

Hearing loss, rehabilitation and job offers in Nigeria: A case series

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Objectives: The aims of this study were to stimulate discussion on how individuals with hearing loss were rehabilitated and were able to secure and maintain job offers.

Background: Communication is a vital skill for any individual. It allows the acquisition of knowledge and experience, in addition to playing a key role in social and family interactions. Hearing loss is an incapacitating disease. It is related to unemployment and underemployment especially among those with severe to profound hearing loss. It has also been said that a greater proportion of the deaf and hard of hearing population is unemployed compared with the hearing population. There are complaints of significant discrimination in getting jobs and in receiving promotions by many individuals with hearing loss, even job interviews pose an unfair challenge.

Methods: This is a retrospective study on selected patients presented with hearing loss. Medical records including Tympanometry, Pure Tone Audiometry and Otoacoustic Emissions were reviewed. The participants were interviewed thoroughly on the benefits of amplifications in connection with their present jobs.

Results: Case 1: Tympanometry – Type As bilaterally, PTA – right ear – severe SNHL, left ear – moderately-severe SNHL, OAE – refer bilaterally. Case 2: Tympanometry – Type As bilaterally, PTA – right ear – moderate CHL, left ear – severe CHL, OAE – refer bilaterally. Case3: Tympanometry – Type A bilaterally, PTA – severe SNHL bilaterally, OAE – refer bilaterally.

Conclusions: This case series reported significant hearing threshold gain and improved communication in work settings and other activities of daily living that involve communication. Hearing loss is an expensive disability, and if left untreated, it can incapacitate the sufferers. However, people with hearing loss should be rehabilitated and empowered through education and training programmes, these would give them access to job opportunities.