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Developing Entrepreneurship among Hearing Impaired People with Technical and Vocational Skills in Rivers State, Nigeria

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Abstract: In Nigeria, hearing impaired people face immense socio-economic difficulties. Due to communication barriers, employers find hiring even those who have completed their education difficult. In light of this, most of them undergo vocational training to acquire vocational skills, hoping they will be meaningfully engaged in job activities to enhance their economic lives. Many hearing-impaired people who possess vocational skills hardly gain employment, and those who have started a business venture or enterprise hardly thrive. The present study investigated entrepreneurship development among hearing impaired people in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study, guided by three research questions, adopted a case study, using interviews and focus group discussions to collect data. The study participants comprised 38 persons. The study's findings showed that communication, building relationships, skillfulness, technology usage, and the ability of relatives to provide support were vital for success in self-employment. It was found that very little has been done by way of activities conducted to develop entrepreneurship for self-employment among hearing impaired students. Furthermore, educational level, medium of vocational training, gender, and family background in entrepreneurship contributed to developing entrepreneurship competencies among the study group. Government intervention, among others, was recommended.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship development, hearing impaired people, vocational skills, special education, entrepreneurship development for hearing impaired people, hard of hearing people.*

1. Introduction

The hearing impaired people are persons who are partly or completely unable to hear with one or the two ears, even sounds higher than required frequency (Zaidi & Baveja, 2021). This condition according to Zaidi and Baveja, may be inherited or acquired; temporal or permanent and affects a total of 250 million people and above globally. Potential

effects of hearing impairment according to Singh in Zaidi and Baveja include: inability to understand sounds from speech, inability to communicate, backwardness in education and economic development as well as social isolation and stigmatization. This is further supported by evidence from the study of Wonkam-Tingang, Kengne Kamga, Adadey, Nguetack, De Kock, Munung and Wonkam (2021). The study found that the hearing impaired individuals in Cameroon had

difficulty in gaining employment and even those who managed to get employed faced difficulties in smooth operation in the workplace due to communication barriers.

Report from the Chairman, Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (JONAPWD) Kaduna State Chapter, Shemang (2018) shows that about 9.5 million Nigerians suffer from one form of hearing impairment or the other. Eleweke, Agboola and Guteng in Asonye, Emma-Asonye and Edward (2018) lamented that, in Nigeria, hearing impaired people face immense social and economic difficulties. Due to communication barrier, employers find it difficult to hire, even those who have completed education (Ubani, Sanikpege & Akubuiro, 2022). In light of this, majority of them undergo vocational education and training to acquire vocational skills with the hope that they would be meaningfully engaged in job activities to enhance their economic lives.

Vocational education and training has the potential to promote self-employment (Bairagya, 2021; Punch, 2016) because an individual can build a business venture or enterprise around a vocational trade. However, experience shows that majority of hearing impaired people in Nigeria and other developing countries, who possess vocational skills hardly gain employment with their skills and those who start a business venture around their vocational skill hardly thrive partly because of communication barrier (Muwaniki & Muvirimi, 2017; Osowole & Onwuchekwa, 2001). Knowledge of entrepreneurship is a key element that can enhance success in business enterprise (Lawal & Ojodu, 2022). Developing entrepreneurship among hearing impaired people with vocational skills could promote self-employment among them.

2. Purpose of the Study

The study investigated entrepreneurship development among hearing impaired people in Rivers State, Nigeria with three research questions.

3. Research Questions

- i. What entrepreneurship competencies are required for self-employment among hearing-impaired people with vocational skills?
- ii. How are identified entrepreneurship competencies developed among school students for hearing-impaired students?
- iii. What is the influence of educational level, medium of vocational training, gender, and family background on entrepreneurship competencies among hearing-impaired people?

4. Significance of the Study

Conducting this study would be of significant benefits to practice and the body of literature. For practice, the result of the study would provide school with necessary information competences required for self-employment among hearing impaired individuals. Schools could use such information for

developing adequate programme towards preparing students would also use the result of the study in policy formulation towards improving the development of entrepreneurship among hearing impaired persons. For the body of literature, the result of the study will provide gap in knowledge on development of entrepreneurship among hearing impaired individuals particularly in the Nigerian context.

