

The Relationship Between Self-Concept and Social Adaptability of People with Blindness in Harare Metropolitan Province

Henry Wasosa

Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Zimbabwe

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.51244/IJRSI.2024.1108094>

Received: 23 August 2024; Accepted: 02 September 2024; Published: 15 September 2024

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the relationship between self-concept and adaptability of people with blindness in Harare Metropolitan province, Zimbabwe. People with blindness have a wide range of self-concepts just like sighted people and their experiences may impact their self-concept in unique ways. Some people with blindness may have a strong sense of identity and pride in their blindness while others may struggle with feelings of inadequacy or social isolation. The main objective of this study was to determine the relationship between self-concept and social adaptability of people with blindness in Harare Metropolitan province. The research question for the study was stated as follows: What is the relationship between self-concept and social adaptability of people with blindness in Harare Metropolitan province? The study embraced a mixed approach specifically an explanatory sequential design was used and it was grounded on Social cognitive theory by Albert Bandura. The study targeted people with visual impairment in Harare Metropolitan province in Zimbabwe. The researcher used Yamane formula obtain the sample size of 384 participants. Quantitative data was collected using a Robson Self-Concept questionnaire. An interview guide was also used to collect qualitative data. The quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Thematic analysis was used to analyze qualitative data. The findings of the study indicated that, there was a negative correlation analysis between self-concept and social adaptability among people with blindness unveiled a notable negative correlation, indicating that individuals with a more positive self-concept tend to display lower levels of social adaptability, and vice versa. The correlation coefficient denoted a moderate negative relationship between self-concept and social adaptability. The study also recommends that the relationship between self-concept and social adaptability of people with blindness in Harare Metropolitan province should be enhanced through: Educational opportunities and assistive technologies. Access to assistive technologies can significantly enhance social interaction and independence for individuals with blindness.

Key Words: Blindness, Self-Concept, Relationship, Social Adaptability, Metropolitan

Wasosa, H. (2024) The Relationship Between Self-Concept and Social Adaptability of People with Blindness in Harare Metropolitan Province

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

World Health Organization reported that at least 2.2 billion people worldwide suffered from blindness, myopia and long sight. A person is regarded as visually impaired when they are unable to see because of injury, disease or congenital condition, or lacking a sense of sight (WHO, 2002). This can range from partial vision loss to complete blindness. Sense of sight is important to human beings. According to Dehghan, Kaboudi, Alizadeh, and Heidarishara (2020) learning, education, communication and emotion are greatly associated with the sense of sight and as such in the event that someone has visual impairment it creates an undeniable effect on the psychological and social state of the individual. Blindness leaves humans in a state of physical, psychological and economic dependency.

Psychologists find self-concept as a useful construct in understanding people's development and behavior. Self – concept can be seen as an idea of the self -constructed from the beliefs one holds about oneself and the responses of others. It can also be defined as the picture that one has of himself/herself (Habeeb 2017). Self-

concept plays a significant role in the growth and development of a person. Abadali, Asatsa and Ntaragwe (2021) express that self- concept includes our knowledge of how we behave, our individual characteristics and our capabilities. Self-concept infer to a person's attitude and feelings about himself and a number of psychological processes that govern behavior and adjustment (Saikia, 2020).

Loss of sight affects the individual's behaviors and ways of adaptation to the surrounding environment, where anxiety and depression affect them emotionally (Zed & Ibrahim, 2022). Salimi, Mohammadi & Sadeghi, (2016), express that Visual impairment is not only blindness but is also accompanied by many problems, such as lack of basic skills. Ackerman (2019) echoes that self-concept is not only influenced by biological and environmental factors, but social interaction plays a major role as well. Self-concept is influenced by significant others, praise, or criticism, as well as attributes of one's behavior (Harris & Orth, 2020).

In the In Australia and the Netherlands, research shows that, visually impaired persons report lower health related quality of life than peers without visual impairment and that the importance of social networks, access to education, and vocational training in enhancing the self-concept and social adaptability of people with blindness (Justin, Haegele, & Zhu, 2019 and Vervloed , 2015).

In Namibia, Rwanda, and Kenya, there are challenges faced by people with blindness due to limited access to education, employment, and healthcare. There is also lack of inclusive policies and societal stigma impact self-concept and social adaptability among individuals with blindness (Faul et al., 2017, Cloete , 2019, Nsengumuremyi, 2018 and Sibanda, 2017).

The World Health Organization (1990) pointed out that an individual can be called a completely healthy individual only if they are sound in four aspects: physical health, mental health, good social adaptability and morality (Chirico, 2016).

The self-concept of people with blindness may be influenced by their own perceptions of their blindness and how they perceive others attitudes towards blindness. Some blind people may view their blindness as an integral part of their identity while other may focus more on their abilities and strengths. These concerns may make it a challenge for them to adapt in the society. This backdrop builds the foundation upon which this study aims to establish the relationship between the self-concept and social adaptability of people with blindness in Harare Metropolitan province, Zimbabwe.

Statement of the Problem

Individuals with blindness face unique challenges in developing their self-concept and adapting to social environments. These challenges are rooted in societal attitudes, limited access to resources, and the need for specialized support. People with blindness may encounter stereotypes and stigmatization in society. These negative perceptions can affect their self-concept by eroding self-esteem and self-efficacy. The social outcry lies in the perpetuation of these stereotypes and the resulting barriers to social inclusion and acceptance. Accessibility issues persist in various aspects of life, such as education, employment, and public spaces. This lack of accessibility can limit opportunities for people with blindness, hindering their social adaptability. The outcry stems from the continued presence of physical and digital barriers that impede their full participation in society.

