redrafted a number of times before being finalised. Questions to be taken up in the questionnaire should be tested on people to eliminate possible errors. An important aim in the construction of the questionnaire for this investigation was to present the questions as simple and straightforward as possible. All of the above was taken into consideration by the researcher during the design of the questionnaire for this investigation.

The aim of the questionnaire (cf. Appendix 3) was to obtain information regarding educators' perceptions of their responsibility towards hearing impaired learners in mainstream schools. The researcher's objective was to avoid bias, ambiguity, prejudice and technical language in the questions. A variety of response systems or question types were used in order to obtain the desired result.

#### (1) Type of questions

##### (a) Closed-ended questions

Oppenheim (1992:112) and De Vos (2001:161) state that questions in a questionnaire can either be open or closed-ended. A closed-ended questionnaire

is one in which the respondents are offered a choice of alternative answers. Closed-ended questions are easy to ask and quick to answer, and their analysis is also straightforward. The major drawback of closed-ended questions is that they limit the respondents to the provided answers or alternatives. The respondents are deprived of the opportunity of providing their own answers in their own way. These questions may also introduce some form of bias.

(b) Open-ended questions

According to Oppenheim (1992:112), De Vos (2001:161) and Cohen and Manion (1994:98) open-ended questions are not followed by any kind of choice and the respondent's answers are recorded in full. In the case of a written questionnaire, the amount of space or the number of lines provided for the answer will partly determine the length and the fullness of the responses provided. The virtue of the open-ended question is that it does not force the respondent to adapt to the pre-conceived answers. Furthermore, the open-ended questions are flexible, thus enabling the researcher to clear up misunderstandings.

Oppenheim (1992: 112) emphasises that the chief advantage of the open-ended question is the freedom it gives to the respondents. Once they have understood the intent of the question, they can respond freely without being influenced by a prepared set of answers.

The disadvantage of open-ended questions is that they are difficult to answer and difficult to analyse. Many open questions lengthen the time of completion and respondents may be tempted to leave notes incomplete, which decreases the real value of the data obtained from the questionnaires. A large number of open questions also lengthen the time necessary for the processing of data. Inclusion of many open questions in the questionnaire makes it more expensive, more time-consuming and more liable to error (De Vos, 2001:160).



(c) Scaled items

McMillan and Schumacher (1993:244-245) state that scales are used extensively in questionnaires because they allow a fairly accurate assessment of beliefs or opinions. This is because our beliefs and opinions are thought of in terms of gradations. The usual format of scaled items is a question or statement followed by a scale of potential responses. Scaled items are a type of multiple-choice question. The subjects check the place on the scale that best reflects their beliefs or opinions about the statement. The most widely used example is the Likert scale. A Likert scale is one in which the item includes a value or direction and the respondent indicates agreement or disagreement with the statement. Likert-type items use different response scales; the items can be either neutral or directional.

According to De Vos (2001:164) a scaled question is useful to obtain information about non-exact and more subjective aspects. The researcher must be careful not to follow the same sequence from positive to negative throughout the questionnaire. Alternation is necessary to decrease bias. For this study, the researcher employed the Likert-type scale response in the construction of the questionnaire.

(2) The questionnaire

Section One: This section deals with biographical information of the respondents. This was done in accordance with Babbie (1990:84), who regards biographical questions as valuable "ice-breakers" at the start of the questionnaire, since they are generally not threatening and easy to answer. In section one, completion type questions as well as multiple choice questions were used.

According to Babbie (1990:84), asking demographic questions at the beginning of the questionnaire not only has the advantage of the respondent becoming accustomed to the questionnaire but it also gives information regarding variables

influencing refusals, should the respondent wish not to complete the questionnaire.

Section Two: This section focuses on educators' perceptions of their responsibilities towards hearing impaired children in mainstream schools. The researcher employed the Likert-type scale response in the construction of this section. These closed questions enable the result of the investigation to become available fairly quickly. Closed questions are better understood, questions can be answered within the same framework and responses can be better compared with one another.

### **3.3.3 Characteristics of a good questionnaire**

During the construction of the questionnaire, the researcher was guided by the characteristics of a good questionnaire as identified by Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1988:190), Mahlangu (1987:84-85) and Norval (1988:60) :

- It has to deal with a significant topic; one which the respondent will recognise as important enough to warrant spending his or her time on. The significance should be clearly and carefully stated on the questionnaire and the accompanying letter.
- It should seek only that information which cannot be obtained from other sources.
- Questionnaires should be attractive in appearance, neatly arranged and clearly duplicated or printed.
- It must be as short as possible, but long enough to get the essential data.
- Directions should be clear and complete and important terms clearly defined.
- Each question must deal with a single concept and should be worded simply.

- Objectively formulated questions with no leading suggestions should render the desired responses.
- Different categories provide an opportunity for easy, unambiguous and accurate responses.
- Questions should be presented in a proper psychological order proceeding from general to more specific and sensitive responses. An orderly grouping helps respondents organize their thinking so that their answers are logical and objective. It is preferable to present questions that create a favourable attitude before proceeding to those that are more intimate or delicate in nature.
- Data obtained from questionnaires are easy to tabulate and interpret. It is advisable to pre-construct a tabulation sheet anticipating the likely tabulation and ways of interpreting the data, before the final form of the questionnaire is decided upon. This working backward from a visualisation of the field analysis of data is an important technique for avoiding ambiguity in a questionnaire. If computer tabulation is planned it is important to designate code numbers for all possible responses to permit easy transference to computer programming format.

In deciding on the appeal and utility of the questionnaire in this study, cognizance had to be taken of the fact that the questionnaire was to be self-administered. The design of the questionnaire therefore had to be appealing and brief in order to elicit answers.

#### **3.3.4 Advantages and disadvantages of the questionnaire**

Data can be gathered by means of a structured questionnaire in *inter alia* the following ways: a written questionnaire that is mailed, delivered or handed out personally; personal interviews and telephone interviews. Each mode has specific advantages and disadvantages which the researcher needs to evaluate

for their suitability to the research question and the specific target population being studied, as well as relative cost.

(1) *Advantages of the written questionnaire*

One of the advantages of using the questionnaire is that all respondents receive the same set of questions phrased exactly the same way. The questionnaire is time-saving and conducive to reliable results. Bless & Higson-Smith (1995:112-113), Mahlangu (1987:96), and Cohen and Manion (1994:111-112) list the advantages of the written questionnaire as follows:

- Affordability. It is the least expensive means of data gathering.
- It precludes possible interviewer bias.
- It permits anonymity. If it is arranged such that responses are given anonymously, the researcher's chances of receiving responses which genuinely represent a person's beliefs, feelings, opinions or perceptions, will increase.
- It provides uniformity across measurement situations. Each person responds to exactly the same questions because standard instructions are given to respondents.
- A respondent has sufficient time to consider answers before responding.
- Data provided by written questionnaires can be more easily analysed and interpreted than data obtained from verbal responses.
- Written questionnaires can be given to many people simultaneously; hence a large sample of a target population can be reached.
- The use of written, mailed questionnaires solves the problem of non-contact if the respondent is not at home when the interviewer calls. When the target population to be covered is widely and thinly spread, the mailed questionnaire is the only possible method of approach.
- The problems related to interviews can be avoided. Interview "errors" may seriously undermine the reliability and validity of survey results.

- A respondent can answer questions of a personal or embarrassing nature more willingly and frankly than in a face-to-face situation with an interviewer who may be a complete stranger.
- In the case of the mailed questionnaire, questions requiring considered answers rather than immediate answers can be completed by consulting relevant documents
- Respondents can complete the questionnaires in their own time and in a more relaxed atmosphere.
- The administering of the questionnaires, and the coding, analysis and interpretation of data can be done without special training.
- Data obtained from written questionnaires can be compared and inferences made.
- Written questionnaires can elicit information, which cannot be obtained from other sources. This renders empirical research possible in different educational disciplines.

Self-administered questionnaires provide an opportunity to establish rapport with respondents and to explain the purpose of the study.

(2) Disadvantages of the written questionnaire

According to Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1988:190), Bless & Higson-Smith (1995:114), Kidder and Judd (1986:223-224), Mahlangu (1987:84-84), and Grinnel and Williams (1990:216-217) the written questionnaire also has disadvantages such as:

- It does not provide the flexibility of interviews. In an interview comments can be explored. This makes it possible to gauge how people interpret questions. If respondents interpret questions differently the validity of the information is jeopardised.
- Respondents generally express views better verbally than in writing.

- Questions can be answered only when they are easy and comprehensible with given instructions and definitions.
- Answers to mailed questionnaires must be seen as final. Rechecking of responses cannot be done. There is no chance of investigating beyond the given answer for clarification of ambiguous answers. If respondents are unwilling to answer certain questions nothing can be done about it. The mailed questionnaire is essentially inflexible.
- In written questionnaires, researchers are unable to control the context of question answering, and specifically the presence of other people. Respondents may ask friends or family members to examine the questionnaire or comment on their answers, causing bias of the respondent's own opinions.
- The researcher cannot correct misunderstandings or answer questions that the respondents may have through written questionnaires. Respondents may answer questions incorrectly or not at all due to confusion or misinterpretation.

The researcher of this study used the written questionnaire as research instrument taking into consideration its advantages and disadvantages.

### **3.3.5 Validity and reliability of the questionnaire**

Huysamen (1989:1-3) mentions that validity and reliability are two concepts that are of critical importance in understanding issues of measurement in social science research. Questionnaire designers rarely deal consciously with the degree of validity and reliability of their instrument. This is one reason why so many questionnaires lack these two qualities (Cooper, 1989:15). Questionnaires have a very limited purpose. In fact, they are often one-time gathering devices with a very short life, administered to a limited population. There are ways to improve both the validity and reliability of questionnaires.

Although reliability and validity are two different characteristics of measurement, they “shade into each other” (Kidder & Judd, 1986:53-54). Both validity and reliability are two ends of a continuum but at points in the middle it is difficult to distinguish between them. Researchers can never guarantee that an educational measuring instrument measures precisely and dependably what it is intended to measure (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1988:198). Huysamen (1989:1-3) states that researchers must have a general knowledge as to what validity and reliability are and how one goes about validating a research instrument and establishing its reliability.

(1) Validity of the questionnaire

According to De Vos (2001:166) validity refers broadly to the degree to which an instrument is doing what it is intended to do. Validity refers to the degree to which an instrument succeeds in measuring what it has set out to measure. De Vos (2001:166), Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1988:237) and Dane (1990:257-258) distinguish between four types of validity:

- Content validity which is determined by asking: Is the instrument really measuring the concept we assume it is? Does the instrument provide an adequate sample of items that represent that concept?
- Face validity which is often used interchangeably with content validity, but some argue that it is technically not the same. It refers to what an instrument “appears” to measure. It is a desirable characteristic of a measuring instrument and without it, one may encounter resistance on the part of the respondents.
- Criterion (or criterion-related) validity which involves multiple measurement and is established by comparing scores on an instrument with an external criterion, known to, or believed to measure the concept,

trait or behaviour being studied. The criterion should be relevant, reliable and free from bias and contamination.

- Construct validity which is perhaps the most difficult because it involves determining the extent to which an instrument successfully measures a theoretical construct, e.g. intelligence, cohesion, achievement, responsibility, motivation etc. Construct validity is concerned with underlying theory.

According to De Vos (2001:168) we really pose three questions when we ask how valid an instrument is:

- How well does this instrument measure what we want it to measure? (Content validity)
- How well does this instrument compare with one or more external criteria purporting to measure the same thing? (Criterion validity)
- What does this instrument mean, what is it in fact measuring, and how and why does it operate the way it does? (Construct validity)

The validity of the questionnaire as a research instrument reflects the sureness with which conclusions can be drawn. It refers to the extent to which interpretations of the instrument's results, other than the ones the researcher wishes to make, can be ruled out. Establishing validity requires that the researcher anticipates the potential arguments that sceptics might use to dismiss the research results (Cooper, 1989:120; Dane, 1990:148-149).

The researcher employed the questionnaire as a method to establish educators' perceptions of their educational responsibility towards hearing impaired children in mainstream schools. Due to the complexity of the respondents' varying contexts and conditions, one is never sure that the questionnaire devised will actually measure what it purports to measure. From the interpretations of the



results obtained and the sureness with which conclusions could be drawn the researcher is convinced that, to a great extent, the questionnaire did measure that which it was designed for.

## (2) Reliability of the questionnaire

According to De Vos (2001:168) reliability can be defined as the accuracy or precision of an instrument; as the degree of consistency or agreement between two independently derived sets of scores; and as the extent to which independent administrations of the same instrument yield the same (or similar) results under comparable conditions. Synonyms for reliability are dependability, stability, consistency, predictability, accuracy, reproducibility, repeatability and generalisability.

Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1988:194) distinguish between the following types of reliability:

- Test-re-test reliability – consistency estimated by comparing two or more repeated administrations of the measuring instrument. This gives an indication of the dependability of the results on various occasions.
- Internal consistency reliability indicates how well test items measure the same phenomena.
- By correlating the results obtained from two halves of the same measuring instrument, calculation of the split-half reliability can be made.

Reliability refers in general to the extent to which independent administration of the same instrument (or highly similar instruments) consistently yields the same (or similar) results under comparable conditions. Reliability is not primarily concerned with what is being measured but with how well it is being measured. The more reliable our instruments, the more consistent and dependable our

results. High reliability does not guarantee valid results, but there can be no valid results without reliability (De Vos, 2001: 16).

Sources of error that affect reliability are *inter alia* the following (Mulder, 1989:194) and Kidder and Judd (1986:209):

- Change of moods or alertness of respondents because of illness, fatigue, good or bad experiences or temporary differences amongst members of the group being measured.
- Variations in the conditions of administration between groups. These range from distractions such as noise and omissions in verbal instruction during administration.
- Differences in scoring or interpretation of results, chance differences in what the observer notices and errors in computing scores.
- Random effects by respondents who guess or check off attitudes or alternatives without understanding them.

The researcher believes that the questionnaires in this investigation were completed with the necessary honesty and sincerity required to render the maximum reliability possible. Frankness in responding to questions was made possible by the anonymity of the questionnaire.

### **3.4 ETHICAL MEASURES**

The importance of ethical measures when establishing the qualitative research design is evident in the literature. The researcher has an obligation to respect the rights, needs, values and desires of the participants in the research (Creswell, 1994:165).

In contrast to research in the natural science, research with human beings requires the researcher to take into consideration the scientific and moral values relating to his research (Kvale, 1983:110). Although it is important to make the truth known, it is ethical to have respect for people's humanity and dignity even if it means information might get lost (Blauner & Wellman, 1982:101-113).

The following safeguards, as suggested in Cresswell (1994:165-166), were employed in this research to protect the participants' rights:

- The research objectives were articulated verbally and in writing to the participants.
- The participants and the KZN Department of Education were informed of all data collection activities.
- The participants' rights, interests and wishes were considered first when choices were made regarding the reporting of the data.
- The participants will remain anonymous.

Confidentiality, privacy and anonymity were respected in this research. With privacy is meant that no information was forced from participants in the focus groups if they did not wish to give inputs, and their rights were respected. Furthermore, confidentiality means that no information will be made known to a third person without the consent of the respondent. To ensure anonymity the identification of none of the participants will be made known (Miles & Huberman, 1994:293).

Ethical and moral aspects involve the "person" of the researcher and are more than only knowledge of ethical procedures. The "person" of the researcher is the totality of the background, integrity and experience of the researcher (Kvale, 1983:17).

### **3.5 ADMINISTRATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

If properly administered the questionnaire is one of the best available instruments for obtaining information from widespread sources or large groups simultaneously (Cooper, 1989: 39). The researcher personally delivered questionnaires to the selected schools and collected them from Dr Janse van Rensburg after completion.

### **3.6 THE PROCESSING OF THE DATA**

After having collected data, it then had to be captured in a format which would permit analysis and interpretation. This involved the careful coding of 150 questionnaires completed by educators in mainstream schools in the Amanzimtoti Ward, Umbumbulu Circuit. The coded data was subsequently transferred onto a computer spreadsheet using Microsoft Excel.

