



HELLENIC REPUBLIC

**National and Kapodistrian
University of Athens**

School of Education

Department of Early Childhood Education

MA Program "Special Education"

Name: **Maria-Anna Moraki**

Supervisor: **Evdoxia Nteropoulou – Nterou**

Title of dissertation: **Views and experiences of D(d)eaf teachers
regarding the inclusive education of D(d)eaf students**

Abstract

In the effort to create an inclusive way of education and an educational system in which all children have equal opportunities and equal access, it is necessary to explore the views of teachers. More specifically, in the discussion regarding equal access of D(d)eaf children to inclusive education, in this research, D(d)eaf teachers are invited to express their experiences and opinions regarding disability and special and inclusive education.

This study aims to investigate the experiences of D(d)eaf teachers from the education they have received, with a focus on inclusion, but also to present their opinions regarding the existing form of D(d)eaf education and its relationship with inclusive education. The ultimate goal of the research is for educators, with a critical eye, to evaluate the methods of educating the D(d)eaf, access and obstacles that may exist. The pursuit of providing quality education to D(d)eaf children, as well as equal participation in learning for people with D(d)eafness in general, is another goal of this specific research. Finally, the main demand is to change the way D(d)eaf people are educated and to implement inclusive practices by teachers, for the "unconditional" participation of children in education and the removal of any possible exclusion.

Based on the purpose and ultimate goal of this research effort, the research questions of the study have been formulated, which consist of three axes. Initially, the teachers present their views regarding inclusion, disability and D(d)eafness. Then, they are invited to share their experiences from their school context as people with disabilities and finally, to express their opinions regarding the existing form of education for D(d)eaf children.

To collect the data, semi-structured interviews were conducted, based on a pre-designed question guide. The resulting data were subsequently analyzed using the content analysis method.

From the analysis of the data, medicalized interpretations of the concepts of disability and D(d)eafness emerged, as well as the identification of the term "integration" with integration. Also, the responses revealed that the training received by the participants is non-inclusive, with minimal support mechanisms and with the biggest obstacle to their full access being the communication code. Furthermore, it appears that some teachers have worked in inclusive structures, with the intention of collaborating and integrating children with disabilities, but have nevertheless experienced exclusion from special education positions in their work, due to their impairment. Finally, the issue of the inadequacy of state benefits regarding the support of D(d)eaf children and their equal access to education is highlighted.

Keywords: Disability, education, D(d)eafness, inclusive education, D(d)eaf teachers, access to education.