Research has shown that, the availability of psychosocial support systems for individuals with blindness is inadequate yet visual experiences are undeniably valuable for the formation of concepts, and given the significant role vision play in cognition, children with visual impairments exhibit distinct variations in this aspect compared to their sighted peers (Pandey 2018). There is an outcry that, the limited access to counseling, mentoring, and peer support programs, which are crucial for the development of a positive self-concept and social adaptability. It is on the basis of this growing concern that this study was an attempt to conduct a comprehensive analysis on the relation between self-concept and social adaptability of individuals with blindness in Harare Metropolitan province, being the capital city of Zimbabwe.

Purpose of the study

The main purpose of the study was to explore self-concept of people with blindness in Harare Metropolitan province, Zimbabwe so as to establish the way this target population perceived themselves and how they were perceived by others in the context of the support systems, such as family, friends, educational institutions, and assistive technologies, playing a role in shaping both self-concept among individuals with blindness.

Research Objective.

The research was guided by the following objective:

To determine the relationship between self-concept and social adaptability of people with blindness in Harare metropolitan province.

Research Question

This research sought to address the following research question:

What is the relationship between self-concept and social adaptability of people with blindness in Harare metropolitan province?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study was carried out within the context of Social cognitive theory by Albert Bandura (1986). Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) started as the Social Learning Theory (SLT) in the 1960s by Albert Bandura. It developed into the SCT in 1986 and posits that learning occurs in a social context with a dynamic and reciprocal interaction of the person, environment, and behavior. The unique feature of SCT is the emphasis on social influence and its emphasis on external and internal social reinforcement. SCT considers the unique way in which individuals acquire and maintain behavior, while also considering the social environment in which individuals perform the behavior. The theory takes into account a person's past experiences, which factor into whether behavioral action will occur. These past experiences influences reinforcements, expectations, and expectancies, all of which shape whether a person will engage in a specific behavior and the reasons why a person engages in that behavior (Wayne W. LaMorte, 2022).

Justification and Significance of the study

The study may provide valuable insights into the relationship between self-concept and social adaptability of people with visual impairment. Understanding how blindness affects self-concept and social adaptability can lead to the development of tailored interventions and support systems that empower individuals to lead fulfilling lives and participate actively in society, promoting inclusivity and equal opportunities. This research can also provide insights into the emotional and psychological challenges faced by people with blindness, leading to the creation of targeted mental health resources and strategies that enhance their overall well-being. By uncovering the barriers and facilitators of social adaptability, the study can contribute to designing environments and social interactions that are more accommodating and welcoming for individuals with blindness, fostering their integration into various social settings.

Review of Related Literature

The study conducted a scholarly theoretical review as well as a scholarly critique of empirical studies that have been conducted the area of self-concept of the people with blindness in Harare Metropolitan province, Zimbabwe.

Theoretical Review

The study reviewed the cultural identity theory presented by Collier and Thomas in 1988 which highlights the dynamic interaction between an individual's cultural identity and their experiences in a multicultural society and the Psychological Empowerment Theory which was proposed by Zimmerman (1990) whose summary is provided in this section.

Cultural identity theory

The Cultural Identity Theory presented by Collier and Thomas in 1988 highlights the dynamic interaction between an individual's cultural identity and their experiences in a multicultural society. Collier and Thomas propose that cultural identity is not a fixed or static construct but is rather shaped by a person's social environment and interactions. This theory recognizes that individuals often belong to multiple cultural groups simultaneously, each influencing their identity in distinct ways.

Psychological empowerment theory

The Psychological Empowerment Theory was proposed by Zimmerman (1990). According to the theory, empowering directs attention towards health adaptation, competence and natural helping setting. An individual who has psychological empowerment is able to change his/her mindset compounded with positive thinking and his/her own ability to have control of his/her potential in addressing challenges either at individual or societal level. Empowerment process attempts to gain control, obtain needed resources and critically understand one's social environment. It also helps to develop skills so individuals can become independent problem solvers and decision makers. According to Zimmerman, (1990) Psychological empowerment has the potential of upholding self-efficacy in terms of perceptions of competence, personal control and positive self-image.

Review of Empirical Studies and Related Literature

Relationship between Self-concept and social adaptability

The empirical literature was drawn from different settings, in Iran, Kamali and Ashori, (2023) conducted a quasi-randomized controlled trial design to survey the effect of orientation and morbidity training on the quality of life in students who are blind where 24 participants were randomly selected. The results showed significant increases in quality of life and all subscales (physical health, mental health, social relationships, and environmental health) in the experimental group than in the control group.

In the United Kingdom, Edwards (2016) explored the construct of resilience on the social life amongst visually impaired people. The findings suggested that whilst independence and confidence were amongst the protective factors located at an individual level, a number of risk factors located across a visually impaired person's ecologies pose a challenge to their participation. Social exclusion blocks the development of social adaptability (Liu et al., 2021).

In South Korea, Sim (2020) conducted a study on persons with visual impairments who had various experiences with resiliency. One of the resilience processes based on life experiences were identified as experience and adaptation. They are exposed to diverse and complex environments while coping with physical development, mental depression, frustration, and social adaptation.

In Nigeria Tunde-Ayinmode, (2011) carried out a study and focused on examining the psychological and social adjustment of two groups of blind individuals residing in Ilorin. The findings of the study indicated that the majority of the blind participants displayed reasonable levels of adjustment in key aspects such as social interactions, marriage, and family life. However, a significant portion of the participants exhibited poor adjustment in areas such as education, vocational training, employment, and mobility.

Conceptual Framework

This study developed a conceptual framework to diagrammatically show the relationship between self-concept of people with visual disability as depicted in Figure 1.

