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**Problems of Visually Challenged -  
With Special Reference to School Children  
in Coimbatore District, Tamilnadu**

**J. Sheela, Ph.D.**

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Introduction

Disability is a condition or function judged to be significantly impaired related to the usual standard of an individual or their group. The term is often used to refer to individual functioning, including physical impairment, sensory impairment, cognitive impairment, intellectual impairment or mental health issue.

The World Health Organization (WHO, 2006) has produced the International Classification of Functioning (ICF) on Disability and Health. It distinguishes between body functions (physiological or psychological ex-vision) and body structures (anatomical parts eg. the eye and the related structures).

Visually challenged/blindness is the condition of lacking visual perception due to physiological or psychological factors. Various scales have been developed to describe the extent of vision loss and define “Blindness”. According to WHO estimates in 2002, the most common causes of blindness around the world are: Cataracts (47.8%), Glaucoma (12.3%), Uveitis (10.2%), Age Related Macular Degeneration (AMD) (8.7%), Trachoma (3.6%), Corneal Opacity (5.1%) and Diabetic Retinopathy (4.8%). The normal vision in any human being can be made vision less due to the poisoning such as exposure to chemicals. A well-known example is methanol, found in Methylated spirits, which is sometimes used by alcoholics as a cheap substitute for regular alcoholic beverages (Canada Safety Council, 2005).

## 1.2. Types of Blindness

Some of the types of blindness are as follows :

1. **Total Blindness:** Total blindness is the complete lack of vision which is clinically recorded as “NLP”, an abbreviation for “No Light Perception”.
2. **Legal Blindness:** Legal blindness is defined as visual acuity (vision of 20/200, 6/60) or less in the better eye with best correction possible. This means that a legally blind individual would have to stand 20 feet (6m) from an object to see it with the same degree of clarity as a normally sighted person could from 200 feet (60m).
3. **Color Blindness:** Color blindness is also known as Dyschromatopsia or color vision deficiency, in humans is the inability to perceive differences between some or all colors that other people can distinguish. It is most often of genetic nature, but may also occur because of eye, nerve or brain damage, or due to exposure to certain chemicals.
4. **Cortical Blindness:** Cortical blindness is the total or partial loss of vision in a normal appearing eye caused by damage to the visual area in the brain’s occipital cortex.
5. **Night Blindness:** Night blindness or Nyctalopia is a condition making it difficult or impossible to see in relatively low light. It is a symptom of several eye diseases. Night blindness may exist from birth, or be caused by injury or malnutrition.

6. **Stereoblindness:** Stereoblindness is the inability to see in 3D using stereovision, resulting in the sufferer's inability to perceive stereo scopic depth. While individuals with only one eye necessarily suffer from this condition, the condition also results when two eyes do not work in proper concert.

### **1.3. Causes of Blindness**

Serious visual impairment is caused due to several reasons. Most visual impairment is caused by disease and malnutrition followed by abnormalities and injuries and genetic defects. Vision can also be lost due to the poisoning and willful actions.

### **1.4. Blindness in India**

In every age, the handicap of blindness has stirred the sympathy of civilized peoples, but until comparatively recent times that sympathy generally expressed itself in the giving of alms to the wayside mendicant, rather than in constructive effort on his behalf. Men have been slow to realize the justice of the blind man's claim to education, employment and all that goes to make "the good life".

Less than a century and half has passed since the first school for the blind in England opened its doors. In India the earliest school for the blind was founded at Amritsar by English missionaries, followed by schools at Calcutta and Ranchi. Even to-day there are only about twenty organizations for the blind in the whole of India, and of these, few have resources adequate to care for more than a dozen or two of the thousands of blind children.

Although the vast size of India and the fact that up to now only the fringe of the problem of blindness are touched. The problems of prevention of blindness is then a more pressing one; which might, by its very immensity, paralyze effort, unless there were

another side to the picture. Although no exact figures are available as to causation, it is indisputable that a great part of India's blindness is due to infantile ophthalmia, to neglect to simple eye-diseases in children, to the application of irritant remedies, to small pox and to trachomoa, all of which are preventable, or can be remedied by proper treatment. The following quotation from a statement of infantile ophthalmia by the Census superintendent, Madras, which appears in the report of the 1931 census, brought this out : -- "The chief tragedy of blindness," he writes, "is that so much of it in India – probably more than half – is preventable, and that the majority are incurable or partially blind. Ophthalmia neonatorum is in any case preventable after birth by a simple precaution which every woman ought to know, but which many, including dais, unfortunately do not". It may, however, be added here that all trained midwives are being instructed in the application of the crede method, and that by slow degrees the hereditary of indigenous dais are being succeeded by trained workers.

### **1.5. Blind's Education in India**

Problems of the women in rural areas are much more severe as they also lack exposure, access to welfare organizations and non-availability of loans from Financial Institutions for initiating any enterprise. "Visually challenged women suffer more, particularly in rural areas, because they are denied education" (Madhavan, 2007). The inquiries made in 1930 showed that although there were rather more than twenty schools for the blind in India, the majority of these were small, probably not accommodating more than about a dozen pupils. Only the most elementary curriculum of reading, writing and arithmetic was attempted, together with a little handwork, and few children remained at school long enough to receive the real benefit. The fact that there was no system by which the child could pass from school to training centre, and from training centre to workshop, made a dead end of education in many of the schools, and parents were disinclined to allow their children to attend.

