

**THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIETAL ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE EDUCATION
OF LEARNERS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT IN BENIN CITY**

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BENIN CITY, EDO STATE

MARCH, 2025

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**A RESEARCH WORK SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION AND COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY, IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF
BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (B.SC. ED) DEGREE IN SPECIAL EDUCATION IN
THE UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY, EDO STATE, NIGERIA**

MARCH, 2025

CERTIFICATION

We, the undersigned, certify that Aisosa Eweka with the matriculation number EDU2102436 has satisfactorily completed the research requirement for the Award of Bachelor of science (B.Sc.Ed.) degree in special education in the department of educational evaluation and counseling psychology, faculty of education, university of Benin, Benin city, Edo State.

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DEDICATION

This project work is being dedicated to Almighty God the author and finisher of my faith and my late mother, Mrs. Esther Osarieman Eweka

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my deep sense of appreciation and gratitude to God Almighty for His divine wisdom, inspiration, strength, protection and for the success of this research work.

I am greatly indebted to my research supervisor, Uwoye. E. B (Mrs) who despite her crowded schedule, devoted time and energy to read, correct, and restructure the work throughout the duration of my writing. I also appreciate her inspiration and constructive criticism, which she offered wholeheartedly.

I am deeply grateful for the guidance and mentorship provided by Head Of Department, Rev. Fr(Dr) A.A.Adubale and Course Advisor, Mr N.A Idugboe. Your invaluable advice and support have a significant role in the completion of this project.

My sincere thanks go to the following lecturers, whose contributions have been integral to my academic growth: Mrs M.E.Denedo, Dr (Mrs) Catherine Onwobulu, Mr Adonis, Mr Robinson, Mrs Osarieman, Mrs Omodaranle and Mr Owoade and every other lecturers who impact on me during my entire study in the University. Your dedication to teaching and encouragement have been truly inspiring.

My heartfelt appreciation goes to my beloved parents, Mr. Patrick. I. Eweka and the late Mrs. Esther. O. Eweka, through whom I was able to achieve a reasonable measure of academic success. I am forever grateful for their unwavering support, love,

and encouragement. To my siblings, Mrs. Itohan Anita Eribo, Mr. Osahon igbinovia, Mr. Parry Eweka, Sis Jennifer Eweka and Bro Aimueawonsa Carter Eweka, thank you for your constant prayers, support, and understanding.

A special note of thanks goes to my beloved edobor, through who I was able to bring out the best in me and contribute to my community. Thank you, my love for your invaluable advice, great inspirations that shape my tomorrow. May almighty God bless you abundantly. I am grateful for your love and support throughout this journey.

I am very grateful to my Godmother and friends who have also contributed to my academic success, particularly Mrs. Godwin-Aiya Cynthia, Mr. Joshua Izekor and his beloved wife, Mrs. Amarachi Izekor. Your love, prayer and great inspiration have been vital to my academic achievement. A big thank you to three people of you.

My appreciation also goes to the chairman of the Edo State association of the deaf, Mr. Eromosele Kingsley, for his support.

Lastly, I would like to appreciate all my coursemates at the University of Benin, as well as others whom I cannot mention here. I say a big thank you to you all.

TABLE OF CONTENT

	PAGES
TITLE PAGE	i
CERTIFICATION	ii
DEDICATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
TABLE OF CONTENT	vi
LIST OF TABLES	viii
ABSTRACT	ix
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	
Background of study	1
Statement of problem	5
Purpose of the study	6
Research Questions	6
Significant of the study	7
Scope and delimitation	8
Operational definition of terms	8
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	
Concept of Attitudes	10
Societal Attitudes towards the Education of Learners with Hearing Impairment	14
Concept of Hearing Impairment	20
Effects of Hearing Impairment	24

Education of Learners with Hearing Impairment	28
Stigmatization and Negative Labels	33
Stigma Theory and Social Constructivism Theory	37
Empirical Review	40
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	
Research Design	44
Population of the Study	44
Sample and Sampling Techniques	44
Research Instrument	45
Validity of the Instrument	45
Reliability of the Instrument	45
Method of Data Collection	46
Method of Data Analysis	46
CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF RESULT AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS	
Result	47
Discussion of Findings	55
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION	
Summary	58
Conclusions	58
Recommendation	59

Suggestions for further study	62
REFERENCES	63
APPENDIXES	66

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Demographic Characteristics of the respondents	47
Table 2 The impact of societal attitudes on the educational experiences of learners with hearing impairments	48
Table 3 Influence of societal attitudes on the inclusion of learners with hearing impairment in regular classroom settings	49
Table 4 Role societal attitudes plays in shaping the self-esteem and academic achievement of learners with hearing impairments	51
Table 5 Extend of societal attitudes effect on the academic performance of learners with hearing impairment	53

ABSTRACT

This study was designed to examine the influence of societal attitudes toward the education of learners with hearing impairments in Benin City. Four research questions were formulated to guide the study.

The study adopted a descriptive research design. The total sample of the study consisted of fifty(50) learners with hearing impairments in Ihogbe College, from both junior and senior schools (Hearing Impaired unit) in Benin City, a public Secondary School in the sampled area. Random sampling technique has used to select the respondents. The research instruments for the study was a questionnaire titled "Societal Attitudes Towards the Education of Learners with Hearing Impairments Questionnaire" which was distributed to the respondents and collected immediately after completion. Simple frequency percentages, mean scores and standard deviations were used to analyze the responses. To ensure the reliability of the study, Cronbach's Alpha was calculated, yielding a value of 0.716.

The findings revealed that societal attitudes have a minimal direct impact on these learners' educational experiences, with most respondents reporting no significant stigma or discrimination from peers or teachers. However, the study highlights that misconceptions and lack of awareness about hearing impairments create challenges in their education, particularly regarding inclusion in regular classrooms. While societal attitudes do not significantly motivate academic achievement, they negatively influence learners' self-esteem and confidence. The study indicates that negative perceptions from peers and teachers, while not directly affecting academic performance, can lower motivation and self-confidence, leading to indirect impact on academic success. Overall, the findings suggests that societal attitudes, while having a modest influence, play a more significant role in shaping the emotional well being and inclusion of learners with hearing impairments than in their academic outcomes.

Keywords: Societal attitudes, Inclusive education, Stigmatization, Social integration and accessibility

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Education serves as a powerful tool for cultivating positive attitudes toward the education of children with hearing impairments by building self-esteem, encourage health relationships and I oenhancing emotional resilience, leading to inclusive support from educated parents and society.

Education is the best legacy parents and the general society can give to children with special needs. This is because the development and growth of any society depends largely on the quality of education of such children. It is generally believe that the basic for any true development must commence with the positive attitudes of the parents and the general public towards the education of learners with hearing impairments. It is imperative to state that positive attitudes of the society and parents toward learners with hearing impairment remains the vehicle for socio-economic, psychological and educational development of any child include the child with hearing impairment.

Every learner includer the learners with hearing impairments have the right to access to basic and equal quality educational opportunity irrespective of their difficulties. This call for school to modulate way of successfully educating all children with diversity in a common setting. There is an emerging consensus learners with disabilities needs to

be included in the educational arrangement set for their peers, in this believe to have motivate learners with hearing impairments and others to adopt a positive attitude towards the education of learners with hearing impairments. This inclusive education of learners with hearing impairments refer to the educational process that wishes to extend and maximum the opportunity of learners with hearing impairment to attend regular schools within their locality. It involves the provision of necessary special education services under the responsibility and management of the classroom teacher (Gargiulo,2012). However with the development of inclusion education policies, learners with hearing impairments are being enrolled in regular schools (Right to education act,2009). The ideas of inclusive education is derived from the human rights perspective which holds that although a disability might affect a person sensory or physical skills, it does not limit a person's capacities. It is believe that by allowing special needs children to attend the same school with the regular learners will help both to develop positive academic experiences.

Teachers and parents' attitudes and society perceptions plays a very important role in the successful implementation of inclusive education for learners with hearing impairment. Negative attitudes of parents, teachers, government and the general society towards the inclusive education program for learners with hearing impairment in regular school will affect the implementation of that program.

Healthy parental attitudes results in acceptance of the learner's disability and facilitate therapeutic progress. Attitudes of society, families and people with disability themselves contribute to converting impairment into disabilities (Baxter,2007). The attitudes of specific societies are critical in assessing both the intensity of disability and accessing areas where collective actions is likely to fail the education of learners with hearing impairment and hence public action is desirable to promote education for all include the learners with hearing impairment.

The parents struggle to cope with their own actions and the reactions of others. Their attitudes towards their children with hearing impairment change resulting in changes in response toward the education of the learners with hearing impairment. These attitudinal changes in turn may have an adverse affect on the academic experience of such learner with hearing impairment and the behaviors pattern too might change.