#### **3.6.1 Descriptive statistics**

Descriptive statistics serve to describe and summarise observations. Frequency tables, histograms and polygons are useful in forming impressions about the distribution of data.

*According to Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1988:65-76) frequency distribution organizes data obtained from questionnaires to simplify statistical analysis. A frequency table provides the following information:*

- It indicates how many times a particular response appears on the completed questionnaire.
- It provides percentages that reflect the number of responses to a certain question in relation to the total number of responses.

- The arithmetic mean (average) can be calculated by adding all the scores and dividing it by the number of scores.

### 3.6.2 Inferential statistics

Inferential statistics are values calculated from a sample and are used to estimate the same value for the population. According to McMillan and Schumacher (1993:355) and Huysamen (1989:5) inferential statistics concerns itself with inferences that can be made about population indices on the basis of corresponding indices obtained from samples drawn randomly from the population.

According to De Vos (2001:115) research always commences with one or more questions or hypotheses. Questions are posed about the nature of real situations, while hypotheses are statements about how things can be. Hypotheses are always in declarative sentence form, and they relate, either generally or specifically, variables to variables. According to Kerlinger (1986:17) a hypothesis is a conjectural statement of the relation between two or more variables. There are two criteria for good hypothesis statements:

- Hypotheses should make statements about the relations between variables.
- Hypotheses should carry clear implications for testing the stated reliables.

This implies that hypothesis statements should contain two or more variables that are measurable or potentially measurable and they should specify how the variables are related (De Vos, 2001:117).

It is therefore clear that a proposition and a hypothesis are basically the same thing, except that a proposition states, "This is so," while a hypothesis asks, "Is this so?" or states, "I think this is so, but I will find out (De Vos, 2001:36)."

Hypotheses are seen as the most powerful tools to achieve dependable information. Kerlinger (1986:17) also states that they have power. Negative findings are sometimes as important as positive ones, in that they encourage further investigation.

### **3.6.3 Analysis of data**

The questionnaire (cf. Appendix 3) was designed to determine educators' perceptions of their responsibilities towards hearing impaired children in mainstream schools. In order to obtain the information needed for the purpose of this study the questionnaire was sub-divided into two categories.

- Section one, items 1.1 - 1.19, requested biographical information about the educator. The questions included information on age, gender, years of teaching experience, qualifications, training in special education needs and mother tongue.
- Section two gathered information regarding educators' perceptions of their educational responsibility towards hearing impaired children in mainstream schools. This section included questions on resources, support and knowledge.

## **3.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE INVESTIGATION**

This investigation was constrained by a number of factors that may have influenced the reliability and validity of the questionnaire:

- To restrict the investigation to manageable proportion, the researcher limited the study to educators at seven schools in the Amanzimtoti Ward. The alternative was to conduct research at all secondary schools in the Ethekwini Region. However, this might have resulted in an unmanageable

number of respondents for the statistical programme used by this researcher.

- Even though anonymity was required in the questionnaire the possibility exists that, out of caution, the respondents might not have been frank and truthful in their responses.

### **3.8 SUMMARY**

In this chapter the researcher provides an overview of the research design, explains the research methodology used for this study and gives a brief description of the research method. The preparation, research instrument, pilot study and administration of the questionnaire (cf. Appendix 3) are presented. Chapter four focuses on the presentation and analysis of the research data collected from the questionnaire.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH DATA**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

Literature on educators' perceptions of their responsibilities towards hearing impaired children in mainstream schools was explored in previous chapters. This chapter deals with the analysis and interpretation of data, which was collected by means of questionnaires completed by educators of seven schools in the Umbumbulu Circuit. The empirical data was obtained to give further scientific support to certain findings made in the literature study.

The data obtained from this research procedure was analyzed. The analysis involved encoding of the one hundred and fifty questionnaires and subsequent transferring of the coded data onto a computer spreadsheet. Finally, the data was subjected to computerized statistical analysis in order to test the relationship between the specific variables in 4.3. The SPSS version 9 programme was used.

Statistical differences were determined by the Chi-squared test of significance and the "t" test. In the Chi-squared test of significance it meant that those contingency questions which did not require a response were given a value of 0.

#### **4.2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS**

McMillan and Schumacher (1993:192) claim that descriptive statistics transform a set of numbers or observations into indices that describe or characterize the data. Descriptive statistics are thus used to organize, summarize and reduce large numbers of observations. This reduction results in few numbers derived



from mathematical formulas to represent all observations in each group of interest. The use of descriptive statistics is the most fundamental way to summarize data and it is indispensable in interpreting the result of quantitative research.

#### **4.2.1 Biographical data**

The items on biographical information in the questionnaire include age, gender, home language, qualifications, post level, mother tongue, teaching experience, average number of learners in class and training in special educational needs.

##### **(1) Gender of respondents**

**TABLE 4.1: GENDER**

<b>GENDER</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Male	54	33,1
Female	109	66,9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>100</b>

Respondents included in the study had to be of both gender groups. It was however not possible to obtain an equal number of males and females. About 33,1% of the respondents were male educators while 66,9% were female, which is a normal representation of the ratio of educators in the population of educators since there are generally more females than males in the teaching profession (Chetty, 2004:110).

(2) Age of respondents**TABLE 4.2: AGE**

AGE GROUP	N	%
20-30	30	18,4
31-40	61	37,4
41-50	41	25,2
51-60	25	15,3
Above 60	6	3,7
TOTAL	163	100

The most effective way to measure respondents' opinions according to age was to put it in categories of ten year intervals. From table 4.2 it is clear that this was a middle-aged population with more than 30 % (37,4%) of the educators in the research sample between 31 and 40 years and 25,2% between 41 and 50 years. The ages of the respondents range from 20 to above 60 years. There were only (3,7%) educators above 60 years.

(3) Educational level of educators**TABLE 4.3: QUALIFICATIONS**

QUALIFICATIONS	N	%
Degree, teaching diploma +additional	27	16,6
Degree + teaching diploma	31	19,0
Teaching degree + postgraduate qualification	6	3,7
Teaching degree	15	9,2
Teaching diploma + further qualifications	31	19,0
Teaching diploma	45	27,6
Other	8	4,9%
TOTAL	163	100

The responses to educators' qualifications reveal that 27,6% had a teaching diploma, 9,2% a teaching degree, 19,0% a degree plus teaching diploma, 16,6% a degree, teaching diploma and additional qualifications and 19,0% a teaching diploma with further qualifications. This is consistent with the increasing demand for teachers to have specialised knowledge in order to teach subjects in schools. Educators have been improving their qualifications in order to keep up with the rapid pace of change in knowledge, the advancement of technology and the increasing demands imposed upon them in schools (Marsh, 1992:88).

(4) Post level of educators

**TABLE 4.4: POST LEVEL**

POST LEVEL	N	%
Principal	4	2,5
Deputy principal	6	3,7
Head of Department	22	13,5
Subject head	15	9,2
Educator	116	71,2
TOTAL	163	100

In a research like this, one also wants to include all the possible positions in the educational system. As table 4.4 shows, all possible positions are included in the research project. Table 5 shows that more than half of the respondents (71,2%) are Level 1 educators – this is consistent with the composition of educators in most schools (DNE, 2002:2-8). Head of Departments are 13,5%. The rest of the respondents include (2,5%) principals, (3,7%) deputy principals, (13,5%) head of departments and (9,2%) subject heads.

(5) Mother tongue of educators**TABLE 4.5: MOTHER TONGUE**

MOTHER TONGUE	N	%
Afrikaans	34	20,9
English	52	31,9
Hindu	3	1,8
Tamil	6	3,7
Xhosa	3	1,8
Zulu	65	39,9
TOTAL	163	39,9

Table 4.5 shows that the majority of the respondents (39,9%) who participated reported Zulu as their mother tongue. The second largest group was English (31,9%) and next is Afrikaans (20,9%). These languages are also represented in the Census of 1999 *as the largest groups of home language speakers in KwaZulu-Natal* ([www.statssa.gov.za](http://www.statssa.gov.za)). This means that the group of respondents correctly represents the linguistic composition of this province.

(6) Teaching experience of educators**TABLE 4.6: TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

TEACHING EXPERIENCE	N	%
1-10	62	38,1
11-20	46	28,2
21-30	41	25,3
31-43	14	8,4
TOTAL	163	100

Teaching experience is as important as educators' qualifications. It was important that the research group had to represent all the possible groupings of experience in teaching. Table 4.6 shows that the majority of respondents have 10 years and less teaching experience (38,1%). The number of respondents who have between 10 and 20 years of teaching experience is (28,2%) and those between 20 and 30 years of experience is less than thirty percent (25,3%). The smallest number of respondents (8,4%) was those with more than 30 years of teaching experience.

(7) Average number of learners in class

**TABLE 4.7: AVERAGE NUMBER OF LEARNERS**

<b>AVERAGE NUMBER OF LEARNERS IN CLASS</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
25-30	33	20,2
31-40	76	46,1
42-120	54	33,7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>100</b>

The majority of respondents (46,1%) indicated that they have classes of between 31 and 40 learners. A smaller number (33,7%) of respondents indicated that on average they have more than 40 learners in their classes. The smallest number of respondents (20,2%) indicated that their average learner number was smaller than 30 per class. No-one indicated classes smaller than 25 learners on average per class. Class size has a direct impact on educators' perceptions and motivation. This in its turn impacts on their perceptions of their task to accommodate hearing impaired learners. It appears that in the Umbumbulu District a large percentage of educators (79,8%) have to cope with large classes.

(8) Training received by educators in special education**TABLE 4.8: TRAINING IN SPECIAL EDUCATION**

TRAINING IN SPECIAL EDUCATION	N	%
Yes	12	7,4
No	151	92,6

In the total sample of subjects who were investigated, the majority (92,6%) had no training in special education. With regard to training in special education, the above table shows that only 7,4% educators indicated that they had received training in special education.

All the legislation is in place, surveys have been done, and recommendations have been made to make inclusive education possible. The reality, however, seems to be that educators are not aware of these plans and policies and are not properly trained. Despite the recognition of the rights of learners with special needs to inclusive education, very little has been done in terms of preparing educators for inclusive education.

(9) Type of special educational training received**TABLE 4.9: TYPE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION TRAINING**

TYPE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION TRAINING	N	%
Workshops	3	1,8
Module	5	3,1
Diploma	3	1,8
Degree	1	0,6
Total	12	7,4

A large number of educators (92,6%) received no special training. Other educators had their training in workshops (1,8%), as part of a module during studies (3,1%), (1,8%) did a diploma in special educational needs and (0,6%) did a degree in special educational needs.

(10) Educator level: primary or secondary

**TABLE 4.10: PRIMARY OR SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

PRIMARY OR SECONDARY SCHOOL	N	%
High school	133	81,6
Primary school	30	18,4

With regard to whether they were employed at primary or secondary schools, the largest number of respondents (81,6%) indicated that they were teachers at secondary schools in the region and a smaller number (18,4%) indicated they were educators at primary schools. Inclusive education impacts on both primary and secondary schools. Both primary and secondary schools were included in the sample to make it more representative of the educator population. (Primary school educators have remedial training built into their training and might be better prepared to accommodate special educational needs.)

#### **4.2.2 Areas of educational responsibility**

Items 2.1 to 2.35 in Section 2 of the questionnaire measured the areas of responsibility facing the educator in educating hearing impaired learners in mainstream schools. These items are based on certain presumptions, which follow from the critical study of the relevant literature in Chapters 2 and 3. It is important to note that although most educators were not trained in special education, they acknowledge that if they had a hearing impaired child in their class, they would make a special effort to build a personal relationship with him.

It appears that on a personal level, educators feel responsible towards hearing impaired children, but that they feel they have too many responsibilities and stress which would conflict with their responsibility towards the hearing impaired learner. Many educators feel they lack resources and do not have the skills to teach hearing impaired learners.

**TABLE 4.11: EDUCATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY**

Question Number	AGREE Frequency Percentage	DISAGREE Frequency Percentage	UNCERTAIN Frequency Percentage	TOTAL
2.1.	63 38,7	48 29,4	52 31,9	163 100
2.2.	55 33,7	65 39,9	43 26,4	163 100
2.3.	31 19	94 57,7	38 23,3	163 100
2.4.	5 3,1	123 75,5	35 21,5	163 100
2.5.	34 20,9	47 28,8	82 50,3	163 100
2.6.	36 22,1	63 38,7	64 39,3	163 100
2.7.	92 56,4	34 20,9	37 22,7	163 100
2.8.	9 5,5	137 84	17 10,4	163 100
2.9.	56 34,4	62 38	45 27,6	163 100
2.10.	62 38	52 31,9	49 30,1	163 100
2.11.	35 21,5	73 44,8	55 33,7	163 100
2.12.	13 8	95 58,3	55 33,7	163 100
2.13.	62 38	70 42,9	31 19	163 100
2.14.	103 63,2	20 12,3	40 24,5	163 100
2.15.	80 49,1	31 19	52 31,9	163 100
2.16.	46 28,2	42 25,8	75 46	163 100
2.17.	77 47,2	37 22,7	49 30,1	163 100
2.18.	124 76,1	22 13,5	17 10,4	163 100
2.19.	12 7,4	122 74,8	29 17,8	163 100



2.20.	57 35	59 36,2	47 28,8	163 100
2.21.	122 74,8	24 14,7	17 10,4	163 100
2.22.	59 36,2	71 43,6	33 20,2	163 100
2.23.	102 62,6	38 23,3	23 14,1	163 100
2.24.	50 30,7	72 44,2	41 25,2	163 100
2.25.	122 74,8	21 12,9	20 12,3	163 100
2.26.	139 85,3	15 9,2	9 5,5	163 100
2.27.	124 76,1	17 10,4	22 13,5	163 100
2.28.	44 27	22 13,5	97 59,5	163 100
2.29.	38 23,3	35 21,5	90 55,2	163 100
2.30.	27 16,6	47 28,8	89 54,6	163 100
2.31.	21 12,9	97 59,5	45 27,6	163 100
2.32.	11 6,7	75 46	77 47,2	163 100
2.33.	76 46,6	28 17,2	59 36,2	163 100
2.34.	18 11	109 66,9	36 22,1	163 100
2.35.	10 6,1	114 69,9	39 23,9	163 100

The areas in Table 4.11 can be explained in detail as follows:

- (1) Identifying a hearing impaired learner who is not wearing hearing aids in a classroom situation

**TABLE 4.12: IDENTIFYING LEARNERS (Q2.1)**

	Frequency	Percent
Agree	63	38,7
Disagree	48	29,4
Uncertain	52	31,9
Total	163	100,0

In the context of this particular question the uncertain response is seen as a lack of knowledge. So, although there is no significant statistical difference between the responses, the majority of the respondents reacted negatively. They either disagreed (29,4%) or said they were uncertain (31,9%) whether they could identify a hearing impaired learner who does not wear hearing aids in a classroom situation.

This means that more than 60% of the respondents do not have knowledge of the manner in which a hearing impaired learner is presented, namely by day-dreaming, by apparent misbehavior, especially failure to do homework (Gouws, 1981; Kapp, 1994:347; Engelbrecht & Green, 2001:149). Often when homework is only given verbally, the hearing impaired child tends to miss out and not write it down. The learner's personality is also often described as shy, withdrawn and there is a tendency to daydream. He is also sensitive and suspicious. When the learner often complains of colds, allergies, tonsillitis and ear infection, especially at a young age, it is important to be aware of the possibility of hearing loss. Deafness or hearing loss in the family is also indicative. The learner has a tendency to turn his head to use the ear with the least hearing loss. The child might often look confused but is also too shy to ask questions and ask that instructions should be repeated. They react slowly to explanations, questions and tasks. The child with hearing loss might also appear to be lip-reading.