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Schools for blind, as existed depended mainly on private benevolence, at least in their initial stages, though government grants are usually made towards the upkeep of schools which reach a reasonable standard of efficiency. The above gloomy account of the education of the blind as it existed in India when the National Institute for the Blind made its inquiry that it should be supplemented by the statement that there are in the vast country perhaps half a dozen schools which are doing magnificent work in difficult conditions.

### **1.6. BRAILLE: A Method of Learning**

The question of the education of the blind is immediately bound up with that of Braille, and here those concerned with the improvement of conditions are confronted with considerable difficulty. The “battle of the types” which raged in this country during the first half of the nineteenth century, and was finally won by those who sponsored Braille, was the first step in the educational emancipation of the English blind, who, so long as a multiplicity of embossed types existed, could never hope to have an adequate supply of books, either for use in schools or for general reading. In India to-day there is a multiplicity of Braille codes, which makes it impossible for anything like an adequate supply of Braille literature to be attempted, and renders the ideal of an up-to-date educationists in India that even if no single code can be devised which would be applicable to the many languages and dialects of India, there might be two codes, one for the languages which are Aryan in origin, and the other for the four mainly Dravidian languages of the south. It is a problem which can only be solved by those who know India from within, and when its solution is found the education of the blind will be in a position to make a notable advance.

### **1.7. Problems of The Visually Challenged Persons**

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Visually challenged people are in many parts of the world. They face a lot of problems in their life and they have to depend on others for satisfying their needs. One percent in the World goes blind every second, one child every minute. There are 135 million visually handicapped people in the World (and the numbers are increasing as we speak). One fourth of them are right here in India. 45 million is the number of corneal blind, of which 90 per cent are below the age of 45 (including 60 per cent below 12 years) and here is the clincher-80 per cent of the blindness is curable (Srinivasan, 2007). People in developing countries are significantly more likely to experience visual impairment as a consequence of treatable or preventable conditions than in the developed countries. While vision impairment is most common among people over 60 years of age across all regions, children in poor communities are more likely to be affected. Blindness can be present at birth, acquired through illness or accident, or associated with aging (glaucoma, cataracts, macular degeneration, optic nerve atrophy, diabetic retinopathy). According to the American Foundation for the Blind, almost 1 person in every 1,000 under the age of 45 has a visual impairment of some type, while 1 in every 13 individuals older than 65 has a visual impairment which cannot be cured with glasses. With current demographic trends toward a larger proportion of elderly, the prevalence of visual impairments will certainly increase (School of Public Health and Health Professions).

### **1.7.1. Access to Computer and Document**

The blind people do not have the advantage to make use of recent development in information displayed on the screen. However, mandatory use of a mouse or other pointing device requiring eye-hand co-ordination is also a problem. Special programs exist to provide individuals with the ability to magnify the screen image. There are also programs which allow the individual to have the content of the screen read aloud. Individuals with low vision may also miss messages, which pop up at different points on

the screen, since their attention is usually focused on only a small area of the screen at any time.

Written operating instructions and other documentation may also be inaccessible if they are not provided in electronic or alternate form (e.g. audio tape or Braille) and even then people may have difficulty accessing graphic or pictorial information included in documentation.

The blind are treated as burdens to their families and society, when; if properly trained they can live perfectly normal lives. At times the degree of blindness ranges from total loss to a fair degree of vision. Therefore all blind children can not be educated or treated alike. Their individual problems and needs, need to be taken into consideration. To keep this in to mind an attempt is made here to study the problems faced by the visually challenged female children at schools and at their homes. It is a known fact that a person with a sensory handicap is gifted with a talent or innate ability that needs to be tapped. We should encourage them to learn and master their disability and lead a fairly independent life. They can even be taught to take care of themselves and earn their own living.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **METHODOLOGY**

The 2001 census have a category wise population figure of those with visual, speech, hearing, orthopedic and mental disabilities so that an assessment of what assistance they got so far and what they required further could be done. In recent years there is an increase in the awareness that the visually challenged person must be cared and the need to protect them. But still they face some difficulty to survive and to bring out their ability. The present research work is primarily intended to study the problems of the visually challenged female children in Coimbatore District, TamilNadu.

#### **2.1. Objectives**

- To know the problems faced by the visually challenged female children.
- To know the caretaker of the visually challenged female children.
- To know the opinion of visually challenged female children regarding their upliftment by the society.
- To know the awareness on Government schemes provided to visually challenged person.

#### **2.2. Sample Frame and Size**

Schools for the Blind in Coimbatore District, Tamil Nadu State were selected for the study. For the study totally 3 schools were selected using simple random sampling method. In all the 3 schools 100 samples were selected and listed below:

S.No.	Name of the School	Number of Respondents
1	Ramakrishna Mission , Periyamayakkanpalayam.	23
2	St. Michales Blind School, Town Hall.	35
3	Uliyampalayam Blind School, Uliyampalayam.	42
	Total	100

Female school children in the age group of 12 to 17 years were interviewed in the month of December 2007.

### 2.3. Tools Used For Data Collection

Major tool used in the study is an interview schedule, which was prepared in such a manner to get detailed information, which fulfills the objectives of the study. The interview schedule was prepared to probe information from the respondents regarding the subjects. The questions were in detail about their economic condition, family background, health problems, societal responsibilities, in family their importance, their hobbies, daily activities, their mental freeness, care takers, awareness on government schemes. Each case was taken in a detailed manner with a view to get accurate information from the respondents.