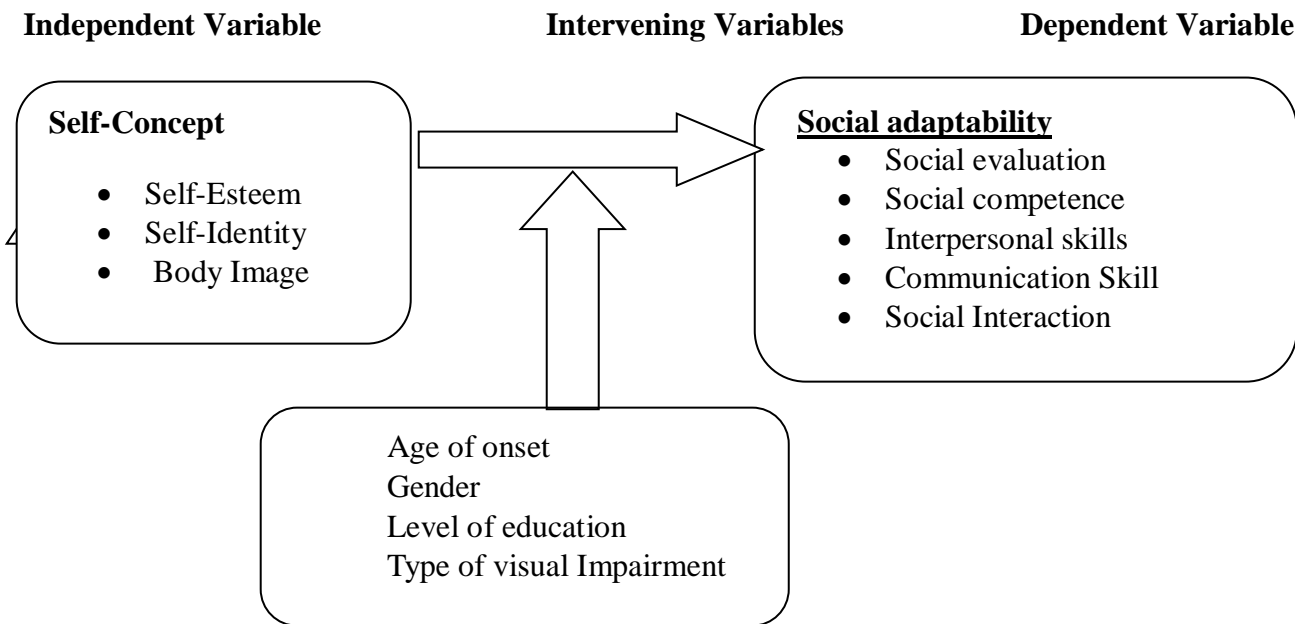


Figure 1. Relationship between self-concept and social adaptability of people with visual impairment

From the Independent Variables, Self-Esteem is a variable represents individuals' perceptions of their own worth and value. Higher levels of self-esteem may contribute to positive self-concept and enhance social adaptability among people with blindness. Individuals with higher self-esteem may feel more confident in social situations, leading to better social interaction and communication skills. Self-identity refers to the way individuals perceive themselves in terms of their characteristics, roles, and relationships.

On the dependent Variables, the social evaluation refers to individuals' perceptions of how they are judged or evaluated by others in social situations. It reflects the extent to which individuals feel accepted, respected, and valued by their peers. Higher levels of social evaluation may indicate positive social adaptability, characterized by successful social integration and acceptance within social networks.

On the intervening Variables, the age at which individuals experience blindness can influence their development of self-concept and social adaptability. Those who have been blind since birth (congenital blindness) may have different experiences and coping mechanisms compared to those who acquire blindness later in life (acquired blindness), impacting their self-concept and social adaptability. Gender plays a role in shaping individuals' experiences, perceptions, and social roles. It may influence the development of self-concept and social adaptability differently for males and females with blindness.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adopted a mixed method approach research approach and specifically used a convergent parallel mixed methods research design. The quantitative and qualitative data collection was done separately and then converged at analysis, interpretation and presentation followed by comparing and integrating the results. This methodology is grounded in the idea of utilizing the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research question (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). The convergent parallel mixed methods research design was used because, the primary purpose of this research design is to explain why phenomena occur and to predict future occurrences.

A convergent parallel mixed methods research design study is an approach to inquiry that combines both qualitative and quantitative methods prioritizing both methods almost equally. It is characterized by research hypotheses that specify the nature and direction of the relationships between or among variables being studied. Probability sampling is normally a requirement in explanatory research because the goal is often to generalize the results to the population from which the sample is selected. The data are quantitative and almost always require the use of a statistical test to establish the validity of the relationships. Accordingly, this study emphasized on the quantitative phase, and was followed by the qualitative phase (Creswell, 2011). A convergent parallel mixed method design is a type of mixed methods research approach that utilizes both quantitative and qualitative data collection in two distinct phases. It was aimed at explaining or providing deeper meaning to the findings from the quantitative phase through the use of qualitative methods. By adapting this method, the researcher was able to attain research objectives and give more comprehensive evidence in both qualitative and quantitative inquiries.

Target Population

The study target population for research was the people with blindness who comprised of the individuals who were blind or visually impaired. This population included people of varying ages, backgrounds, and experiences. The current total population of persons with blindness in the disability according to Zimbabwe 2022 population and housing census report Harare province is shown is displayed in table 1.

Table 1

2022 population and housing census report of Harare province

Location	Male	Female	Total
Harare Urban	5,075	6,580	11,655
Chitungwiza	1,260	1,796	3,056
Epworth	677	751	1,428
Provincial Total	7,012	9,127	16,139

Sample Techniques and Sampling Size

This study used a combination of sampling techniques which included multistage, stratified, purposive and simple random sampling techniques which led to the drawing of the final sample size for the study. Multistage sampling was used to arrive at the three districts of Harare metropolitan province which included Harare urban, Chitungwiza and Epworth. For the calculation of the sample, the researcher employed Yamane formula which has a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5%. Purposive sampling was used to select the key informant participants who were perceived to be information-rich cases related to the phenomenon of interest (Palinkas, et al., 2015). According to (2020) “Taro Yamane's (1967) formula has been simplified. The formula facilitates calculation of the sample size with consistence. The sample size was determined as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

In this formula: n = Sample size; N = the population; e = margin of error.