The lack of knowledge regarding learners with special needs as well as regarding inclusive education will place great pressure on educators who could easily feel overwhelmed if inclusive education becomes a reality. The role of the educator is ever-expanding, and not equipping them to cope with inclusive education will place great pressure on them and will make it impossible for them to manage the change. This also means that in the case of the primary school educators, the majority would not be able to identify the hearing impaired learner at an early age. Early age identification is essential because auditory and speech training should take place at the earliest age possible (Kapp, 1994:324-325).

(2) Keeping a record of learners' disabilities that can help with the identification of learners with hearing impairments

**TABLE 4.13: RECORD OF LEARNERS' DISABILITIES (Q2.2)**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Agree</b>	55	33,7
<b>Disagree</b>	65	39,9
<b>Uncertain</b>	43	26,4
<b>Total</b>	163	100,0

Most educators (39,9%) disagreed that their schools kept a record of learners' disabilities that could help with the identification of learners with hearing impairments. A further percentage (26,4%) was uncertain whether their school kept a record. In the context of this particular question the uncertain is seen as a lack of knowledge. In view of the fact that few educators (less than 40%) feel they can identify a hearing impaired learner in their class by means of behavior or physical signs, it is disconcerting that record-keeping, which could help an educator significantly in identifying a hearing impaired learner, is limited.

(3) Reporting to a school support team at the school

**TABLE 4.14: SCHOOL SUPPORT TEAM (Q2.3)**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Agree</b>	31	19
<b>Disagree</b>	94	57,7
<b>Uncertain</b>	38	23,3
<b>Total</b>	163	100

Most of the educators (57,7%) agreed that there is no school support team at their school to whom they could report the presence or progress of a hearing impaired learner. The presence of a school-based support team provides an ongoing 'training' opportunity for educators, enabling and empowering them to become more independent in addressing difficulties. If not needed for guidance, it is there for emotional support and peer discussions to enhance professional development (Campher, 2003:75; Lipsky & Gartner, 1996:780-781).

Due to educators' heavy workload the lack of school support teams is a major cause of concern. With a heavy workload educators are often not able to cope with the demands of their profession. If the government and the schools are serious about making inclusive education work, they need to put school support teams in place so that educators can be supported in their work.

(4) Services offered by a district support team to support educator

**TABLE 4.15: DISTRICT SUPPORT TEAM (Q2.4)**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Agree</b>	5	3,1
<b>Disagree</b>	123	75,5
<b>Uncertain</b>	35	21,5
<b>Total</b>	163	100

Most of the educators (75,5%) agreed that there had been no district support team at their school to offer their services regarding inclusive education.

According to the White Paper 6 on Building an Inclusive Education and Training System the Department of Education commits itself to the establishment of support teams that consist of staff from provincial, regional, head offices and special schools, thus pooling limited available resources. The key focus areas are: supporting the capacity building of schools, identifying learning needs and

barriers to learning and identifying the support needed to address these challenges. In the provision of support to schools these teams are involved with on-the-job training of educators in developing aspects of schools, which will bring about a culture of learning and teaching.

According to Nicholls (1998:48-52) educators are disillusioned with the teaching profession. Some of the reasons are the high volume of work and the poor salary packages. Other reasons are their inability, in the present climate, to meet the high demands on themselves as professionals, lack of resources, the absence of appreciation from the school authorities for work undertaken as well as lack of support from departmental authorities.

The lack of support from government in organising District Support Teams to evaluate and support schools, adds to educators' disillusionment and stress. It could mean that they would feel resentful towards learners with special educational needs and the inclusive process as it only adds to their burden.

(5) The availability of an educational resource centre in their region to obtain information regarding hearing-impaired learners

**TABLE 4.16: EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE CENTRE (Q2.5)**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Agree</b>	34	20,9
<b>Disagree</b>	47	28,8
<b>Uncertain</b>	82	50,3
<b>Total</b>	163	100

A large percentage of educators (28,8%) disagreed that there was an educational resource centre in their region and (50,3%) were uncertain. A possible explanation of the large number of respondents who were uncertain is that the term "educational resource centre" is not familiar. Educational resource

centres are the special schools. According to governmental plans, educational schools will gradually change to educational resource centres as more and more learners with special needs are included in mainstream schools. The special schools will then be educational resource centres, which will advise and support the mainstream schools. This question as well as the question on whether there is a special school in the region, was included into the questionnaire to test educators' knowledge of the terminology that is currently being used in terms of inclusive education. Educators knew there was a special school for hearing impaired learners, but responded "uncertain" regarding educational resource centre, probably assuming it was something different. The lack of knowledge of the terminology shows that educators have not been informed and trained sufficiently regarding inclusive education.

(6) Government allocation of financial resources

**TABLE 4.17: FINANCIAL RESOURCES (Q2.6)**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Agree</b>	36	22,1
<b>Disagree</b>	63	38,7
<b>Uncertain</b>	64	39,3
<b>Total</b>	163	100

Effective and efficient funding is important for inclusive education to be successful. The majority of educators who were involved in this study expressed the belief that the way resources are currently allocated does not promote inclusive education. Of the subjects, 38,7% disagreed that the way government currently allocated financial resources, promoted inclusive education. Of the subjects, 39,3 % were unsure, which is also an indication of lack of knowledge of finances and inclusive education, and 22,1% felt that the way resources were allocated, promoted inclusive education.

- (7) The presence of a school for hearing impaired learners in their region where educators can obtain information regarding hearing impaired learners

**TABLE 4.18: SCHOOLS IN REGION (Q2.7)**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Agree</b>	92	56,4
<b>Disagree</b>	34	20,9
<b>Uncertain</b>	37	22,7
<b>Total</b>	163	100

Most of the respondents (56,4%) agreed that there was a school for the hearing impaired in their region. It appears that the majority of educators in this survey are aware of the presence of the Durban School for the Hearing Impaired in Amanzimtoti, which is close to most of the schools which participated in the research. The policies on inclusive education maintain that mainstream and special schools should increase collaboration in order to support learners who are to be included in mainstream schools.

More research is needed to see to what extent this collaboration has been put into practice during the past few years. The lack of knowledge of the term “educational resource centre” (question five) does however suggest that there has not been much collaboration in the region where the research was done. If there had been, educators would probably have been more aware of the term “educational resource centre”. Therefore, although there is a school for the hearing impaired in the region, it appears that the different schools still function in isolation.

(8) The availability of resources to assist with teaching a hearing impaired learner

**TABLE 4.19: AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES (Q2.8)**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Agree</b>	9	5,5
<b>Disagree</b>	137	84
<b>Uncertain</b>	17	10,4
<b>Total</b>	163	100

The majority of the educators' (84%) disagreed that they have enough resources to assist them in teaching hearing impaired learners. Resources is a broad term and refers to time, money, books, adapted material, as well as aids such as special hearing aids or adapted classrooms, overhead projectors and computers.

Many educators would probably agree that time is their most valuable resource and that they are under stress to plan their work adequately. They have to attend to classroom commitments, extra-curricular duties, lesson preparation, assessment and the marking of learners' work, and provide personal and academic assistance to learners (Chetty, 2004:119). They often also have large classes, which add to their workload. Some schools have classroom assistants, especially at primary schools, but in most cases educators have to cope with these demands on their own. Resources such as computers and overhead projectors could help reduce workload. But very few schools have these luxuries and are actually under-resourced.

Placing learners with special needs in mainstream schools where educators feel they do not have enough resources and to teach a hearing impaired learner in such a context would be highly unprofessional and unethical. It would be nothing more than "dumping". Schools would have to better resourced and equipped before inclusive education can be implemented.



(9) Feeling comfortable with a hearing impaired learner in the class

TABLE 4.20: COMFORTABILITY (Q2.9)

	Frequency	Percent
Agree	56	34,4
Disagree	62	38
Uncertain	45	27,6
Total	163	100

More educators (38%) disagreed that they would feel comfortable with a hearing impaired learner in the class than those (34,4%) that felt they would feel comfortable. Of the subjects, 27,6% felt uncertain. The response to the question is not really significant, but it does however indicate that the majority do not feel overwhelmingly positive or negative. The closeness of the response probably shows educators' mixed feelings regarding inclusive education. In South Africa, the pro-special needs campaign is not as active as in America, and lack of funds and resources tend to make people more realistic. On the other hand, our history of Apartheid and our progress to a democratic society have made people more tolerant of diversity. The mixed feelings that are portrayed in this response shows how people have opted for a position of neutrality, which is also politically more correct.

(10) The ability to adapt the method of teaching to accommodate a hearing impaired child

TABLE 4.21: ABILITY TO ADAPT TEACHING METHOD (Q2.10)

	Frequency	Percent
Agree	62	38
Disagree	52	31,9
Uncertain	49	30,1
Total	163	100

A larger percentage (38,0%) of educators agreed that they have the ability to adapt the method of teaching to accommodate a hearing impaired child. A smaller percentage, although not significantly smaller (31,9%), feel they do not have the ability to adapt the method of teaching to accommodate a hearing impaired child in their class. A smaller percentage, although not significantly smaller, (30,1%) felt uncertain.

The response might be explained by the fact that few of these educators have been trained in special educational needs (compare biographical information: *training in special educational needs*). They do not know that they might need to change their methods of teaching in order to accommodate a hearing impaired child, and therefore they might feel they already know enough or they might feel unsure if they are capable of adapting their methods of teaching. Furthermore, the word ability might also appear to refer to natural ability rather than trained ability and as such, most educators probably would have a natural ability, which could be trained to accommodate hearing impaired learners.

(11) *The skills to adapt teaching materials to accommodate a hearing impaired child*

**TABLE 4.22: SKILLS TO ADAPT TEACHING MATERIALS (Q2.11)**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Agree</b>	35	21,5
<b>Disagree</b>	73	44,8
<b>Uncertain</b>	55	33,7
<b>Total</b>	163	100

Most of the respondents (44,8%) disagreed that they had the skills to adapt teaching materials to accommodate a hearing impaired child. Adapting teaching materials involves adapting or explaining vocabulary in a text, making material more visual (although not excessively) and working from a concrete level to an

abstract level. Adapting teaching material leads to more effective teaching and learning. Educators should be trained in adapting materials for hearing impaired learners as well as for other learners with special educational needs.

(12) Adapting assessment strategies to accommodate a hearing impaired child

**TABLE 4.23: ADAPTATION OF ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES (Q2.12)**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Agree</b>	13	8,0
<b>Disagree</b>	95	58,3
<b>Uncertain</b>	55	33,7
<b>Total</b>	163	100

Most of the respondents (58,3%) disagreed that they knew how to adapt assessment strategies to accommodate a hearing impaired child. Only a small percentage (8%) agreed that they had the knowledge to adapt assessment strategies to accommodate hearing impaired children.

With the new system of evaluating learners in groups and the focus on group work, many hearing impaired learners might be excluded from fully participating because of the higher level of noise which could make it hard for them to follow what is being discussed and argued in the group. Educators will have to take this into consideration, and maybe set a separate test to be written, or adapt the marks, keeping in mind general capability. Another possibility may be to have the group in which the hearing impaired learner finds himself, work outside by themselves. Educators' lack of knowledge concerning assessment strategies is disconcerting. If assessment strategies are not adapted, the hearing impaired learner will be penalised and might become demotivated.

(13) Knowledge to adapt classroom seating to accommodate a hearing impaired learner

**TABLE 4.24: ADAPTATION OF CLASSROOM SEATING (Q2.13)**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Agree</b>	62	38,0
<b>Disagree</b>	70	42,9
<b>Uncertain</b>	31	19,0
<b>Total</b>	163	100

Forty-two comma nine percent of the respondents (42,9%) disagreed that they had the knowledge to adapt classroom seating to accommodate a hearing impaired learner. Nineteen percent (19%) of respondents were unsure. More respondents thus seem not to have knowledge of adapting classroom seating to accommodate a hearing impaired learner. This means educators are not able to guide the hearing impaired learner effectively as to where to sit so that he can optimally benefit from the lesson. This would result in ineffective teaching and ineffective learning.

(14) Peer support as an effective way of helping the hearing impaired learner to cope academically

**TABLE 4.25: PEER SUPORT (Q2.14)**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Agree</b>	103	63,2
<b>Disagree</b>	20	12,3
<b>Uncertain</b>	40	24,5
<b>Total</b>	163	100

More than half of the educators (63,2%) agreed that peer support is an effective way of helping the hearing impaired learner to cope academically. Using the

hearing impaired learner's peers as support for him will lessen the burden on the educator. A buddy system could ensure correct homework has been taken down and that all instructions were clearly understood. With the problem of large classes, educators have practical difficulties in giving learners individual attention (Chetty 2004:119). Making use of the buddy system, his peers, could help to overcome these difficulties.

(15) A hearing impaired child can benefit significantly socially from being integrated in a mainstream school

**TABLE 4.26: SOCIAL BENEFIT (Q2.15)**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Agree</b>	80	49,1
<b>Disagree</b>	31	19,0
<b>Uncertain</b>	52	31,9
<b>Total</b>	163	100

Less than half of the educators (49,1%) concurred that hearing impaired learners can socially benefit significantly from being integrated in a mainstream school. A smaller percentage (19%) disagreed and a larger percentage (31,9%) was uncertain. Inclusive education is not yet a reality in South Africa. The high uncertain response percentage shows how little educators know about the social benefits of inclusive education because they have not witnessed it, they can only imagine it.

- (16) *A hearing impaired child can academically benefit significantly from being integrated in a mainstream school*

**TABLE 4.27: ACADEMIC BENEFIT (Q2.16)**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Agree</b>	46	28,2
<b>Disagree</b>	42	25,8
<b>Uncertain</b>	75	46,0
<b>Total</b>	163	100

Less than one-third of the respondents (28,2%) agreed that a hearing impaired child can academically benefit significantly from being integrated in a mainstream school. A very close percentage (25,8%) disagreed that a hearing impaired child can academically benefit significantly and almost half of the respondents (46%) were uncertain. The closeness of the response rates as well as the high uncertain rate reflects the mixed and uncertain feelings educators have on the issue of inclusive education.

Educators in South Africa have little experience, insufficient training, knowledge and support in terms of inclusive education. They are burdened by heavy workloads, large classes, inadequate knowledge of OBE, multicultural classes, administrative duties and undisciplined learners. It is therefore probably difficult for them to imagine that a hearing impaired learner can benefit academically from inclusive education (Chetty, 2004:153).

(17) Feeling capable of handling situations where the hearing impaired learner might be harassed

**TABLE 4.28: CAPABILITY OF HANDLING SITUATION (Q2.17)**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Agree</b>	77	47,2
<b>Disagree</b>	37	22,7
<b>Uncertain</b>	49	30,1
<b>Total</b>	163	100

Less than half of the respondents (47%) agreed that they felt capable of handling situations where the hearing impaired learner might be harassed. Thirty percent (30,1%) of the respondents felt uncertain. And twenty two percent (22,7%) disagreed. One would expect more educators to know how to handle situations of harassment if inclusive education is to be a success.

Educators have to be able to play a guiding role in solving tense situations and portraying the correct role and proper values. To be able to do so, they need training and practice. This will involve workshops and hands-on experience, not only theoretical knowledge. Research has shown that educators have to be agents of change (Campfer,2003:85) to make inclusive education work.

- (18) Teaching a class in which learners have a variety of needs is significantly more difficult than teaching a class in which the learners are of approximately equal ability

**TABLE 4.29: VARIETY OF NEEDS (Q2.18)**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Agree</b>	124	76,1
<b>Disagree</b>	22	13,5
<b>Uncertain</b>	17	10,4
<b>Total</b>	163	100

The majority of the respondents (76,1%) agreed that teaching a class in which learners have a variety of needs is significantly more difficult than teaching a class in which the learners are of approximately equal ability.

Over the past few years, educators in South Africa have had to adapt to multicultural education. Nicholls (1998:34,37), Squelch and Lemmer (1994:4) and King (1990:13) mention that the majority of educators in South Africa experience the teaching of multicultural classes as stressful because they

- are not able to understand the diversity of cultures. The different cultures cause misunderstandings and clashes of ideas. Consequently, educators are accused of being insensitive to the learners of other races.
- experience difficulty in empathising with the problems of multicultural learners.