### 2.4. Pre Test

Interview schedules were scrutinized by applying it to a small group of children. For the pre test 10 respondents were interviewed. After that certain slight modifications were made in the tool by deleting unnecessary questions. Final tool was then prepared by incorporating questions connected with almost all information regarding the problems of visually challenged children.

## 2.5. Problems During Data Collection

During the initial stage of data collection, there seemed to be some reluctance on the part of the children to answer some of the questions. The researcher had taken pains to convince and soothe the respondents by explaining the importance and purpose of the study. Some of the children revealed the answers only after consulting the ward members.

## 2.6. Data Analysis

After the collection of data all the responses were checked as well as edited carefully. Later, all the data were transferred into the code sheets with the help of a code design and the same were entered into the personal computer (PC). Then the data were checked for transcription errors and edited accordingly. The analysis of the data has been carried out using simple percentage.

## 2.7. Structure of the Study

The report consists of **Introduction chapter**, which includes the definition of blindness, types of blindness, causes of blindness and the condition of blind people in India. The **Second chapter** deals with the methodology adopted for the study.

**Third chapter** focuses on the background characteristics of the visually challenged female school children and their family.

**Fourth chapter** consist of problems of visually challenged female children in their daily life and the **Fifth chapter** depicts the knowledge and attitude of the visually challenged female children. The **Final chapter** is the summary and conclusion.

## CHAPTER – III

### BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE VISUALLY CHALLENGED FEMALE CHILDREN

#### 3.1. Background Information

In this study age, religion, type of family, childhood place of residence is the selected background variables given in Table 3.1. These background variables play a crucial role to determine the major objectives to focus about the visually challenged.

**Table 3.1: Number of Respondents by Their Background Characteristics**

Background Characteristics	Number of Respondents	Percent
<b>1. Age</b>		
≤ 13 years	22	22.0
14 - 15 “	45	45.0
16 and above “	33	33.0
<b>2. Religion</b>		
Hindu	95	95.0
Christian	5	5.0
<b>3. Family Type</b>		
Nuclear	95	95.0
Joint	5	5.0
<b>4. Childhood Place of Residence</b>		
Rural	71	71.0
Urban	29	29.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

In

order to know the age group of the visually challenged female children, the age groups are classified into three categories namely below 13 years of age, 14 to 15 years of age and 16 and above years. It was observed that nearly half of the respondents i.e., 45 per cent of them are in the age group of 14 to 15 years. Next to that 33 per cent of them are in the age group of 16 and above years and the remaining 22 per cent of them are in the age group of below 13 years.

India is a traditionally bonded society. Due to the invasion of many rulers there is a prevalence of diversified religious practice since ancient times. In general, there are three major religion, practiced by the people namely Hindu, Muslim and Christianity. In Table 3.1 of panel 2 the religious practice of the respondents are given. It is evidenced that out of 100 respondents almost 95 per cent of them are Hindus, only minimum number i.e., 5 per cent of them belong to Christianity.

Though joint family system is prevailing in the ancient period, it is not common in the present modern period. It was observed in panel 3 of Table 3.1 that 95 per cent of the female children are living in nuclear family and the remaining 5 per cent of them are living in joint family. Their childhood place of residence reveals that (panel 4 of Table 4.1) three-fourths of them (71%) were from rural background and 29 per cent of them were from urban area.

### **3.2. Type of Vision**

Visually Challenged person could suffer either due to total blindness or due to visual impairment. The type of visual impairment is given in Table 3.2.



**Table 3.2: Number of Respondents by their Type of Vision**

Type of Vision	Number of Respondents	Percent
Visually Impaired	19	19.0
Blind	81	81.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

It is evident that in the study area 19 per cent of the children are visually impaired and blind children who suffered from total blindness are 81 per cent. Thus children suffering from total blindness are higher than visually impaired children in the study area.

### **3.3. Nature of Vision**

Vision can last either by birth or after their birth which could have caused due to various reasons like, vitamin deficiency, accident, fever etc. Table 3.3 explains the nature of vision of the respondents.

**Table 3.3: Number of Respondents by their Nature of Vision**

Nature of Vision	Number Respondents	Percent
By Birth	78	78.0
After Birth	22	22.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

It is observed that by birth 78 per cent of the female children in the study area suffer from blindness and the remaining 22 per cent suffer from blindness after their birth. The causes are due to various reasons like accidents, diseases, vitamin deficiency etc. Among the 22 respondents only for the past three years and below 14 per cent of them are suffering from the visual impairment and the remaining 8 per cent of them are suffering for more than three years.

### 3.4. Causes of Eye Defect

Various eye defects for the respondents are provided in Table 3.4. It is clear that for 18 per cent of the respondents the causes of eye defect are due to hereditary problem. Among the causes of eye defect 45 per cent of them are affected by nervous disorders, 7 per cent of them have problem of low vision and 6 per cent of them are affected by retina, 4 per cent are suffering from low circulation of blood, 5 per cent of them have blindness because of accident, 2 and 3 per cent of the respondents eye vision was lost due to fever, small pox respectively during conception period of their mothers and 10 per cent of them caused due to the deficiency of vitamin C and tumor in eyes.

