International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation, Vol. 23, Issue 04, 2019
ISSN: 1475-7192

The Development and Validation of Self-evaluated Employability Inventory for TVET Hearing-impaired Graduates

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***Abstract*---*Work is important for the sustainability and well-being of life. Just like ordinary hearing people, a hearing-impaired person also has desires to be appreciated in successful careers with value lifestyle. This achievement can be measured by employability. The purpose of this paper is to discuss on the development of a self-evaluated employability inventory for hearing-impaired community. Using a modified Delphi method, nine panel experts were appointed to obtain consensus to construct items for this inventory. Three rounds of modified Delphi method was conducted, which the first round was a one-to-one interview session. Twenty items' inventory was developed based on the information that gathered from interviews and literature searches. The Second and third round were using questionnaire survey in a way to get experts' rating for each item. The collected data were analysed empirically using content validity ratio (CVR). The Finding showed 10 items retained to assess hearing-impaired self-evaluated employability. This inventory also can be interchangeably evaluated by employer to his/her employee.*

Keywords*---*Hearing-impaired, Self-evaluated, Employability, Modified Delphi

I. INTRODUCTION

Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) for the hearing-impaired provides education, training and skills in specific area to enable them to become self-reliant by having a full-time job. According to Engr Amaechi et al. (2017), TVET manages to conquer unemployment and poverty issues by committing oneself to obtain a job. By having a career, it can provide a stable income to individual and undergo a quality of life (Anizam Mohamed Yusof, Mohd Ali & Mohd Salleh, 2013). However, the desire to have a career and fixed income is a big challenge for the hearing-impaired (Perkins-Dock et al., 2015). Dammeyer et al. (2019) even stated that those with hearing loss might be in less percentage to get salary increment or promotion to higher position in workplace (Mohd Salehuddin Mohd Zahari, 2010).

Trend towards achieving success in a career can be depicted when one gets a job, trying to move from one workplace to another in order to achieve a better life (Samuel & Ramayah, 2016). Employability depends not only on individual factors such as knowledge of the field, experiences, skills and personal traits. It also depends on the

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Received: 15 Sept 2019 | Revised: 17 Oct 2019 | Accepted: 15 Nov 2019

curriculum implementation in the education institution and the expectations of the employer towards a graduate (Tharanga Sumanasiri, Ab Yajid & Khatibi, 2015). Apart from this, an individual will find it is easier to get a job by equipping all employable features.

Employability can be defined as the ability of a person to enter a workforce and sustain the desired job (Fugate, Kinicki & Ashforth, 2004; Samuel & Ramayah, 2016).This study employs The Key to Employability introduced by Pool and Sewell (2007) as a foundation. The model defined the concept of employability as a framework for graduates to develop their career. The Key to Employability model uses key illustration as a model image to present clearer picture of what is being implied (refer Fig. 1). This model attempts to explain that in order to open the door for employability, an individual must holds or possess a key that consists of elements (1) knowledge, understanding and skills in the field; (2) generic skills; (3) emotional intelligence; (4) career development learning; and (5) life and work experiences.