The attitude of the general public in the society towards the education of learners with hearing impairment are often influence by cultural, social and economic factors. In Nigeria, these attitudes can be particularly negative leading to marginalization and exclusion . MCQuarries Parrila(2014) saw that negative attitudes towards learners with hearing impairment can impact their educational experience, self-esteem and overall well being. In most case, people's negative attitudes was indicated as one of the serious problems in the education of the learners with hearing impairment in Nigeria and North

American, and their social life. This in turn will impact learners with hearing impairmentd learning outcome in school setting.

The attitude of teachers both special schools and regular education towards the education of learners with hearing impairment are critical factors that can foster a supportive and inclusive environment or create barriers to their academic and social integrations. Positive attitudes can lead to effective teaching strategies, personalized support and equitable opportunities for learners with hearing impairments on the other hand, negative attitudes may result in limited support, Stigmatization and inadequate education services.

Allen(2014) has provided insight into the factors that influence parents, teachers, government and the general society's attitudes toward the education of learners with hearing impairments. This study aims to build up on existing research and further explore the prevailing attitudes of parents, teachers and the general society towards the education of learners with hearing impairments in Benin City. By identifying the factors that shape Societal attitudes towards learners with hearing impairment, this study seek to contribute valuable insights to the promotion of positive societal attitudes towards their learning outcomes and the creation of supportive learning environments for all learners irrespective of their abilities.

The societal attitudes towards the education of learners with hearing impairments in Benin City are a major determinant of their educational outcomes. Negative attitudes, including Stigmatization, exclusion, and prejudice can lead to discrimination in educational settings and limit learners' access to resources, opportunities and support. These learners with hearing impairment may face reduced self-esteem, social isolation, and feeling of inadequacy, all of which can impact their academic performance and overall well-being.

Societal misconceptions about the abilities of learners with hearing impairments often result in a lack of understanding about the educational accommodations they need. Teachers, peers, and even parents may not fully grasp the potentials of learners with hearing impairments, which can contribute to an educational environment that is not conducive to their success. Conversely, positive societal attitudes those that views learners with hearing impairments as capable, deserving of equal opportunities and able to contribute to society - can foster supportive learning environments that enhance learners' academic achievement and social integration.

Statement of the Problem

The education of learners with hearing impairments in Benin City faces significant challenges due to prevailing societal attitudes such as Stigmatization,

exclusion, prejudice, marginalization and others. This study aims to investigate the influence of these attitudes on the education of learners with hearing impairments.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to investigate the influence of societal attitudes on the education of learners with hearing impairments in Benin City. This study seems:

1. To investigate the impact of societal attitudes on the education of learners with hearing impairments in Benin City.
2. To identify the barrier to and facilitators of inclusive education for learners with hearing impairments
3. To examine the relationship between societal attitudes and the self-esteem, motivation of learners with hearing impairments towards their education.

Research Questions

In order to understand how the influence of societal attitudes towards the education of learners with hearing impairments impact their learning outcomes, the following research questions were raised:

1. What is the impact of societal attitudes on the educational experiences of learners with hearing impairment?

2. How do societal attitudes influence the inclusion of learners with hearing impairment in regular classroom settings?
3. What role do the societal attitudes play in shaping the self-esteem and academic of learners with hearing impairment?
4. To what extent do negative societal attitudes towards hearing impairment affect the academic performance of learners with hearing impairment?

Significance of the Study

The study on the influence of societal attitudes on the education of learners with hearing impairment in Benin City yields crucial implication for educational policy, practice, and development interventions. The findings will:

1. Inform policy reforms promoting positive attitudes, inclusive education, improved teacher training programs, and enhanced resources allocation for learners with hearing impairments.
2. Contribute valuable insights to the Edo State Government's efforts to promote inclusivity, rights and empowerment of persons with disabilities, fostering community awareness and support.
3. Reduce stigma and social exclusion, enhancing academic and professional opportunities for learners with hearing impairment.

4. Encourage parents and community involvement and support.
5. Help families better understand the societal dynamics that influence their children's educational experiences, empowering them to advocate for their children's rights to an inclusive education.
6. Be valuable resource in the global effort to create inclusive, accessible and supportive education systems for learners with hearing impairments and other disabilities.

Scope and Delimitation

This study focuses on examining the influence of societal attitudes on the education of learners with hearing impairments at Ihogbe College (Hearing Impaired unit), Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria.

Operational Definition of Terms

Attitudes: Attitudes refers to a person's positive, negative, or neutral evaluations, feelings, and tendencies towards a particular object, idea, or group, influencing their behavior and decision-making.

Societal Attitudes: Societal Attitudes refers to the collective beliefs, values, and opinions held by a community or society towards a particular group or issues, in this case learners with hearing impairments. These attitudes shape social norms, influence individual behavior, and impact policy decision.

Education of Learners with Hearing Impairment: Education of learners with hearing impairment refers to the specialized instructional strategies, resources, and support services designed to meet the unique learning needs of individuals with hearing impairments, ensuring equal access to quality education and promoting academic, social, and personal development.

Learners with Hearing Impairment: Learners with hearing impairment refers to individuals with permanent or temporary hearing loss, ranging from mild to profound that affect their ability to process auditory information.

Inclusive Education: Inclusive education refers to an educational approach that values diversity, promotes equal opportunities, and provides support services to ensure learners with hearing impairment participate fully in mainstream educational setting.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This literature review examines existing research on the impact of societal attitudes on the education of learners with hearing impairment.

Concept of Attitudes

Attitudes are defined as settled ways of thinking or feeling about someone or something, typically reflected in a person's behavior. They are generally categorized into three components:

Cognitive: Refers to beliefs and knowledge about a person, group or object (e.g, thinking that learners with hearing impairments are capable of learning but need specific support).

Affective: Involves emotions or feelings toward a subject (e.g feeling empathy or frustration towards learners with hearing impairments).

Behavioral: Refers to the way a person acts or is predisposed to act in relation to a subject (e.g offering support or exclusion of learners with hearing impairments in educational settings) (Ajzen,2018).

Attitudes are shaped by cultural, social, psychological, and environmental factors and can have a significant influence on how individuals interact with others, especially marginalized groups like learners with hearing impairments.

Schneider & Riehi(2019) states how negative societal attitudes toward learners with hearing impairments result in their exclusion from mainstream classrooms, leading to lower academic achievement and social isolation. They argue that Societal views on disability must shift toward more inclusive and supportive attitudes to improve educational outcomes for learners with hearing impairments.

Kemp & Carter(2020) said that the role of teachers' attitudes in the education of learners with hearing impairment. It emphasized the importance of teacher training and awareness of learner's specific needs, neting that positive attitudes among educator can lead to better inclusion and educational outcomes. The authors suggested that developing positive attitudes in educators is a critical factor in enhancing the academic success of learners with hearing impairments.

Attitudes are psychological tendencies that influence how individuals evaluate or respond to people, objects, events or ideas. In simple terms, an attitude refers to a person's favourable or unfavorable evaluations, emotional feelings, behavioral tendencies toward a particular object or concept (Tawio, 2019).

Mbath (2011) stated that attitude can either positive and negative. They play a significant role in shaping the education of the learners with hearing impairment, their behaviours, interactions and decision making process.

Adekunle (2019) reported that negative attitude toward learners with hearing impairments can significantly impact their academic and educational experiences as well as their overall outlook on life. He further stated that negative attitude can lead learners with hearing impairments to have lower expectation thereby making teachers and hearing peers lower expectation of learners' abilities leading to reduce academic challenges and opportunities.

Attitudes are a powerful force that shape the social and educational experiences of learners with hearing impairments. Positive attitudes can lead to better inclusion, academic success and social integration. While negative attitudes contribute the exclusion, and limited opportunities (Killen,2016).

Ogundele(2014) examined the role of societal attitudes in the inclusion of learners with hearing impairment. He emphasized the importance of shifting societal views to create more inclusive educational environments. He further said that negative societal attitudes were significant barrier to the successful integration of learners with hearing impairments into mainstream schools.

Lederbery(2013) highlight that educator's attitudes, particularly their acceptance and understanding of the capabilities of learners with hearing impairments, are linked to how successfully these learners integrate into general education classroom

The attitudes of peers toward learners with hearing impairments also play a critical role in their educational experience. Positive peer attitudes help foster social inclusion, whereas negative attitudes can lead to isolation, bullying, exclusion from group activities (Heward, 2013). He further notes that when learners with hearing impairments experience positive attitude from their peers, they are more likely to develop social skills and friendships, which in turn enhance their overall academic experience.

Stone(2008) said that attitudes from teachers, peers and families also influence the self-perception of learners with hearing impairments. He explained that how learners who experience positive interactions with others, and who feel understood and valued, are more likely to develop high self-esteem and a positive self-concept. In contrast, negative attitudes may lead to internalized stigma, which can affect a learners' sense of self-worth and motivation. Learners with hearing impairments who receive positive reinforcement and opportunities for success are likely to engage in their education and pursue long-term goals.

