

**THE USE OF DIGITAL VIDEO CONFERENCING TO SUPPORT THE TEACHING  
AND LEARNING OF DEAF LEARNERS**

**by**

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this research report is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Teacher Education at the University of Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other university.



V S Naiker



May 2006

## SYPNOSIS

This study explores how digital video conferencing (DVC) supports the teaching and learning of Deaf learners providing access to an appropriate curriculum. Whilst there are policies addressing the educational needs of the Deaf in South Africa, there are still gaps between policy and practice, as a result there are not enough visible results that ensure equal access and equal opportunities. The lack of visual educational technologies that support the delivery of instruction in schools for the Deaf in South Africa create barriers to effective teaching and learning.

The main aim of this study is, how does digital video conferencing support the teaching and learning of Deaf. Also, the experiences of Deaf learners who are exposed to digital video conferencing technologies will be described. The findings will be used to make recommendations for improving the teaching and learning strategies in Deaf education.

This study also examines how Digital Video Conferencing and related educational technologies support the teaching and learning of Deaf learners. According to DEAFSA, 2002, 14.43% of learners within special educational needs are Deaf. In my 14 years experience in Deaf education, and 11 years as principal of the school for Deaf learners, I have found that barriers exist in Deaf learners who are part of the system. The constructivist theory which focuses on the individual in the learning process, will be used in this study. This study proves that Digital video conferencing intervention can minimize the barriers that exist in Deaf education and afford learners the opportunity to participate in and make use of their natural language, that is South African Sign Language.

The qualitative research design is therefore most appropriate for this study, since the focus is to obtain data that could facilitate an understanding of the experience of Deaf learners, whose teaching and learning sites are supported using digital video conferencing technologies. The video recorded responses from Deaf participants increased the validity of the data. The participants in this study are twelve grade 10 (N1) Deaf learners from Tshwane north. The participants being Deaf learners in this research project receive instruction as activities from their educator using DVC.

The findings revealed that DVC liberates learners with special needs and their teachers, especially, opening up opportunities for the Deaf in particular. DVC technology must be seen as an educational tool to support the delivery of the exciting National Curriculum Statements (NCS) curriculum, and more importantly, supports the communicative modes of the Deaf, and in doing, so improves the status of Deaf education in South Africa

Finally this new role requires the educator of the Deaf to assume responsibility for creating within Deaf learners a desire to learn (Storbeck, 1998). In doing so, using DVC technologies would foster an ethos of achievement among Deaf learners.

DVC technology provides exactly what the Deaf have been waiting for, that is educational technologies that would support the acquisition of their natural language, South African Sign Language. The use of DVC technology in the teaching and learning of Deaf learners in South Africa is a new concept, therefore it is necessary for the teacher of the Deaf to use instructional methods that motivate learners and encourage active learning.



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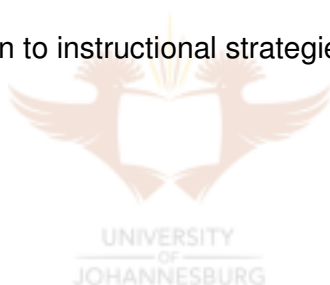
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