Adding to the stress of multicultural education, the stress of including multi-abled/multi-impaired learners, might just result in educators becoming discouraged and demotivated.



- (19) It is the hearing impaired child's own responsibility to cope academically in a mainstream school

**TABLE 4.30: OWN RESPONSIBILITY (Q2.19)**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Agree</b>	12	7,4
<b>Disagree</b>	122	74,8
<b>Uncertain</b>	29	17,8
<b>Total</b>	163	100

Most of the respondents (74,8%) disagreed that it was the hearing impaired child's own responsibility to cope academically in a mainstream school. This seems to imply that they felt it was their responsibility as educators to help the hearing impaired child cope academically. One could argue that the educators feel responsible for the hearing impaired learners in their classes and by not addressing the learner's needs, they will feel guilty, frustrated and angry. One could therefore argue that the respondents would not mind having hearing impaired learners in their class. This would however mean special training for them to help the learner cope.

- (20) A hearing impaired learner is a child in educational distress

**TABLE 4.31: EDUCATIONAL DISTRESS (Q2.20)**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Agree</b>	57	35
<b>Disagree</b>	59	36,2
<b>Uncertain</b>	47	28,8
<b>Total</b>	163	100

More than a third (36,2%) disagreed that a hearing impaired learner is a child in educational distress, and a very close percentage (35,0%) agreed. The closeness of the response rate suggests the mixed feelings educators have on the life-world of the hearing impaired child. Lack of knowledge concerning the effect that a hearing impairment has on the child's educational progress probably led to the closeness of the response rate. The word "distress" is also quite emotional and may have been too strong a word to relate to. The term "child at risk" is less emotional and may have been a better choice.

(21) *Appropriately qualified educators should rather teach hearing-impaired learners*

**TABLE 4.32: APPROPRIATELY QUALIFIED EDUCATORS (Q2.21)**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Agree</b>	122	74,8
<b>Disagree</b>	24	14,7
<b>Uncertain</b>	17	10,4
<b>Total</b>	163	100

A very large percentage (74,8%) of the respondents agreed that appropriately qualified educators should rather teach hearing impaired learners. According to Möwes (2002:80) many educators feel they are not appropriately qualified to teach hearing impaired learners and learners with other impairments. They perceive themselves as not being good enough to deal with the challenges involved in teaching learners with impairments. Mainstream educators' opinion that appropriately qualified educators should rather teach hearing impaired learners is the very reason why special schools were started. To make a success of inclusive education, educators in mainstream education will have to see themselves as appropriately qualified as well as *be* appropriately qualified.

- (22) An excellent culture of parental involvement is apparent at my school

**TABLE 4.33: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT (Q2.22)**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Agree</b>	59	36,2
<b>Disagree</b>	71	43,6
<b>Uncertain</b>	33	20,2
<b>Total</b>	163	100

More respondents disagreed (43,6%) with the statement that an excellent culture of parental involvement is apparent at their school than those that agreed (36,2%).

The involvement of parents is crucial for inclusive education to be a success. A healthy partnership between the school and the community is one of the cornerstones of an effective school (Glatter, Preedy, Riches, & Masteron, 1988:339). The closeness of the response rate and the high uncertain rate (20,2%) could be attributed to the fact that many parents who are involved in their children's academic lives, actually intimidate the educators. So, although parents are involved, this may be perceived as negative rather than positive.

- (23) I have so many learners in my class that it is impossible for me to give adequate attention to a hearing impaired child in my class

**TABLE 4.34: ADEQUATE ATTENTION (Q2.23)**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Agree</b>	102	62,6
<b>Disagree</b>	38	23,3
<b>Uncertain</b>	23	14,1
<b>Total</b>	163	100

The majority of the respondents (62,6%) agreed that they have so many learners in their classes that it is impossible for them to give adequate attention to a hearing impaired child in their class.

Teaching large classes is stressful to educators. In many secondary schools in South Africa, an educator might teach up to five classes with an average of 45 learners in each class. Modise (1999:18) contends that with the presence of large class numbers in schools, educators find it difficult to create an atmosphere conducive to good teaching and learning. Nicholls (1998:16) states that at present classes in many schools in South Africa are too large, which means that there is insufficient time to adequately complete the required tasks – hence, the learners suffer. Jarvis (2002:10) confirms that educators with large numbers in their classes find it difficult to offer much needed individual attention to learners.

(24) My school has a system of pastoral care in place which will also support the hearing impaired learner

**TABLE 4.35: PASTORAL CARE (Q2.24)**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Agree</b>	50	30,7
<b>Disagree</b>	72	44,2
<b>Uncertain</b>	41	25,2
<b>Total</b>	163	100

Most of the respondents (44,2%) disagreed that their schools had a system of pastoral care in place which would also support the hearing impaired learner. A small percentage (30,7%) agreed and a close percentage (25,2%) was uncertain. The closeness of the response rates could be attributed to the educators' view of what a system of pastoral care is. Some might see it as a counselling educator, others as the system of HOD's that takes care of certain grades, others as a psychologist that visits the school.

- (25) If I should notice a hearing impaired child not wearing his hearing aid, I would regard it as my responsibility to investigate why

**TABLE 4.36: WEARING OF HEARING AID (Q2.25)**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Agree</b>	122	74,8
<b>Disagree</b>	21	12,9
<b>Uncertain</b>	20	12,3
<b>Total</b>	163	100

More than seventy percent (76,1%) of the respondents agreed that if they should notice a hearing impaired child not wearing his hearing aid, they would regard it as their responsibility to investigate why.

The inherent difficulty in the teaching situation is that the educator's role is becoming diverse and is often not in keeping with their training. The response shows that educators would feel it is their responsibility to investigate why the child is not wearing his hearing aid, but the reality is that educators suffer under the constraints of large classes, inadequate time, lack of training in inclusive education and insufficient support. Although they might investigate why, they might not be able to come up with a solution. The conflict between their feelings of responsibility and their inability to solve the problem might lead to stress and disillusionment.

- (26) If a hearing impaired child is not coping in my class I would regard it as my responsibility to report it to his parents as quickly as possible

**TABLE 4.37: RESPONSIBILITY TO REPORT (Q2.26)**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Agree</b>	139	85,3
<b>Disagree</b>	15	9,2
<b>Uncertain</b>	9	5,5
<b>Total</b>	163	100

More than eighty percent (85,3%) of the respondents maintained that they would regard it as their responsibility to report to a parent when a hearing impaired child is not coping in their class. Although educators might view this as their responsibility, the practical constraints on reporting are numerous. Schools often have difficulty contacting parents due to the fact that they have out-dated or incorrect contact details, or because parents are very busy. Educators are already under great stress and often do not have time to see parents, except at parents' evenings. It also has very little value contacting parents if there is no proper follow-up. A large number of educators (92,6%) indicated that they had no training in special education, and it is therefore doubtful that proper remedial follow-up will be done.

- (27) If I had a hearing impaired learner in my class, I would make a special effort to build a personal relationship with him

**TABLE 4.38: PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP (Q2.27)**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Agree</b>	124	76,1
<b>Disagree</b>	17	10,4
<b>Uncertain</b>	22	13,5
<b>Total</b>	163	100

A large number of respondents (76,1%) indicated that they would make a special effort to build a relationship with a hearing impaired learner in their class. Any form of impairment evokes sympathy because of a mind thought "jump" that most of us make when we are confronted with impairment, namely: It could have been me. Educators are further trained to have respect for learners and to help them grow. It is therefore a natural reaction for educators to feel responsible for a child who experiences more barriers in learning than the average child. This feeling of responsibility does not however mean that the educator is appropriately qualified and equipped to help the child.

(28) *My school's principal has expressed a positive attitude towards inclusive education*

**TABLE 4.39: PRINCIPAL'S ATTITUDE (Q2.28)**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Agree</b>	44	27
<b>Disagree</b>	22	13,5
<b>Uncertain</b>	97	59,5
<b>Total</b>	163	100

A large number of respondents (59,5%) were uncertain whether their school's principal has expressed a positive attitude and (13,5%) disagreed. It may be that educators do not often have contact with a principal and are therefore unsure about his views on many issues. However, inclusive education is a relevant and actual issue and principals should have voiced their opinions, concerns and plans to educators by now.

- (29) Most of my colleagues have expressed positive attitudes towards inclusive education

**TABLE 4.40: COLLEAGUES' ATTITUDES (Q2.29)**

	Frequency	Percent
Agree	38	23,3
Disagree	35	21,5
Uncertain	90	55,2
Total	163	100

The largest number of respondents (55,2%) was uncertain as to whether their colleagues have expressed positive attitudes towards inclusive education. This may be because it is not a topic that educators discuss, or it may be that the respondents do not know what inclusive education is! The responses show a lack of awareness and preparation for inclusive education. If inclusive education had been something they had been trained and prepared for, they would have had conversations about it and would have had opinions about it. A small percentage (21,5%) said their colleagues are not positive and more than 23,3% percent said their colleagues are positive. This means that a larger percentage is negative and uncertain than positive.

- (30) My school's governing body has procedures in place so that complaints from parents of learners with special educational needs are addressed

**TABLE 4.41: GOVERNING BODY PROCEDURES (Q2.30)**

	Frequency	Percent
Agree	27	16,6
Disagree	47	28,8
Uncertain	89	54,6
Total	163	100



The largest number of respondents (54,6%) was uncertain as to whether their school's governing body had procedures in place to address complaints from parents of learners with special educational needs. It is clear that schools do not have policies and procedures in place to accommodate learners with special educational needs, since they would have made educators aware of it had it been the case.

(31) My school's management team accommodates in-service professional training for staff in relation to special educational needs in its yearly planning

**TABLE 4.42: MANAGEMENT TEAM ACCOMMODATION (Q2.31)**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Agree</b>	21	12,9
<b>Disagree</b>	97	59,5
<b>Uncertain</b>	45	27,6
<b>Total</b>	163	100

The majority of respondents (59,5%) disagreed that their school's management team accommodated in-service professional training for the staff in relation to special educational needs in its yearly planning. Schools in the area where the research has been done evidently either do not know about inclusive education or do not see the urgency or the need to implement it. During the past few years, schools have been inundated with changes, the new curriculum probably being the most dramatic. Schools are presumably so focused on changing their curriculum, that the need or the ability to implement inclusive education as well is compromised.

- (32) My school has a policy in place pertaining to access for learners with sensory disabilities

**TABLE 4.43: LEARNER ACCESS POLICY (Q2.32)**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Agree</b>	11	6,7
<b>Disagree</b>	75	46,0
<b>Uncertain</b>	77	47,2
<b>Total</b>	163	100

The largest number of respondents (47,2%) was uncertain and the second largest number of respondents (46,0%) disagreed. A policy about which one is “uncertain” whether it exists or not, is of little use. Schools are supposed to have policies and plans in place ensuring that learners with sensory disabilities have access, e.g. ramps, lifts and bigger doors for wheelchairs. Not only should there be policies, but these policies should be made known to educators and implemented.

- (33) A hearing-impaired learner will be less of a burden in the class than a learner with disciplinary problems

**TABLE 4.44: LESS BURDENSOME (Q2.33)**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Agree</b>	76	46,6
<b>Disagree</b>	28	17,2
<b>Uncertain</b>	59	36,2
<b>Total</b>	163	100

The majority of respondents (46,6%) agreed that a hearing-impaired learner would be less of a burden than a learner with disciplinary problems. Although educators seem to realise that hearing-impaired learners would probably be less

of a burden than learners with disciplinary problems, they indicate that hearing impaired learners should rather be taught by appropriately qualified educators (cf. 4.2.2 (21) ) which implies that they view special schools are more appropriate environments for hearing impaired learners. The irony is that educators deal with learners with disciplinary problems every day and do not call on “appropriately qualified educators in these contexts.” They would rather ensure that they themselves were those “appropriately qualified educators”.

(34) *I have more sympathy for a child from a broken home than for a child with a hearing impairment*

**TABLE 4.45: SYMPHATHY (Q2.34)**

	Frequency	Percent
<b>Agree</b>	18	11,0
<b>Disagree</b>	109	66.9
<b>Uncertain</b>	36	22.1
<b>Total</b>	163	100

The majority of respondents (66,9%) disagreed that they had more sympathy for a child from a broken home than for a child with a hearing impairment. Educators often tend to make exceptions for children whose parents are divorced. According to the responses, they will also show the same, if not more, kind of leniency and sympathy for a child with a hearing impairment.

(35) When a hearing impaired child has a hearing aid, he does not need extra help from educators

TABLE 4.46: EXTRA HELP (Q2.35)

	Frequency	Percent
Agree	10	6,1
Disagree	114	69,9
Uncertain	39	23,9
Total	163	100

The majority of the respondents (69,9%) disagreed that when a hearing impaired child has a hearing aid, he does not need extra help from educators. Research has shown that there is a perception that a hearing aid is like a “miracle cure” that fixes hearing impairment. The respondents in this study realise that there are additional adjustments and forms of help needed in order for a hearing impaired child to maximally benefit from education in a mainstream class setting.

4.3 INFERENCEAL STATISTICS

Inferenceal statistics are used to make inferences or predictions about the similarity of a sample to the population from which the sample is drawn. Since many research questions require the estimation of population characteristics from any available sample of subjects or behavior, inferenceal statistics are commonly used in reporting results (Huysamen, 1989:48-50). Inferenceal statistics depend on descriptive statistics. Therefore, inferenceal statistics make very little sense without a complete understanding of descriptive statistics.

#### **4.3.1 Independent variables**

For the purpose of this study, the researcher selected the following independent variables:

- the gender of respondents;
- the age of respondents;
- the qualifications of respondents; and
- the training in special educational needs respondents underwent.

#### **4.3.2 Dependent variables**

For the purpose of this study, the researcher selected the following dependent variables:

- Educators' perceptions of their skills and abilities to teach hearing impaired children in mainstream schools.
- Educators' perceptions of their schools' support, the Department of Education's support and general support of them in the change to inclusive education.
- Educators' perceptions of hearing impaired children in mainstream schools.

### **4.4 HYPOTHESIS**

For each table representing the cross-tabulation, the following research hypothesis can be formulated:

#### **Hypothesis 1**

Educators' perceptions of their skills and abilities to teach hearing impaired children in mainstream schools have no relation to the:

- the gender of respondents;
- the age of respondents;
- the qualifications of respondents; and
- the training in special educational needs respondents underwent.

### Hypothesis 2

Educators' perceptions of their schools' support, the Department of Education's support and general support of them in the change to inclusive education have no relation to the:

- the gender of respondents;
- the age of respondents;
- the qualifications of respondents; and
- the training in special educational needs respondents underwent.

### Hypothesis 3

Educators' perceptions of hearing impaired learners in a mainstream school have no relation to the

- the gender of respondents;
- the age of respondents;
- the qualifications of respondents; and
- the training in special educational needs respondents underwent.

Each hypothesis in this research can further be formulated in a number of null-hypotheses in accordance with the questions stated in each table. According to the Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) and p-value of each question in the table, the null-hypothesis can be accepted or rejected as follows:

- If the value of  $p < 0,05$  but  $p > 0,01$  the statistical relation is significant
- If  $p < 0,01$  the statistical relation is highly significant
- If  $p > 0,05$  the statistical relation is insignificant

**TABLE 4.47:** The relation between the respondents' gender, age, qualifications and training and their perceptions of their skills and abilities to teach hearing impaired learners in mainstream schools.