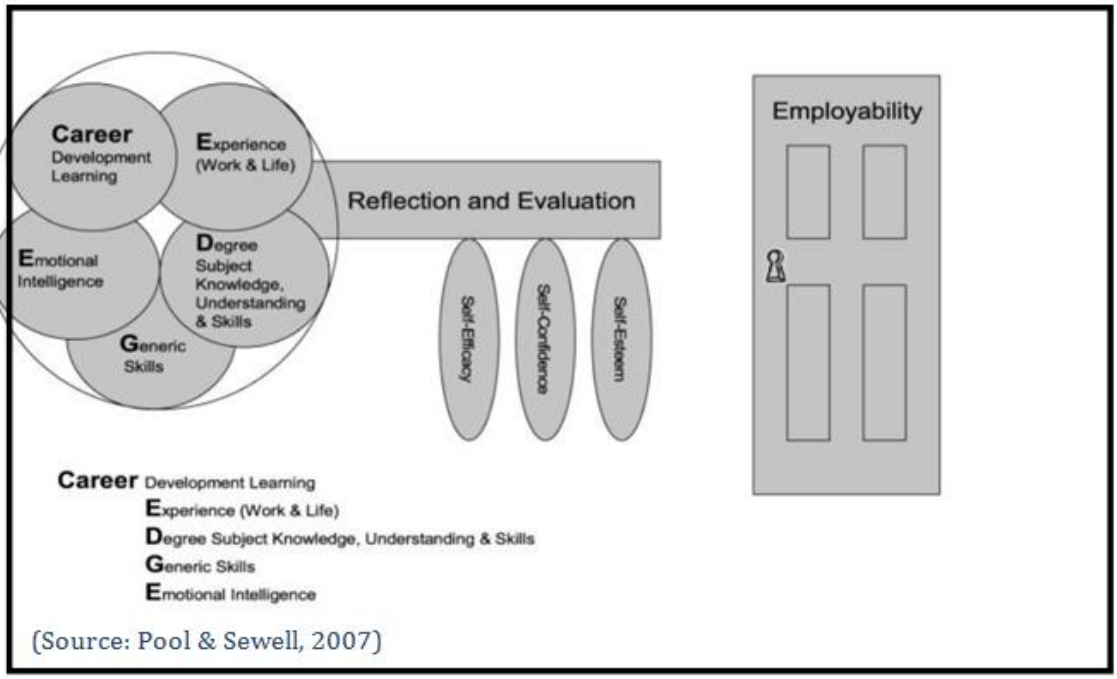

Figure 1: The Key to Employability

A graduate is encouraged to find a job that is relevant to the field of study so that the skills learned at the education institution can be transferred and applied in a workplace. In addition to academic qualifications, employers are now more likely to recruit graduates with generic skills in various fields (Harvey et al., 1997). Even so, the hearing-impaired usually have low education achievements and high social and communication problems (Perkins-Dock et al., 2015; Stokar, 2017). A graduate needs to have good emotional intelligence to achieve the full potential of the work. Research has proved that individuals with high levels of emotional intelligence are able to motivate oneself and others to meet success in life (Cooper, 1997). Emotional intelligence can be built by encouraging collaboration, effective communication, negotiating with each other and reflecting on the learning experience (Pool, 2016; Barnes, 2017).

In order for a graduate to succeed in a career, it is crucial to emphasis his/her career development learnings. Their lifelong learning in work will equip them to manage and acquire better careers. Graduates should know how to

grasp opportunities that exist and promote themselves effectively to employers (Pool & Sewell, 2007) about their strengths to support and contribute to the company growth. According to The Pedagogy for Employability Group (2006), graduates with work experiences are more likely to get a job than those who do not. Lowden et al. (2011) found that a graduate who leaved school with no working experience is difficult to get hired (Barnes, 2017) and intricate to adapt with the workplace. By recognizing this fact, educational institutions nowadays have integrated work-related curriculum and industry training as a basic requirement in their courses of study.

In addition to the knowledge, skills and attributes discussed above, graduates also need to reflect on their passions and aspirations, evaluate their learning experiences and performances to enable them to sustain the job they wish (Barnes, 2017). According to Pool and Sewell (2007), self-efficacy, self-confidence and self-esteem are among the salient key elements in driving a person's employability. Those with high self-concept are believed to have strong ability to accomplish high achievements. Hence, a person with hearing-impaired needs to own an employability key equipped with knowledge and experiences as well as self-assessment ability to enable them to open the door to their desired career path. Graduates with hearing-impaired need to be more persistent and keep striving for whatever obstacles they may face in order to guarantee their employability in uncertain job markets these days.

