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Ms.Vatsala Pathak

Research Scholar,
Deen Dayal Upadhyay Gorakhpur-
University, Gorakhpur,
India

Prof. Anubhuti Dubey

Department of Psychology,
Deen Dayal Upadhyay Gorakhpur-
University, Gorakhpur,
India

Correspondence:**Ms.Vatsala Pathak**

Research Scholar,
Deen Dayal Upadhyay Gorakhpur-
University, Gorakhpur,
India

Looking Into The Mental Health Of Visually Impaired

Ms.Vatsala Pathak, Prof. Anubhuti Dubey

Abstract

Aim: The present study was conducted to better understand the psychological journey of the visually impaired. It is possible that having a visual impairment has a considerable influence on a variety of life areas, including career, personal/social connections, psychological well-being, adjustment, day-to-day difficulties, and overall well-being. According to many studies, the quality of life for those who are blind or visually impaired is strongly influenced by how others perceive their condition.

Methods: In this study, we utilized a qualitative technique to better understand how persons with visual impairments think about the world, how they perceive experiences, and what meaning they assign to occurrences. This is a primary goal of qualitative research. To name just a few, there are a variety of qualitative approaches to qualitative research. The current study employed IPA as its technique of investigation.

Result: People suffer from visual impairment as a result of a variety of traumatic experiences or illnesses that impact their eyesight. When it comes to making choices, people who are blind or visually impaired worry a lot about getting all the information they need.

Keywords: Disability, IPA, Psychological, Social relationship, Visual impairment

1. Introduction

The average life expectancy of the world's population has increased by twenty years since 1950. According to current predictions, this will continue to grow until the year 2050 [1]. People over the age of 60 in the European Union (EU) are increasing by more than 2 million per year, according to Walford and Kurek (2008) [2] [3]. Between 2012 and 2032, there will be a 63.5 percent rise in the number of people over 65 in Northern Ireland. In addition, the quantity of individuals over the age of 85 in Northern Ireland is expected to rise by 19.6% between 2012 and 2017 [4].

Macular degeneration, cataracts, glaucoma, and diabetic retinopathy are among the most common eye diseases in older persons [5].

Because the environment does not provide some impairments-related difficulties, the social model is no longer relevant, say Shakespeare and Watson (2002) [6], who claim that excellent intellectual functioning is essential for many occupations in the twenty-first century. However, the fact that visually impaired students are statistically less likely to complete their studies due to academic failure, lack of support, or withdrawal due to insufficient supervision suggests that acceptable adaptations to working techniques in Higher Education (HE) may still be made. In college, individuals who are blind or visually challenged face a variety of difficulties [7-8]. Mental, institutional, environmental, and physical barriers are the four basic types identified by Owen-Hutchinson et al. (1998) [9].

Disability studies, as the history of physically disabled mobility shows, is a topic that brings together many different academic disciplines, such as sociology, history, medical anthropology, and politics. In contrast, psychology has not been included in this alliance until recently because of its focus on people. Social models of disability have been undermined by this (except for its use in the rehabilitation field). It is worth noting that clinical psychology and psychiatric problems have long been seen as an exception. It was

seen to be a problem that needed to be addressed. Because of this, unique elements of having a disability were not taken into consideration. Disability studies and clinical psychology have been criticized for failing to bridge the divide between them [10]. Disability studies, on the other hand, have just begun to be used in clinical psychology to promote social change by empowering impaired individuals and their communities [11].

Even the psychological well-being of physically challenged persons is negatively affected by the lack of understanding of the psychological features of having physical disabilities. Denying the sentiments and difficulties of handicapped persons concerning their limitations is a distinct kind of oppression. This results in sentiments of shame and a rejection of one's uniqueness [12]. Physically challenged studies, on the other hand, have been exceedingly cautious about including psychology in their study. In addition, experts have discussed how clinical psychology may be improved. Clinical psychology has seen modifications in its conceptualization of individual cases, becoming more socially or culturally oriented recently. Because of the way clinical applications in psychology work, it is expected that change will be slow in coming. In addition, the interdisciplinary approach to disability studies and clinical psychology is beneficial since it provides a distinct viewpoint on the handicapped and raises awareness of the need to treat a patient with impairments with culturally appropriate psychotherapy [13-14]. Aside from ableism's pervasiveness in society, it is also important to note the paucity of research and the quantity of material available to undergraduate and graduate psychology students in formal education that reveal prejudice in case conceptualization and treatment of patients with disabilities. The work of 15 psychotherapists has been made possible via the work of disability studies researchers. For their mental well-being, this is necessary.