**Table 3.4: Number of Respondents by the Cause of Eye Defect**

<b>Causes</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Nervous Disorder	45	45.0
Hereditary Problem	18	18.0
Low Vision	7	7.0
Retina	6	6.0
Circulation of Blood	4	4.0
Accident	5	5.0
Fever to Mother	2	2.0
Small Pox during Pregnancy	3	3.0
Tumour in Eyes	10	10.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### 3.5. Eye Defect to Family Members

In the study area to know the eye defects of the children are due to genetic disorder, it was felt necessary to include the question of family members having the problem of any eye defect and the result is explained in Table 3.5.

**Table 3.5: Number of Respondents by Eye Defects to Family Members**

<b>Eye Defects to Family Members</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Yes	18	18.0
No	82	82.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

It is evident that 82 per cent of the respondents' family members are not affected by eye defect, whereas 18 per cent of their family members are affected by eye defect. Thus the result revealed that the eye defect is not hereditary.

### **3.6. Person in the Family Having Eye Defect**

The Table 3.6 explains the respondents' family members suffering from eye defect.

**Table 3.6: Number of Respondents by Family Members Having Eye Defect**

<b>Family Members Having Eye Defect</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percent</b>
No One	82	82.0
Brother	11	11.0
Sister	1	1.0
Grand Father	5	5.0
Grand Mother	1	1.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

It is observed that 82 per cent of the respondent's family members have no eye defect. On the other hand, family members especially brother of the respondents are affected by eye defect (11 %) followed by 5 per cent of the respondent's grand father are suffering from eye defect and one respondent each of their family members namely sister and grand mother is suffering from eye defect respectively.

## CHAPTER – IV

### PROBLEMS OF VISUALLY CHALLENGED FEMALE CHILDREN IN DAILY LIFE

#### 4.1. Problems Faced by the Respondents in Daily Life

The visually challenged children are faced the problems in their routine life. Table 4.1 explains the type of problems faced by them.

**Table 4.1: Problems Faced by the Respondents in Daily Life**

Problems	No of Respondents	Percent
No Problem	3	3.0
Eating Food	17	17.0
Purchasing Dress	16	16.0
Changing Dress	18	18.0
Cooking	19	19.0
Purchase of Things	27	27.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

It was observed that almost all the respondents face problems in one or the other activities. Out of 100 respondents 27 per cent of them face problem in purchase of things, 19 and 18 per cent each of them suffer while cooking and changing dress respectively. The other 17 and 16 per cent each of them face problems while eating and purchasing of dress. Only 3 per cent explained that they have no problem to meet the daily activities. It is clear that many of the children are affected while purchasing the things from shops.

#### 4.2. Problems Faced in the House

The visually challenged children explained their problems faced in their house. The details are provided in Table 4.2

**Table 4.2: Problems Faced in the House**

<b>Problems Faced</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percent</b>
No problem	78	78.0
Identifying Products	6	6.0
While Helping Mother	9	9.0
Moving one Place to Another Place	7	7.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

It is observed that 78 per cent of the respondents have stated that they have no problem in their house, 9 per cent of the respondents face problem while helping their mother. Another 7 per cent of respondents had problem in moving from one place to another and 6 per cent of the respondents have problem in identifying the products. Thus few respondents i.e., 22 per cent of them face problem in the house to do various activities.

#### 4.3. Preference of School

The preference of school by the respondents is given in the Table 4.3. It is observed that out of 100 respondents almost 96 per cent of them preferred to go to special school, whereas the remaining 4 per cent of the respondents are satisfied with the

ordinary school itself. Thus the children wish to be equipped themselves by being in special schools to overcome the hurdles faced by them in their in daily life.

**Table 4.3: Number of Respondents by Preference of School**

Preference of School	Number of Respondents	Percent
Ordinary School	4	4.0
Special School for Blind	96	96.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### **4.4. Mode of Transportation to Reach School**

Mode of transportation is essential to reach the destination. The facility of transportation varies from person to person depending upon their economic status and convenience. The Table 4.4 shows that the respondents reach their school through various modes of transportation.

**Table 4.4: Number of Respondents by Mode of Transportation**

Mode of Transportation	Number of Respondents	Percent
By Walk	7	7.0
School Van	24	24.0
Bus	44	44.0
Auto Rickshaw	10	10.0
Two Wheelers	11	11.0
Car	4	4.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

It is evident that 44 per cent of the respondents are comfortable and preferred to travel by bus to reach the school, closely followed by 24 per cent of the respondents traveled by school van since their parents feel that going by school van is safer for their children. Two wheeler and auto rickshaw are the mode of transportation for the 11 and 10 per cent of the respondents respectively. In the study are 4 per cent of the female children are economically sound and reach their school by car in contrast to that 7 per cent of them reach school by walk. This shows that most of them belong to middle class family as they afford to reach their school by bus.

#### **4.5. Courage to Travel by Bus Alone**

The Visually Challenged person generally have the problem to travel, in spite of that they must have courage to travel alone by bus or any other vehicle with out the support of others. Respondents were probed about their courage to travel by bus alone are provided in Table 4.5. Slightly more than half of them (55%) said that they have no courage to travel alone by bus and the remaining 45 per cent of them explained that they have courage to travel alone. This shows that the persons depending upon others for travel is high due to lack of confidence.

**Table 4.5: Courage to Travel by Bus Alone**

<b>Courage to Travel</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percent</b>
No	55	55.0
Yes	45	45.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### **4.6. Problems Faced in the School**

Everyone is facing one or the other problems in their daily life. The level of problems ranges from person to person. Especially the visually challenged children face

problems not only at home but also at School. Hence, the problem they faced at school was probed and is given in the Table 4.6.