Employability concerns about the expectation of a worker's current and future outcome, regardless of whether they change positively (promotion) or negatively (dismissal) (Rothwell & Arnold, 2007). There are plenty of instruments used to measure employability for specific areas, but the instruments are not specified for hearing-impaired group. Therefore, this study will identify the appropriate items in a special developed instrument for hearing-impaired community in favour of further accurate assessments. When a person with hearing-impaired has a high level of employability, he/she is believed to be able to get and maintain a job well (Rothwell & Arnold, 2007). The purpose of this study was to develop an inventory of "self-evaluated employability for TVET hearing impaired graduates".

(a) What is the consensus of experts on the items of "self-evaluated employability for TVET hearing impaired graduates"?

II. RESEARCH METHOD

Employability is a huge topic that is being studied worldwide. However, employability among TVET hearing-impaired is being less investigated. Hence, there are limited literatures available referring closely to this context. In this situation, Delphi method is relevant to be used to gather information that is insufficient or less of statistical proven data available for the problem studied (Azizollah Jafari et al., 2008; Custer, Scarcella & Stewart, 1999). Delphi is "a method used to obtain the most reliable consensus of opinion of a group of experts, by a series of intensive questionnaires interspersed with controlled feedback"(Mckenna, 1994, p1221). Due to some arguments on the weaknesses of classic Delphi, this paper employed qualitative and quantitative research approaches with a modified Delphi method as the main which is believed to feature more flexibility (Powell, 2003). Both quantitative and qualitative approaches (Zamanzadeh et al., 2015) can reduce the probability of bias when analysing the experts' ideas (Custer, Scarcella & Stewart, 1999).

The modified Delphi method is almost similar to the classic Delphi with respect to the process of data collection (Custer, Scarcella & Stewart, 1999). The only different between these two methods is the items was constructed in the very beginning set of questionnaires which is built by different sources with related to the problem

studied such as interview and literature review (Juniza et al., 2019; Zamanzadeh et al., 2015). Researcher chose to apply modified Delphi in this study as it may have a solid foundation and nearly complete items in the first round (Custer, Scarcella & Stewart, 1999).

Futhermore, researcher adopted purposive sampling to choose the appropriate and relevant experts to the study. Based on research needs, researcher searched for the list of samples with considering their knowledge and experiences that can contribute to the study (Dolores &Tongco, 2007). This is a very important stage because the sample chosen may drive this study to a successful Delphi research (Powell, 2003). In this study, there were nine heterogeneous experts panel made up of six specialist educators, two employers and one society committee member with wider varying backgrounds and appropriate domain knowledge (refer Table 1). According to Crawford and Wright (2016), 5 – 20 experts are appropriate for Delphi method to be implemented. Delphi method emphasis on the qualities of the experts, whoever may contribute to the finding rather than the number of experts to represent the population (Powell, 2003).

Table 1: List of Experts in Modified Delphi Method

Position	Expertise	Experience
1. Professor	TVET	>20 years
2. Professor	TVET	>20 years
3. Associate Professor	Special Education (Hearing-impaired)	>20 years
4. Associate Professor	Special Education (Hearing-impaired)	>20 years
5. Senior Lecturer	TVET and Special Education (Hearing-impaired)	>10 years
6. Polytechnic Lecturer	TVET and Special Education (Hearing-impaired)	>10 years
7. Employer	Hiring hearing-impaired graduate as employee	>10 years
8. Employer	Hiring hearing-impaired graduate as employee	>10 years
9. Society Committee Member	Hearing-impaired	>28 years

The Process of Data Collection and Analysis

Based on literature search and The Key to Employability model, researcher summaries the aspects to pursue employment. Researcher designed an interview protocol and ran the interview sessions with nine experts as a first round, using the modified Delphi method. Information gathered from the interview and 20 items were developed using 3-point Likert Scale which are 0–not necessary, 1–useful but not essential and 2–essential (Lawshe, 1975). The items were organized methodically in a questionnaire and then was distributed to the same experts as well for review and validation purpose in the second round of modified Delphi method. Knight et al (2019) believed that the use of paper questionnaires has the potential to identify important items as it is clearer presented in identical order. The data was collected and then analysed using content validity ratio (CVR). This method is not only able to gain experts' consensus in general, but also quantitatively evaluated by formulas or empirical measurements on each item (Zamanzadeh et al., 2015). CVR for each item has be calculated using the following formula:

$$CVR_i = \frac{n_e - N/2}{N/2}$$

CVR_i = Content Validation Ratio of each item
n_e = The number of expert ratings on scale of 2
N = Total number of experts