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Design:

People who were blind or visually impaired were the primary focus of this study. The goal was to get an understanding of how people interpret and make meaning of their experiences by discussing their ideas, emotions, perceptions, and reflections on those experiences with them. Interpretative phenomenological analysis [IPA] is one of the qualitative methodologies that was employed in the study. Semi-structured questions would be utilized throughout the interview. Participants in a study are recruited by a process known as "snowball sampling." It was employed when it was difficult to locate volunteers. Snowball sampling gets its name from the fact that once you get it rolling, it gathers up additional "snow" and grows in size. It was a non-probability sampling approach.

2.2 Procedure

Under the recommendations of Kvale and Brinkmann, the interview process was semi-structured (2009) [15]. As a result, queries were as impartial as possible and thus allowed for more freedom. There were a variety of open-

ended questions about their life at home and at work as well as about their finances, family members, education, and his subjective experiences as a blind person. The participant was interviewed in their own house to confirm that he was comfortable and confident. The following were examples of interview schedule questions:

- What are the day-to-day challenges in your life??
- You said that people sometimes do not support and mislead you, so how do you react when such a challenging situation comes in your life??
- You just discussed social support... What does social support mean in your life??
- What does social relationship or social relationship mean to you??
- Are there some biases that you faced in your life?
- You have to face your whole life somewhere.... so, what is the meaning of life for you?
- In the current scenario, are you satisfied with the policies available to you by the government or would you like to make any changes to them?

2.3 Sample

The basic objective of IPA was to provide fair regard to each participant's narrative. As a result, IPA study samples were often small, allowing for a more in-depth examination. An in-depth analysis of specific occurrences was the goal of IPA, not the creation of a theory that could be applied to the entire population. When it comes to persons who are partly or completely visually impaired, this study aimed to get insight into their mental frameworks.

2.4 Measuring Tool

A systematic qualitative technique, interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA), was used to analyze the interviews, which examined participants' subjective experiences [16]. While conceding that individual researchers may introduce particular notions into the analytic process, IPA was judged a viable approach since it permitted for thorough descriptions of how participants thought and felt about issues, they were faced in their daily environment [17-18]. The fundamental objective of IPA was to elicit first-person narratives of events and phenomena under inquiry that are rich, detailed, and first-person. Semi-structured interviews would be used in addition to demographic data in this study. Semi-structured interviews enable the interviewer and subject to converse at the moment. In addition, they were allowed for the discovery of new and unanticipated difficulties, which might be further investigated with more questions by the researcher in the future.

2.5 Data analysis

IPA was shown to be a good method for analyzing tiny samples, and Smith et al. (2009) designed a set of six stages to evaluate an interview. Note-taking and developing themes emerged from this process, as well as a search for linkages across instances. With broad margins for notes, the interview was recorded verbatim and transcribed. For example, a pause or chuckle was marked

by the inclusion of brackets in the text [19]. To better comprehend what was stated, transcripts were re-read many times. Next, for each interview, we produced exploratory remarks regarding language, description, and conceptual notes. Researchers maintained a journal to record their early views to use the journal for bracketing. According to their apparent meanings and connections, potential themes were grouped [20]. To confirm that the verbatim data supported the themes, the transcripts of each interview were re-read. Finally, overarching themes emerged from all interviews [21]. Thus, in this research, the analysis of the data would be following Smith et al (2009) six-stage approach, as detailed below:

Stage 1: Reading and re-reading

Stage 2: Initial noting

Stage 3: Developing emergent themes

Stage 4: Searching for connections across emergent themes

Stage 5: Moving to the next case

Stage 6: Looking for patterns across cases

2.6 Quality Assurance

The study team followed guidelines to improve the quality of their work. As a result, an audit was conducted to check that the interpretations and original transcripts were linked. The transcripts and topics addressed with independent investigators were also examined for any irregularities. Using a research diary and tables to document each stage of the analysis, we were able to keep the decision-making process transparent. The article's credibility was bolstered by the inclusion of direct quotations in the results section [22-23].

3. Result

Following the IPA findings, four major themes emerged: the lack of being defined by others, disability definitions and lived experiences, roles ascribed to blind people, and emotional responses associated with victimization as a consequence of unfulfilled needs. Table 1 depicts the superordinate's themes and subordinates' themes.