This is the detailed presentation of how the Researcher will arrive at the sample size:

N (Population size) = 16,139 (Total from the population table)

e (Margin of error) = Let's assume a desired margin of error of 5% (you can adjust this value)

Formula: $n = N / (1 + (e^2) / N)$

$$n = 16,139 / (1 + (0.05^2) / 16,139) \approx 384$$

After determining the sample size, a stratified sampling method was applied. The rationale for the choice of a stratified sampling method at this level will be the number of people with blindness varied from one district to another. The stratified sampling method helped in allocating proportionately the number of participants according to the size of their district.

Stratified Sampling = Total Sample Size X Population of Subgroups

Entire Population

$$\text{Harare Urban} = 11,655 \times 384 = 277$$

$$16,139$$

$$\text{Chitungwiza} = 3,056 \times 384 = 73$$

$$16,139$$

$$\text{Epworth} = 1,428 \times 384 = 34$$

$$16,139$$

$$\text{Thus, } 277 + 73 + 34 = 384$$

For the qualitative phase, the researcher Creswell (2014) recommends that same individuals, used for first phase be used for follow up. A sample size should be neither too large nor too small, for sake of research cost, manageability, and generality (Creswell, 2012).

Accordingly the study purposively selected 6 people based on high levels of social adaptability so as to obtain qualitative data. Participants who have been diagnosed with blindness, either congenital or acquired, who were/must be over the age of 18, were selected for the study.

Data Collection tools.

The researcher used a structured questionnaire to collect quantitative data on the levels of self-concept. Section A of the questionnaire consisted questions on demographic profile of the participants. Section B made use of the Robson Self-Concept Questionnaire. It consisted of 30 items in which the participants were asked to indicate how much they agree or disagree with each statement, according to how they typically felt. The answers were scored on a scale of 0-5. A high score represents high self-esteem and *visé vasa*. The SCQ has been proven to have good reliability (Cronbach's alpha of 0.89). Qualitative data was collected using a semi-structured interview guide whereby the interviews were conducted to gather in-depth qualitative data. These interviews allowed participants to share their personal experiences and perceptions in a more detailed and nuanced manner.

Data Analysis

Both quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis were used to carry out the data analysis. The study being a convergent mixed methods research design, the data analysis procedure was a systematic approach that will involves separately analyzing quantitative and qualitative data, followed by comparing and integrating the results. This methodology is grounded in the idea of utilizing the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research question (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017).

For the quantitative component, statistical techniques are employed to analyze numerical data. Descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, and correlation analyses were used to examine patterns and relationships within the data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). SPSS version 25 assisted in this analysis process. On the other hand, the qualitative component involves analyzing textual or narrative data to identify themes, patterns, and meanings. Thematic analysis will be applied to extract key insights from the qualitative data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

Ethical Considerations

In this study, the researcher acquired all the necessary licenses and permissions to carry out the study. The researcher visited the participants and provided them with a description of the study in advance to obtain their informed consent from those who voluntarily wished to participate. The researcher also assured participants of confidentiality and privacy and warranted that the research would not elicit psychological issues, offering psychological debriefing after data collection. This was realized by dedicating more time at the end of data collection to help participants return to normalcy and prevent harm. All recorded research data and filled questionnaires were held back in safe custody and will later be destroyed at the appropriate time once the dissertation was approved by the University. Additionally, throughout the process, participants' privacy and confidentiality were protected, and a supportive and comfortable environment was created for them during data collection. Finally, the researcher cited all work of other authors and carried out plagiarism checks to avoid any instances of academic misconduct.

Findings of the Study

The relationship between self-concept and social adaptability of people with blindness in Harare Metropolitan province

This study sought to obtain data regarding the relationship between self-concept and social adaptability of people with blindness in Harare Metropolitan province.

The findings further deviate from Manitsa and Doikou (2020) who synthesized results from 17 academic articles published during 1998 and 2018, which examined the topic of social support for students with visual impairments in educational institutions. The evaluation revealed that for students with visual impairments cooperation, empathetic behavior, and practical assistance are the main components of social support. Besides it was noted that support from staff members contributed to students' academic learning and social inclusion, whereas peers' social support enhanced their self-esteem and social acceptance.

Despite the initial difficulties, the participants emphasize how their parents' encouragement and refusal to coddle them played a vital role in shaping their resilience and independence. The emphasis on learning alternative skills, such as using a white cane and braille, empowered the participants to forge their own paths and develop a strong sense of self-reliance. This suggests that fostering independence and self-determination is crucial for cultivating a positive self-concept.

Further, the participants describe how their blindness has actually opened them up to unique sensory experiences and a profound appreciation for the world around them. They have developed a distinct perspective that sighted people often overlook, finding joy and fulfillment in tactile, auditory, and olfactory experiences. This shift in mindset, from viewing their disability as a limitation to seeing it as a source of strength and resilience, is a powerful testament to the importance of reframing disability in a positive light. Navigating a visually-oriented society has required the participants to hone their adaptability and problem-solving skills, which they now view as integral to their personal growth and self-concept.