The CVRi value obtained is for the maintaining or removing items on the instrument (Zamanzadeh et al., 2015). According to Lawshe (1975), CVRi values are negative when less than half the number of experts agree that the item is 'important'; CVRi = 0 when only half of the number of experts agree that the item is 'important' while half of the other experts do not. Items in this CVRi value will be suggested for its removal. Whereas CVRi = 1 when all experts agree the item is 'important' indicates that the item should be retained in the instrument. If the CVRi value obtained within the range is 0 to 0.99, then the item should be considered whether opted for maintaining or eliminating (Lawshe, 1975). In this study, which including nine experts, the minimum CVRi value was 0.75. This would mean that item with CVRi value that less than 0.75 will be removed.

Subsequently, the second round yielded results where, there were 10 items have been rejected by experts and three items needed amendment based on expert's suggestion. The remaining 10 items was sent to the same nine experts again for the third round validation. In this round, all experts agreed with the 10 items to be used to carry on as the final questionnaire item. Delphi's round can be stopped once the responses showed saturated and reliable (Crawford & Wright, 2016). The experts believed that with the 10 items in the questionnaire, they are able to answer the employability issues among TVET hearing-impaired graduates.

The finding of a Delphi method was more inclined to experts' viewpoint that it may not be based on proven facts (Powell, 2003). Thus, the data that has been analysed in second round and third round were presented in the form of tables for validation purpose. After the items were identified to be retained in the final instrument, the content validity index (CVI) had been calculated for the entire instrument. CVI is the average CRV of the entire items, calculated by taking the sum of CVRi and then divided by the number of items in the instrument (Lawshe, 1975).