**Table 4.6: Number of Respondents by Problems Faced in The Schools**

<b>Problems in the School</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percent</b>
No Problem	3	3.0
Going to Bathroom	29	29.0
Writing Lessons	37	37.0
Reading Lessons	8	8.0
Moving	16	16.0
Difficult to Identify Teachers	7	7.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The results from Table 4.6 depicted that 37 per cent of the respondents have problem in writing their lessons closely followed by 29 per cent of them have problem in going to bathroom and 16 per cent of the female children have problem with moving to various places. In connection with class room activities 8 and 7 per cent of the respondents stated that they find difficulty in reading lessons and identifying their teachers. Only 3 persons said that they have never come across the problem at school. The result inferred that most of the female children have problems in writing their lessons. Therefore, more attention is essential to achieve good carrier in future.

#### **4.7. Person Helping in School**

As the visually challenged children face problem at school, naturally they seek the support of others in the school. Table 4.7 shows the person helping the children in the school.



**Table 4.7: Person Helping in the School**

<b>Person Helping</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Friends	37	37.0
Teachers	51	51.0
Self	12	12.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

In the school, teachers are the care takers for the differently abled children. This is obvious in the study. It is observed that as high as 51 per cent of the respondents receive the help from their teachers, for another 37 per cent of them their friends help in various activities the remaining 12 per cent of them take care of themselves in the school. It is evident that half of the visually impaired female children seek the help of their teachers in writing, reading and going to other places in the school campus.

#### **4.8. Person Helping in Writing Notes**

It is very difficult for the visually challenged children to master their subject unless they know Braille system. They always have to seek the support of others in writing and reading their lessons. Table 4.8 explains the person helping for them in writing notes.

**Table 4.8: Person Helping in Writing Notes**

<b>Person Helping</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percent</b>
No Help	5	5.0
Friends	35	35.0
Teachers	33	33.0
Neighbours	2	2.0
Parents	25	25.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

It is evidenced that parents are the major source of support to write the class notes for 25 per cent of the visually challenged children and 5 per cent of the respondents write themselves without seeking support from others. The remaining 2 per cent of the respondents stated that they are making use of their neighbours to write the class notes. Thus it can be say that friends and teachers played a major role in writing class notes.

#### **4.9. Person Helping for Reading at Home**

.Table 4.9 highlighted that the person helping for visually challenged while reading.

**Table 4.9: Person Helping for Reading at Home**

<b>Person Helping</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Mother	27	27.0
Father	31	31.0
Sister	19	19.0
Brother	15	15.0
Tutor	3	3.0
Neighbor	3	3.0
Self	2	2.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

It is clear from the Table that 31 per cent and 27 per cent of the respondents received help from their father and mother respectively for reading books at home. Next to parents, siblings are the people to support the visually handicapped persons. Brothers (15%) and sisters (19%) are the persons to rendering their services in the form of reading books to their visually challenged siblings and 3 per cent each of the respondents received help from their tutor and Neighbours respectively. Only 2 per cent of the respondents have received no help, they study by themselves. Almost all the respondents write the exam with the help of separate tutors or scribe, arrange by the school. The

results highlighted that parents are paring more time to their visually challenged children for reading and moreover the children are comfortable with their parents than any other person.

#### **4.10. Preferred Occupation**

Given training and opportunity, the average blind person can do the average job in the average place of business as well as his or her sighted colleagues. Most of the blind in the world lack opportunity, if not training. Most of the visually challenged children want to be economically independent. Nowadays, many of the visually challenged are being absorbed in the work force and in industries, because of their abilities, reliability and sincerity. In fact they are even preferred for certain jobs. Their preference of working is given in Table 4.10.

**Table 4.10: Number of Respondents by Their Preferred Occupation**

<b>Preferred Occupation</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percent</b>
No idea	10	10.0
Professional Job	66	66.0
Government jobs	24	24.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The results from the above table highlighted that most of the visually challenged children (66.0%) preferred to work as a professionals followed by 24 per cent of them stated that their preference is any government job and 10 per cent of the respondents have no idea about their preference of job. This shows that in the competitive world, female children are in a position to identify and select the job they preferred and moreover they want to show their capabilities through professional jobs which could be a challenging nature.

#### **4.11. Job Opportunity Immediately After Education**

The attitude towards job opportunities immediately after completing the education of the respondents is provided in Table 4.11.

**Table 4.11: Job Opportunity Immediately After Education**

<b>Job Opportunity</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Don't Know	14	14.0
Definitely I Will Get Job	85	85.0
Own business	1	1.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

It is observed from the table that as high as 85 per cent of the respondents have the confidence that they will get the job immediately after completing the education, 14 per cent of the respondents have no idea about their job opportunities and only one respondent's attitude is that she wants to do business. The results highlighted that visually impaired children are more confident and self reliant about their job opportunities and this will be possible only through the timely support and continuous encouragement provided by the parents and the wonderful surroundings.

#### **4.12. Health Problems During The Past Three Months**

Health is the important criteria in everybody's life. Everyone wanted to be healthy and feels that their offspring are also healthy like them. In order to know whether the respondents face faced any problems it was felt appropriate to ask during the past three months from the date of interview respondents had any health problems and the results were provided in Table 4.12.