The ability to find creative solutions to everyday challenges has fostered a heightened sense of agency and self-efficacy, further reinforcing their capacity for self-reliance and independence. The participants emphasize that their blindness is just one aspect of their multifaceted identity, and does not solely define who they are. They have developed a strong sense of self-worth that transcends their disability, recognizing the unique strengths and perspectives it has brought them. This holistic view of identity suggests the importance of

supporting individuals with blindness in exploring and celebrating the full breadth of their personhood. One of the participants when commenting about self-concept of people with blindness in the interview noted:

"There were definitely times, especially as a teenager, where I felt different and isolated because I couldn't see things the way other people did. As a child born blind, I faced unique challenges in navigating a world designed for those with sight. The simplest tasks, like getting around my neighborhood or reading a book, required me to approach life in completely different way compared to my sighted peers. There were moments of frustration and self-consciousness, when I acutely felt my disability set me apart from others" (3rd.01.2024).

The participant continued to state that; "I remember feeling left out at school when my classmates discussed visual experiences I couldn't relate to, or struggling to keep up in physical activities that relied on sight. It was isolating to realize how much of the world operated based on visual cues that I couldn't access. But my parents were amazing at helping me develop my other senses and encouraging me to be independent. They refused to coddle me or treat me as fragile. Instead, they pushed me to learn braille, use a white cane, and figure out innovative ways to accomplish everyday tasks. Whether it was cooking, playing sports, or exploring my surroundings, they empowered me to be self-reliant". (4th.01.2024).

"And that; over time, as I honed these alternative skills and strategies, I learned to navigate the world in my own way. I gained a unique perspective that sighted people couldn't access. Tasks that had once felt insurmountable became routine. And with each new challenge I overcame, my confidence grew. I realized that my blindness wasn't a weakness, but a source of strength and resilience. Though the journey wasn't always easy, I'm grateful for the support and encouragement that allowed me to develop my independence and self-assurance. My disability may have made me different, but it also gave me the opportunity to forge my own path and become the person I am today." (3rd.01.2024).

These findings concur with Harris & Orth (2020) who noted that, some studies suggest that people with blindness, particularly children and adolescents, may experience lower self-esteem compared to sighted peers. This could be attributed to the societal emphasis on vision and the challenges they face in navigating a world largely designed for sighted individuals. The findings further align with the research by Simonsmeier et al. (2020) who suggested that, children born blind might have a lower self-identity compared to those who lose vision later in life. This could be due to the lack of a reference point for sight and the need to develop self-perception based solely on non-visual experiences.

The data from the current study indicates that the participants may possess a somewhat balanced or moderate locus of control, not strongly leaning towards either the internal or external end of the spectrum. The analysis of self-image and self-esteem components reveals a generally neutral to slightly positive self-perception among the respondents. These findings align with Sacks, (2021) seminal work on locus of control suggests that individuals can be characterized as having either an internal or external locus of control, with those exhibiting a more internal locus feeling a greater sense of control over their lives. The findings are also consistent with the multidimensional nature of self-concept as discussed in the work of Bourne et al. (2021), who proposed that self-concept encompasses various facets, including academic, social, and physical self-concepts, which can vary in their levels of positivity or negativity.

The data suggesting resilience and optimism among the participants aligns with the concept of "psychological capital," which encompasses positive psychological states such as self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience (Bibault et al. 2019). The elevated mean scores for items related to overcoming challenges and maintaining a positive outlook indicate the presence of these desirable psychological resources within the sample. On the other hand, the findings regarding self-criticism and insecurity are in line with the concept of "contingent self-worth," where individuals' self-esteem is heavily dependent on the approval and evaluations of others (Balagangadhara, 2018). The heightened scores for items related to self-dissatisfaction and social comparison suggest that some participants may struggle with maintaining a stable and positive self-image.

In order to ascertain the relation between the Self-Concept and Social Adaptability of People with Blindness a correlation analysis was conducted to explore the relationship between these two variables. Detailed findings are provided in Table 2.

Table 2:

Correlation between Self-Concept and Social Adaptability of People with Blindness

Correlations		Self-Concept of People with Blindness	Social Adaptability of People with Blindness
Self-Concept of People with Blindness	Pearson Correlation	1	-.296**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	346	346
Social Adaptability of People with Blindness	Pearson Correlation	-.296**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	346	346
** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The correlation analysis between self-concept and social adaptability among people with blindness unveils a notable negative correlation of $-.296$ ($p < .01$), indicating that individuals with a more positive self-concept tend to display lower levels of social adaptability, and vice versa. The correlation coefficient of $-.296$ denotes a moderate negative relationship between self-concept and social adaptability. The findings imply that, individuals with a favorable self-concept may feel less compelled to adapt socially or alter their behavior to conform to various social contexts. Conversely, those harboring lower self-esteem or a negative self-concept might exhibit a heightened motivation to adapt socially, seeking validation or acceptance from others.

These findings concur with Mushimiyimana (2017) who conducted a qualitative inquiry utilizing a case study approach to assess the challenges faced by women with visual impairments concerning the equalization of opportunities in Bugesera district, located in the Eastern province of Rwanda. The study highlighted a prominent issue – the absence of accessible information for women with visual impairments. This information gap created a bias against them, impeding their ability to access and benefit from equal opportunities in Rwanda. The findings also underscored the absence of specific strategies aimed at promoting awareness regarding social norms and equal rights in the context of various opportunities in Rwanda.

This lack of awareness further compounded the challenges faced by women with visual impairments. Comprehending this correlation holds paramount importance in crafting interventions aimed at bolstering both self-concept and social adaptability among individuals with blindness. It underscores the necessity of addressing self-perception and confidence levels alongside fostering adaptive social skills to nurture overall well-being and social integration within this demographic. The findings concur with a study in Zimbabwe, by Manyumwa, (2018) carried out a qualitative study aiming to delve into the concept of inclusion and explore the psychosocial encounters of students with visual impairments within the confines of a Zimbabwean state university.