Received: 15 Sept 2019 | Revised: 17 Oct 2019 | Accepted: 15 Nov 2019

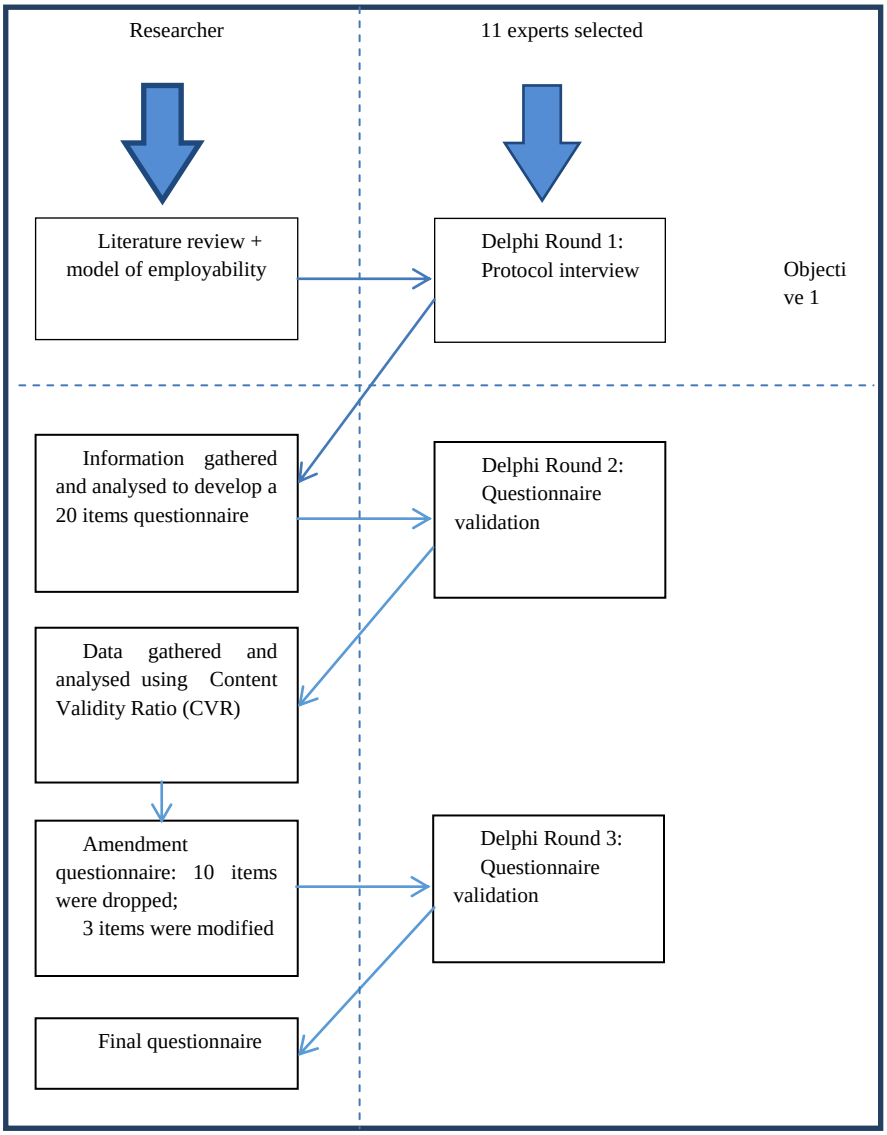

Figure 2: The process of data collection and analysis

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There were total of three rounds in this modified Delphi study. In the first round of the modified Delphi, researcher reviewed some previous studies about the same topic of research and analyses to filter the information of the problem. This step was also has been practiced by Zamanzadeh et al. (2015) and Juniza et al. (2019). Protocol interview is derived through the literature search and researcher experiences. Researcher sought the list of expert panels using snow ball technique and review their knowledge and experiences towards the field of study. Each expert was asked for their willingness to participate in this study. Only those agreed to contribute for several rounds of modified Delphi will proceed with this process.

In the first round of modified Delphi, an interview session with nine selected identified expert panels was conducted separately. This study applied semi-structured interview (Zamanzadeh et al., 2015) which allowed experts to express openly their thoughts, opinions and suggestions on the topics discussed without being influenced by others.

Received: 15 Sept 2019 | Revised: 17 Oct 2019 | Accepted: 15 Nov 2019

Experts are driven to express more idea with researcher prepared literature knowledge. Therefore, the discussions will bring forth more in depth of a topic and able to gain more information from experts' experiences and knowledge regarding to the field of study. This is also agreed by Barnes (2017) where a research related to hearing-impaired, it requires qualitative approach such as interview to get individual experiences to support the study content. The information gathered from interview session was later constructed into items manually on the following round of modified Delphi as recommended by Mckenna (1994). In an effort to minimise the limitation, researcher did not fully rely on the experts' individual viewpoint. Items were also formed by considering available information through the proven literatures that agreed by experts on account that the developed instrument will be more reliable with more specific knowledge to the context of the study (Zamanzadeh et al., 2015). The items formed were based on the five elements suggested by Pool and Sewell (2007) namely knowledge, understanding and skills in the field; generic skills; emotional intelligence; career development learning; and life and work experience.

The subsequent round of modified Delphi was more to quantitative approach. Based on the first round information, 20 suggested items were constructed in a questionnaire. Experts rated the items, provided with comments and suggestions to amend few items. Table 2 shows the second round modified Delphi's result. After the experts rated the item, the validity of the content of each item was calculated.