**Table 4.12: Health Problems during the Past Three Months**

<b>Health Problem</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percent</b>
-----------------------	------------------------------	----------------

No problem	79	79.0
Fever	14	14.0
Chicken pox	3	3.0
Cold, body pain	4	4.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

It is interesting to note that 79 per cent of the respondents had no health problems during the reference period of last three months. This is mainly due to strictly adhering hygienic practices in their day to day life. On the other hand, 21 per cent of the respondents had one or the other health problems viz., Fever (14%), Chicken pox (3%), Cold and body pain (4%).

#### **4.13. Place of Treatment**

People affected by various diseases often seek the help of doctors and nurse for which they have go to the private hospitals, government hospitals or clinic depending on the economic status to cure themselves and their family members. Table 4.13 indicates the place of treatment underwent by the respondents during the period of their sickness.

**Table 4.13: Place of Treatment**

<b>Place of Treatment</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Not going	2	2.0
Private hospital	47	47.0
Government hospital	41	41.0
Clinic	10	10.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

It is clear from the Table that, most of the respondents i.e., 47 per cent go to the private hospitals because of their economic status, good hospitality and also due to the

advancement of new technologies in the field of medical sciences. Around 11 per cent of the respondents goes to government hospitals because of free services provided by the hospitals, 10 per cent of them take the treatment in clinics and remaining 2 per cent have not taken any treatment.

#### **4.14. Accompanied Person During Hospital Visit**

Persons with normal vision can overcome the health problems by themselves without seeking help from others to a certain extent. But it is a tough task for persons with visual impairment. Visually impaired children are accompanied by others for taking them to the hospitals. Table 4.14 shows the person accompanied the visually impaired children to the hospitals.

**Table 4.14: Number of Respondents by Accompanied Person**

<b>Accompanied Person</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percent</b>
No body	4	4.0
Teachers	43	43.
Father	19	19.0
Mother	26	26.0
Brother	8	8.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

It is observed that 43 per cent of respondents were accompanied by their parents, 19 per cent of them were taken by their father, 26 per cent of respondents were accompanied by their mother, 8 per cent of respondents were accompanied by their brother and only 4 per cent of the respondents are not accompanied by any one. It is evident that in most of the cases the parents accompanied their children to the hospitals.

## CHAPTER – V

### KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDE OF THE VISUALLY CHALLENGED FEMALE CHILDREN

#### 5.1. Opinion About People with Normal Vision

Nobody likes to be blind, but it is nature that by some way or the other some people are born blind. They have their views regarding the people who have the normal eye vision. Table 5.1 explains the opinion of the respondents about the people who have the normal vision.

**Table 5.1: Opinion about People with Normal Vision**

<b>Opinion about Vision</b>	<b>Number of Respondent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
No Comments	74	74.0
No Difference	5	5.0
To Love Nature	5	5.0
Luckiest Person	16	16.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

It is observed that 74 per cent of the respondents have no comments on people with normal vision whereas 16 per cent of the respondents' attitude is that they are the luckiest person. For 5 per cent each of the respondents stated that they didn't find any difference between blind and the people with vision and people with vision are lucky enough to admire the beauty of nature.

## 5.2. Objects Like to See

Vision is the only medium through which one can admire the surrounding environment can identify and talk with the members in the family and society. Table 5.2 explains the things liked by the respondents to see if they had vision. It is observed that more than one-fourths (29%) of the respondents wish to see everything in the world. The other 15 per cent and 14 per cent of the respondents each wish to travel alone and like to see ornaments respectively, 13 per cent of them are interested to see and admire the beauty of nature. About 11 per cent and 6 per cent of the respondents are interested to play and to see buildings. Only 12 per cent are not interested to see anything and they feel comfortable by being blind.

**Table 5.2: Objects Like to See**

<b>Objects</b>	<b>Number of Respondent</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Not interested to see	12	12.0
Ornaments	14	14.0
Building	6	6.0
Transport	15	15.
Nature	13	13.0
Everything	29	29.0
Sports	11	11.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>



### 5.3. Incident that Made “Thank God for Not Having the Vision”

Certain incidence makes the visually challenged person not to have vision. In the Table 5.3 it is explained about the different incidence that made the respondents not to have vision.

**Table 5.3: Number of Respondents by Incident for no Need of Vision**

<b>Incident</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percent</b>
No Idea	83	83.0
Death of Friend’s Brother	1	1.0
Death of Uncle	1	1.0
Kumbakonam Fire Accident	3	3.0
Accident	2	2.0
Hearing Bad News	4	4.0
Death of Grand Mother	2	2.0
Bed Ridden of Father	2	2.0
Death of Father	2	2.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

It is observed that 83 per cent of respondents have no incident that made them to feel not to have vision. Hearing bad news made 4 per cent of the respondents feel not to have vision, 2 per cent of the respondents each felt not to have vision due to accident, death of grand mother, bedridden of father and death of father. Remaining one per cent of the respondents each felt not to have vision due to the death of the friend’s brother and death of uncle. Thus it is clear that 17 per cent of the visually impaired children feel not to have vision due to the cause of accidents and sadness.

Moreover, some of the incidence makes them totally depressed and they go up to the level of cursing the God. Such situation was formed for 7 per cent of the respondents i.e., 3 per cent felt totally depressed by hearing the fire accident occurred at the school in Kumbakonam, 2 per cent of the respondents each felt worst when people create sympathy on them and the death of the parents respectively.