The study's findings revealed that these visually impaired students had encountered positive experiences during their university journey. These positive encounters were attributed to several factors, including the support they received from both their peers and university staff. Additionally, assistance with the curriculum, the availability of convenient hostel accommodations, and the implementation of effective traffic regulations

all contributed to their sense of confidence and security. The study underscored the significance of a supportive and accommodating university environment in enhancing the psychosocial well-being of students with visual impairments, ultimately fostering their confidence and a sense of security within the university community.

These findings concur with the works of Fatima, Ashraf & Jahan (2022) who carried out a study on identifying factors impacting the self-concept and self-esteem of visually impaired persons. The study's results indicated that there were no discernible differences based on gender or the type of disability among the participants. Although, the study did find statistically significant differences in the SC and SE of visually impaired individuals based on factors such as age, academic grade, residential area, and the level of support and affection provided by their families, the results of the regression analysis indicated that all demographic variables could predict the SC and SE of visually impaired individuals.

The findings of the current study align with the work of Palomino (2017) who carried out a study on an analysis of self-concept in students with compensatory education needs for developing a mindfulness-based psychoeducational program. The findings from the study indicated that the respondents displayed positive self-concept levels in various aspects, including peer relations, physical appearance, physical ability, and academic self-concept in mathematics.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

There was a negative correlation analysis between self-concept and social adaptability among people with blindness unveiled a notable negative correlation, indicating that individuals with a more positive self-concept tend to display lower levels of social adaptability, and vice versa. This is based on the on the basis of the result, in which the null hypothesis on the relationship between the between the self-concept and interpersonal skills of people with blindness was rejected.

The correlation coefficient denoted a moderate negative relationship between self-concept and social adaptability. The findings imply that, individuals with a favorable self-concept may feel less compelled to adapt socially or alter their behavior to conform to various social contexts. Conversely, those harboring lower self-esteem or a negative self-concept might exhibit a heightened motivation to adapt socially, seeking validation or acceptance from others.

Recommendations

Thus, far the study has proposed some of the recommendations that can be put in place in order to mitigate and resolve the issue of blindness in Harare Metropolitan province, Zimbabwe. The recommendations are tailored to correspond with the study objective and the research question. The recommendations are in line with the objective which was to establish the relationship between self- concept and adaptability of people with blindness in Harare Metropolitan province, Zimbabwe.

The study also recommends that the relationship between self-concept and social adaptability of people with blindness in Harare Metropolitan province should be enhanced and this can be achieved through embracing the importance of accessibility and resources. This can be enhanced through:

Educational Opportunities: The research identifies a link between educational attainment and social adaptability. Investing in inclusive educational programs that cater to the needs of students with blindness is essential. This includes providing accessible learning materials, training teachers in effective communication strategies, and fostering a supportive learning environment.

Assistive Technologies: Access to assistive technologies can significantly enhance social interaction and independence for individuals with blindness. Initiatives that promote training and subsidized access to these technologies, such as screen readers and text-to-speech software, can empower individuals to navigate social situations with greater confidence.

REFERENCES

1. Abadali, K.R., Asatsa, S., & Ntaragwe, M. (2021). Adolescents' Social Networking and Self-Concept in Public Mixed Day Secondary Schools in Kajiado North Sub-County, Kenya. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social*. 2454-6186.841.
2. Ackerman, C. (2019). What is Self-Concept Theory? A Psychologist Explains. *Positive Psychology*.
3. Al-Kenani, R.A. (2022). Assessment of Mental Orientation and Social Adjustment of Persons with Visual Impairment. *Journal of Positive School Psychology*. 6(1), 1894-1899.
4. Augestad, L. B. (2017). Self-concept and self-esteem among children and young adults with Visual impairment: A systematic review. *Cogent Psychology*, 4(1), 1319652. Doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/23311908.2017.1319652>.
5. Augestad, L. B. (2017). Mental health among children and young adults with visual Impairments: A systematic review. *Journal of visual impairment & blindness*, 111, 411- 425.
6. Awinii, A. (2021). Friendship formation between visually impaired and non-visually impaired Pupils in selected inclusive basic schools in Ghana. *European Journal of Special Education Research*.7 (4) Doi: 10.46827/ejse.v7i4.4056.
7. Banoo, J., & Vaida, N. (2019). Comparative study on emotional and school adjustment of Differently abled adolescents. *International Journal of Economic Perspectives*,13(1), 35-45.
8. Atmowardoyo, H. (2018). Research Methods in TEFL Studies: Descriptive Research, Case Study, Error Analysis, and R & D. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*. 197-204.
9. Beteinaki, E. (2019). Social interactions and friendships of adolescents with visual impairments. School of education and communication (HLK) Jönköping University.
10. Wayne W. LaMorte, (2022) *Social Cognitive Theory*; Boston University School of Public Health, Boston USA
11. Bruner, A., B. Hansen, M. & Heir, T. (2019). Loneliness among adults with visual impairment: Prevalence, associated factors, and relationship to life satisfaction. *Health Qual Life Outcomes* 17(24). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12955-019-1096-y>.
12. Chirico, F. (2016). Spiritual well-being in the 21st century: It's time to review the current WHO's health definition *J. Health Soc. Sci.* 1, 11–16.
13. Chu, H.Y., & Chan, H S. (2022). Loneliness and Social Support among the Middle-Aged and Elderly People with Visual Impairment. *Int J Environ Res Public Health*. 19(21):14600. Doi: 10.3390/ijerph192114600.
14. Cmar, J. L., & Markoski, K. (2019). Promoting self-determination for students with visual Impairments: A review of the literature. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*, 113(2), 100-113. Doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/0145482X19839796>.
15. Cook, T. D., & Campbell, D. T. (1979). *Quasi-Experimentation: Design & Analysis Issues for Field Settings*. Houghton Mifflin.
16. Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2017). *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research* (3rd Ed.) Sage Publications.
17. Dehghan, F., Kaboudi, M., Alizadeh, Z., & Heidarisharaf, P. (2020) The relationship between Emotional intelligence and mental health with social anxiety in blind and deaf children, *Cogent Psychology*, 7: 1716465.
18. Demmin, D.L., & Silverstein S.M. (2023). Visual Impairment and Mental Health: Unmet Needs and Treatment Options. *Clinical Ophthalmology*.
19. Datta, P. & Talukdar, J. (2015). The impact of vision impairment on students' self-concept. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*. 20(6). DOI: 10.1080/13603116.2015.1111441.
20. Davis, M. H. (1980). A multidimensional approach to individual differences in empathy. *JSAS Catalog of Selected Documents in Psychology*, 10, 85.
21. Davis, M. H. (1983). Measuring individual differences in empathy: Evidence for a Multidimensional approach. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 44, 113-126.
22. DeVellis, R. F. (2017). *Scale Development: Theory and Applications* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
23. Edwards, A. (2016). Understanding the resilience processes involved in social participation Amongst visually impaired adults in the UK.

