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Uko Francesca Uche-Ezekiel
Institute of Special Education
Studies, Faculty of Education
Palacky University Olomouc,
Czech Republic

Educational Audiology and Hearing Impairment

Uko Francesca Uche-Ezekiel

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Book Review

The right to quality education for all children including those with Special Education Needs (SEN) articulated in both international and national policy and legislation has raised consciousness among stakeholders particularly in the school setting. This, in addition to the quest to contribute to the academic community prompted the above authors to intellectually craft this master piece titled “*Educational Audiology and Hearing Impairment*” to be a close associate of professionals in Special Educational Needs, allied disciplines generally and hearing impairment in particular. The authors appreciate the challenge of hearing loss present in the family, school and the society especially in the seemingly inclusive schools in Nigeria. The wealth of authors experience from the classroom, research field and therapeutic clinic gives them insight into the subject matter and opportunity to readers to benefit from firsthand information presented in the text.

The book is presented in simple and straight forward language devoid of professional jargon to enhance the understanding of all categories of readers, where it is unavoidable such term (s) is well explained. Structurally, the book is divided into ten chapters, each, focusing on a specific topic with a balance relationship to the title of the publication. Diagrams, tables and charts are clearly and intelligently presented to facilitate the point being buttressed.

In chapter one, the authors introduce it by under scoring ability to hear as a condition for effective conversation or communication both at home and in school. The loss of this ability or malfunctioning of the organ due to many factors result to hearing impairment. The chapter further explains the term hearing impairment with specific illustrations and highlights the different types based on time or age of onset, degree of loss and site of lesion as seen below:

- Congenital loss
- Adventitious hearing loss
- Deafness
- Hardness of hearing
- Conductive hearing loss
- Mixed hearing loss
- Psychogenic hearing loss

The effects of hearing impairment on the individual is discussed with particular emphasis on environment such as family, classroom and society as it reduced ones’ ability to interact. In the school the chapter notes that learning outcomes are adversely and substantially affected, at home the child is seemingly in a different world as he/she has difficulty communicating with others creating psychological problems and opportunity for the buildup of attitudinal barrier. The role of parents as active partners in education of persons with hearing impairment in collaboration with special educators and other professionals/paraprofessionals are succinctly discussed in the book.

Chapter two focuses on etiology of hearing impairment which occurred at three different stages, professionally referred to as pre-natal, peri-natal and post-natal, in each of these developmental periods, there are specific factors that lead to this disability. Prominently listed and discussed as causes of the condition in the chapter are Rh factor (Rhesus factor,

Correspondence:

Uko Francesca Uche-Ezekiel
Institute of Special Education
Studies, Faculty of Education
Palacky University Olomouc,
Czech Republic

n maternal Rubella, malnutrition, ototoxic drugs, chromosomal abnormality, prolonged labour, Anoxia, premature delivery, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), infections, excessive noise and accident. The authors in chapter three stress the importance of early identification and strategies for managing the impairment among professionals with call on professionals and multi-agency participation. The chapter appreciates the role of research by audiologist scientists, British Educational Research Agency and advances in technology in identification and management of hearing impairment. Among other screening tests, the efficacy of Oto-Acoustic Emission (OAEs) is commended. The next chapter is basically concerned with anatomy and physiology of the human ear as the basis for understanding the process of hearing sound. It also notes some pathology that may constitute hindrances to production and transmission of sound as well as the mechanism of hearing process.

Chapter five concentrates on audiometric assessment, the concept is properly defined and its global development chronologically presented. Emphasis on neonatal screening and the types of hearing test that can be conducted on both children and adults is central in this publication. According to the authors these include:

- ✓ Pure-tone Testing
- ✓ Speech Testing
- ✓ Test of the middle Ear
- ✓ Auditory Brainstem Response
- ✓ Otoacoustic Emission
- ✓ Whispered Voice Test
- ✓ Turning Fork Test

The procedure of conducting screening test and interpretation of the results are clearly discussed in the chapter. Chapter six presents the protocol for audiological assessment acceptable globally in a simplified manner; hints on audiological management and evaluation are well explained. Chapter seven simply and clearly defines the term hearing aids, its development, public perception, maintenance and psycho-social implications of using hearing aids in different societies. It also discusses parts of hearing aids and common types as well their advantages and disadvantages principally to guide users in the selection of appropriate hearing aids that will enhance learning and communication. The next chapter centered on professional competences needed to educate learners with hearing impairment which is National Certificate in Education with specialization in hearing impairment, specialized skills in clinical setting and ability to communicate with the clients/parents. In chapter nine, the authors recognize the value of classroom interaction in the development of children with hearing impairment and extensively discussed classroom intervention strategies which are broadly divided into two, educational and medical intervention. The former include oral method, manual method and total communication while the latter focus on curative measures aimed at addressing the incidences and prevalence of hearing problem through surgical operations, screening/assessment and recommendation of hearing aids. They also highlight the strength and weakness associated with each intervention approach. The chapter is concluded with emphasis on classroom accommodations and other support services for children with hearing impairment. The last chapter presents self-assessment questions drawn from all

the chapters. An interesting part of the book is the glossary of some terminologies used to serve as a quick reference to readers when in doubt or confused with a particular term.