5. Literature Review

Vocational education is believed to prepare individuals for successful transition from school to employment (Wilson-Clark & Saha, 2019) because it aims to equip individuals with occupation related skills. The acquisition of occupation-related skills has several advantages for both the individual and society at large. For the individual, it is a means for competence development towards gainful employment. Thus, it enhances economic lives, positive self-esteem, and social integration (Fatima & Saleem, 2016; Ibrahim et al., 2017; Jørgensen et al., 2021). When an individual gets employed whether self-employed or paid employment, the person receives income to take care of personal needs which boost economic life. The ability to take care of personal needs could engender a sense of self-fulfillment, which leads to positive self-esteem and social integration (Bagheri-Nesami et al., 2016; Filiatreau et al., 2023; Tong et al., 2022). For society, acquiring occupation-related skills provides an opportunity for gainful employment, which could empower individuals to contribute towards enhancing economic development in society (Banjo & Oludele, 2020; Khilji et al., 2012). When more and more individuals gain paid or self-employment, they invest their various human capital in completing their job functions. This way, they contribute to economic development of the society at large.

Vocational education is also very beneficial to hearing-impaired individuals. Literature shows that vocational education and training provide support for individuals with disabilities, including the deaf and hearing impaired, to gain employment (Breyer, C., Wilfling, Leitenbauer & Gasteiger-Klicpera, 2020; Clark, 2007; Vernon & Fishler, 1966; Yusof, Ali & Salleh, 2014); enhances independence and economic life among persons with disability (Nadya, Syaifudin & Fahriza, 2022; Wiratman, Yuliana & Roihana, 2018); promotes self-awareness, self-dependence mindset and ability to select desired vocation among hearing impaired (Roy, 2020).

Entrepreneurship is the process of identifying a business venture, developing a business plan, and determining the resources needed to get the business venture started and running (Nieman, Hough & Nieuwenhuizen, 2003; Osimabale & Gidado, 2016). Evidence from the literature shows that entrepreneurship training is a potential means of economic advancement both for individuals with hearing impairment and the nation at large. For example, in a survey conducted in Ibadan, Western part of Nigeria by Oyewumi and Adeniyi (2013), it was found from the perception of the study participants, who were majorly students with hearing impairment, that entrepreneurship promotes self-dependence

and economic development. In a similar survey conducted in south-east and south-south zone of Nigeria by Olayi, Egaga and Ikebudo (2019), it was found that exposure to entrepreneurship training had multiplier effect as it equips individuals with the competence to develop a business towards enhancing the economic livelihood of individuals with hearing impairment as well as the immediate community.

In light of the significant role that entrepreneurship training plays in economic life of people with hearing impairment, there is need to gain an understanding of how to develop entrepreneurship among this group of people. It is also important to identify the skills needed to be a successful entrepreneur. The definition of entrepreneurship provided by Nieman et al. (2003) and Osimabale and Gidado (2016) provides some insight into the skills needed for successful entrepreneurship. These include: thinking skill, decision making skills, planning and resourcefulness. This is because, to be able to identify a business venture requires an individual to think through. And after identifying the business, there is need to develop a plan of actions to be taken. Decisions have to be taken to execute the plans. Every business venture requires resources to survive. Resourcefulness of the business owner helps him/her to manage resources to solve problems towards achieving business goals (Bradley, 2014).

Other entrepreneurship skills specified by Cooney (2012) are technical skills, management skills. According to Kutzhanova et al. (2009), technical skills are skills required for producing a business product or service while management skills are skills needed for day to day operation of a business. A model for developing entrepreneurship skill is offered by Gibb in Cooney (2012). According to the model, teaching entrepreneurship should focus on instilling values, development of capacity for strategic thinking, stimulating the entrepreneurial attitude, utilisation of experiential learning, enhancing relationship and collaborative and networking attitude among others. A study by Atkins (2013) to gain insight into how deaf entrepreneurs in USA manage to survive in their business ventures revealed that experience and skills, collaboration and networking strategy, understanding of the market and using communication strategies among others were vital to successful entrepreneurship endeavour. Typical communication strategies employed by the participants in Atkins' study were email, text messaging, video relay service and telecommunication relay service among others.

Although, entrepreneurship is reported to contribute positively to the livelihood of hearing impaired individuals, little evidence exists in the empirical literature regarding the development of entrepreneurship among hearing impaired individuals particularly in the Nigerian context. The present study therefore sought to fill this gap in knowledge.