24. Eguavoen E.O., & Eniola M.S. (2016). Influence of self-concept and social acceptance on Academic achievement of students with visual impairment in Oyo State, Nigeria. *An International Journal of Arts and Humanities*.5 (3):213.
25. Fatima, I., Ashraf, S., & Jahan, M. (2022) .Identifying the factors that impact self –concept and self-esteem of persons with visual impairment .*Pakistan journal of humanities and social sciences*.1487 - 1496.
26. Guba, E. G. (1981). Criteria for Assessing the Trustworthiness of Naturalistic Inquiries. *Educational Communication and Technology*, 29(2), 75-91.
27. Gudonis & Klopota (2017). Features of Interpersonal Interaction of Blind and Visually Impaired Youth with Student Group. *Pedagogy*. 132–142.
28. Habeeb, K.T. (2017). An Analysis of Self-Concept in Middle Adolescents. *Research Journal for Interdisciplinary Studies*.
29. Harris M.A., & Orth, U. (2020).The link between self-esteem and social relationships: A meta-analysis of longitudinal studies. *J. Personal. Soc. Psychol.* 2020; 119:1459–1477. Doi: 10.1037/pspp0000265.
30. Heppe, E. C. M., Kef, S., de Moor, M. H. M., & Schuengel, C. (2020). Loneliness in young adults with a visual impairment: Links with perceived social support in a twenty-year longitudinal study. *Research in Developmental Disabilities*, 101, 1-10. [103634]. <https://Doi.org/10.1016/j.ridd.2020.103634> .
31. Hosseini, A. A., Allahi, Z., & Kahrazahi, M. (2022). The effect of teaching handicrafts through study methods on self-esteem of visually impaired students. *Research in Teaching*, 10(1), 181-163. Doi:[HTTPS://WWW.DOI.ORG/10.34785/J012.2022.007](https://WWW.DOI.ORG/10.34785/J012.2022.007).
32. Jabeen, S. M., & Akhter, M. (2018). A Comparison of Students' Self-Concept on the Basis of Visual Impairment and Normal Vision. *Bulletin of Education and Research*, 40(3), 145-156.
33. Jessup G., Bundy A. C., Broom A., & Hancock N. (2017). The social experiences of high school students with visual impairments. *J. Vis. Impair. Blind*. 111, 5–19. Doi: 10.1177/0145482x1711100102.
34. Jindal-Snape, D. (2004). Generalization and maintenance of social skills of children with visual impairments: self-evaluation and the role of feedback. *JVIB*. 98(8):1–23.
35. Justin, A., Haegele, J. A., & Zhu, X. (2019). Physical Activity, Self-efficacy and Health-related Quality of Life among Adults with Visual Impairments. *Disability and rehabilitation*. Taylor & Francise online. <https://Doi.org/10.1080/09638288.2019.1631397>.
36. Kamali, N., & Ashori, M. (2023). The effectiveness of orientation and mobility training on the quality of life for students who are blind in Iran. *British Journal of Visual Impairment*, 41(1), 108–120. <https://Doi.org/10.1177/02646196211019066>.
37. Kapinga, O. S., & Aloni, M. (2021). Measuring levels of self-esteem of students with visual impairments in regular schools in Tanzania. *Br. J. Vis. Impair.* 026461962110516. Doi: 10.1177/02646196211051685.
38. Kombo, D., & Tromp, D. (2016). *Proposal and Thesis Writing*. Nairobi: Paulines.
39. Krejcie, R.V., & Morgan, D.W., (1970). Determining Sample Size for Research Activities. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*.
40. Leat, S. J., & Lovie-Kitchin, J. E. (2013). Self-assessment of the frequency of completion and the difficulty of daily vision tasks for people with visual disability. *Ophthalmic and Physiological Optics*, 33(6), 652-660.
41. Luca, C. & Liliana, M. (2020). Study on the Level of Self-Esteem in Visually Impaired Students.
42. Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Sage Publications.
43. Liu, Y., Liu, H., and Liu, Z. (2021). The relationship of self-presentation, psychological needs, and exercise dependence in college students with overweight. *Front. Psychol.* 11:625501. Doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2020.625501.
44. Majid, U. (2018). *Research Fundamentals: Study Design, Population, and Sample Size*.
45. Manitsa, I., & Doikou, M. (2022). Social support for students with visual impairments in Educational institutions: an integrative literature review. *Br. J. Vis. Impair.* 40, 29–47. Doi: 10.1177/0264619620941885.
46. Maniu, E., A., Maniu, D., A., Grosu, V., T., & Grosu, F., E. (2019). Movement activities and Quality of life of visually impaired students. In V. Chis (Ed.), *Education, Reflection, Development – ERD 2019*,