Societal Attitudes toward the Education of Learners with Hearing Impairments

Societal attitudes refer to the collective beliefs, perceptions, and behaviors that a society or group holds toward a particular issues. In this case, towards the education of learners with hearing impairments. These attitudes are shaped by various factors, including cultural norms, personal experiences, media representations, and historical perspective on disability.

Oluwade(2010) explained how important it is to change negative attitudes in a society and the way the attitudes can influence learners with hearing impairments' lives. This is because there are many area a person's life can become affected by societal negative attitudes. When all of these are affected with negative attitudes, it makes a big psychological impact that result in the distortion of a person's good self-esteem. He therefore further stated;

"Deafness is viewed a divine punishment person with hearing loss can be seen carrier or mediators of this punishment and that also Stigmatize the whole family, there still are myths and misconceptions about the nature and causes of different deafness in combination with feelings and shame."

Societal attitudes shape educational policies and practices, in many cases, societal views on disability influence whether education is inclusive or segregate, and whether learners with hearing impairments are provided with the resources they need to succeed.

Giangreco(2011) highlight how societal attitudes toward inclusion have Shifted in recent decades, moving away from segregation toward more inclusion educational models. This change has been influenced by the broader societal shift toward valuing diversity and inclusion. Societal views that disability should be accommodated and celebrated rather than hidden or treated as a deficit have led to better integration of learners with hearing impairments in mainstream educational settings.

Schirmer(2017) explained how societal attitudes toward education for children with disabilities, including those learners with hearing impairments, are crucial in determining the resources allocated to special education. Negative or uniformed societal attitudes can lead to inadequate funding and poor implementation of inclusive education policies.

Alemayehu(2016) explained that people continue to reflect on negative attitudes with reference to factors (laws and legislation) that influence people's attitudes and a direct reflection of the country's national law where hearing impaired people are referred as stubborn and are not looked upon as full human being as many people believed that:

"Deaf Mute and Deafness who as a consequence of permanent infirmity are not capable to take care of themselves. In many parts of Benin city, persons with hearing impairments are still perceived as sub-human, menances to society, objects of pity, ridicule and a burden".

Harris(2007) stated that stigma can manifest in various ways, such as the belief that individuals with hearing impairments are "less capable" incapable of learning, or difficult to teach. This leads to exclusion, both social and academic, and limit their access to mainstream education. Stereotyping involves generalized, beliefs or assumptions about individuals with hearing impairments. For instance, people may assume that learners with hearing impairments will not be able to understand lessons in regular classrooms or that they require special treatment such strong stereotype can limit their educational opportunities and hinder their social integration.

Alade(2005) explained that Societal attitudes influence how resources are allocated for the education of learners with hearing impairments. Positive attitudes towards to these learners often result in the availability of necessary accommodations, such as sign language, interpreters, hearing aids, captioned media and visual learning aids. Conversely, negative attitudes may lead to underinvestment in resources which can hinder learners' ability to participate fully in educational activities.

Teachers and parents attitudes play a crucial role in the education of learners with hearing impairments. Teachers and parents who have positive attitudes toward the education of learners with hearing impairments are most likely to adapt their teaching methods and create supportive environment for these learners.

Ebhohimen(2013) explained that positive attitudes among hearing students towards learners with hearing impairments, particularly when there is increased in term of sign gesture communication, interaction and understanding. The presence of positive attitudes can lead to inclusive policies and practices in schools, increased academic and social opportunities for learners with hearing impairments, better integration of learners with disabilities into the broader school community. Regular Education awareness about the hearing impairments will contribute to a more positive and inclusive environment fostering greater understanding and acceptance of the deaf community.

Ladd(2021) said that societal attitudes toward sign language, a key component of societal attitudes toward the education of learners with hearing impairments is the view of sign language or as a "second-class" communication tool. In many societies, sign language has historically been undervalued or outright suppressed in favor of oralism. He further argued that societal attitudes that view sign language as inferior have led to policies and practices that excluded or devalued the language, despite it's importance in enabling effective communication for learners with hearing impairments. Sign language is essential for the cognitive and social development of learners with hearing impairments.

Tola(2020) explained that positive societal changes, including the enactment of legislation such as the Discrimination Against Persons With Disabilities (prohibition) Act,2018 have led to more inclusive education for learners with hearing impairments.

These changes were driven by the recognition that societal attitudes must evolve to create an inclusive environment for all learners, regardless of their hearing ability.

Adebayo(2007) discusses how traditional African beliefs often attribute disabilities to supernatural causes, which may result in a child with hearing impairments being hidden away by the family. This cultural isolation can hinder the child's social development and deny them the opportunity for education. As a results, learners with hearing impairments may be perceived as incapable of leading productivity lives or cotributing meaningful to society. This stigma not only impacts their mental and emotional health but also their access to societal resources and opportunities including education.

In therm of education, societal attitudes in Benin city, towards learners with hearing impairments are influenced by perception of the necessity and feasibility of inclusive education. Although Nigerian educational policy advocas for the inclusion of learners with disabilities, including those with hearing y, in regular schools, practical challenges persist. The National Policy On Education (Federal Government Of Nigeria,(2013)) highlights the need for an inclusive education system that accommodates learners with disabilities. However, in practice, the mainstream education system is not adequately prepared to support learners with hearing impairments due to lack of trained teachers, sign language, interpreters, and accessible learning materials (Ibrahim & Olusola(2020)).

In a study conducted by Ibrahim and Olusola(2020), it was found that many teachers in Nigerian schools lacked the necessary skills to adapt their teaching methods to include learners with hearing impairments. This result in learners with hearing impairments being isolated in classrooms, unable to fully participate in academic activities, and thus not receiving the quality of education they deserve.

Adebayo(2014) highlights that although there are a few schools dedicated to special education, they are often underfund, overcrowded and located primarily in urban, creating a significant barrier for learners in rural areas. This geographical divide exacerbates the marginalization of learners with hearing impairments, as many families cannot afford to relocate to urban centre for educational purpose.

A study conducted by Omoaregha(2017) reported that negative attitudes among hearing students toward learners with hearing impairment in Benin city, including stigma, discrimination and social exclusion. He further explained that the lack of understanding and limited awareness and understanding of learners with hearing impairments identity contribute the negative attitudes. Normal students often seen learners with hearing impairment as different and have the fear of communicating with learners with hearing impairments.

Concept of Hearing Impairment

Hearing Impairment is a generic term, which describes any condition that reduces the hearing acuity of an individual and makes it impossible for him/her to perceive and interpret auditory signal (sound). This condition arises when there is any disorder affecting the auditory system which includes the ear, the auditory nerve and the auditory cortex.

Hearing Impairment varies from person to person depending on the following factors such as the degree or level of impairment and the place of impairment, the time of onset of impairment and the configuration of the hearing loss. It constitutes a significant category of disability that directly affects individual's communication abilities, social interactions, and educational experiences. Social attitudes toward learners with hearing impairments are shaped by a variety factors, including cultural beliefs, misconceptions, and structural challenges within the educational system. These attitudes, in turn, impact the life outcomes of learners with hearing impairments, such as their access to quality education, social inclusion, and economic participation.

Stataloff(2003) stated that hearing impairment refers to a partial or total inability to hear sounds, and it can vary in severity, ranging from mild to profound. It can affect one ear (unilateral) or both ears(bilateral) and may be present at birth(congenital) or

develop later in life(acquired). Hearing Impairment can be caused by a wide range of factors include genetic conditions, aging, noise exposure, infections, trauma or diseases.

There are types of hearing impairment according to wallord(2000) such as:

- **Conductive hearing loss:** Occurs when there is problem with the outer or middle ear that prevent sound from being conducted to the inner ear.
- **Sensorineural hearing loss:** Results from damage to the inner ear(Cochlear) or the auditory nerve pathway.
- **Mixed hearing loss:** A combination of both conductive and sensorineural hearing loss where there are problems in both the outer or middle ear and inner ear.
- **Central auditory process disorder(CAPD):** A condition where the brain has difficulty processing sounds deposit normal hearing ability in the ears. It affects the way the brain interprets and responds to sound.

According to World Health Organisation(WHO,2012), an estimated 466 million people globally experience disabling hearing loss with a significant number being children. In Nigeria, hearing impairments are common form of disability, and while efforts have been made to support affected individuals, they continue to face various challenges.

The way society understand and conceptualizes hearing impairments plays a crucial role in shaping attitudes toward those affected. Historically, hearing impairments have been misunderstood, often associated with intelligence deficits or incapacity for normal life participation. This misconception has contributed to the stigma and marginalization of learners with hearing impairments, particularly in the educational context.

In his study on disability in African contexts, ozoji(2012) explains that cultural stigmas prevent learners with hearing impairments from being viewed as capable of valuable members of society. They are often perceived as less intelligent or unable to contribute meaningfully, resulting in discrimination and neglect. Such attitudes not only affect the learners but also extent to their families who may face ridicule or marginalization due to presence of a child with hearing impairment.