Table 2: Accepted or Rejected Item

1.1.1	ITEM	1.1.2	P1	1.1.3 2	1.1.4 3	1.1.5 4	1.1.6 5	1.1.7 6	1.1.8 7	1.1.9 8	1.1.10 9	1.1.11 VRi	1.1.12 EXPERT'S CONSENSUS
1.1.13	E1	**1.1.14**	2	**1.1.15**	**1.1.16**	**1.1.17**	**1.1.18**	**1.1.19**	**1.1.20**	**1.1.21**	**1.1.22**	**1.1.23** .78	**1.1.24** accepted & modified
1.1.25	E2	**1.1.26**	2	**1.1.27**	**1.1.28**	**1.1.29**	**1.1.30**	**1.1.31**	**1.1.32**	**1.1.33**	**1.1.34**	**1.1.35** .00	**1.1.36** accepted
1.1.37	E3	**1.1.38**	2	**1.1.39**	**1.1.40**	**1.1.41**	**1.1.42**	**1.1.43**	**1.1.44**	**1.1.45**	**1.1.46**	**1.1.47** .56	**1.1.48** rejected
1.1.49	E4	**1.1.50**	2	**1.1.51**	**1.1.52**	**1.1.53**	**1.1.54**	**1.1.55**	**1.1.56**	**1.1.57**	**1.1.58**	**1.1.59** .56	**1.1.60** rejected
1.1.61	E5	**1.1.62**	2	**1.1.63**	**1.1.64**	**1.1.65**	**1.1.66**	**1.1.67**	**1.1.68**	**1.1.69**	**1.1.70**	**1.1.71** .00	accepted & modified
1.1.72	E6	**1.1.73**	2	**1.1.74**	**1.1.75**	**1.1.76**	**1.1.77**	**1.1.78**	**1.1.79**	**1.1.80**	**1.1.81**	**1.1.82** .00	accepted & modified
1.1.83	E7	**1.1.84**	2	**1.1.85**	**1.1.86**	**1.1.87**	**1.1.88**	**1.1.89**	**1.1.90**	**1.1.91**	**1.1.92**	**1.1.93** .56	**1.1.94** rejected
1.1.95	E8	**1.1.96**	2	**1.1.97**	**1.1.98**	**1.1.99**	**1.1.100**	**1.1.101**	**1.1.102**	**1.1.103**	**1.1.104**	**1.1.105** .00	**1.1.106** accepted
1.1.107	E9	**1.1.108**	2	**1.1.109**	**1.1.110**	**1.1.111**	**1.1.112**	**1.1.113**	**1.1.114**	**1.1.115**	**1.1.116**	**1.1.117** .56	**1.1.118** rejected
1.1.119	E10	**1.1.120**	2	**1.1.121**	**1.1.122**	**1.1.123**	**1.1.124**	**1.1.125**	**1.1.126**	**1.1.127**	**1.1.128**	**1.1.129** .56	**1.1.130** rejected
1.1.131	E11	**1.1.132**	2	**1.1.133**	**1.1.134**	**1.1.135**	**1.1.136**	**1.1.137**	**1.1.138**	**1.1.139**	**1.1.140**	**1.1.141** .00	**1.1.142** accepted
1.1.143	E12	**1.1.144**	2	**1.1.145**	**1.1.146**	**1.1.147**	**1.1.148**	**1.1.149**	**1.1.150**	**1.1.151**	**1.1.152**	**1.1.153** .56	**1.1.154** rejected
1.1.155	E13	**1.1.156**	2	**1.1.157**	**1.1.158**	**1.1.159**	**1.1.160**	**1.1.161**	**1.1.162**	**1.1.163**	**1.1.164**	**1.1.165** .56	**1.1.166** rejected
1.1.167	E14	**1.1.168**	2	**1.1.169**	**1.1.170**	**1.1.171**	**1.1.172**	**1.1.173**	**1.1.174**	**1.1.175**	**1.1.176**	**1.1.177** .00	**1.1.178** accepted
1.1.179	E15	**1.1.180**	2	**1.1.181**	**1.1.182**	**1.1.183**	**1.1.184**	**1.1.185**	**1.1.186**	**1.1.187**	**1.1.188**	**1.1.189** .00	**1.1.190** accepted
1.1.191	E16	**1.1.192**	2	**1.1.193**	**1.1.194**	**1.1.195**	**1.1.196**	**1.1.197**	**1.1.198**	**1.1.199**	**1.1.200**	**1.1.201** .56	**1.1.202** rejected
1.1.203	E17	**1.1.204**	2	**1.1.205**	**1.1.206**	**1.1.207**	**1.1.208**	**1.1.209**	**1.1.210**	**1.1.211**	**1.1.212**	**1.1.213** .56	**1.1.214** rejected
1.1.215	E18	**1.1.216**	2	**1.1.217**	**1.1.218**	**1.1.219**	**1.1.220**	**1.1.221**	**1.1.222**	**1.1.223**	**1.1.224**	**1.1.225** .78	**1.1.226** accepted
1.1.227	E19	**1.1.228**	2	**1.1.229**	**1.1.230**	**1.1.231**	**1.1.232**	**1.1.233**	**1.1.234**	**1.1.235**	**1.1.236**	**1.1.237** .78	**1.1.238** accepted
1.1.239	E20	**1.1.240**	2	**1.1.241**	**1.1.242**	**1.1.243**	**1.1.244**	**1.1.245**	**1.1.246**	**1.1.247**	**1.1.248**	**1.1.249** .56	**1.1.250** rejected