6. Methodology

The study adopted a qualitative case study. According to Ary et al. (2010), a case study is a type of qualitative research that combines a number of data collection methods such as interview, focus group and observation, to gain in-depth

understanding of a phenomenon under investigation. Specifically, the study employed an explanatory case study which according to Chopard and Przybylski (2021) aims at providing explanation and not just description of a case which could be an individual, a group, a subject matter or an event. The present study intended to gain an in-depth understanding of the development of entrepreneurship competences required for self-employment among hearing impaired people with vocational skills in Nigeria and also ascertain how family background, educational level, medium of vocational training and gender explain the entrepreneurship competences required for self-employment. Based on this, case study was considered appropriate.

The study participants were 38 persons. They comprised 32 hearing impaired persons purposively selected from a church where they regularly gather on Sundays for worship. The other six persons included: two teachers (hearing impaired), one principal, one vice principal, one student teacher (hearing

impaired) and one sign language interpreter from the church were the hearing impaired gather on Sundays. The sign language interpreter served as a research assistant and interviewee.

Data gathered for the study were transcribed and manually coded in Microsoft Word. Thematic analysis was used to identify themes.

7. Findings and Discussion

The study findings are presented here. The presentation will follow the findings of each of the research questions.

Research Question 1: What entrepreneurship competencies are required for self-employment among hearing-impaired people with vocational skills?

To answer this research question, thematic analysis was employed to identify themes from the transcription of the focus group discussion and the interview sessions with study participants. Five major themes emerged from this process. These themes are communication, building relationship, skillfulness, technology usage and ability of relatives to provide support.

Communication

Communication is described by Aririguzoh (2005) as the process through which information, for a particular aim, is sent and received through a channel. Aririguzoh, further added that communication is significant for the success of an entrepreneurial venture. The finding from this study shows that ability to communicate is a vital competence, that the hearing impaired individuals need to be successful in self-employment. This was evident from one of the interviewees (INTERV 1) of the study. INTERV 1 has a Diploma in Furniture making from a Polytechnic in Nigeria. He had worked in a furniture making firm before resigning to start his own business of making furniture. His report showed that

communication has been very vital to success in his business. According to INTERV 1:

When people come to my shop for the first time, I make gestures and they would know from my gestures that I have hearing impairment problem. Then I bring paper for them to write what they want. I also reply them through writing. This way, I establish business transaction with my customers. ... I exchange phone numbers with my customers and clients. So, they send me sms whenever they want my service. One particular client has given me more than four jobs through sms communication.

Stressing the importance of communication, INTERV 1 lamented that it is sad that quite several hearing-impaired people lack the basic communication skills of reading and writing and, as such, have difficulties in communicating with their business clients. Another evidence of the importance of communication was reported by another interviewee (INTERV 2) who has National Certificate of Education (NCE). She had worked as a teacher in a private school for the hearing impaired students. At the time of the interview, she was no more with school but in business of buying and selling of children's clothes. She was asked how she was able to communicate with hearing people. She said:

I have a little girl with me who hears. She becomes the first contact with customers. She communicates with them. When they have selected what they want to buy, I write the price on a piece of paper. They also write on paper. Through this process we negotiate price until we come to agreement.

A potential problem with this mode of communication used by INTERV 1 and INTERV 2 is that it may be difficult for them to establish business transaction with a hearing person who cannot read and write. But in any case, that they are able to communicate in reading and writing is a plus for their business success. This finding aligns with the finding of Sheh, Hanapi, Mustapha and Kiong (2020) that basic communication skills of reading, writing and counting are needed by hearing impaired graduates to secure jobs.

Other dimensions of communication skill which has to do with being nice and humorous when communicating with people: body gesture and aptitude to express taught in writing when communicating with a hearing person were demonstrated by INTERV 1 which according to Sheh, et al. (2020) was vital for securing job among hearing impaired individuals.

Skillfulness

The finding of the study revealed that skillfulness is a vital requirement for entrepreneurship. Skillfulness is defined by Kamarudin and Said (2008) as a specialised ability in performing tasks. During the interview session with INTERV 1, he emphasized that one need to be very skillful to excel in business. He used furniture making as an example.