#### **5.4. Importance to The Work**

Everybody likes to do certain work because they feel happy by doing the same. Table 5.4 shows the importance given to the work by the respondents.

**Table 5.4: Number of Respondents by the Importance Given to Work**

<b>Important Work</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percent</b>
No Idea	2	2.0
Reading	75	75.0
Writing	4	4.0
Drawing	2	2.0
All work	2	2.0
Meditation	2	2.0
Playing	4	4.0
Listening Music	5	5.0
Food	1	1.0
Cleanliness	2	2.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

It is evident that almost 75 per cent of the respondents are interested to read and they give importance for reading. Another 23 per cent of them are interested in writing and listening music (4% each), playing (4%), drawing, meditation, all work, cleanliness (2 % each) and 1 respondent likes to cook and eat delicious and tasty food. Only 2 respondents have no idea to give importance to the work done by them.

### **5.5. Knowledge About Government Benefits**

There are various government schemes for the uplift of the people belonging to various categories. Table 5.5 indicates that the knowledge and awareness about the government schemes by the respondents. It is necessary to be aware of the government schemes, to make use of it for the betterment of life and society.

**Table 5.5: Number of Respondents by Knowledge About Government Benefits**

<b>Knowledge on Government Schemes</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percent</b>
No knowledge	48	48.0
Thorough Knowledge	49	49.0
Only about Bus pass and scholarship	3	3.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

It is observed that 49 per cent of the respondents have knowledge about the government schemes such as reservation policy for the visually challenged people in the field of education, government job etc. Remaining 48 per cent of the respondents are not aware of the government benefits, and 3 per cent of the respondents know about bus pass and scholarship provided by the government to the disabled children.

## 5.6. Satisfaction about the Government Benefit

Government schemes helps in uplifting the life of the disabled people. Various schemes of the government sometimes fails to fulfill the necessity of the various groups in the society. Table 5.6 indicates the satisfaction by the respondents regarding the government schemes

**Table 5.6: Number of Respondents by Satisfaction about Government Scheme**

Satisfaction about Government Schemes	Number of Respondents	Percent
Not sufficient	47	47.0
Sufficient	53	53.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

It is inferred that more than half of the (53%) of the respondents felt sufficient about Government benefits and another 47 per cent of the respondents felt not sufficient of the Government benefits and they wanted the government to introduce some more schemes for their betterment in occupation and education.

## 5.7. Expectations from the Government

To fulfill their needs the respondents expect some of the benefits from the government. This is given in the Table 5.7 which indicates the supports expected by the respondents from the government for their better life.

**Table 5.7: Number of Respondents by their Expectations from Government**

<b>Expectations</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percent</b>
No Expectation	11	11.0
Providing Dress Materials	3	3.0
Financial Support	11	11.0
Increase Scholarship	48	48.0
Employment Opportunity	12	12.0
Provide Lots of Help	6	6.0
Provide Awareness	4	4.0
School Development and Job	5	5.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

It is evident that nearly half (48%) of the respondents expects the government to increase the scholarship for them. Increase in the employment opportunities are required by 12 per cent of the respondents, 11 per cent each of the respondents felt the need of financial support and have no expectations from the government. Remaining 6 per cent, 5 per cent, 4 per cent and 3 per cent of the respondents each have the expectations like to provide lots of help to provide awareness, to provide better schools and jobs and to provide dress materials. Increase in the scholarship is the main criteria expected from the central and state government by the visually impaired female children.

### 5.8. Things Wish to Do for The People Like Blind

Helping others is the humanity hidden among most of visually impaired children. Visually challenged children wanted to do something for the people who are also blind like them and the results are provided in Table 5.8.

**Table 5.8: Things Wish to Do for the People Like Blind**

<b>Wish to Do for the People</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percent</b>
No Idea	12	12.0
Teach Education	17	17.0
Be Self Confident	7	7.0
Help to Blind People	34	34.0
Scholarship	6	6.0
House to Poor Blind People	12	12.0
Many Schools for Blind Children	11	11.0
Teaching Music	1	1.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The above Table gives the information that 34 per cent of the respondents wish to help the blind people in one way or the other, 17 per cent of them wish to provide education for them. House to poor blind people and no idea is for 12 per cent of the respondents each, 11 per cent of the respondents wanted to construct better schools for the blind children, 7 per cent wants to build self confidence for the blind children, 6 per cent want to provide scholarship and 1 respondent each wants to construct school for them and wished to teach music for the blind children. Thus it is clear that 34 per cent of them wanted to help the others.

### 5.9. Type of Service Rendered by the Public to the Blind People

It is natural that if any visually impaired children or an adult struggles hard to do something, the people near by them comes to help them in someway. Table 5.9 highlights the types of service rendered by the public to the blind people.

**Table 5.9: Type of Service Rendered by the Public to the Blind People**

Service Rendered	Number of Respondents	Percent
No Idea	11	11.0
Help to Cross the Road	16	16.0
Not to Talk Ill about Visionless People	6	6.0
Not Showing Sympathy	44	44.0
Help from Public	19	19.0
Support	4	4.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

It is observed that 44 per cent of the respondents felt that public is not having sympathy towards blind people, 19 per cent of the respondents received help from public, 16 per cent of the respondents were helped while crossing the road, 11 per cent of respondents have no idea about this, 6 per cent of respondents felt that nobody should talk ill about visionless people, 4 per cent of respondents wanted the support from the public. It is clear from the above that in this busy world public is bothered about their own work and they are not coming forward to help the people or the children who are visually challenged.