Ibrahim & Olusola(2020) said that educational attitudes toward learners with hearing impairment are both societal perception of disability and the state of the education system. Despite the Nigerian government's advocacy for inclusive education, learners with hearing impairments often face significant barriers in the educational setting. These include a lack of properly trained teachers, insufficient sign language interpreters and inadequate facilities.

Ogunyemi(2011) notes that many teachers in regular schools lack training in sign language or specialized teaching methods for learners with hearing impairment. As a result, these learners are often segregated from their peers or left behind in classroom activities. Teachers who do not have a clear understanding of hearing impairment may inadvertently reinforce negative stereotype, leading to lower expectations for these learners with hearing impairments.

Okoh and Akpama(2020) further emphasize that learners with hearing impairments are often subjected to ridicule, bullying, and social ostracization. This exclusion begins early in life, where learners with hearing impairments are not included in mainstream social and educational activities. The lack of inclusion can have long term effects on the emotional and psychological well-being of these learners, leading to feelings of isolation, low self-esteem, and even depression.

Learners with hearing impairments often experience social exclusion, which affect their mental health and well-being. Ozoji(2012) argues that societal rejected, coupled with negative attitudes toward their abilities, leads to feelings of inadequacy and low self-worth. Social integration is key to developing communication skills, confidence, and resilience, all of which are necessary for academic and personal success. Without proper social interaction, these learners, may develop psychological problems, such as depression, anxiety and social withdraw.

Effect of Hearing Impairments

Hearing Impairments can have profound effects on the academic, social emotional and cognitive development of learners with hearing impairments. These effects can vary depending on the degree of hearing loss, age of onset, and access to educational interventions.

However, the attitudes that society holds toward learners with hearing impairments directly affect their access to quality education. Negative social perceptions often manifest in the educational system, where misconceptions about the cognitive abilities of learners with hearing impairments can influence teaching practice and educational policies.

Ogunyemi(2011) said that societal attitudes often lead to educational segregation, where learners with hearing impairments are placed in special education schools or isolated setting. This separation can limit their interaction with peers without disabilities and hinder their academic and social development further more, learners with hearing impairments may face low expectation from educators who are not trained to work with learners with hearing impairments. As Ibrahim and Olusola(2020) explains the lack of specialized training for teachers, combined with societal misconceptions about the potential of learners with hearing impairments, result in inadequate educational support and resources, thus affecting their academic achievement.

Ozaji(2012) argues that societal attitudes which view hearing impairments as a cognitive limitation rather than a communication barrier may result in teachers failing to make necessary accommodations such as using sign language or visual aids. This lack of support can prevent learners with hearing impairments from excelling academically and from reaching their full potential.

Learners with hearing impairments faces some challenges which includes the following:

- **Impact On Communication And Language:** According to Ching(2023) stated that learners with hearing impairments especially those with early onset hearing loss often, experience delays in language acquisition, which can hinder their ability to communication, understand complex concept and engage in academic learning. Early intervent, including speech therapy and Cochlear implants, can improve language and cognitive development, leading to better academic outcomes.
- **Academic Performance:** Learners with hearing impairments face challenges in traditional classroom, especially in subjects requiring auditory processing. They may struggle with verbal instructions, discussions and activities. Specialized educational strategies including sign language and assistive technologies like Cochlear implants can improve learning outcomes (Kyle & Harris,2010).
- **Social And Emotional Effects:** Cohen and Huck,(2009) discuss the emotional and social isolation faced by learners with hearing impairments compare to hearing peers.

They further stated that communication barriers can lead to social isolation and emotional challenge like low self-esteem, anxiety and depression. Learners with hearing impairments may find it difficult to engage with peers, which can affect their mental health and social development.

Social isolation, according to Okoh and Akpama(2020), can result in feeling of loneliness, low self-esteem, and depression. Learners with hearing impairment may struggle to form friendships or participate in peer-group activities due to communication barriers and social stigma. The emotional and psychological consequences of this exclusion can further hinder their academic performance and overall development.

In a study conducted by Maka(2019), it has found that many learners with hearing impairments in Nigeria report being bullied or ridiculed by their peers, which exacerbates their feelings of alienation. This bullying is often rooted in the societal belief that learners with hearing impairments are less capable than their hearing peers, and this contributes to a cycle of exclusion and psychological distress.

• **Quality Of Life:** Hearing Impairments can affect an individual's overall quality of life, influencing both personal and professional domains, quality of life can be impacted by communication difficulties, limited access to information and challenges in personal relationships.

Tola(2020) explained that quality of life of learners with hearing impairments is deeply intertwined with societal attitudes toward their education. These attitudes significantly impact not only their educational experiences psychological well-being, social inclusion and future opportunities. In the context of Nigeria, societal perceptions of learners with hearing impairments can either facilitate or hinder their ability to achieve a high quality of life, particularly in relation to their access to quality education, social interaction, and personal development.

- **Cognitive Effects:** Maschart and Knoors(2003) said that there is evidence that hearing impairments can effect cognitive development, particular in area of attention, memory and executive functions.

Maka(2019) explained that societal attitudes that portray learners with hearing impairments as less capable can lead to a diminished sense of self-efficacy. This reduced confidence in their abilities can affect not only their educational performance but also their ability to engage socially and pursue future career goals.

Therefore, the implication of hearing impairment in relation to societal attitudes toward the education of learners with hearing impairments is profound because societal beliefs, values and perception, significantly shape how these learners with hearing impairments are educated, integrated and supported within the broader social system.

Education of Learners with Hearing Impairment

The education of learners with hearing impairments is a critical area in understanding how societal attitudes shape both the learning experiences and life outcomes for these learners. Societal attitudes toward learners with hearing impairment can have a profound influence on their educational access, quality, and opportunities for integration into both academic and social spheres. In this context, the attitude toward the value and potential of learners with hearing impairments, the resources allocated for their education, and the level of societal acceptance play pivotal roles in determining their educational experiences and overall quality of life (Tola,2020).

These societal attitudes can either support (positive) or hinder (negative) the academic, social, emotional development of learners with hearing impairments.

Patterson & Quinn(2006) argues that negative perceptions often resulted in restrictive educational practices that were not conducive to the development of learners with hearing impairment. In contrast, Ladd(2003) highlighted that as awareness grew, there was a move toward integration and the recognition of the importance of inclusive education.

- **Impact on Education:** When society holds negative views about hearing impairments, learners with hearing impairments may face discrimination or lack of support in education setting. Teachers may underestimate their potential or peers may exclude them

from social and academic activities. This can limit their access to quality education, and social integration impacting both their academic performance and self-esteem Ladd(2003).

- **Educational Gap Due To Misconceptions:** Knoors(2003) explained that misconceptions about the capabilities of learners with hearing impairments can lead to insufficient educational policies and the underutilization of effective teaching methods. For examples, the views that learners with hearing impairments can not excel in mainstream education may result in the overuse of segregated schools or restrictive placement in low-expectation settings.

- **Impact on Education:** The misconceptions that learners with hearing impairments cannot excel in mainstream may result in limited educational opportunities with learners with hearing impairments receiving inadequate support (e.g lack of qualified teachers or specialized materials). It is also hinders the promotion of inclusive educational policies that could better integrate learners with hearing impairments into general educational settings.

- **Attitude Toward Inclusive VS segregation:** In recent decades, there have been a strong push for inclusive education, where learners with disabilities, including those learners with hearing impairments are integrated into mainstream classrooms. Societal

attitudes that favour inclusion support the belief that all students, regardless of their disabilities, can benefit from being part of the general education system (Feleketch,2000).

- **Impact On Education:** Positive attitudes toward inclusion have led to more opportunities for learners with hearing impairments to learn alongside their hearing peers with appropriate support services (e.g. sign language interpreters, hearing aids, or FM system), these learners with hearing impairments can participate in the same curriculum, social activities and extra-curricular programs as their hearing peers. Inclusive education equity, diversity, and respect all learners (Horn & Luetz,2014).

- **Segregation and Special Education:** In contrast, societies with negative or neutral attitudes toward inclusion may opt for segregated educational setting for learners with hearing impairments. These learners may be placed in specialized school for the deaf where the curriculum is tailored to their needs, but they may miss out on the social integration and diverse experiences provided by mainstream classroom.

- **Impact on Education:** While specialized schools may provide a more tailored learning experience, they can also reinforce the idea that learners with hearing impairments are fundamentally different from their peers. In such setting, learners may have limited exposure to hearing peers and be deprived of opportunities to develop skills in a more inclusive environment. Becky(2006)

- **Cultural Attitudes Toward Language (Oral VS Sign Language):** Madden & Humphries(2005) stated that societal attitudes toward language use also play a crucial role in the Education of learners with hearing impairments. Some societies prioritize oralism (teaching speech and lip-reading) as the preferred method of communication, while other recognise the value of sign language as a full linguistic modality in its own right.