No	Question	Statistic	Gender	Age	Qualifi- cation	Training
2.1	Identifying a hearing impaired learner not wearing hearing aids	$\chi^2$ p	1,992 0,369	13,106 0,108	11,393 0,496	3,344 0,188
2.10	Ability to adapt method of teaching	$\chi^2$ p	0,980 0,613	12,153 0,145	13,569 0,329	2,456 0,293
2.11	Ability to adapt teaching materials	$\chi^2$ p	4,163 0,125	19,020 0,015	13,903 0,307	6,335 0,042
2.12	Ability to adapt assessment methods	$\chi^2$ p	2,008 0,366	5,215 0,734	12,765 0,386	11,351 0,003
2.13	Knowledge to adapt classroom seating	$\chi^2$ p	1,859 0,395	8,902 0,351	12,827 0,382	6,649 0,036
2.14	Peer support helps hearing impaired learner	$\chi^2$ p	0,604 0,739	16,730 0,033	13,405 0,340	0,777 0,678

2.17	Capable of dealing with harassment of HILearner	$\chi^2$ p	1,685 0,431	7,461 0,488	10,106 0,607	4,355 0,113
2.18	Variety of needs is difficult	$\chi^2$ p	2,258 0,323	8,976 0,344	10,549 0,568	4,074 0,130
2.21	Specialized educators should rather teach HIL	$\chi^2$ p	3,956 0,138	10,010 0,264	9,033 0,700	2,515 0,284

In relation to hypothesis one the Chi-squared test was found to be highly significant at the 1% level ( $p < 0,01$ ) for item 2.12 in the training column.

The null hypothesis for item 2.12 has to be rejected and thus accepted that there is a relation between educators' perceptions of their skills and abilities to teach hearing impaired children in mainstream schools and the training of the respondents in teaching learners with special educational needs.

The null hypothesis was found to be significant at the 5% level ( $p < 0,05$  but  $p > 0,01$ ) for four of the items in Table 4.47, namely items 2.11 (age and training), 2.13 (training) and 2.14 (age). Table 4.47 shows that a:

- significant statistical relation ( $p < 0,05$  but  $p > 0,01$ ) exists between the age of the educator and the
  - skills to adapt teaching materials to accommodate a hearing impaired child



- perception that peer support is an effective way of helping the hearing impaired learner to cope academically
- significant statistical relation ( $p < 0,05$  but  $p > 0,01$ ) exists between the training of the educator and the:
  - skills to adapt teaching materials to accommodate a hearing impaired child
  - knowledge to adapt assessment strategies to accommodate a hearing impaired child
  - necessary knowledge to adapt classroom seating to accommodate a hearing impaired child

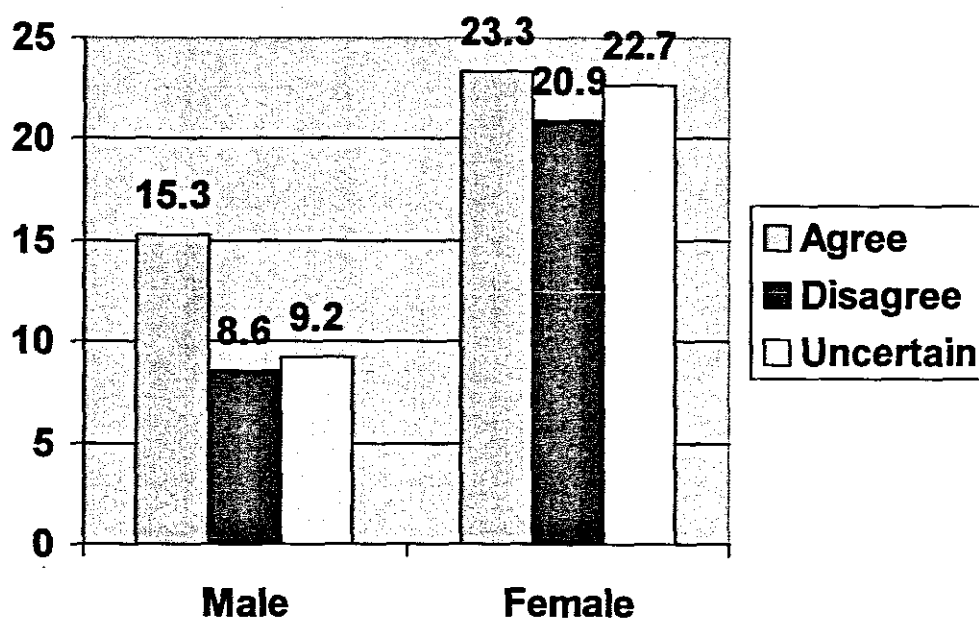
The p-value for the majority of the items in Table 4.47 is bigger than 0,05 ( $p > 0,05$ ) and is therefore not significant.

To explain how the  $\chi^2$  values in Table 1 were calculated, a more detailed analysis of the relation between some of the independent variables and dependent variables will be given by means of cross tabulation.

**Table 4.48:** The relation between the respondents' gender and the ability to identify a hearing impaired learner who does not wear hearing aids in the class (cross-table 1.1 and 2.1).

Gender	Agree	Disagree	Uncertain	Total
Male	25 15,3%	14 8,6%	15 9,2%	54 33,1%
Female	38 23,3%	34 20,9%	37 22,7%	109 66,9%
Total	63 38,7%	48 29,4%	52 31,9%	163 100,0%

**FIGURE 4.1:** The relation between the respondents' gender and the capability of identifying a hearing impaired learner who does not wear hearing aids in the classroom.



$$\chi^2 = 1,992$$

$$df = 2$$

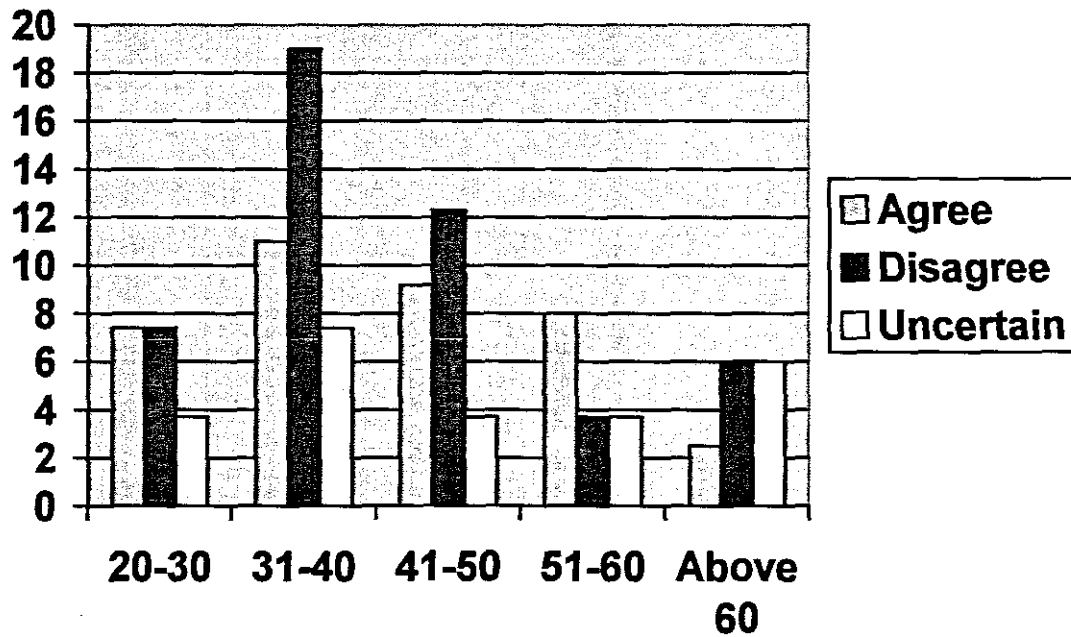
$$p = 0,369$$

$p > 0,05$  which means that there is no statistically significant relationship between the respondents' gender and the capability of identifying a hearing impaired learner who does not wear hearing aids in the classroom. Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted.

**TABLE 4.49:** The relation between the respondents' age and the necessary knowledge to adapt classroom seating to accommodate a hearing impaired child (cross-table 1.2 and 2.13).

Age	Agree	Disagree	Uncertain	Total
20-30	12 7,4%	12 7,4%	6 3,7%	30 18,4%
31-40	18 11,0%	31 19,0%	12 7,4%	61 37,4%
41-50	15 9,2%	20 12,3%	6 3,7%	41 25,2%
51-60	13 8,0%	6 3,7%	6 3,7%	25 15,3%
Above 60	4 2,5%	1 6%	1 6%	6 3,7%
Total	62 38,0%	70 42,9%	31 19,0%	163 100,0%

**FIGURE 4.2:** The relation between age and the necessary knowledge to adapt classroom seating to accommodate a hearing impaired child in the classroom.



$$\chi^2 = 8,902$$

$$df = 8$$

$$p = 0,35$$

$p > 0,05$  which means that there is no significant statistically relationship between the respondents' age and the necessary knowledge to adapt classroom seating to accommodate a hearing impaired child. Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted.

**TABLE 4.50:** The relation between the respondents' gender, age, qualification and training and their perceptions of support from the school, the Department of Education and in general.

No	Question	Statistic	Gender	Age	Qualifi- cation	Training
2.2	School keeps record	$\chi^2$ p	11,932 0,003	4,336 0,826	10,011 0,615	1,690 0,430
2.3	School support team	$\chi^2$ p	2,256 0,324	6,963 0,541	8,235 0,767	0,490 0,783
2.4	District support team	$\chi^2$ p	1,161 0,560	9,348 0,314	6,904 0,864	0,643 0,725
2.5	Educational resource centre	$\chi^2$ p	0,883 0,643	5,478 0,705	9,492 0,660	1,041 0,594
2.6	Government financial resources	$\chi^2$ p	7,247 0,027	7,664 0,467	14,915 0,246	0,720 0,698
2.7	HI School in region	$\chi^2$ p	1,364 0,506	4,350 0,824	12,727 0,389	1,628 0,443
2.8	Resources	$\chi^2$ p	3,390 0,184	16,700 0,033	13,183 0,356	1,626 0,444
2.22	Culture of parental involvement	$\chi^2$ p	1,436 0,488	8,359 0,399	10,998 0,529	3,379 0,185

2.23	Big classes	$\chi^2$	0,536	4,421	14,060	4,826
		p	0,765	0,817	0,297	0,090
2.24	Pastoral care	$\chi^2$	1,252	6,362	10,344	0,499
		p	0,535	0,607	0,586	0,779
2.28	Principal positive	$\chi^2$	0,285	3,883	7,317	0,486
		p	0,867	0,867	0,836	0,784
2.29	Colleagues Positive	$\chi^2$	1,876	11,775	11,816	1,064
		p	0,391	0,162	0,461	0,588
2.30	Governing body has procedures	$\chi^2$	0,309	5,114	9,568	0,941
		p	0,857	0,745	0,654	0,625
2.31	Management team in-service training	$\chi^2$	0,566	6,221	13,821	0,179
		p	0,754	0,623	0,312	0,914
2.32	Policy in place	$\chi^2$	1,516	3,482	9,252	1,265
		p	0,469	0,901	0,681	0,531

Table 4.50 shows that the null hypothesis was found to be highly significant at the 1% level ( $p < 0,01$ ) for item 2.2 in the gender column ( $p = 0,003$ ). This means there is a highly significant relation between gender and the perception that the school keeps a record of learners' disabilities that can help one with the identification of learners with hearing impairments.

The null hypothesis was found to be significant at the 5% level ( $p < 0,05$  but  $p > 0,01$ ) for two of the items in Table 4.50, namely items 2.6 (gender) and 2.8 (age).

Table 4.50 shows at item 2.6 that there is a significant relation ( $p = 0,027$ ) between gender and the perception that the way in which government currently allocates financial resources, promotes inclusive education.

Table 4.50 also shows at item 2.8 that there is a significant relation ( $p = 0,033$ ) between age and the perception that educators have enough resources to assist them in teaching a hearing impaired child.

The null hypothesis for these three statements has to be rejected.

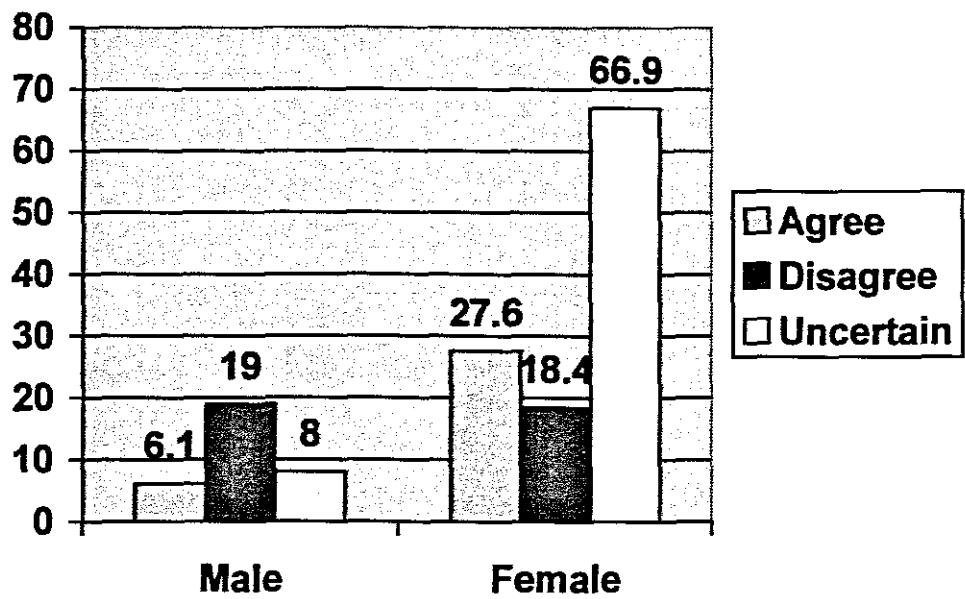
The p-value for the majority of the items in Table 4.50 is bigger than 0,05 ( $p > 0,05$ ) and is therefore not significant. The null hypothesis for all these items should therefore be accepted.

To explain how the  $\chi^2$  values in Table 4.50 were calculated, a more detailed analysis of the relationship between some of the independent variables and dependent variables will be given by means of cross tabulation.

**TABLE 4.51:** The relation between gender and the perception that the school keeps a record of learners’ disabilities that can help one with the identification of learners with hearing impairments (cross-table 1.1 and 2.2).

Gender	Agree	Disagree	Uncertain	Total
Male	10 6,1%	31 19,0%	13 8,0%	54 33,1%
Female	45 27,6%	34 20,9%	30 18,4%	109 66,9%
Total	55 33,7%	65 39,9%	43 26,4%	163 100,00%

**FIGURE 4.3:** The relation between gender and the perception that the school keeps a record of learners’ disabilities that can help one with the identification of learners with hearing impairment.



$\chi^2 = 11,932$   
 $df = 2$   
 $p = 0,003$

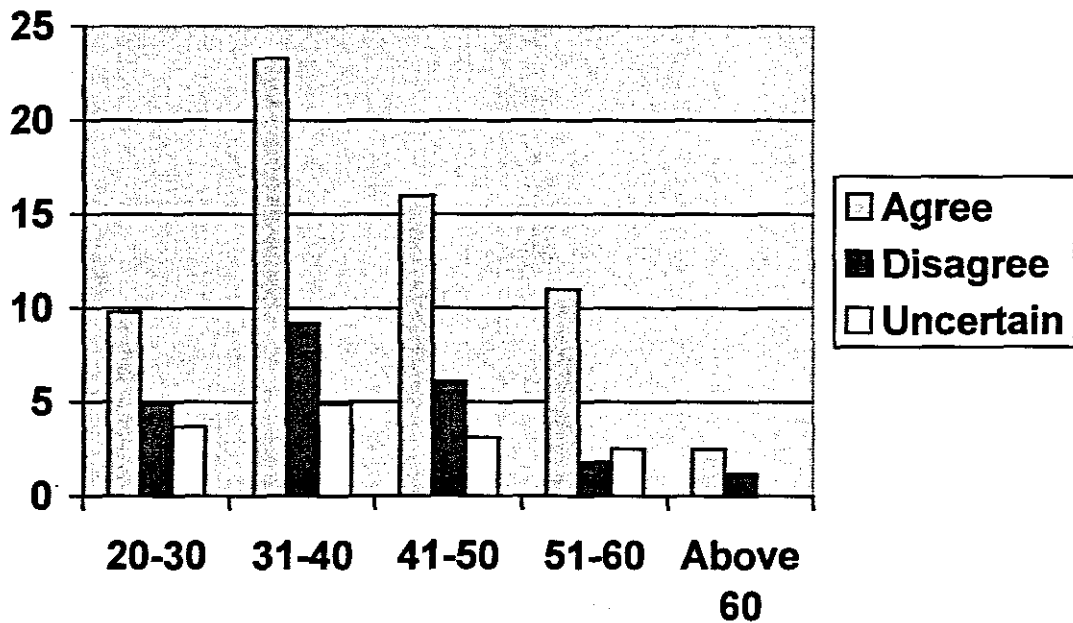


$p < 0,01$  which means there is a highly significant relation between educators' gender and the perception that the school keeps a record of learners' disabilities that could help with the identification of a learner with hearing impairments. The female gender has the more positive perception and the reason for this is unknown and could possibly be further researched.