Because of communication barrier, the person with hearing impairment already has challenge. If you are not skillful in making good furniture, nobody will patronize you. If I make a

chair and display it for sale, what will attract people to it, is the skill applied in making it exceptional. So, if a hearing impaired individual is skillful, people will seek for the product or service. My products and services have been always commended by my clients. For example, I worked for a client, a lecturer in a university, during a renovation exercise. He recommended me for his colleague. That colleague recommended me for their head of department. I have done several person furniture jobs for the head of department. Recently, she also connected me to another person who needed furniture service. I believe the skill I put into place in doing my work plays a very good contributory role in these chains of jobs.

During the focus group discussion session, a report from one of the participants also confirmed that skillfulness is an important competence needed for success in self-employment. According to this participant, who is skilled in baking,

one needs to be very skillful in whatever you do to succeed. When I make my cake, people buy it and make more orders. I believe they like it. I have been into the trade and have gathered experience and acquired skill in the job (BAKER 1).

This finding corroborates the finding of Atkins (2016) that skills and experience were needed for an enterprise. This was also expressed by INTERV 1.

Technology Usage

Majority of the study participants both from the focused group discussion and interview reported that ability to use technology especially social media is instrumental to success as a self-employed person. According to BAKER 1 who was on her teaching practice at a special school for hearing impaired students, "... after making my products, I snap them and put them on my Facebook page and also my whatsapp groups and wall. I get quite a number of orders through this means". INTERV 1 and other participants during focused group discussion reported that ability to use social media was very helpful to them. However, not many of them are able to use social media to promote their business. Sheh, et al. (2020) found that technology skills were very vital in job security among hearing impaired graduates in Malaysia. In fact, competence in using technology could be very useful in business promotion among hearing impaired. For example, they could use social media to advertise their products and services. They could employ the services of good content developers would will create content to promote their business ventures. The finding corroborates the finding by Ukpere, Slabbert and Ukpere (2014) that integrating technology contributed to business success among women entrepreneurs in Keyan. Furthermore, Maiorana-Basas and Pagliaro (2014) asserted that development of technology appropriate for usage by the deaf could promote their participation in education, society and business.

Building Relationship

The ability to build relationships was also found to be a competence needed for self-employment among hearing-

impaired individuals. The inability to communicate through auditory means could pose a problem relating to the hearing people by the hearing impaired person. However, the ability of the hearing impaired person to break this barrier and establish friendships and relationships with hearing people could be a plus for them generally and also for those who are self-employed. Evidence of this was from the report by BAKER 1, BAKER 2 (who makes cakes), a STOCKFISH SELLER, and a GLASS WINDOW MAKER. According to the GLASS WINDOW MAKER,

I have friends who are hearing people. They helped me by recommending this window to people who want to install it in their houses. Then they bring the jobs, and I do it. After which, I give my friends some percentage of the proceeds from the job.

Similar experience was also shared by STOCKFISH SELLER and BAKER 2. INTERV 1 was also found to demonstrate good relationship with people. This was evident through the report from an interview session with the sign language interpreter. According to him:

I found that some of them are good in relationship building. One particular person among them is so good in interpersonal relationship. He has a welcoming and friendly smiles. Most of the deaf people who had to make a written document go to his house for help and he is not tired of supporting them.

This finding agrees with the finding of Ikeze (2020) that ability to relate with others played influential role in self-employment among hearing impaired individuals in Cross Rivers State, Nigeria. Sheh, et al. (2020) also found that ability to socialize and teamwork, helping friends and working with each cooperatively were vital entrepreneurship competences for success in workplace. The result further agrees with that of Halim, Bakar, Hamzah and Rashid (2013) who found from the perspectives of employers in Malaysia that interpersonal skills was a requirement to gain employment by hearing impaired students. Similarly, the finding agrees with that of Atkins (2013) who found from a study participant that collaboration in networks both with deaf and hearing people was instrumental to building a business success. This result is rooted in social capital theory which focuses on the way built interpersonal relationships could serve as a valuable resource base towards enhancing success for members of a network (Xie, Wang & Lee, 2021). Information provided by friends to GLASS WINDOW MAKER was a resource vital to building customer base towards growing his business. In their study, Xie et al. (2021) found that the performance of agricultural entrepreneurs was positively and significantly influenced by social capital.