Received: 15 Sept 2019 | Revised: 17 Oct 2019 | Accepted: 15 Nov 2019

As indicated above, 10 items out of 20 items has met experts' consensus to be retained in second round modified Delphi. Three items from the 10 items were suggested to be amended. Another 10 items that obtained CVRi value less than 0.75 were dropped. Four items were not agreed by experts and six items were found duplicated. After the items were refined by considering the comments and suggestions from all experts, 10 items questionnaire re-proposed to the same panel experts in third round Delphi modified as suggested by Knight et al. (2019).

For example, item "I may get a job with my existed skills" and "I can get another job with the skills I have" are similar in term of meaning. These items were considered as duplicate and will be suggested by experts to combine it into one item. The item "All of the workers with work experience like me are greatly appreciated in all areas of work" not having consensus by experts need to be dropped. The accepted item sound like "I can easily get the same job at another workplace".

The third round process was exactly same as the second round, where the experts gave rating to the items. The analysis from the third round found that experts reviewed items with no new idea. All items obtained experts' consensus to be accepted in the questionnaire. Until saturated, the cycle of modified Delphi for this study come to the end. As stated in a study by Crawford and Wright (2016), three rounds of Delphi are usually sufficient to meet stabil responses. The CVI has been calculated for the entire instruments, which was 0.934. This means that the inventory proposed in this study was highly acceptable (Lawshe, 1975), very reliable and effective to evaluate hearing-impaired graduates' employability.

IV. CONCLUSION

It is the responsibility of all employees to improve constantly their existing skills and to learn new skills in the meantime in order to sustain their job. Nevertheless, beside skills and knowledge, a worker needs to boast life with work experiences to make him/her internally and externally matured. As the more a worker gains experiences, he/she will reflect what has happened and evaluate himself/herself the in ameliorate way. Hearing-impaired worker is a person with disability, and they may encounter different life and work experiences with unusual refection and evaluation. Therefore, a new assessment tool needs to be formulated to achieve more accurate evaluation of this community.

This study had reported the development and validation of a self-evaluated employability inventory for TVET hearing-impaired graduates. The 10 items were able to measure employability of hearing-impaired in general. Overall, the inventory also showed a high CVI which means that it is significant to measure hearing-impaired graduates' employability. Hearing-impaired graduates may rate and measure their current employability on how well they have done whether they want to stay in the present job or seek for a new job. Employers may use this inventory to utilise and evaluate their hearing-impaired workers circumstances towards their work. Moreover, this study also highlighted the use of modified Delphi with CVR analysis which made the instrument development more powerful and reliable. The inventory provided a platform to develop a model on graduate employability or even a training module for TVET hearing-impaired graduates.

V. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The researchers appreciateall the experts participated in this study. Their committed towards every round of modified Delphi are very profesional that make the study more valuable.

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Received: 15 Sept 2019 | Revised: 17 Oct 2019 | Accepted: 15 Nov 2019

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