A study conducted by Ladd(2003) shows that early access to sign language by the learners with hearing impairments and the parents will allows the learners to acquire a more complex vocabulary, bridge concepts to the meaning of words, and build strong foundation for language. This is in agreed with Akpotu(2017) who stated that parents who learns sign language early will promote effectively communication with their learners with hearing impairments that can enhance their relationship, academic success, promote positively impact on the learners with hearing impairments self-esteem, and academic performance. This in turn, will enable the parents to promote emotional support and encouragement that can help their learners with hearing impairments to develop resilience and coping skills.

- **Impact on Education:** In societies where oralism is dominant, there may be limited recognition of sign language as legitimate form of communication. This can result in learners with hearing impairments being pressured to learn to speak and lip-read potentially at the expense of developing proficiency in sign language which often their

natural mode of communication. Alternatively, societies that embrace sign language, education may provide a more supportive environment for learners with hearing impairments, allowing them to thrive in their own linguistic and cultural community.

- **Role of Teachers and Educational Professionals:** The attitudes of educators towards learners with hearing impairments can significantly impact their educational experiences. Teachers who are trained to work with learners with hearing impairments and are aware of the diverse needs of these learners can provide more inclusive supportive learning environment. Lindsey & Wesson(2008).

- **Impact On Education:** Teachers with positive attitudes toward inclusive and the impact on the learners with hearing impairments are more likely to use effective teaching strategies and make accommodations to ensure that learners with hearing impairments have equal opportunities to succeed.

Societal attitudes toward the education of learners with hearing impairment ranging from views on disability, inclusion, language use and policy-play a crucial role in shaping the education of learners with hearing impairments. Positive attitudes that promote inclusion, support for sign language, and recognition of the right of people with disabilities can create an environment where these learners thrive.

Stigmatization and Negative Label

Stigmatization refers to the social process through which certain groups are devalued or marginalized due to perceived differences. In this case, due to learners with hearing impairment. Negative Labeling is the practice of categorizing people in ways that carry negative connotations, often based on stereotypes or misconceptions.

Agwu(2019) said that stigmatization is conceived as the treatment of some body in a way that make them feel they are not good or unimportant.

A research conducted by Knox(2009) explained that inclusive education advocates for the dismantling of stereotypes and stigmatization in education settings. He argues that negative labeling leads to lowered expectations and can segregate learners with hearing impairments into special education setting that do not provide the same academic rigor as general education. By reducing stigmatization and promoting inclusive practices, learners with hearing impairments are more likely to achieve their full potential.

Garry(2006), in his research on the psychological effects of stigma, he explains how learners with hearing impairments experience heightened vulnerability to mental health issues due to the stigmatizing attitudes they face. These learners with hearing impairments may withdraw socially, perform poorly academically, or develop a negative self-concept due to the constant reinforcement of negative labels.

Sullivan(2011) examines the emotional and psychological effects of stigma on learners with hearing impairments, that the long-term impact of being labels as "different" or "less capable" can lead to feelings of isolation and frustration. Learners may also internalize social stigma which can lower their academic aspiration and self-efficacy.

A study conducted by Fatunde(2019) shows that stigmatization and negative label can significantly impact learners with hearing impairment academically by leading them to have social isolation, self-doubt, shame, decreased academic aspiration and limit them to access to extra-curricular activities, leadership roles, and career opportunities. Therefore negative labels can lead to reduce confidence and self-worth, affecting the learners with hearing impairments' motivation and encouragement in learning.

Oliver(2018) affirmed that learners with hearing impairments have experience they are not only disposed, neglected and marginalized, but they are also denied of privileges that the family members, hearing students enjoys. Some learners with hearing impairments are prevented from coming to the sitting room, not talking of sitting room with others, or coming out to greet visitors in their house. Regular students avoid playing or interacting with them claiming superiority over learners with hearing impairments.

Susan(2005) discusses how negative societal perceptions and labels of learners with disabilities, including hearing impairments, influence their academic achievements.

She emphasizes that when learners with hearing impairments are categorized as "incapable", their opportunities are diminished, and they are often placed in tracks that limit their future potentials.

Marsaechark & Knoors(2003) argue that societal perceptions can lead to the exclusion of learners with hearing impairments from mainstream classrooms,where they might otherwise excel. They argue that negative labeling, such as being as "incapable" or "less intelligent", can have a significant impact on a learner's self-esteem and academic motivation. They further stated that when learners with hearing impairments are continuing exposed to negative labels, they may internalize these perceptions. This can lead to a diminished sense of self-worth, which directly affects their engagement with school work and their willingness to participate in class.

Dunn(2001) states that when learners with hearing impairments are repeatedly exposed to failure and negative expectations, they may come to believe that they cannot succeed, regardless the effort they put in. This leads learners with hearing impairments to be helplessness reduces their motivation to try and may result in academic underachievement.

Luckner & Muir(2001) advocate that stigmatization and negative labels may result in insufficient support for learners with hearing impairments. If educators view learners with hearing impairments through the lens of their disability rather than as

individuals with unique strengths and needs, they may be less likely to provide the individualized teaching strategies necessary for these students to succeed. The result is an educational experience that lacks appropriate accommodations and interventions.

Sharma & Simi(2006) say that there is a research conducted by Goffina(2016) that identifies multiple dimensions or types of stigma.

- Public stigma involves the negative or discriminatory attitudes others have about learners with hearing impairments that often lead the learners with hearing impairments to have poor academic performance and reduce confidence to do well.
- Self-stigma refers to negative attitudes including internalized shame, that learners with hearing impairment have about their own condition.
- Institutional stigma is more system involving policies of government and private organisation that intentionally or unintentionally limit opportunities for learners with hearing impairments. Examples include lower funding for deaf education, deaf education research, no state deaf education budget.

PUNCH(2024) reported that societal attitudes towards learners with hearing impairments' condition often lead to feeling of isolation and marginalization, promote learners with hearing impairments to visit speech therapy to cope with the pressure of stigmatization and negative labels made people to underestimate the abilities of learners

with hearing impairments thereby reducing their confidence to excel in educational settings.

It is important to note that stigmatization and negative label has impacted negative learning outcome among the learners with hearing impairments.

Stigma Theories and Social Constructivism Theory

The present study explores Goffma's theory of stigma, which is essential for understanding how societal attitude shape the educational experiences of learners with hearing impairments. Goffma(1963) posts that stigma is a social construct, which individuals who have visible disabilities, such as hearing impairments, being viewed as "other or inferior". This social categorization often leads to marginalization, particularly in educational settings where negative biases can influence expectations and treatment.

Contemporary research support Goffma's ideas, showing that learners with hearing impairments are often subjected to lowered expectations based on stereotypes that they require excessive support or are less capable than their peers. These assumptions can limit opportunities for academic engagement and growth, further perpetuating the-cycle of exclusion.

Even in inclusive education settings, where learners with hearing impairments are integrated into general classrooms, visible signs of impairment- like hearing aids or the use of sign language - often lead to social exclusion or unequal participation. This

underscore Goffman(1963)' notion that societal attitudes, shaped by stereotypes, continue to marginalize these learners with hearing impairments. Modern scholars, such as Oliver(2001) and Kurtz(2016) emphasize that visible and invisible stigma both affect learners with hearing impairments, depending on the extent to which their impairment is observable. Those with visible impairments, such as hearing aids, may face more overt discrimination, while learners with less noticeable impairments may encounter subtler forms of exclusion, as their needs may be overlooked or underestimated.

The process of labeling and stereotyping, as articulated by Goffman, is pivotal to understanding how societal attitudes influence self-perception. Learners with hearing impairment are often labeled as "different" or "incapable" by educators and peers. According to recent studies by Lindsay(2007) and Ainscow(2005), these negative labels can lead to social isolation, lower self-esteem, and reduced academic engagement, as learners internalized these stereotypes and being to believe them. This internalized stigma can diminish their motivation to succeed academically, contributing poor educational outcomes.

Goffma's theory also highlights the persistent of stigma within inclusive education system. Despite efforts to integrate learners with hearing impairments into mainstream classrooms, negative societal attitudes can hinder true inclusion. As demonstrated by research from Booth and Ainscow(2002), the physical integration of learners does not automatically translate into full social and academic participation if educators and peers

maintain perceived notions about their attitudes. This reveals a key challenge in education: changing not only institutional practices but also societal attitudes toward disability.

Social constructivism, as a theory, emphasizes that knowledge is actively constructed by individuals through interactions with their environment and others. Goffma's work on stigma aligns with social constructivism ideas, suggesting that stigma is not an inherent attribute of a person but a socially constructed label that is shaped by societal attitudes and interactions. This perspective is supported by Vgyotsky(1778) who argued that learning is a social process and that people's understanding of themselves and their world is influenced by the social context they are part of. In the case of learners with hearing impairments, societal attitude and social environment can significantly shape how these learners perceive their abilities and themselves, reinforcing the stigma they face.