Ability of Relatives to Provide Support

Getting support in times of needs and challenging situations, from relatives such as family members and friends is regarded as social support and it improves quality of life (Towey, 2023). A survey study by Lovretić, Pongrac, Vuletić and Benjak (2016) found that social support from family members

significantly predicted quality of life among people with hearing impairment from Osijek and Zagreb in Croatia. Support from relatives was reported to be of significant benefit to success in business among the studied group in the present study. This fact was evident from the special school's vice principal for the hearing impaired. The vice principal reported:

some parents of the hearing impaired do not care for their children or wards who have hearing impairment problem. They see the school as a dumping ground. They bring them to the school and do not check the status of their wards partly due to communication barrier. But there is one particular woman who is so supportive of the child. She comes to school with the child and comes to pick him up from school and follows up on anything happening in the school to ensure the child benefits. As a result of this support, the child did well in his academic. I hear the parents established a business for the boy after graduation.

BAKER 1 (an undergraduate student studying Special Education with specialization in Social Studies) during interview session, also reported to have enjoyed similar support from her parents. According to her,

I learnt baking from my mother. Now I am very skillful in baking. My mum brings jobs for me. However, now I am not doing baking for commercial purpose because of my school. When I finish school and there is no ready job, I could venture in the business again.

Other study participants during the focus group discussion reported that their children and other relatives provided support of interfacing with customers. This is an indication that friends and relatives are potential resources that could be very useful for hearing impaired people engaged in entrepreneurship ventures. This implies that the self-employed hearing impaired individual must be resourceful (that must be skilled in using available resources). This corroborates the conclusion of Akeke, Eno and Eyo (2018) that resourcefulness is needed by small business operators. Paskaran and Yasin (2020) found that low parental support was associated with low academic performance of hearing impaired students. Although the focus of the present study is not academic achievement but support from relative and friends play some contributive role in the business success of the studied hearing impaired individuals.

Research Question 2: How are identified entrepreneurship competencies developed among students, in school for the hearing impaired students?

To provide answer to this research question, interview was conducted with the principal, vice principal and two teachers. The principal and vice principal were hearing people who read special education in the university and were in the senior secondary section of the school. The two teachers were hearing impaired persons and teach in the junior secondary section of the school. One of them, was a female teacher who had bachelor's degree in cultural and creative arts. The other was a male teacher and had National Certificate of Education

(NCE) but was enrolled in a bachelor's degree programme in special education. They were asked what they did to equip students with vocational skills and if they exposed the students with some form of entrepreneurial development programme to help students establish their business after graduating from the school. The responses gotten revealed that not much was being done at the time. The male teacher reported that:

before, the school had a functional centre for vocational training provided by government and students were exposed to training in shoe making, tailoring and hair styling. As of now, the centre is not functioning anymore due to lack of funding for materials from government.... But some students enroll for training outside school.

The female teacher was asked if she exposed her students to any form of entrepreneurship aspect of creative and cultural arts. She said "NO, I just follow the curriculum and my scheme of work because there is no time".

The principal and vice principal of the senior secondary section of the school gave similar responses. The question posed was "Sir, is there any form of vocational training organized in the school to equip your students with vocational skills?" The vice principal responded:

The school on its own for now does not have any vocational training programme. But we have a vocational training hall which was built by a, none governmental organization for vocational training. The hall is basically for learning shoe making. As of when the organization came, they also exposed the students to training in fish production. For now, only the shoe making section of the vocational programme is working but not in full scale as we would love it to be. This is because, we lack materials. Recently, we were able to get support for supply of materials and the students made shoe for exhibition which we are preparing to go for.

When asked if there is any entrepreneurial exposure for the students who have learnt the vocational skills for example in the fish making and shoe. The response was NO. According to the vice principal: the organization provided startup packs for best performing students. The limited entrepreneurial activities in the school could be traced to the limited integration of entrepreneurship education in the Nigerian curriculum for students with need for special education as observed by Omede and Oguche (2016). This finding varies from the result by Omede and Oguche (2016). This finding varies from the result by Iftikhar et al. (2022) who found from their study that students with hearing impairment were exposed to different vocational training such as plumbing, moto mechanic, pottery, carpentry, cooking and baking and fashion and design among others in Lahore, Pakistan.

Research Question 3: What is the influence of educational level, medium of vocational training, gender and family background on entrepreneurship competences among hearing impaired people?

Information from interview session with the study participants were used to answer this research question. The findings

reveal that educational level, family background and medium of vocational training play some contributory role in the development of entrepreneurship competences among the hearing impaired people.