**TABLE 4.52:** The relation between age and the respondents' perception that there are so many learners in the class that it is impossible for them to give adequate attention to a hearing impaired child in the class (cross-table 1.2 and 2.23).

Age	Agree	Disagree	Uncertain	Total
20-30	16 9,8%	8 4,9%	6 3,7%	30 18,4%
31-40	38 23,3%	15 9,2%	8 4,9%	61 37,4%
41-50	26 16,0%	10 6,1%	5 3,1%	41 25,2%
51-60	18 11,0%	3 1,8%	4 2,5%	25 15,3%
Above 60	4 2,5%	2 1,2%	0 0%	6 3,7%
Total	102 62,6%	38 23,3%	23 14,1%	163 100,0%

**FIGURE 4.4:** The relation between age and the respondents' perception that there are so many learners in the class that it is impossible for them to give adequate attention to a hearing impaired child in the class (cross-table 1.2 and 2.23).



$$\chi^2 = 4,421$$

$$df = 8$$

$$p = 0,817$$

$p > 0,05$  which means there is no relation between age and the respondents' perception that there are so many learners in the class that it is impossible for him/her to give adequate attention to a hearing impaired child in the class.

The null hypothesis is therefore accepted. This possibly implies that the challenges facing educators concerning inclusive education are the same, whether they are young or old.

**TABLE 4.53:** The relation between the respondents' gender, age, qualification and training and their perceptions of hearing impaired learners generally and in mainstream schools.

No	Question	Statistic	Gender	Age	Qualifi- cation	Training
2.9	Comfortable	$\chi^2$ p	0,342 0,843	8,437 0,392	10,201 0,598	0,934 0,627
2.15	Benefit socially	$\chi^2$ p	0,366 0,833	6,443 0,598	12,537 0,404	1,787 0,409
2.16	Benefit academically	$\chi^2$ p	1,662 0,436	7,981 0,435	15,910 0,195	1,299 0,522
2.19	Own responsibility to cope	$\chi^2$ p	2,908 0,234	10,446 0,235	17,409 0,135	0,511 0,775
2.20	Child in educational distress	$\chi^2$ p	1,687 0,430	19,736 0,011	15,987 0,192	3,453 0,178
2.25	Not wearing hearing aids	$\chi^2$ p	0,101 0,951	13,339 0,101	12,017 0,444	1,858 0,395
2.26	Report to parents not coping	$\chi^2$ p	1,377 0,502	7,914 0,442	4,948 0,960	2,237 0,327
2.27	Special effort to build relationship	$\chi^2$ p	2,850 0,241	11,245 0,188	9,609 0,650	1,537 0,464

2.33	Less of a burden than discipline problems	$\chi^2$ p	0,307 0,857	13,300 0,102	8,107 0,777	2,713 0,258
2.34	More sympathy for broken home	$\chi^2$ p	1,209 0,546	4,821 0,777	20,344 0,061	2,598 0,273
2.35	Hearing aid, no extra help	$\chi^2$ p	1,723 0,423	7,338 0,501	6,573 0,884	1,751 0,417

In relation to hypothesis three the Chi-squared test was found to be significant at the 5% level ( $p < 0,05$  but  $p > 0,01$ ) for item 2.20 in the age column ( $p = 0,011$ ).

The null hypothesis for item 2.20 has to be rejected and thus accepted that there is a relation between the respondents' age and the perception that a child with a hearing impairment is a child in educational distress.

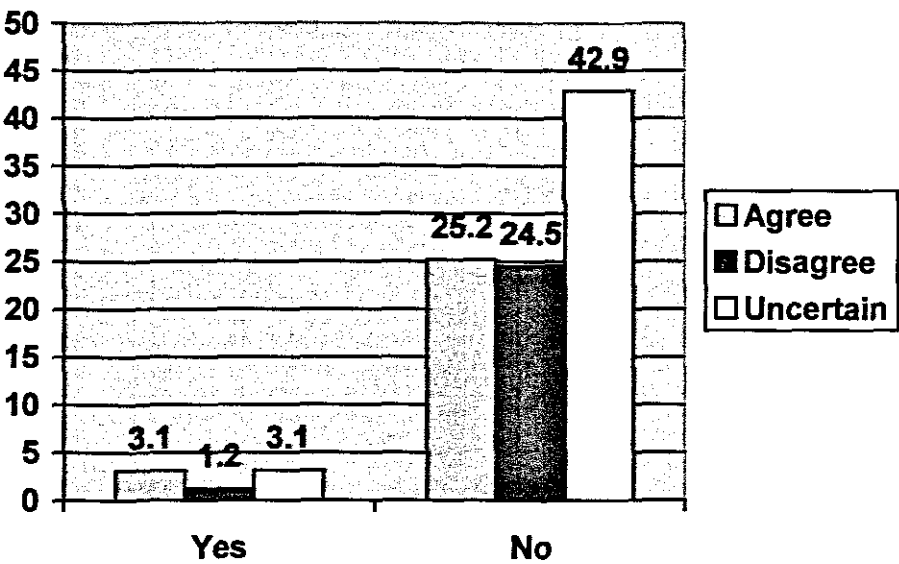
For all the other items in Table 4.53 the p-value is bigger than 0,05 ( $p > 0,05$ ) and is therefore not significant.

To explain how the  $\chi^2$  values in Table 4.53 were calculated, a more detailed analysis of the relationship between some of the independent variables and dependent variables will be given by means of cross tabulation.

**TABLE 4.54:** The relation between the respondents’ training in teaching learners with special educational needs and educators’ perception that hearing impaired children can academically benefit significantly from being integrated in a mainstream school (cross-table 1.8 and 2.16).

Special training	Agree	Disagree	Uncertain	Total
Yes	5 3,1%	2 1,2%	5 3,1%	12 7,4%
No	41 25,2%	40 24,5%	70 42,9%	151 92,6%
Total	46 28,2%	42 25,8%	75 46,0%	163 100,0%

**FIGURE 4.5:** The relation between the respondents’ training in teaching learners with special educational needs and educators’ perception that hearing impaired children can academically benefit significantly from being integrated in a mainstream school (cross-table 1.8 and 2.16).



$\chi^2 = 1,299$   
 $df = 2$   
 $p = 0,522$

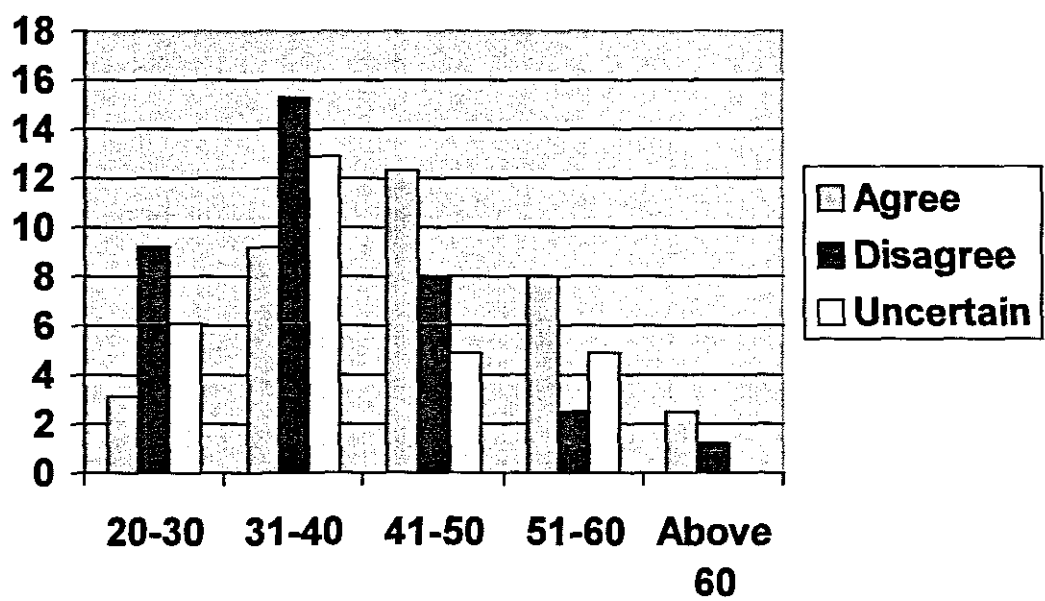
$p > 0,005$  which means that there is no significant statistical relation between the respondents' training in teaching learners with special educational needs and educators' perception that hearing impaired children can academically benefit significantly from being integrated in a mainstream school.

This possibly implies that all educators, whether they have special training or not, believe in the value of education and believe that all learners, impaired or not, can benefit from a mainstream school. The null hypothesis has to be accepted.

**TABLE 4.55:** The relation between the respondents' age and the perception that a hearing impaired learner is a child in educational distress (cross-table 1.2 and 2.20).

Age	Agree	Disagree	Uncertain	Total
20-30	5 3,1%	15 9,2%	10 6,1%	30 18,4%
31-40	15 9,2%	25 15,3%	21 12,9%	61 37,4%
41-50	20 12,3%	13 8,0%	8 4,9%	41 25,2%
51-60	13 8,0	4 2,5%	8 4,9%	25 15,3%
Above 60	4 2,5%	2 1,2%	0 0%	6 3,7%
Total	57 35,0%	59 36,2%	47 28,8%	163 100,0%

**FIGURE 4.6:** The relation between the respondents' age and the perception that a hearing impaired learner is a child in educational distress (cross-table 1.2 and 2.20).



$\chi^2 = 19,736$   
 $df = 8$   
 $p = 0,011$

$p < 0,05$  which means that there is a significant relation between the respondents' age and the perception that a hearing impaired learner is a child in educational distress. The null hypothesis has to be rejected.

A more detailed analysis of table 4.55 shows that the difference between the age groups lies between the group of 31-40 and the group of 41-50. The younger group disagree with the perception that a hearing impaired learner is a child in educational distress with a total of 15,3% in comparison with the older group that disagree with only 8,0%. The age group of 51-60 disagree with only 2,5% and the group above 60 years old with only 1,2%.

This implies that the older group of educators (especially those older than 41) agrees more with the perception that a hearing impaired learner is a child in educational distress. The reason for this might possibly be that older educators are more familiar with the term "child in distress" than younger educators. Younger educators might be more familiar and comfortable with the term "child at risk".

#### **4.5 TESTING OF THE HYPOTHESIS**

From the results of the inferential statistics it can be concluded that the null hypotheses can be more often accepted as there is more "no significant statistical relationships" than "significant statistical relationships" and "highly statistical relationships".

#### **4.6 SUMMARY**

In this chapter, the researcher's aim was to give order to the range of information provided by the educators in their answers to the questions in the questionnaires. Some elements of the data collected were of a demographic nature, which enabled the researcher to construct a broad profile of the sample selected for investigation. Data collected was organised in frequency tables to simplify statistical analysis.

The responses to the questions and the findings were discussed. The last chapter of this study will focus on a summary of the literature review and the empirical investigation and finally make specific recommendations.



## **CHAPTER 5**

### **SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The aim of this study was to investigate educators' perceptions of their responsibilities towards hearing impaired learners in mainstream schools. In this chapter, the following will be provided: a summary and findings of the previous chapters, recommendations, criticisms emanating from the study and a final remark.

#### **5.2 SUMMARY**

##### **5.2.1 Statement of problem**

This study investigated the perceptions that educators have of their responsibilities towards hearing impaired learners. This includes perceptions of their own skills and abilities to teach them, perceptions of the support they receive and perceptions about the hearing impaired child himself. From the literature it was established that educators' perceptions influence the successful implementation of inclusive education. Negative perceptions lead to resistance to change and could impact on the process of changing mainstream schools to inclusive schools. The managerial bodies of schools have an important role to play in leading educators in this process.

### **5.2.2 Theoretical perspectives regarding educators' perspectives of their responsibilities towards hearing impaired children in mainstream schools**

The empirical research shows that inclusive education replaces the responsibility for meeting special educational needs from special education educators to mainstream educators. Educators who respond positively to inclusive education are educators "who are confident in their own judgment, flexible in their understanding of teaching and learning, and prepared to seek new knowledge and approaches" (cf. 1.2).

The competencies required to teach in an inclusive setting involve:

- being able to identify and assess disabling conditions,
- being able to adapt curricular content and teaching methods to assist learners with special needs,
- working in collaboration with colleagues, parents and the broader community and
- being instilled with an optimistic picture of what can be accomplished (cf.1.2).

Educators' perceptions of inclusive education are vitally important. Their perceptions of what is expected of them are part of the complex process of inclusive education and could ultimately determine whether this educational philosophy will be successful in practice (cf.1.2).

There is an impression amongst advocates and non-advocates of inclusive education that full inclusion has swept the educational land. The rhetoric however seems to have moved faster than the reality and only a few schools have joined the full inclusion bandwagon (cf.1.2).

The empirical study shows that there are a number of factors which influence educators' perceptions of inclusive education (cf.1.2):

- Educators' own beliefs and knowledge regarding "cultures of differences" within schools, equity and inclusion.
- Feelings of inadequacy regarding new educational practices.
- Inadequate knowledge of inclusive education and inadequate skills to implement change.
- The schools' culture, which involves school policy, the way in which students are allocated to classes, the principal's attitude to inclusion and the quality of support offered by the school support team.
- Insufficient facilities, infrastructure and assistive devices
- Views on learning outcomes of inclusion

The empirical study revealed that a mainstream school which becomes inclusive has to make many changes in order to create a truly inclusive environment. The following aspects are essential for an inclusive school (cf. 2.2.2):

- *The psychosocial environment*  
This refers to the role of the school's leaders in addressing prejudices, being sensitive to sub-cultures and generally promoting the change in a positive and constructive manner.
- *The physical environment*  
This refers to the school buildings, classrooms, equipment and surrounding terrain. All learners need sufficient space, safety, the minimum barriers and sufficient support.
- *Curriculum*  
All aspects of the curriculum need to be developed to ensure that the diverse needs of the learner population are addressed.

- *Learning support in the school*

A school-based support team made up of students, their parents, educators and representatives of the community should be put in place to support the learning and teaching process.

- *Technical and other support*

Technical support includes administration, financial and other resource allocation and control.

The empirical study revealed that educators in the South African context are faced with enormous social problems such as poverty, AIDS and crime. They also have to deal with large classes. These problems are aggravated by scarcity of resources and a Department that continually changes curriculum and policies. Educators are struggling to come to grips with change overload. They feel that most of the changes are forced upon them, that they have no say in it and that they are not adequately prepared for the changes (cf.1.2)

### **5.2.3 Planning of the research**

This study utilised a questionnaire, constructed by the researcher, as a means to obtain a database. The questionnaires were provided to educators in secondary and primary schools in the Amanzimtoti Ward of the Umbumbulu District in the Ethekweni Region of the Province of KwaZulu-Natal. The information sought for this investigation was not available from any other source and had to be acquired directly from respondents. Because the schools are widely dispersed in the District, questionnaires were used. This way information could, time-wise and cost-wise, easily and efficiently be retrieved.

The aim of the questionnaire was to obtain information regarding educators' perceptions of their responsibilities towards hearing impaired learners in mainstream schools. The following aspects were of particular interest:

- Educators' perceptions of their own skills and abilities to teach hearing impaired learners in mainstream classes.
- Educators' perceptions of the support they receive from their schools, the Department of Education and in general, in the change to inclusive education.
- Educators' perceptions of hearing impaired learners in general and in mainstream classes.