Learners with hearing impairments' engagement with peers and educators can either reinforce or challenge the stigma they experience. If societal attitudes toward hearing impairments are negative, it can limit these learners' opportunities for growth and participation. On the other hand, positive social interaction, where learners with hearing impairments are seen for their capabilities rather than their disabilities can lead to a change in perceptions and help dismantle stigmatizing beliefs.

Social constructivism posits that learners with hearing impairment actively shape their understanding through social interactions. This perspective is echoed by Well(2009), who asserts that learning is a collaborative process deeply embedded in social context. For learners with hearing impairments, their interactions with educators and peers can either perpetuate or challenge the stigma they encounter.

Thus, social constructivism provides an insightful lens for understanding the construction and perpetuation of stigma in education, demonstrating that societal attitudes and societal interactions play a crucial role in shaping the learners experience of learners with hearing impairments.

Empirical Review

Societal Attitudes Towards Learners with Hearing Impairments.

A study conducted in OYO state by Adebayo(2017) emphasized that exposure to negative societal attitudes often leads to internalized feeling or inadequacy among these learners, which in turn impacts their motivation to succeed academically. This finding aligns with Ogunleye(2019), who argued that learners with hearing impairments often experience low self-worth, believing they are inferior to their peers without disabilities, thereby limiting their academic participation.

Nwoke(2018) pointed out that these learners are frequently marginalized, with many teachers and students holding misconceptions about their abilities, which results in

reduced participation and engagement in the classroom. Akpan(2020) highlighted that visible impairments such as the use of hearing aids, and sign language, still result in social exclusion and stigmatization. As a result, learners with hearing impairments often struggle to form meaningful connections with peers and teachers despite policies aimed at promoting inclusivity.

Moreover, internalized stigma is a crucial factor in shaping the academic performance and self-esteem of learners with hearing impairments. Carter and Simpson(2017), the negative societal attitudes of learners with hearing impairments are exposed to often lead to feeling of inadequacy and inferiority, which affect their academic motivation and participation.

Inlive & Mcleary(2011) examined the societal attitudes toward the learners with hearing impairments, that negative societal attitudes and misconception about disabilities (e.g seeing them as curse or punishment) often led to the segregation of learners with hearing impairments into specialized institutions, limiting their educational opportunities.

Akinyem(2019) highlighted that negative stereotypes, such as assuming learners with hearing impairments cannot learn effectively contributed to both social and physical isolation, further hindering their academic success. This views is echoed by McCabe and Waddington(2018), which highlighted that negative stereotypes about learners with

hearing impairments can result in social exclusion and hinder their integration into mainstream.

Ajayi & Akinmoladun(2020) examines teacher preparedness for inclusive education and found that many teachers lacked the necessary training and resources to effectively support learners with hearing impairments. Social stigma also influenced how teachers perceived these learners abilities.

Eze(2017) explored the impact of community awareness campaign of reducing stigma. The study found that education and advocacy led to improve acceptance of learners with hearing impairments although deep-seated cultural beliefs continued to pose barriers.

Furthermore, Okelo & Amusa(2021) conducted a study on the impact of societal attitudes on the academic performance of learners with hearing impairments in Ibadan secondary schools. Their research revealed that societal attitudes particularly those of parents and teachers, played a significant role in determining the academic success of these learners with hearing impairments. Negative attitudes from teachers, such as the belief that learners with hearing impairments cannot perform well academically, led to lowered expectation and limited opportunities for academic engagement. The study recommended that educational policies be strengthened to address barriers and improve support for learners with hearing impairments.

McCracken(2019) investigated the social perceptions of learners with hearing impairments and their peers. The study found that learners with hearing impairments often faced social exclusion, with peers perceiving them as different and less capable. This social stigma, rooted in societal attitudes and lack of awareness, led to reduced opportunities for social interaction and engagement in classroom activities. The study highlighted that learners with hearing impairments were frequently treated as "outsiders" due to societal biases toward disability, which reinforce their marginalization.

Lemke(2020) examines how societal perceptions of disability, including the learners with hearing impairments are formed through media and cultural representations. Their research revealed that media depictions often reinforce stereotypes of individuals with disabilities, as dependent or incapable, which can influence public attitudes and subsequently impact the self-perception and educational opportunities of learners with hearing impairments. By understanding these societal attitudes, the study emphasized the importance of reshaping cultural representations to challenge these limiting perceptions.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter focuses on the procedure used to explore the influence of societal attitudes towards the education of learners with hearing impairment in Benin City. The research design, population, sample and sample technique, instrument, validity of the instrument, Reliability of the instrument, method of Data collection and method of Data Analysis procedures will be discussed in detail.

Research Design

The focus of this study is on the influence of societal attitudes toward the education of learners with hearing impairment. The descriptive research design was used for this study.

Population of the Study

The population of the study is made up of all learners with hearing impairments at Ihogbe College (Hearing Impaired unit), Benin City.

Sample and Sample Techniques

The study adopt 50 learners with hearing impairments from the hearing impaired unit at Ihogbe College, Benin City. A purposive sampling technique was used to selectively choose participants.

Research Instrument

The instrument is a structured questionnaire designed by the researcher. The questionnaire is called 'Societal Attitudes Towards The Education Of Learners With Hearing Impairment Questionnaire.

This consists of two section A and B. Section A contains demographic data of the respondents, while section B contains the variables of th study. The instrument contains twenty(20) questions and is a 4 points likertypes responses. These are Strong Agree(SA), Agree(A), Disagree(D) and Strongly Disagree(SD).

Validity of the Instrument

The instrument used in this study was validated through consultation with two lecturers in the department of Educational Evaluation And Counseling Psychology, University of Benin. Expert opinions, feedback and recommendations was solicited to enhance the instrument's reliability and validity. The final draft will then submitted to the project supervisor for validation.

Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of the instrument was determined using cronbach's alpha with a pilot sample of 15(fifteen) learners with hearing impairments who was not part of the

main study. The result will reveal the reliability coefficient, and a value of 0.716 or higher will be considered acceptable for proceeding with the instrument.

Method of Data Collection

The researcher personally administered the questionnaire to the learners with hearing impairment at Ihogbe College (hearing impaired unit), Benin City. To ensure clarity and accuracy, the instrument was read and explained in sign language where necessary, facilitating direct interaction and maximizing response rates.

Method of the Data Analysis

The collected data was analyzed using Mean and Standard Deviation.

CHAPTER FOUR
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter presents the results of the research carried out on the influence of Societal attitudes toward the education of learners with hearing impairments in Benin city.

Table 1 Demographic Characteristics of the respondents

Characteristics	Components	Frequency	Percentage %
Gender	Male	21	42.0
	Female	29	58.0
	Total:	50	100.0
Age	11-15	13	26.0
	16-20	21	42.0
	21 and Above	16	32.0
	Total:	50	100.0
Class	JSS1-3	25	50.0
	SS1-3	25	50.0
	Total:	50	100.0
School	Public	50	100.0
	Total	50	100.0

The table above indicates the gender, age, marital status and educational level of the respondents. There were 42% male and 58% female which means that most of the respondents were female in terms of age, 26% were between 11-15 years, 42% were

between 16-20 years and 32% were above 21 years. This showed that most of the respondents were in their teen age and above. This is beneficial because most of the respondents are in the age bracket that could understand what they want and whose perception could be reckon with.

Table 2 The impact of societal attitudes on the educational experiences of learners with hearing impairments

ITEMS	SA Freq (%)	A Freq (%)	D Freq (%)	SD Freq (%)	Mean	STD	Remark
I have experience stigma or discrimination from my peers or teachers due to my hearing impairments.	23(46)	21(42)	5(10)	1(2)	1.68	0.748	Low impact
I have been excluded from participating in certain school activities because of my hearing impairment	18(36)	21(42)	9(18)	2(4)	1.9	0.839	Low impact
I feel that my hearing impairment has limited my opportunity for socialization with my peers.							
I often face challenges in my education because of							

misunderstanding or lack of awareness about hearing impairment.							
I feel that teachers and peers often underestimate my abilities due to societal attitudes surrounding hearing impairment.							

Strong Agree(SA)=1, Agree(A)=2, Disagree(D)=3, and Strongly Disagree(SD)=4.

Weighted Average(WA)=2.03

The result in the above table 4.2 shows that most of the respondents Disagree that they experience stigma or discrimination from their peers or teachers. They disagree that they have been excluded from participating in certain school activities because of their hearing impairment. They also were not of the agreement that hearing impairment has limited their opportunity for socialize with their peers and that teachers and peers often underestimate their abilities. However majority were of the opinion that they face challenges in their education because of misunderstanding or lack of awareness about hearing impairment. It can therefore be deduced that there is low impact of societal attitudes on the educational experiences of learners with hearing impairment in the study area.