An evidence to this finding was from the report of the sign language interpreter who was part of the study participants. He was asked: how long have you been working with these people and from your experience, do you think education background, gender, vocational training and family background have any role to play in the entrepreneurship competences among them? According to him.

I have served as an interpreter here for a period of seven years now. I have four persons among them who have attended tertiary institutions. One, a male learnt furniture in a polytechnic, one, a female, wife to the furniture person, has National Certificate of Education in Home Economics, studied home economics. The third person, a male has Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts. The fourth person, a female also has National Certificate of Education but am not very sure of her area of specialisation. These four, have enjoyed family support and their parents are educated. To me, they have demonstrated commendable level of success in business, particularly, the furniture person. He gets jobs continually, he has three children and he pays their fees from his business proceeds. Sometimes he gets jobs that he also invites his fellow hearing impaired fellows who are furniture makers to join. I have personally given him furniture jobs to do for me. On one occasion, I invited him to do a job for me in my office. I talked to my office colleague about him. My colleague marveled that a hearing impaired person could work with such skill. He then invited him to do a job for him. He then recommended the man to his head of department. This head of department has connected this man to many jobs since after then. One day I asked him how he was able to get all these jobs. He answered, "I try to ensure I do my jobs to the taste of my clients. My learning from the Polytechnic also helps me".

level could provide them with some level of exposure and interpersonal relationship as well as communication skills needed for success in entrepreneurship ventures. This aligns with the finding of Kolstad and Wiig (2014) that an additional year of primary education significantly contributed to profitability in entrepreneurship in a survey conducted in Malawi. The testimony about the furniture person who studied from Polytechnic is also an evident that medium of vocational training has influence on entrepreneurship competence. In Nigeria, Polytechnics were established for equipping individuals with technological skills with one of the goals as: to provide training that will impact the skills necessary to produce technicians and technologist who would be enterprising and self-reliant (Federal Government of Nigeria, FGN, 2013).

The interview sessions with BAKER 1 and the vice principal are evident that family background plays significant role in the entrepreneurship competences among hearing impaired people. BAKER 1 reported how she has always enjoyed great support from her mother (a graduate) who taught her baking,

linked customers to her and also educational support. The vice principal's testimony of a hearing impaired student whose mother (a graduate) was always involved in the schooling of her child and how the child was succeeding in a business setup for him by the parents is also another evident of the influence of family background on entrepreneurship competence of hearing impaired individuals.

These findings are indicative that family background in terms of support and educational level of parents or guardian as well as entrepreneurial background could contribute positive to entrepreneurship competence demonstrated by the hearing impaired individual. This finding agrees with the finding of Ranwala (2016) that family background had significant impact on entrepreneurship knowledge for venture creation in Sri Lanka

8. Conclusions/Recommendations

The study used a qualitative explanatory case study design to explore competencies required for self-employment among hearing-impaired individuals, the development of these competencies in schools for the hearing impaired, and influence of educational level, family background, gender, and medium of vocational training on entrepreneurship competencies among the studied group. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that communication skills, including basic communication skills of writing, reading, and counting, as well as communication skills for interpersonal relationships such as welcoming smile, technology usage, building relationships, skillfulness and ability of relatives to provide support were vital competences required for self-employment among the studied group. The study also concludes that little was being done in terms of developing vocational skills and entrepreneurship among hearing-impaired students in special schools dedicated to them. Furthermore, the study concludes that educational level, family background, support and involvement, and a medium of vocational training were instrumental to developing entrepreneurship competencies among the studied hearing-impaired individuals. Gender was not influential in the development of entrepreneurship among them. Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made.

1. Schools and training centres involved in providing vocational training for the hearing impaired should not only deliver training to equip students with skill in various trades but should also give priority to developing entrepreneurship towards helping them start small business ventures, upon graduation when there is no ready paid employment.

2. Schools should ensure students are very skillful in whatever trade they have chosen.

3. The students should be trained to acquire interpersonal skills for good relationship, communication skills and how to use technology (e.g. social media tools) for learning and business activities.

5. Teachers involved in teaching hearing impaired students should be engaged in regular in-service training to enhance their capacity for preparing the students for entrepreneurship.

6. Favourable policies should be enacted to enhance continual intervention support from successive government in terms of funding for vocational training of hearing impaired students.

7. Schools should develop participatory methods to involve parents in the training of their wards.

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