

Self-Concept and Emotional Stability among Individuals with Blindness and Low Vision

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Abstract—The present study explores the relationship between self-concept and emotional stability among individuals with visual impairments, particularly focusing on two subgroups: those with total blindness and those with low vision. Self-concept, the perception individuals have about themselves, and emotional stability, the capacity to manage emotions in challenging circumstances, are critical for psychological adjustment. A sample of 120 participants (60 with blindness and 60 with low vision), aged between 15 to 30 years, were selected from special and inclusive educational institutions across urban India. Standardized tools including the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale and the Emotional Stability Questionnaire were administered. The results indicate significant differences in self-concept and emotional stability between the two groups, with individuals with low vision reporting higher levels of self-concept and emotional stability. The study highlights the importance of early interventions, inclusive education, and counselling support to enhance the emotional and psychological wellbeing of persons with visual impairments.

Index Terms—Visual Impairment, Blindness, Low Vision, Self-Concept, Emotional Stability, Disability Psychology, Inclusive Education etc.

I. INTRODUCTION

Visual impairment is one of the most prevalent forms of disability worldwide, significantly affecting a person's ability to interact with their environment. The psychological implications of vision loss go far beyond physical limitations, deeply impacting emotional development, self-esteem, and interpersonal relationships. Self-concept refers to an individual's perception of themselves—who they are, what they can do, and how they fit into the world. Emotional stability, on the other hand, reflects how

well a person can remain balanced and calm in the face of emotional challenges. Individuals with blindness and low vision often experience social isolation, stigmatization, and educational as well as vocational limitations, all of which may contribute to emotional disturbances and distorted self-perception. Understanding these psychological variables in individuals with visual impairment is crucial for educational planning, rehabilitation, and social integration.

Visual impairment, including blindness and low vision, ranks among the most common disabilities globally and has far-reaching psychological consequences (Willings, 2025). The loss or serious diminution of vision does far more than inhibit physical functioning—it can destabilize emotional health, alter one's self-concept, and disrupt interpersonal relationships (Emotional Health of People with Visual Impairment, 2015; Heinze et al., 2023). Self-concept refers to how individuals perceive themselves—their identity, capabilities, social roles and how they fit into the world (Lifshitz, Hen, & Weisse, 2006). In the context of visual impairment, individuals often confront a reappraisal of who they are, what they can do, and how others see them (Lifshitz et al., 2006). Research shows that adolescents and young adults with visual impairment often report lower self-esteem and more fragile self-concepts compared to their sighted peers (Augestad, 2017). Emotional stability describes how well a person maintains balance, copes with change and stays calm in the face of emotional stressors (Teaching Visually Impaired, 2025). For people with vision loss, emotional stability may be challenged by grief over loss of vision, stigma, social isolation and loss of previously held roles or activities (Willings, 2025). Studies also show that people with vision loss face

nearly double the rates of anxiety and depression compared to those with normal vision (van Munster et al., 2025).

Moreover, self-concept and emotional stability are intertwined in this context. For instance, better mastery and self-esteem mediate the relationship between worse visual acuity and poorer mental health outcomes (Self-concept and its Relationship to the Adaptive Behavior of Blind Students, 2021). Thus, if vision impairment undermines self-concept (e.g., “I am not competent anymore”), this may reduce emotional stability, leading to depression, anxiety or social withdrawal. Social isolation, stigmatization and limits in education or employment exacerbate this: individuals may internalize negative beliefs, feel less worthy or perceive themselves as different (Heinze et al., 2023). Understanding these psychological variables is crucial for educational planning, rehabilitation and social integration. Interventions to support adaptive behaviour, bolster self-concept and build coping skills are foundational for helping individuals with visual impairment develop resilience, emotional balance and a positive sense of self.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Several studies have emphasized the significance of self-concept and emotional regulation in individuals with disabilities.

Sacks and Wolffe (2006) stated that visually impaired adolescents frequently encounter significant challenges in identity formation due to limited social acceptance and reduced opportunities for meaningful peer interaction. They often struggle to participate fully in social activities, which can lead to feelings of isolation, lower self-confidence, and difficulty establishing a stable sense of self. The absence of visual access to social cues further restricts their ability to engage effectively in communication and build supportive relationships.