#### **5.2.4 Aims of the study**

The researcher formulated specific aims (cf.1.5) to determine the course of this study. These aims were realised through a literature study, together with the empirical study consisting of a structured questionnaire. On the basis of the aims and findings of this study, certain recommendations will be offered.

### **5.3 FINDINGS**

#### **5.3.1 Findings from the literature study**

From the literature study it was found that education in South Africa have changed dramatically during the past ten years. In terms of the White Paper on Education and Training (2001), The South African Schools Act and the White Paper 6: Developing District Support Teams: Guidelines for Practice, Curriculum 2004 and Education White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education as well as the principles of our Constitution (cf. 2.2.1), any practice must be consistent with the following:

- Every learner has a fundamental right to education.
- Those with special educational needs must have access to regular schools, which should accommodate them.
- All learners can learn given the necessary support.

- Schools must create the conditions for learners to succeed.
- A shift has to be made from labelling learners according to disability towards addressing barriers experienced by individual learners.
- Provision should be based on the levels of support needed to address a range of barriers to learning.

The Department of Education has further committed itself to establishing district support teams as a central part of the overall strengthening of education support services in South Africa. The New Curriculum includes outcomes-based education, which promotes inclusive education by stressing individual adaptation strategies and assessment (cf. 2.2.3).

The findings from the literature study show that the challenges facing the educator of the hearing impaired child in mainstream schools (cf. 2.4) involve:

- Diagnosing hearing impaired children.
- Managing the classroom effectively according to the principles of totality, individualisation, perception, motivation, tempo-differentiation, meta-cognition.
- Adapting the physical environment, using visual aids and human resources.
- Combating stigma, isolation and marginalization.
- Giving care and support.

It was clear from the literature study that all these challenges are overwhelming to the majority of educators. Changes have taken place on a level of policy-making, but the majority of educators have not been involved in making these policies and feel that these changes are forced upon them. Educators' negative perceptions of their own knowledge, abilities and skills in terms of inclusive education, their feelings of inadequacy and the lack of support could mean that

inclusive education will remain an interesting theory and policy, but will not be implemented by the majority of schools.

### **5.3.2 Findings from the empirical study**

From the empirical study the following information was obtained:

#### **(1) Skills and abilities of respondents**

The majority of respondents disagreed or were uncertain about their skills and abilities:

- Respondents disagreed (29,4%) or were uncertain (31,0%) whether they could identify a hearing impaired learner who was not wearing hearing aids.
- Respondents disagreed (31,9%) and were uncertain (30,0%) whether they had the ability to adapt their method of teaching to accommodate a hearing impaired child.
- Respondents disagreed (44,8%) that they had the skills to accommodate a hearing impaired child.
- Most of the respondents (58,3%) disagreed that they knew how to adapt assessment strategies to accommodate a hearing impaired child.
- Most of the respondents either (42,9%) disagreed or were uncertain (19,0%) whether they had the knowledge to adapt classroom seating to accommodate a hearing impaired learner.
- Most of the respondents (76,1%) agreed that teaching a class in which learners have a variety of needs is significantly more difficult than teaching a class in which the learners are of approximately equal ability.
- A very large percentage (74,8%) of the respondents agreed that appropriately qualified educators should rather teach hearing impaired learners.

(2) Support of educators

The majority of educators felt they lacked support:

- Most of the respondents agreed (39,9%) or were uncertain (26,4%) whether their schools kept a record of learners' disabilities that could help them with the identification of learners with hearing impairments.
- Most of the respondents (57,7%) agreed that there is no school support team at their school.
- Most of the respondents (75,5%) agreed that there had been no district support team at their school to offer their services regarding inclusive education.
- Most of the educators (50,3%) were uncertain whether there was an educational resource centre in their region where they could obtain information regarding hearing-impaired learners.
- Most of the educators (84,0%) disagreed that they had enough resources to assist them in teaching hearing impaired learners.
- More respondents disagreed (43,6%) than agreed (36,2%) with the statement that an excellent culture of parental involvement was apparent at their school.
- The majority of respondents (62,6%) agreed that they have so many learners in their classes that it would be impossible to give adequate attention to a hearing impaired learner in the class.
- Most of the respondents (44,2%) disagreed and were uncertain (25,2%) that their schools had a system of pastoral care in place which would support the hearing impaired learner.
- A large number of respondents (59,5%) were uncertain whether their school's principal had expressed a positive attitude towards inclusive education and (13,5%) disagreed.



- The largest number of respondents (55,2%) was uncertain as to whether their colleagues had expressed positive attitudes towards inclusive education.
- The largest number of respondents (54,6%) was uncertain as to whether their school's governing bodies had procedures in place to address complaints from parents of learners with special educational needs.
- The majority of respondents (59,5%) disagreed that their school's management team accommodated in its yearly planning in-service professional training for the staff with regard to special educational needs.
- The largest number of respondents (47,2%) was uncertain and the second largest number of respondents (46,0%) disagreed that the school had a policy in place pertaining to access for learners with sensory disabilities.

(3) Attitudes towards hearing impaired learners

The majority of educators showed ambivalent attitudes towards hearing impaired learners:

- More educators (38,0%) disagreed that they would feel comfortable with a hearing impaired in the class than those (34,4%) that felt they would feel comfortable. (27,6%) felt uncertain.
- Almost half (49,1%) of the educators felt that hearing impaired learners can socially benefit significantly from being integrated in a mainstream school.
- Almost half (46,0%) of the educators were uncertain whether a hearing impaired child can benefit academically from being integrated in a mainstream school.
- Most of the respondents (74,8%) disagreed that it was the hearing impaired child's own responsibility to cope academically in a mainstream school.

- More than seventy percent (76,1%) of the respondents agreed that if they should notice a hearing impaired child not wearing his hearing aid, they would regard it as their responsibility to investigate why.
- More than eighty percent (85,3%) of the respondents maintained that they would regard it as their responsibility to report to a parent when a hearing impaired child is not coping in their class.
- A large number of respondents (76,1%) indicated that they would make a special effort to build a relationship with a hearing impaired learner in their class.
- The majority of respondents (46,6%) agreed, while a smaller number (36,2%) were uncertain that a hearing-impaired learner would be less of a burden than a learner with disciplinary problems.
- The majority of respondents (66,9%) disagreed that they had more sympathy for a child from a broken home than for a child with a hearing impairment.
- The majority of the respondents (69,9%) disagreed that when a hearing impaired child has a hearing aid, he does not need extra help from educators.

## **5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.4.1 Improvement of support for educators**

#### **(1) Motivation**

Based on the literature study as well as the scientific data and the results obtained in chapter four in this study, the researcher has reason to motivate for increased support for educators in the change to inclusive education.

Educators spend many hours on preparation, hunting for resources, paperwork, extra-mural activities and discipline. They need the support from their colleagues,

school management and the Department of Education as well as the broader community in order to make a success of inclusive education. The degree of support the educator receives is the most powerful predictor of positive attitudes towards full inclusion (cf. 2.2.2 (1)).

If educators are not adequately supported, they:

- become demotivated ;
- become negative towards change; and
- become unsure (cf. 1.2).

And then inclusion will remain a theory and will not be put into practice in South African schools, no matter how many laws are made.

## (2) Recommendations

The following recommendations are made with regard to support for educators:

- There should be smaller classes in schools. The educator-learner ratio in a school should ideally be 1:30. This can be achieved by increasing the post provisioning norm in a school, thus increasing the number of educators in a school.
- School principals should organize and (re)deploy staff effectively, and schedule necessary time for educators to plan and learn new skills.
- The school environment should be one of collaboration where individuals are committed to working together.
- The principal's leadership style should be such that he/she actively embodies the democratic values of inclusive education, and supports educators by taking cognizance of their beliefs, feelings and perceptions.

- The physical environment should be made accessible to all learners and conducive to inclusive education (cf. 2.2.2 (2)).
- Technical support should be given from administrative and financial sides as well as through resource allocation and control.
- The curriculum should be developed to ensure that the diverse needs of the population are met.
- A school-based support team should be formed, made up of students, their parents, educators, representatives from the community, NGO's and neighbouring schools. This team could assist educators in the following ways:
  - Meet on a weekly basis with educators who request support.
  - Promote collaboration actively.
  - Deal with one case per meeting.
  - Keep confidential notes about cases.
- A District-support team should also be available for more specialist advice and intervention. This team should consist of a core of education support personnel who could offer support and advice. They could consist of school psychologists, special educators, guidance counsellors, speech and language specialists, occupational therapists and even doctors and nurses. They could assist educators in the following ways:
  - Do behavioral consultation.
  - Do clinical consultation to identify and assess learner problems.
  - Assess the entire school system and assist educators in resolving identified concerns.
  - Ensure accountability, legal and ethical practices and encourage collaborative and consultative skills.

- Governing bodies are supposed to stay informed as to the latest policies which support inclusive education, such as :
  - Whole school development.
  - Parent empowerment programmes.
  - Health-promoting initiatives.
  - Community-based approaches to education.
- Parental support is necessary if the process of inclusive education is to be managed effectively. Schools should host information-sharing forums in addition to written correspondence. Collaboration between families and school personnel enables the exchange of valuable resources and ideas thereby improving the quality of education for all students (cf. 2.5.1 (3)).

## **4.2 In-service training of educators**

### **(1) Motivation**

It is clear from the findings that the training of educators will need to change in order to make inclusive education a reality. Educators were of the opinion that they have limited knowledge of inclusive education. Their lack of knowledge and skills lead to negative attitudes and misconceptions concerning inclusive education and specific disabilities. (cf. 1.2) It is recommended that at pre-service level, special needs should be integrated into all educator education courses. But more importantly, educators who are already in service, should be provided with in-service training.

An important requirement, which became apparent from the literature study, is that educators should be involved from the very beginning of the process, they should participate in the decision-making process. The significance of asking educators' opinions and input on inclusion of learners with special educational needs before such change is implemented, is stressed (Möwes, 2002:312). The

schools' management has to create a school environment that is conducive for inclusive education by creating opportunities for in-service training.

An in-service program should aim at promoting successful collaboration and include in its design the active participation of various role players, time provision to accommodate collaboration, the consideration of emotional (attitudes), cognitive (knowledge and skills), interpersonal (support and help) and educational needs of educators in times of change, and the training of educators in communication, consulting, joint planning, team teaching, problem solving, conflict control and leadership skills (cf. 2.5.1 (2)).

To promote the school as a learning community, professional development should be an ongoing, coherent and rigorous process. It should enable educators to become lifelong learners, through high quality, needs driven, research-based, in-service support programmes. Staff development should not only affect knowledge, attitudes and practices of educators and administrators, but must also alter the cultures and structures of the organisation (Campher, 2003: 105).

Research has shown that educators can also benefit from therapeutic techniques where, through a self-exploration process, they can challenge existing beliefs, enhance insight into their own perceptions and raise the will to change. Two counselling methods are suggested, namely: clarifying processes and bibliotherapy. These affective courses can be included in the training of educators. Educators have shown that they actually value the affective courses more than the educator-instruction courses (Schechtman & Or, 1996:146).

(2) Recommendation

Some important aspects in the training of educators include the following:

- they should be instilled with an understanding that they are responsible for all learners regardless of their abilities;
- they should be able to identify and assess disabling conditions;
- they should be aware of how to make classroom and curricular adaptations as well as changes in their teaching methods to assist learners with special needs;
- they should be prepared and trained in co-operative approaches to meet the needs of learners. These could involve learner tutors, family members or others;
- they should be familiar with community and government agencies which can provide assistance to families and individuals;
- they should be aware of where and how to turn to in order to receive advice or assistance concerning the instruction of learners with special needs;
- they should be instilled with positive attitudes toward these learners; and
- they should obtain an optimistic picture of what can be accomplished.

An in-service training programme should involve the following aspects:

- Coaching.

- Collaborative problem-solving.
- Group problem-solving.
- In-service education.
- Demonstration of methods and materials.
- Case study discussion.
- Guest speakers.
- Conferences.
- Newsletters.
- Co-teaching which includes:
  - Parallel teaching.
  - Alternative teaching.
  - Station teaching.

An in-service training programme should involve the following aspects:

- Understanding change.
- Managing change.

The training programme could also include an affective course which involves two counselling methods for challenging existing educator beliefs: clarifying process and bibliotherapy.

Thus, participants receive training on two levels: they are provided with specific knowledge, methods, and strategies for use in the classroom and they experience these interventions themselves.

#### **5.4.3 Further research**

##### **(1) Motivation**

It is clear from the literature study that transformation is never easy or simple. Much progress has been made in South Africa by new systems and procedures.



However, large parts of the education system are still seriously dysfunctional: gross inequality exists, educator morale is low, governance and management are yet to be strengthened and quality and learning outcomes are still poor. Educators' perceptions of their contexts, conditions and responsibilities need to be taken account of when institutional change takes place. Educators' perceptions need to be researched and addressed systematically and purposefully in order to make a success of inclusive education.

## **(2) Recommendation**

The recommendation is that further research on educators' perceptions needs to be undertaken to formulate a clear and workable plan for inclusive education and to develop a well-planned strategy to manage the process of inclusive education positively and effectively.

Research needs to be done to formulate a clear and workable plan for inclusive education. Although full inclusion is the desirable long-term option, this could prove to be problematic in the short and medium term, due to the lack of qualified educators and other resources. Progressive inclusion could be an option and should be researched.

More research is also needed to bring about change in educators' beliefs and perceptions with the purpose of bringing about effective educational change.

## **5.6 CRITICISM OF THE STUDY**

Criticisms that emanate from the study include the following:

- It seems that many educators who completed the questionnaire drew perceptions from the gripes of other educators in their profession – their responses may not necessarily have been their own perceptions. The

probability exists that several educators indicated theoretical assumptions and necessary practical facts.

- Due to the heavy workload of educators, they may have completed the questionnaire in haste.
- The challenge facing the educator with regards to inclusive education cannot accurately be determined by a questionnaire alone. An interview as a supplementary source of information may prove helpful.

## **5.7 CONCLUSION**

I trust that this study will be of value to all educational authorities and other stakeholders. I also hope that the recommendations from this study will be implemented and thereby contribute to the effective management of inclusive education in South Africa.