### 5.10. Type of Information to Convey to the Blind

Encouraging advice to anyone can make the person bold, confident and self reliant to face the various problems. Table 5.10 focuses on the type of advice or information which the respondents want to give the blind people.

**Table 5.10: Information Like to Convey to the Blind**

Information	Number of Respondents	Percent
No One	26	26.0
Certain Good Education	3	3.0
Go to Good Occupation	8	8.0
Give Fame to Parents	4	4.0
Stand on Own Legs	7	7.0
Do Good Works to Bring Fame to Themselves	5	5.0
Get Rid of Sympathy	14	14.0
Courageous	17	17.0
Have Hope as it is Good for Everything	16	16.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

It is observed that 26percent of respondent have no idea to give information to the blind people, 17 per cent of the respondents told that they should be made courageous, 16 per cent of the respondents told that they should have hope that whatever is happening it is for good, 14 per cent of the respondents told that they should get rid of sympathy, 8 per cent of the respondents felt that blind people should go to good occupation, 4 per cent of the respondents focused that visually challenged people should bring name and fame to their parents, 7 per cent of the respondents told that they should stand on their own legs, 5



per cent of the respondents told that do good works which will bring fame to them and 3 per cent of the respondents liked to give information on better education which will be useful for them in their future. Thus it is clear that visually impaired children would like to give information like better education, getting rid of sympathy, being courageous and by doing good works which will bring name and fame not only to themselves but also to their parents will help to solve the various problems faced by them.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

Visually challenged/blindness is the condition of lacking visual perception due to physiological or psychological factors. Problems of the women in rural areas are much more severe as they also lack exposure, access to welfare organizations and non-availability of loans from Financial Institutions for initiating any enterprise. They face a lot of problems in their life and they have to depend on others for satisfying their needs. Their individual problems and needs, need to be taken into consideration. To keep this in to mind this study deals with the problems faced by the blind female children of the school in their day to day life in Coimbatore District, Tamilnadu during the month of December 2007.

The **First chapter** consists of Introduction, which includes the definition of blindness, types of blindness, causes of blindness and the condition of blind people in India. The **Second chapter** deals with the methodology adopted for the study.

**Third chapter** focuses on the background characteristics of the visually challenged female school children and their family. The blind people are suffering mentally and physically in their day to day life. But because of their positive attitude and strong feeling they lead a happy life. Age is an important criterion to show their physical and mental ability. It was observed that nearly half of the respondents i.e., 45 per cent of them are in the age group of 14 to 15 years. It is evidenced that out of 100 respondents almost 95 per cent of them were Hindus, living in the nuclear family and their childhood place of residence was from rural background. It is observed that majority of the female children in the study area suffer from total blindness. Some are blind from the birth due to hereditary traits and some are blind after the birth due to some accidents,

circulation of blood and deficiency of vitamins. The cause of blindness and visually impaired are nervous disorder, accidents, low vision, cataract, tumor in eyes, white spot, and problem in Retina. In many of the respondent's family the blindness is found among their brothers, fathers, sisters, and grandmothers.

**Fourth chapter** consists of problems of visually challenged female children in their daily life. It was observed that almost all the respondents face problems in one or the other activities. The problems faced by the blind people in their home are while eating food, changing their dress, cooking, shopping and so on. The blind children are unable to study in the normal schools and most of them study in the specialized schools for the blind and they travel by bus to reach the school. Slightly more than half of them (55%) said that they have no courage to travel alone by bus. The respondents stated that at their school they have problem in writing lessons, find difficulty in reading lessons and identifying their teachers. The blind children are not self dependent and they must depend on someone like their parents, friends, teachers and neighbours for their help. Despite of their problems many are successful in their life and many are helped by others to succeed in their life.

**Fifth chapter** depicts the knowledge and attitude of the visually challenged female children. The visually challenged female children wanted to see the ornaments, meet the great people who have succeed in their life and they are very much interested to see their parents who are helping them in their daily life. The Profession chosen by the blind children is well supported by the government and most of them use the financial support provided by the government and many scholarship are given by the government for the students studying in the blind school but some of them are unaware of the government schemes. It is evident that the respondents expect the government to increase the scholarship and to provide employment opportunities to them. Many blind

children are interested to start the schools for the blind when they grow up and some have the idea of teaching the music to the students and some have the idea of teaching for the blind children. From the study it is clear that the respondents are happy for not having vision due to the tragedies which are happening in and around their surroundings. Most of them are interested to do works like reading, writing, listening to music, cooking and eating delicious food. The **final chapter** is the summary and conclusion.

### **How Do We Help The Visually Challenged?**

Special schools are set up to teach these children through Braille and other manual skills. But besides this, they need to be socialized to help them to fit into society and get over their deep-rooted feelings of insecurity and inferiority. This depends on the parents, extended family as well as peer groups. Do not treat them with pity. Give them opportunities through encouragement to show their talent. They might not have external vision, but internally they can see well than us.

Government is providing various schemes for the upliftment of the blind people but most of the blind people are unaware of such schemes. The blind people do not like to be dependant but they are forced to be dependant and they like to live a independent life and they like to have a successful and a happy life which they themselves prove by attaining a good position.

Thus, it is clear that awareness programmes for the upliftment of the visually challenged should be organized at national and international level and more and more government schemes in the field of education and occupation should be created for them.

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