Tuttle and Tuttle (2004) noted that individuals with low vision benefit from greater access to environmental cues, visual feedback, and independent mobility, all of which contribute to stronger emotional balance and a healthier self-image. Because they can interpret facial expressions, body language, and spatial surroundings more effectively than those with total blindness, they often experience better social

interaction, increased confidence, and a more positive sense of personal competence, autonomy, and identity. Smith et al. (2011) reported a positive relationship between higher self-concept and the use of adaptive emotional regulation strategies in children with disabilities, emphasizing the importance of psychological support throughout developmental stages. Their findings suggest that children who perceive themselves more positively are better able to manage stress, cope with challenges, and maintain emotional stability. The study highlights the role of supportive educational environments, counselling interventions, and family involvement in strengthening self-belief and emotional resilience, ultimately contributing to healthier social adjustment and improved overall well-being.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the level of self-concept among individuals with blindness and low vision.
2. To assess emotional stability among individuals with blindness and low vision.
3. To compare self-concept and emotional stability between the two groups.
4. To analyse the correlation between self-concept and emotional stability in the visually impaired population.

Hypotheses:

- ❖ H01: There is no significant difference in self-concept between individuals with blindness and low vision.
- H02: There is no significant difference in emotional stability between individuals with blindness and low vision.
- H03: There is no significant correlation between self-concept and emotional stability in individuals with visual impairment.

IV. METHODOLOGY

Research Design:

Descriptive and comparative research design

Sample:

- Total: 120 individuals with visual impairment
- Group A: 60 with total blindness
- Group B: 60 with low vision

- Age range: 15–30 years
- Sampling technique: Purposive sampling
- Location: Special and inclusive schools/colleges in urban India

Inclusion Criteria:

- Certified cases of blindness or low vision
- Willingness to participate
- Age between 15–30 years

Tools Used:

1. Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (TSCS) – Measures various domains of self-concept.
2. Emotional Stability Questionnaire (ESQ) – Assesses emotional balance and control.

Procedure:

After obtaining consent from participants and institutions, the questionnaires were administered in Braille/audio format (for blind participants) and large print (for low vision). Confidentiality and ethical norms were strictly followed.

Statistical Analysis:

- Mean, SD, t-test for group comparison
- Pearson's correlation coefficient for association

V. RESULTS

Variable	Group A (Blind)	Group B (Low Vision)	t-value	Significance
Self-Concept (Mean ± SD)	41.2 ± 6.5	47.8 ± 5.3	6.04	$p < 0.01$
Emotional Stability (Mean ± SD)	38.4 ± 7.2	44.1 ± 6.1	5.17	$p < 0.01$

Correlation (entire sample):

- Self-Concept & Emotional Stability: $r = 0.61$, $p < 0.01$

VI. DISCUSSION

The study clearly shows that individuals with low vision reported significantly better self-concept and emotional stability compared to those with total blindness, which may be attributed to their relatively

greater access to social cues, mobility, and independence—factors that are essential in shaping self-identity and managing emotions. The positive correlation between self-concept and emotional stability further indicates that individuals who hold a more favourable perception of themselves are more likely to maintain emotional balance, aligning with previous research highlighting the importance of vision in psychological development. Social inclusion, strong family support, and educational adaptations appear to play important roles in influencing self-perception and emotional well-being among the visually impaired. Nonetheless, individuals with complete blindness may require targeted interventions such as counselling, assertiveness training, and structured social skills development to strengthen emotional resilience and enhance self-concept, ultimately improving their quality of life and social participation.

VII. CONCLUSION

The present study underscores the psychological challenges faced by individuals with visual impairment, particularly those with complete blindness. Differences in self-concept and emotional stability between blind and low-vision individuals highlight the need for differentiated support services that address their unique emotional and developmental needs. Individuals with blindness often encounter greater limitations in independence, social interaction, and identity formation, which can heighten vulnerability to low self-esteem, anxiety, and emotional instability. Therefore, educational institutions and rehabilitation centres must focus on structured programs that foster positive self-perception, coping skills, and emotional regulation among visually impaired youth. Counselling services, peer support groups, inclusive classroom practices, and skill-based training can empower students to build confidence and resilience. Enhancing self-concept and emotional stability not only supports their academic success but also promotes mental well-being, vocational readiness, and meaningful social participation. A holistic, psychologically informed approach is essential for enabling visually impaired individuals to realize their full potential and integrate effectively into society.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Implement life skills training in schools for the visually impaired.
- Provide regular psychological counselling and peer-group support.
- Increase awareness among teachers and parents about the emotional needs of blind students.
- Promote inclusive education practices to build confidence in children with visual impairments.

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