THE ACADEMIC SELF-CONCEPT
OF LEARNERS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT
IN TWO SOUTH AFRICAN PUBLIC SCHOOL CONTEXTS:
SPECIAL AND FULL-SERVICE INCLUSION SCHOOLS

ANNA-BARBARA DU PLESSIS

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA, SOUTH AFRICA

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SPECIAL AND FULL-SERVICE INCLUSION SCHOOLS

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ANNA-BARBARA DU PLESSIS

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FACULTY OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
SOUTH AFRICA

Supervisor
PROF AC BOUWER
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
SOUTH AFRICA

Co-supervisor
PROF JA HATTIE
UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND
NEW ZEALAND

PRETORIA, SOUTH AFRICA
2005
Regrettably, the author/artist/creative mind behind this picture could not be traced, and could, therefore, not be cited.
“... wat is die mens dan dat U aan hom dink,
die mensekind dat U na hom omsien?

U het hom net ‘n bietjie minder as ‘n hemelse wese gemaak
en hom met aansien en eer gekroon ...”

(Psalms 8:5,6)

“A person who doubts himself
is like a man who would enlist in the ranks of his enemies
and bear arms against himself.
He makes his failure certain
by himself being the first person to be convinced of it.”

(Dumas, in Ferreira, 1992:77)
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

How can a mere ‘thank you’ convey the immense gratitude I feel for what people have done over and above what could have been expected from them? Nevertheless, thank you to …

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SUMMARY

The Education White Paper 6 has set South Africa on the course for implementing a policy of inclusive education and participation in its schools. It is argued that an essential criterion to establish the congruency between the inclusive education and participation policy and its implementation is the academic self-concept (ASC) of learners. The ASC is influenced by context, thereby including all the systems which contribute to context, such as the education, school, class and social systems. As the product of different factors in various systems, the ASC may have significant diagnostic value in a school and class system. For this study, the ASC of learners with hearing impairment (HI), as an example of an impairment to be included in schools, was explored, involving two public school contexts: special and full-service inclusion schools.

The research design incorporated a multi- and mixed method design, as quantitative data, to measure, describe and analyse the nature of the ASC of learners with HI, was augmented with qualitative data, to further explore the nature of the relation between the ASC and HI, especially in respect of the dynamics of the ASC. The investigation entailed developing and administering ASC questionnaires to Grade Seven learners with and without HI in special and full-service inclusion schools, observing classroom interactions, conducting interviews with the principals, educators and learners with HI, and collecting background information on the learners with HI.

In answer to the main research question, What is the ASC of Grade Seven learners with HI in the contexts of special and full-service inclusion schools?, the data suggested that school context (full-service inclusion or special schools) did not play a primary role in influencing the ASC of learners with HI. The first sub-question related to the role HI plays in the ASC of Grade Seven learners in the two school contexts. The results suggested that HI greatly influenced the first language ASC (LASC) of the learners with HI in the special school and one of the full-service schools. HI did not seem to play a strong role in the mathematics ASC (MASC) of learners with HI, provided that there was adequate and effective support for the learners with HI. The second sub-question addressed the outcome(s) related to the ASC of Grade Seven learners with HI, which could be regarded as indicative of the successful conversion of primary schools to full-service inclusion schools. The results suggested that a general ASC (GASC) and LASC which are moderately lower than the GASC and LASC of the learners with no HI, and a MASC that is similar to the MASC of the learners with no HI, is acceptable. The third sub-question addressed guidelines to improve the conversion of primary schools to full-service inclusion schools. From the data, early identification of HI,
appropriate technical and early specialised learning support, and the accessibility and knowledge of educators appeared to contribute the most to the ASC of learners with HI. Understanding some of the functional and accidental limitations of the research places the findings and conclusions in perspective.

KEY WORDS

Academic self-concept (ASC)
Inclusive education and participation
Barriers to learning and participation (BLP)
Hearing impairment (HI)
Effective learning environments
Special schools
Full-service inclusion schools
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2. **The various systems**  
   - (a) *Religious and value system*  
   - (b) *Political system*  
   - (c) *Economic, social and community systems*  
   - (d) *Education and school systems*  
   - (e) *Family system*  
   - (f) *Individual system*  
3. **Special educational needs / BLP revisited in the light of the systems**  
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4. **Consequences of exclusion and segregation**
5. **In conclusion**

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(3) Values underpinning inclusive education
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<tr>
<td>AAC</td>
<td>augmentative and alternative communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASC</td>
<td>academic self-concept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASCs</td>
<td>academic self-concepts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASCQ</td>
<td>academic self-concept questionnaire</td>
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<tr>
<td>BFLPE</td>
<td>Big-fish-little-pond Effect</td>
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<tr>
<td>BLP</td>
<td>barriers to learning and participation</td>
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<td>DEAFSA</td>
<td>Deaf Federation of South Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>EASC</td>
<td>English academic self-concept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EASCs</td>
<td>English academic self-concepts</td>
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<td>ENT</td>
<td>Ear, Nose and Throat</td>
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<td>EWP 6</td>
<td>Education White Paper 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>FET</td>
<td>Further Education and Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>GASC</td>
<td>general academic self-concept</td>
</tr>
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<td>GASCs</td>
<td>general academic self-concepts</td>
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<td>GDE</td>
<td>Gauteng Department of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>HI</td>
<td>hearing impairment</td>
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<tr>
<td>I/E</td>
<td>internal / external</td>
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<tr>
<td>L1</td>
<td>first language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LASC</td>
<td>first language academic self-concept (either Afrikaans or Sepedi)</td>
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<tr>
<td>LASCs</td>
<td>first language academic self-concepts (either Afrikaans or Sepedi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAM</td>
<td>mean of achievement marks across all learning areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MASC</td>
<td>mathematics academic self-concept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MASCs</td>
<td>mathematics academic self-concepts</td>
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<tr>
<td>NCNSNET</td>
<td>National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training</td>
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<td>NCESS</td>
<td>National Committee for Education Support Services</td>
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<td>OBE</td>
<td>outcomes-based education</td>
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<td>RSA</td>
<td>Republic of South Africa</td>
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<td>SHQ</td>
<td>Song and Hattie Questionnaire</td>
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<td>SAT</td>
<td>Stanford Achievement Test</td>
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<td>SASA</td>
<td>South African Schools Act</td>
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<td>SDI</td>
<td>Self-Description Inventory</td>
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<td>SBST</td>
<td>school-based support team</td>
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<td>SGB</td>
<td>school governing body</td>
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<td>SSPS</td>
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