Table 3 Influence of societal attitudes on the inclusion of learners with hearing impairment in regular classroom settings

ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	STD	Remark
	Freq(%)	Freq(%)	Freq(%)	Freq(%)			
Negative societal attitude towards hearing impairments often limiting us from fully participating in regular classroom setting.	14(28)	17(34)	11(22)	8(16)	2.26	1.046	High influence
The acceptance of learners with hearing impairments by my classmates and teachers has a positive impact on my inclusion in regular education settings.	19(38)	25(50)	3(6)	3(6)	1.80	0.803	Low influence
My interaction with peers are influenced by attitude they have towards hearing impairments which affect my sense of inclusion	17(34)	21(42)	10(20)	2(4)	1.94	0.843	Low influence
The lack of awareness and misunderstanding about hearing impairments among teachers and classmates has created barriers.	13(26)	23(46)	10(20)	4(8)	2.10	0.886	High influence
Teachers and classmates in my regular school settings are not supportive and understanding of my hearing impairments needs.	14(28)	23(46)	10(20)	3(6)	2.04	0.856	High influence

Strongly Agree(SA)=1, Agree(A)=2, Disagree(D)=3, and Strongly Disagree(SD)=4.

Weighted Average(WA)=2.03

The result as shown in table 4.3 reveals that most of the respondents were of the opinion that negative societal attitude towards hearing impairments often limit them from fully participating in regular class room settings and that the lack of awareness and understanding about hearing impairments among teachers and classmates has created barrier to their inclusion. They also were in agreement that teachers and classmates in thier regular school settings are not supportive and cooperative to them. However, majority disagree that acceptance of learners with hearing impairments by classmates and teachers has a positive impact on their inclusion in regular education settings. They also were not in agreement that interaction with peers are influenced by attitude they have towards hearing impairments which affect their sense of inclusion. It can therefore be inferred that to some extent, societal attitude influence the inclusion of learners with hearing impairments in regular classroom setting.

Table 4 Role societal attitudes plays in shaping the self-esteem and academic achievement of learners with hearing impairments

ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	STD	Remark
	Freq(%)	Freq(%)	Freq(%)	Freq(%)			
Negative societal attitudes towards my hearing impairment have a negative	13(26)	17(34)	9(18)	11(22)	2.36	1.102	High low

impact on my self-esteem and confidence in school.							
Positive societal attitudes toward learners with hearing impairment motivate me to achieve better academically.	19(38)	22(44)	4(8)	5(10)	1.90	0.931	Low role
I feel that social attitudes towards my hearing impairment interfere with how I view my abilities in an academic setting.	12(24)	27(54)	11(22)	0(00)	1.98	0.685	Low role
Societal attitudes shape how I perceive my potential and success in school, influencing my overall academic performance and achievement.	19(38)	19(38)	8(16)	4(8)	1.94	0.935	Low role
I believe that when people treat me with respect and understand me, I perform better academically.	20(40)	24(48)	3(6)	3(6)	1.78	0.815	Low role

Strongly Agree(SA)=1, Agree(A)=2, Disagree(D)=3, and Strongly Disagree(SD)=4.

Weighted Average(WA)=1.99

The result as shown in table 4.4 reveals majority of the respondents disagree positive societal attitudes towards learners with hearing impairment motivate them to achieve better academically and that societal attitudes towards their hearing impairment interfere with how they view their abilities in an academic settings. They disagree that

societal attitudes shape how they perceive their potential and success in school. They were not of the agreement that they perform better academically when people treat them with respect and understanding. However, most were of the opinion that negative societal attitudes towards their hearing impairment have a negative impact on their self-esteem and confidence in school. Therefore, it could be assumed that societal attitude plays minimal roles in shaping the self-esteem and academic achievement of learners with hearing impairment in the study area.

Table 5 Extend of societal attitudes effect on the academic performance of learners with hearing impairment

ITEMS	SA Freq(%)	A Freq(%)	D Freq(%)	SD Freq(%)	Mean	STD	Remark
Negative societal attitudes towards hearing impairment make it harder for me to concentrate in class and perform well academically.	14(28)	18(36)	13(26)	6(12)	2.22	0.996	Low effect
Societal perspective on hearing impairment negatively affect me to feel less motivated to do my best in school.	9(18)	18(36)	9(18)	14(28)	2.56	1.091	High effect
Negative perceptions make my peers and teachers assume I am less confident in my abilities, which affect my academic	11(22)	15(30)	15(30)	9(18)	2.44	1.033	High effect

performance.							
When people treat me differently because of my hearing impairment, it lower my self-esteem and harms my academic success.	10(20)	19(38)	14(28)	7(14)	2.36	0.964	Low effect
Negative societal attitudes towards hearing impairment discourage me from participating fully in my education, resulting in lower academic performance.	10(20)	20(40)	12(24)	8(16)	2.36	0.985	Low effect

Strongly Agree(SA)=1, Agree(A)=2, Disagree(D)=3, and Strongly Disagree(SD)=4.

Weighted Average(WA)=2.39

The result as shown in table 4.5 believe to have revealed that majority of the respondents were not of the opinion that negative societal attitudes towards their hearing impairment make it harder for them to concentrate in class and perform well academically. They disagree that when people treat them differently because of their hearing impairment, it lowers their self-esteem and affect their academic success. They were also not in agreement that negative societal attitudes towards hearing impairment discourage them from participating fully in their education resulting in lower academic performance. However, most of them were of the opinion that societal attitudes on hearing impairment negatively make them to feel less motivated to do their best in school. They also agree that negative perception make their peers and teachers assume them to

have less confidence in their abilities, which affect their academic performance. It can deduced that the effect of societal attitude on the academic performance of learners with hearing impairment is minimal.

Discussion of Findings

The study examined the influence of societal attitudes on the education of learners with hearing impairment.

It explored how societal attitudes affect learners with hearing impairments in regular classroom.

The findings revealed that, overall societal attitudes had a relatively low impact on stigma and exclusion for learners with hearing impairments. Most respondents reported not experiencing significant discrimination or being excluded from school activities, However, the study identified that a lack of awareness and understanding about hearing impairment among peers and teachers posed a significant barrier to their inclusion and academic success. The result suggest that while stigma was not widespread, misunderstanding about hearing impairments were a prevalent challenge.

Regarding inclusion in regular classrooms settings, the research found that societal attitudes, particularly negative perception, limited learners fully participation. The majority of respondents indicated that teachers and classmates lack of awareness created barriers to inclusion.

Notably, the study highlighted that acceptance by peers and teachers did not significantly influence inclusion, pointing to the need for greater awareness and support for learners with hearing impairments.

In terms of self-esteem and academic achievement, the study revealed that societal attitudes had minimal direct effects on academic performance but significantly impacted learners' self-esteem and confidence. Negative societal attitudes were shown to undermine learners' psychological well-being, which could indirectly affect the motivation and academic outcomes. This finding underscores the importance of fostering a positive and supportive environment for learners with hearing impairments to help boost their self-esteem and academic performance.

The research also showed that negative societal attitudes did not directly hinder academic performance but influenced motivation and self-perception, which in turn, impacted educational outcomes. Despite these challenges, the learners expressed that societal attitudes affected their motivation to perform well in school, with many reporting that negative perceptions led to assumptions about their confidence and abilities.

The fact that the majority of respondents did not feel that they were regularly underestimated by their peers or teachers indicated that many educators and classmates likely hold positive views of the capabilities of learners with hearing

impairments. This supportive environment can foster an atmosphere of respect and inclusion which is essential for the academic and social success of these learners.

The study found that when people treat learners with hearing impairment with respect and understanding, these learners perform better academically. This indicates that positive societal attitudes -such as respect, understanding and empathy -play a critical role in fostering a supportive environment.

Positive societal attitudes have a beneficial effect on learners' self-esteem helping them feel valued and capable.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study aimed to explore the influence of societal attitudes toward the education of learners with hearing impairments in Benin City. Chapter One provided a comprehensive introduction, including a discussion of the statement of the problem, research questions and other relevant information. In Chapter Two a review of related literature was conducted, focusing on key theoretical frameworks such as stigma theory, social constructivism and the empirical framework. A descriptive research design was adopted for this study, with data collected through questionnaire. The sample consisted of fifty(50) participants, all of whom were learners with hearing impairments from both junior and senior secondary school at Ihogbe College in Benin City. The responses were analyzed using frequency tables, percentages, mean, scores and standard deviations.

Conclusions

The findings of the study suggest that societal attitudes have varying level of influence on learners with hearing impairment, particularly in their educational experiences, inclusion in regular classrooms, self-esteem and academic performance. Overall the impact of societal attitudes is generally low in most areas with certain exceptions where negative societal attitudes have a more pronounced effect.

In term of educational experience, societal attitudes were found to have a low impact. Most respondents disagreed that they experienced stigma, discrimination or exclusion because of their hearing impairment. The data show that negative perceptions or lack of awareness did not significantly hinder participation in school activities or social interactions. However, a lack of understanding about hearing impairment did present some challenges, indicating that while societal attitudes may not directly cause exclusion they can affect the quality of inclusion.