- vol 85. European Proceedings of Social and Behavioural Sciences (pp. 560-567). European Publisher. <https://doi.org/10.15405/epsbs.2020.06.56>.
47. Manyumwa, E. (2018). Inclusion and the psychosocial experiences of students with visual Impairments in a Zimbabwe state university. *African Educational Research Journal* 6 (3). 190-196.
 48. Messick, S. (1980). Test Validity and the Ethics of Assessment. *American Psychologist*, 35(11), 1012-1027.
 49. Miklyaeva, A. V., & Gorkovaya, I. A. (2018). Self-esteem of adolescents with visual Impairments as a predictor of hardiness. *Soc. Welfare Interdiscip. Approach* 8, 94–105. Doi: 10.21277/sw.v2i8.331.
 50. Mishra, S. B., & Alok, S. (2017). *Handbook of Research Methodology*. Edu creation.
 51. Mukhopadhyay, S., Moswela, E. M., & Habulezi, J. (2021). Experiences of learners with visual Impairments in Botswana primary schools. *International Journal of Inclusive Education* DOI: 10.1080/13603116.2021.1965802
 52. Olaz, F., & Castejón, J. L. (2017). Perceived quality of life and subjective well-being in adults with visual impairment: A literature review. *Qualitative Vision Rehabilitation and Therapy*, 1(1), 14-23.
 53. Onabolu, O. O., Jagun, O. O., & Ebonhor. M. (2019). The impact of blindness on the Socio-economic lives of young adults in South Western Nigeria. *International Journal of Current Research and Review*. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.31782/IJCRR.2019.11192>.
 54. Pandey, R. K. (2018). Study of Adjustment of Visually Impaired Students. *Universal Journal of Educational Research* 6(11): 2562-2571, 2018 <http://www.hrpub.org>. DOI: 10.13189/ujer.2018.061121.
 55. Pandith, A., Malik, M., & Ganai, M. (2012). Self-concept and level of aspiration among hearing impaired, visually impaired and crippled secondary school students of district Baramullah, J & K. *International Journal of Current Research*, 4(1), 115-118.
 56. Papadopoulos, K. & Papakonstantinou, D. (2020). The Impact of Friends' Social Support on Depression of Young Adults with Visual Impairments. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*, 67:5, 484-496.
 57. Reema, (2010). A study of relationship between self-concept and adjustment of visually impaired adolescents studying in inclusive and special schools, Ph.D. (Education). Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi.
 58. Robertson, A. O., Tadić, V., & Rahi, J. S. (2021) This is me: A qualitative investigation of young people's experience of growing up with visual impairment. *PLoS ONE* 16(7): e0254009. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0254009>.
 59. Ryff, C. D. (1989). Happiness is everything, or is it? Explorations on the meaning of psychological well-being. *Journal of personality and social psychology*. 57(6), 1069.
 60. Ryff, C. D., & Keyes, C. L. M. (1995). The structure of psychological well-being revisited. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 69(4), 719.
 61. Saikia, R. (2020). A Study on Self-Concept. *International Education and research Journal*.
 62. Saleem, J., Saleem, S., Ikram, S., Inam, S., Siddiqui, A., & Ain, Q. (2022) Self-esteem and Social Intelligence in Visually Impaired Adolescents. *Pakistan Journal of Medicine and Health Sciences*. 17(1).
 63. Samokhvalova, A. G. & Kryukova T. L. (2017). Teens' coping/non-coping with communication difficulties in a special boarding school setting. *Social Welfare: Interdisciplinary Approach*, 7 (1), 104-117, DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21277/sw.v1i7.288>.
 64. Sarma, A. M. (2020). Gender Difference in Self Concept of Visually Impaired and Sighted Students of Barhampur Block of Nagaon District of Assam -A Case Study. *Palarch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology*, 17 (9).
 65. Shenton, A. K. (2004). Strategies for Ensuring Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research Projects. *Education for Information*, 22(2), 63-75.
 66. Siedlecki, S. (2020). Understanding Descriptive Research Designs and Methods. *Clinical nurse specialist*. 34(1):8-12.
 67. Sim, O. (2020). Analysis of the resilience process experienced by people living with visual impairment. *J. Environ. Res. Public Health*. 17, 2819.
 68. Teddlie, C., & Tashakkori, A. (2009). *Foundations of Mixed Methods Research: Integrating Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches in the Social and Behavioral Sciences*. Sage Publications.
 69. Terziev, V. (2019). *Conceptual Framework of Social Adaptation*.

70. Trochim, W. M. K. (2006). Validity. Research Methods Knowledge Base.
71. Toyon, M.A.S.(2021). Explanatory sequential design of mixed methods research: Phases and challenges. *International Journal of Research in Business and Social Science* 10(5).253-260.
72. WHO (2002). Total blindness, World Health Organization, Geneva.
73. Yildiz, M.A., & Duy, B. (2013). Improving Empathy and Communication Skills of Visually Impaired Early Adolescents through a Psycho-education Program. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice* - 13(3).1470.
74. Yuan, W., Xie, Z., Dong, P., & Yang, Y. (2022). Linking perceived social support to self-esteem and social integration among adolescents with visual impairment: A cross-lagged study. *Front Psychol.* Doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2022.
75. Zed, N.N.A., & Ibrahim, S.A.(2022).& Emotional intelligence and its relationship to future anxiety for blind adolescents. *Egyptian Journal of Social Work (EJSW)*
76. Zhou, M., & Lin, W.(2016). Adaptability and Life Satisfaction: The Moderating Role of Social Support. *Front Psychol.* 7:1134. Doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2016.01134. PMID: 27516753; PMCID: PMC4963457.