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supph`http://www.medafrica.com/content/news/art`

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*South African Council of Educators*

`www.sace.org.za`

*South African Statistics*

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(Census 2001)

## LIST OF TABLES & FIGURES

### LIST OF TABLES

Table number	Description	Page
2.1.	Comparison of policies	29
2.2.	Potential accommodations to be considered during lesson planning	42
4.1.	Gender	90
4.2.	Age	91
4.3.	Qualifications	91
4.4.	Post Level	92
4.5.	Mother tongue	93
4.6.	Teaching experience	93
4.7.	Average number of learners in class	94
4.8.	Training in special education	95
4.9.	Type of special education training	95
4.10.	Primary or secondary schools	96
4.11.	Educational responsibility	97-98
4.12.	Identifying learners (Q2.1)	98
4.13.	Record of learners' disabilities (Q2.2)	100
4.14.	School support team (Q2.3)	100
4.15.	District support team (Q2.4)	101
4.16.	Educational resource centre (Q2.5)	102
4.17.	Financial resources (Q2.6)	103
4.18.	Schools in region (Q2.7)	104

4.19.	Availability of resources (Q2.8)	105
4.20.	Comfortability (Q2.9)	106
4.21.	Ability to adapt teaching method (Q2.10)	106
4.22.	Skills to adapt teaching materials (Q2.11)	107
4.23.	Adaptation of assessment strategies (Q2.12)	108
4.24.	Adaptation of classroom seating (Q2.13)	109
4.25.	Peer support (Q2.14)	109
4.26.	Social benefit (Q2.15)	110
4.27.	Academic benefit (Q2.16)	111
4.28.	Capability of handling situation (Q2.17)	112
4.29.	Variety of needs (Q2.18)	113
4.30.	Own responsibility (Q2.19)	114
4.31.	Educational distress (Q2.20)	114
4.32.	Appropriately qualified educators (Q2.21)	115
4.33.	Parental involvement (Q2.22)	116
4.34.	Adequate attention (Q2.23)	116
4.35.	Pastoral care (Q2.24)	117
4.36.	Wearing of hearing aid (Q2.25)	118
4.37.	Responsibility to report (Q2.26)	119
4.38.	Personal relationship (Q2.27)	119
4.39.	Principal's attitude (Q2.28)	120
4.40.	Colleagues' attitudes (Q2.29)	121
4.41.	Governing body procedures (Q2.30)	121

4.42.	Management team accommodation (Q2.31)	122
4.43.	Learner access policy (Q2.32)	123
4.44.	Less burdensome (Q2.33)	123
4.45.	Sympathy (Q2.34)	124
4.46.	Extra help (Q2.35)	125
4.47.	The relation between the respondents' gender, age, qualifications and training and their perceptions of their skills and abilities to teach hearing impaired learners in mainstream classrooms.	128-9
4.48.	The relation between the respondents' gender and the ability to identify a hearing impaired learner who does not wear hearing aids in the class (cross-table 1.1 and 2.1).	130
4.49.	The relation between the respondents' age and the necessary knowledge to adapt classroom seating to accommodate a hearing impaired child (cross-table 1.2 and 2.13).	132
4.50.	The relation between the respondents' gender, age, qualification and training and their perceptions of their support from the school, the Department of Education and general support.	133-4
4.51.	The relation between gender and the perception that the school keeps record of learners' disabilities that can help one with the identification of learners with hearing impairments (cross-table 1.1 and 2.2).	135
4.52.	The relation between age and the respondents' perception that there are so many learners in the class that it is impossible for the respondents to give adequate attention to a hearing impaired child in the class (cross-table 1.2 and 2.23).	137
4.53.	The relation between the respondents' gender, age, qualification and training and their perceptions of hearing impaired learners generally and in mainstream schools.	138-9



4.54.	The relation between the respondents' training in teaching learners with special educational needs and educators' perception that hearing impaired children can academically benefit significantly from being integrated in a mainstream school (cross-table 1.8 and 2.16).	140
4.55.	The relation between the respondents' age and the perception that a hearing impaired learner is a child in educational distress (cross-table 1.2 and 2.20).	142

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure number	Description	Page
4.1.	The relation between the respondents' gender and the capability of identifying a hearing impaired learner who does not wear hearing aids in the classroom.	131
4.2.	The relation between age and the necessary knowledge to adapt classroom seating to accommodate a hearing impaired child in the classroom.	132
4.3.	The relation between gender and the perception that the school keeps record of learners' disabilities that can help one with the identification of learners with hearing impairment.	136
4.4.	The relation between age and the respondents' perception that there are so many learners in the class that it is impossible for the educator to give adequate attention to a hearing impaired child in the class (cross-table 1.2 and 2.23).	137
4.5.	The relation between the respondents' training in teaching learners with special educational needs and educators' perception that hearing impaired children can academically benefit significantly from being integrated in a mainstream school (cross-table 1.8 and 2.16).	141
4.6.	The relation between the respondents' age and the perception that a hearing impaired learner is a child in educational distress (cross-table 1.2 and 2.20).	142

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Letter requesting permission**

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Private Bag X1022  
Umbumbulu  
4015

Dear Dr van Rensburg

**PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH ON EDUCATORS'  
PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR EDUCATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS  
HEARING IMPAIRED CHILDREN IN MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS**

I am presently conducting research entitled *Educator's perceptions of their educational responsibility towards hearing impaired children in mainstream schools* as part of a Doctorate degree in Education at the University of Zululand (Durban-Umlazi Campus) under the supervision of Prof. G. Urbani and Dr A van der Merwe.

As part of my study educators from schools in the Bumble district are required to fill in questionnaires pertaining to the topic and I intend to send out questionnaires to educators.

Your permission to approach the principals of schools in the Ubumbulu District to complete the questionnaires will be greatly appreciated.

I enclose the following document:

- (a) A copy of the questionnaire, which will be handed to educators.

It would be greatly appreciated if you could grant approval at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely

  
**S.M. VERHOEF**

**APPENDIX 2**

**Permission to undertake research**



ETHEKWINI REGION UMLAZI DISTRICT	ISIFUNDA SASETHEKWINI <b>UMBUMBULU CIRCUIT</b>	ETHEKWINI REGION UMLAZI DISTRICT
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Address Next to Magistrate's Court  
Ikheli UMBUMBULU  
Adres

Private Bag :X1022  
Isikhwama Seposi :UMBUMBULU  
Privaatsak :4105

Telephone : (031) 9150036  
Ucingo 9150001  
Telefoon 9150222  
Fax : (031) 9150189  
Date October 2004

Enquiries Dr v Rensburg

Reference Research

Imibuzo  
Navrae

Inkomba  
Verwysing

Usuku  
Datum

ATTENTION ALL PRINCIPALS: AMANZIMTOTI WARD

**PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH ON EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR EDUCATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS HEARING IMPAIRED CHILDREN IN MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS**

Mrs S Verhoef is presently conducting research entitled *Educator's perceptions of their educational responsibility towards hearing impaired children in mainstream schools* as part of a Doctorate degree in Education at the University of Zululand (Durban-Umlazi Campus) (student no. 036303) under the supervision of Prof. G. Urbani and Dr A van der Merwe.

Permission is hereby granted to Mrs Verhoef to approach the principals of schools in the Amanzimtoti Ward to complete the questionnaires.

Yours faithfully

**DR J.C. JANSE VAN RENSBURG**  
**WARD MANAGER**

**APPENDIX 3**

**Questionnaire**

Tel Nos. (031) 903-6659 (Home)

6 Viden Road  
**AMANZIMTOTI**  
4125  
19 October 2004

The Educator

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR DETERMINING EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
THEIR RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS HEARING IMPAIRED CHILDREN IN  
MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS**

I am currently conducting research regarding educators' perceptions of their responsibility towards hearing impaired children in mainstream schools at the University of Zululand (Durban-Umlazi Campus) under the supervision of Prof. G. Urbani and Dr A. van der Merwe.

Your responses to the attached questionnaire are vital in assisting me to determine what educators' perceptions of their responsibility towards hearing impaired children in mainstream schools are. The questionnaire is divided into two sections.

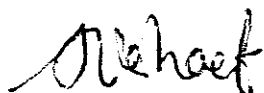
- |                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| <b>Section one</b> | Requires information about you, the respondent (biographical information).  |
| <b>Section two</b> | Deals with educators' perceptions of their responsibility towards hearing impaired children in mainstream schools |

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

All information will be regarded as confidential and no personal details of any respondent will be mentioned in the findings, nor will any of the results be related to any particular school.

I am most grateful to you for your time and effort.

Yours sincerely



**S.M. VERHOEF (Mrs)**

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

## QUESTIONNAIRE

*Educators' perceptions  
of their  
educational responsibility  
towards hearing impaired  
children in  
mainstream schools*

S VERHOEF  
MARCH 2005



## QUESTIONNAIRE

### *EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR EDUCATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS HEARING IMPAIRED CHILDREN IN MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS*

#### INSTRUCTIONS

Educators are requested to kindly complete  
all sections of this Questionnaire.

Thank you!

#### SECTION 1: BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

##### 1.1 Gender

Male ☐ Female ☐

##### 1.2 Age group

20-30 ☐

31-40 ☐

41-50 ☐

51-60 ☐

Above 60 ☐

##### 1.3 Qualifications

Degree, teaching diploma + additional postgraduate qualifications ☐

Degree plus teaching diploma ☐

Teaching degree plus postgraduate qualification ☐

Teaching degree ☐

Teaching diploma plus further qualifications ☐

Teaching diploma ☐

Certificate ☐

Other (please specify) .....

1.4 Post level .....

Principal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deputy principal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Head of Department	<input type="checkbox"/>
Subject head	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.5 Mother tongue .....

1.6 Teaching experience (indicate years of teaching experience ending 31 December 2004) .....

1.7 What is the average number of learners in your class? .....

1.8 Do you have any training in teaching learners with special educational needs?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
------------------------------	-----------------------------

1.9 If your answer to question 1.8 is "yes", what type of training have you received?

.....

.....

## SECTION 2: EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS

### INSTRUCTIONS TO RESPONDENTS

- Please read each statement carefully before giving your opinion, or response.
- Please ensure that you do not omit a question, or skip a page.
- Please be frank when giving your opinion.
- Please do not discuss statement with anybody.
- For each of the statements, please indicate your response by marking the appropriate block with a cross (X).

**Thank you for your kind cooperation!**

Before expressing your feelings or opinion regarding a specific statement, consider the following to indicate your response

### EXAMPLE

Learners who are hearing impaired should be allowed in mainstream schools

	Agree	Disagree	Uncertain
If you agree with the statement	X		
If you disagree with the statement		X	
If you are uncertain about the statement			X

## 2 EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS

All statements that follow bear reference to educators' perceptions of their responsibility towards hearing impaired children in mainstream schools.

		Agree	Disagree	Uncertain
2.1	I am capable of identifying a hearing impaired learner who does not wear hearing aids, in my class.			
2.2	My school keeps a record of learners' disabilities that can help me with the identification of learners with hearing impairments.			
2.3	There is a <i>school support team</i> at my school to whom I can report the progress of a hearing impaired learner in my class.			
2.4	The <i>district support team</i> has been to my school this year to offer their services concerning support for learners with impairments in mainstream schools.			
2.5	There is an <i>educational resource centre</i> in our region where I can obtain information regarding hearing-impaired learners.			
2.6	The way government currently allocates financial resources, promotes inclusive education.			
2.7	There is a school for hearing impaired children in our region where I can obtain information regarding the education of hearing impaired children.			
2.8	I have enough resources to assist me in teaching a hearing impaired child.			

		Agree	Disagree	Uncertain
2.9	I feel comfortable about having a hearing impaired child in my class.			
2.10	I have the ability to adapt my method of teaching to accommodate a hearing impaired child.			
2.11	I have the skills to adapt teaching materials to accommodate a hearing impaired child.			
2.12	I know how to adapt assessment strategies to accommodate a hearing impaired child.			
2.13	I have the necessary knowledge to adapt classroom seating to accommodate a hearing impaired child.			
2.14	I feel that peer support is an effective way of helping the hearing impaired learner to cope academically.			
2.15	A hearing impaired child can benefit significantly socially from being integrated in a mainstream school.			
2.16	A hearing impaired child can benefit significantly academically from being integrated in a mainstream school.			
2.17	I feel capable of handling situations where the hearing impaired learner might be harassed.			
2.18	Teaching a class in which learners have a variety of needs is significantly more difficult than teaching a class in which the learners are of approximately equal ability.			

		Agree	Disagree	Uncertain
2.19	It is the hearing impaired child's own responsibility to cope academically in a mainstream school.			
2.20	A hearing impaired learner is a child in educational distress.			
2.21	Appropriately qualified educators should rather teach hearing-impaired learners.			
2.22	An excellent culture of parental involvement is apparent at my school.			
2.23	I have so many learners in my class that it is impossible for me to give adequate attention to a hearing impaired child in my class.			
2.24	My school has a system of pastoral care in place which will also support the hearing impaired learner.			
2.25	If I should notice a hearing impaired child not wearing his hearing aid, I would regard it as my responsibility to investigate why.			
2.26	If a hearing impaired learner is not coping in my class, I would regard it as my responsibility to report this to his parents as quickly as possible.			
2.27	If I had a hearing impaired learner in my class, I would make a special effort to build a personal relationship with him.			
2.28	My school's principal has expressed a positive attitude towards inclusive education.			

		Agree	Disagree	Uncertain
2.29	Most of my colleagues have expressed positive attitudes towards inclusive education.			
2.30	My school's governing body has procedures in place so that complaints from parents of learners with special educational needs are addressed.			
2.31.	My school's management team accommodates in-service professional training for staff in relation to special educational needs in its yearly planning.			
2.32	My school has a policy in place pertaining to access for learners with sensory disabilities.			
2.33	A hearing-impaired learner will be less of a burden in the class than a learner with discipline problems.			
2.34	I have more sympathy for a child from a broken home than for a child with a hearing impairment.			
2.35	When a hearing impaired child has a hearing aid, he does not need extra help from teachers.			

## **SUMMARY**

The movement in South Africa towards the inclusion of learners with special educational needs in regular schools is a result of international trends. Essentially these trends derive from the fundamental rights of all humans to education and equal educational opportunities for all learners. There is a proposed link between effective educational transformation and educators' perceptions and views of these changes. Against this background, the study investigated educators' views of their responsibilities towards hearing impaired children in mainstream schools.

The first phase of this study comprised a comprehensive overview of the literature on inclusive education as well as on hearing impaired children. The second phase involved research by means of a questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered to a stratified random sample of 163 primary and secondary school educators in the Amanzimtoti Ward. The results of this questionnaire provided evidence that educators have a variety of perspectives on their responsibilities towards hearing impaired children in mainstream schools.

Some of the major findings are the following:

- The majority of educators in the Amanzimtoti Ward have never undergone any training in special needs education.
- The majority of educators are uncertain about their skills and abilities to accommodate learners with hearing impairments.
- Schools need to be modified in order to accommodate hearing impaired learners.
- The majority of educators feel they lack support and need specialised support services in order to fulfill their educational responsibilities.



In view of these findings, recommendations are made in order for inclusive education to be implemented effectively. Firstly, support for educators needs to be improved on different levels. Secondly in-service training is necessary to improve educators' skills and abilities and address their perspectives. Lastly, further research in this field is of the utmost importance.

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## OPSOMMING

Die beweging in Suid-Afrika na inklusiewe onderwys - die insluiting van leerders met spesiale onderwysbehoefte in gewone skole - is die gevolg van internasionale tendense wat spruit uit die basiese regte van alle mense tot opvoeding en gelyke opvoedkundige geleenthede vir alle leerders. Daar is 'n voorgestelde verband tussen effektiewe opvoedkundige transformasie en opvoeders se persepsies en perspektiewe van hierdie veranderinge. Teen hierdie agtergrond is opvoeders se persepsies van hulle verantwoordelikhede teenoor gehoorgestremde leerlinge in hoofstroomskole ondersoek.

Die eerste fase van hierdie studie bevat 'n omvattende oorsig van die literatuur oor inklusiewe onderwys sowel as oor gehoorgestremde kinders. Die tweede fase behels navorsing wat gedoen is met behulp van 'n vraelys. Die vraelys is bedien aan 'n ewekansige gestratifiseerde steekproef van 163 laerskool en hoërskool opvoeders. Die uitslag van die vraelys het getoon dat opvoeders 'n verskeidenheid opvattinge het in verband met hulle verantwoordelikhede teenoor gehoorgestremde leerlinge in hoofstroomskole.

Die volgende is enkele van die hoofbevindinge wat gemaak is:

- Die oorgrote meerderheid van opvoeders in die Amantzimtoti area het geen opleiding in die onderwys van leerders met spesiale onderwysbehoefte nie.
- Die meerderheid van die opvoeders is onseker van hulle vaardighede en vermoëns om leerders met gehoorgestremdhede te akkommodeer.
- Skole moet aangepas word ten einde leerders met gehoorgestremdhede te akkommodeer.

- Die meerderheid opvoeders voel dat hulle nie voldoende ondersteun word nie en het 'n behoefte aan gespesialiseerde ondersteuningsdienste ten einde hulle opvoedkundige verantwoordelikhede na te kom.

In die lig van die bevindinge is aanbevelings gemaak om te verseker dat inklusiewe onderwys suksesvol geïmplementeer word. Eerstens moet ondersteuning vir opvoeders op alle vlakke verbeter word. Tweedens is in-diens-opleiding nodig om opvoeders se vaardighede en vermoëns te verbeter sowel as om hulle persepsies aan te spreek. Laastens is verdere navorsing op hierdie gebied dringend noodsaaklik.

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