However, positive societal attitudes seem to add value to the learner's ability to perform better in school.

Overall, the study highlights the need for greater awareness and education to foster support and inclusive environments for learners with hearing impairments. Though societal attitudes do not severely affect educational outcomes, interventions aimed at increasing awareness could improve inclusion and self-esteem ultimately benefiting academic performance.

Recommendation

From the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- **Enhance Awareness and Understanding:** The study reveals that the lack of awareness and understanding about hearing impairments poses a significant barrier to the inclusion and academic success of learners, therefore, it is recommended to implement educational

programs for teachers, learners and the wider community to raise awareness and correct misconceptions about hearing impairments. These programs can promote the importance of inclusive education and encourage positive attitudes toward learners with hearing impairments.

- **Promote Inclusive Teaching Practice:** Teachers should be trained in inclusive teaching strategies that cater to the needs of learners with hearing impairments. This could include offering accommodations such as sign language interpreters, providing written materials, and use assistive technologies training on effective communication and ways to engage learners with hearing impairments will help improve their educational experiences and participation in regular classroom.

- **Foster a Cultural of Acceptance and Support:** The study suggests that negative societal attitudes hinder the inclusion of learners with hearing impairments. Schools should focus on fostering a culture of acceptance by promoting the social integration of these learners through group activities, teamwork, and peer-support programs. Encourage positive peer interactions and providing teachers with strategies to promote cooperation and understanding can help change societal attitudes and improve the learners' sense of belonging.

- **Address the Psychological Impact of Negative:** Although societal attitudes may not directly affect academic performance. They have a significant impact on learners' self-

esteem and confidence. Schools should offer counseling and psychological support services to help learners with hearing impairments cope with the emotional effects of negative societal attitudes. This support could include mentoring programs, confidence-building activities, and workshops that help learners manage stress and improve their self-esteem.

- **Strengthen Collaboration between Teachers and Parents:** Encouraging open communication and collaboration between parents and teachers of learners with hearing impairments is crucial. Schools should establish regular meetings with parents to discuss needs of their children and ensure that strategies for inclusion and academic support are effectively implemented. Parents can also play a key role in advocating for their children and raising awareness in the broader community.

- **Implement Policies For Inclusive Education:** Government and educational institutions should develop policies that prioritize inclusive education, ensuring that learners with hearing impairments are integrated into regular classrooms. This can include providing financial and logistical support for the necessary resources such as assistive devices, teacher training and classroom accommodations.

- **Encourage Further Research On Attitude Change Interventions:** Further research should be conducted to explore effective intervention for changing societal attitudes toward hearing impairments. Longitudinal studies or pilot programs that aim to shift

perception could provide valuable insights into how to implement lasting changes in attitudes within educational settings and communities.

- **Promote Peer-Leadership And Advocacy:** Creating programs where students with hearing impairments can serve as leaders or advocates in their school communities may help to challenge negative perceptions. These programs could involve peer mentoring, awareness campaigns, and student-led discussions about hearing impairments, there by allowing learners with hearing impairments to educate their peers and build a supportive network within the school.

Suggestions for further study

Further research is needed to explore strategies for changing societal attitudes and enhancing inclusion for learners with hearing impairments.

This could include investigating the effectiveness of specific intervention strategies, inclusive education models, and teachers training programs.

Additionally, studying the role of family and community engagement, technology, and accessibility can provide valuable insights.

Longitudinal studies and cross-cultural comparisons can also help deepen our understanding of the complex relationship between societal attitudes, inclusive practices, and the experiences of learners with hearing impairments.

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APPENDIX I
QUESTIONNAIRE
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION AND COUNSELING
PSYCHOLOGY, INFLUENCE OF SOCIETAL ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE
EDUCATION OF LEARNERS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT (ISATELWHI)

Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire is meant for research purposes on the influence of societal attitudes towards the education of learners with hearing impairment.

Please read the items carefully and indicate your response appropriately in the space provided.

I therefore request you to kindly respond to all questions as honestly as possible, as the outcome of this study will hopefully improve educational settings for better people like you. Your response will be treated with utmost confidence.

Thank you.

Sincerely
yours

Eweka Aisosa
Oghosa.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Please provide the following information by ticking the applicate boxes or filling in the blanks:

1. Type Of School Attended (please tick one):

Public School

Private School

2. Age:

11-15 years

16-20 years

21 years and above

3. Class Level:

Junior school (JSS 1-3)

Senior school (SS 1-3)

4. School Name (please write the name of your school):

• Ihogbe College Of Education

5. Sex:

Male

Female

SECTION B: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD
	What is the impact of Societal attitudes on the educational experiences of learners with hearing impairments.				
1.	I have experienced stigma discrimination from my peers or teachers due to my hearing impairment.				
2.	I have been exclude from participating in certain school activities or events because of my hearing impairment.				
3.	I feel that my hearing impairment has limited my opportunities for socialization and friendships with my peers.				
4.	I often face challenges in my education because of misunderstanding or lack of awareness about hearing impairment.				
5.	I feel that teachers and peers often underestimate my abilities due to societal attitude surrounding hearing impairment.				
	How do societal attitudes influence the inclusion of learners with hearing impairment in regular classroom settings?				

6.	Negative societal attitudes toward hearing impairment often limit us from fully participating in regular classroom settings.				
7.	The acceptance of learners with hearing impairment by my classmates and teachers has a positive impact on my inclusion in regular educational settings.				
8.	My interactions with peers are influenced by the attitudes they have towards hearing impairment which affect my sense of				

	inclusion.				
9.	The lack of awareness and understanding about hearing impairment among my teachers and classmates has created barriers to my inclusion.				
10.	Teachers and classmates in my regular school setting are not supportive and understanding of my hearing impairment needs.				
	What role do societal attitudes play in shaping the self-esteem and academic achievement of learners with hearing impairments.				
11.	Negative societal attitudes towards my hearing impairment have a negative impact on my self-esteem and confidence in school.				
12.	Positive societal attitudes towards learners with hearing impairment motivate me to achieve better academically.				
13.	I feel that Societal attitudes towards my hearing impairment interfere with how I view my abilities in an academic setting.				
14.	Societal attitudes shape how I perceive my potential and success in school, influencing my overall academic performance and achievement.				
15.	I believe that when people treat me with respect and understand me, I perform better academically.				
	To what extent do negative societal attitudes towards hearing impairment affect the academic performance of learners with hearing impairment.				
16.	Negative societal attitudes towards learners with hearing impairment make it harder for me to concentrate on class and perform well academically.				

17.	Society perspective on hearing impairment negatively, affect me to feel less motivated to do my best in school.				
18.	Negative perceptions make my peers and teachers assume I am less confident in my abilities, which affect my academic performance.				
19.	When people treat me differently because of my hearing impairment, it lowers my self-esteem and harms my academic success.				
20.	Negative societal attitudes towards hearing impairment discourage me from participating fully in my education, resulting in lower academic performance.				

APPENDIX II

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	14	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	14	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.716	20

APPENDIX III

Societal Attitudes Toward the Education of Learners with Hearing Impairments in Benin City.

Cronbach's A/P	No of Item
0.716	20

Descriptive Statistics School

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid public/private	49	98.0	98.0	98.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Age

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid: 11-15	12	26.0	26.0	26.0
16-20	21	42.0	42.0	42.0
Above 21	16	32.0	32.0	32.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Class

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid:JS1-3 SS1-3	50	100.0	100.0	100.0

Sex

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid: Male	21	42.0	42.0	42.0
Female	29	58.0	58.0	100.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Statistics

	N	Sum	Mean	Standard Derivation
I have experiences stigma or discrimination from my peers due to my hearing impairment	50	84	1.64	.741
I have been excluded from participating in certain school activities or events because of my hearing impairment	50	95	1.90	.839
I feel that my hearing impairment has limited	50	100	2.00	.969

opportunities for socialization and friendships with my peers				
I often face challenges in my education because of misunderstanding or lack of awareness about hearing impairment	50	128	2.56	1.110
I feel that teachers and peers often underestimate my abilities due to societal attitudes surrounding hearing impairment.	50	100	2.00	.904

Statistics

	N	Sum	Mean	Standard Derivation
Negative societal attitudes toward hearing impairment often limit us from fully participating in regular classroom settings	50	-	2.26	1.046
The acceptance of learners with hearing impairment by my classmates and teachers has a positive impact on my inclusion in regular educational setting	50	-	1.80	.808
My interactions with peers are influenced by the attitudes	50	-	1.94	.843

they have toward hearing impairment which affect my sense of inclusion				
The lack of awareness and understanding impairment among my teachers and classmates has created barriers to my inclusion	50	-	2.10	.886
Teachers and classmates in my regular school setting are not supportive and understanding my hearing impairment needs	50	-	2.04	.856