Table 1 Superordinate and Subordinate Themes

| S.no | Superordinate theme | Subordinate theme |
|------|---|---|
| 1 | The other people's definition of a sensation of lack | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The lack of invisible vision 2. To keep up with the sighted peers, one must repress one's wants. 3. Being seen as an entity that must be identified and tracked down 4. A sensation that something is amiss and that one must work harder than normal |
| 2 | The terms used to describe disability and the lives of those who live with it | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Referrals to social services for people with disabilities 2. Inaccessibility is a second reason for unfulfilled demands. 3. Emotional and interpersonal skills are referred to as the handicap |
| 3 | The blind's appointed responsibilities | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Seeing people's refusal to accept 2. not acting in a blind manner 3. the satisfaction of a void in the views of others; and 4. Regardless of the problem |
| 4 | Responses to victimization that are caused by unfulfilled needs. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inability to accurately describe one's feelings in the case of those who have been objectified as handicapped (contradictions and inconsistency). 2. Despite their longing for freedom, the lives of those who have been imprisoned |

With quotations from participant reports, the following sections outline each theme's subordinates.

3.1 The Feeling of Lack Defined by the Others

The participant's early recollections are the source of the first theme. While talking about a third party defined visual impairment that arose from childhood experiences, participants sensed a void in their own lives as a result of this impairment. Participants' perceptions of their

deficiencies are reflected in their responses. Having a low vision is depicted as an inherent defect in participant 1, and it is clear that the underlying reasons for this condition are inferred from other people's experiences. The following describes the present situation for the participant.

First and foremost, I suffer from a genetic condition. A congenital marriage may be to blame, but it's also a result of an eye pressure that's causing the agony.

Scientific recognition, on the other hand, adds to the definition of disability that the impaired person fails to provide. In this way, we can see how the sense of a deficiency indicated above (1) is in the mind during the diagnosis and characterization of a handicap. Participant 2 expressed remorse for not being self-sufficient in her remark about her independence because of the cause of her handicap.

Congenital and 90% visually deficient, I am unable to read, write, or see. I'm still relying on another person for the majority of my day-to-day activities. However, I also have periods of extreme hardship, leading to a mental collapse.

In their later lifetimes, when they provided a particular scientific diagnosis, it was discovered that the participants had misrepresented their actual state of 'not seeing' under the influence of other people. In addition, the participants are expected to correct for the skewed lack of vision that they may have. Distress and trauma are vividly described in the recollections of three participants' childhoods.

As a person with a handicap, I am constantly confronted with challenges throughout my whole life. As a child, I hoped every night that my impairment would go away so that I could go to school. As a child, I was afraid that having a disability would make my life more challenging. I used to think of my disability as a huge gap in my life that needed to be filled when I was a teen. This chasm would be narrowed if I were constantly attractive and successful. In the past, I've thought of my impairment as a barrier that makes it harder for me to do things.

This concept of blindness as a barrier to participation in activities that sighted people take for granted is well-recognized and widely accepted. According to participant 1, she has always wanted to attempt sculpting and painting but is hindered by her vision handicap.

It's difficult for me to accomplish the things I'd want to because of my condition. For instance, I'd want to explore a variety of visual arts, such as painting, pottery, and more. I, on the other hand, am unable to carry out these actions. Reducing my life and activities because of my disability.

As a person's life advances, his or her wants and desires change as well. A handicap is defined as a lack of something, which means that it is always to blame for any given scenario, regardless of the circumstances. Adults want to take care of their looks, but it is known that the standards of physical attractiveness imposed by sighted persons are a source of this desire. To put it another way, visually impaired people can't meet the criteria set out by

those who can see. This is how participant 4 imagined the scenario.

Makeup is something I'd want to try. Blonde is my natural hair color. My eyes have become a bright shade of emerald, and green recently. My hair is dyed a dark shade of brown. It's a whole different shade on me, however. However, I can also wear this hair with some makeup. Makeup is the only way to showcase pale blonde hair. But I'm at a loss as to how to achieve that, so I'll just dye my hair black. People who know me know that I value aesthetics highly. Another thing that holds me back is being able to put on make-up. My preferred look has to be altered often. Always a step behind schedule and with something lacking in their work ethic.

By not acknowledging their visual impairment and not questioning the limits or ease of access brought about by this handicap, the participants are understood. The disadvantages of seeing people's lifestyle and dress are demonstrated to be untrained by those who are blind themselves, contrary to popular belief. Of course, this claim is made as if it were incomplete, and they complain about it. While other participants described how their lives are governed by the perceptions of others, she described how her wants and desires are repressed to meet the expectations of others.

Forks, knives, and spoons aren't my strong suits. I'm in good health. However, I must admit that I am not without faults. Cutting waffles is one example. When cutting them up, make sure you're in plain sight of the onlookers... When it comes to sweets, my only option is to avoid them at all costs since I'm unable to make them myself. "

Participant 5 was the first to remark that she couldn't meet this level without experiencing herself and appeared to be too near to certain situations in her life to achieve it.

For example, if I need to travel someplace, I always have to find someone to go with me and arrange for them to join me. The extra dose may be necessary even for social interactions. When they call, I don't go because I can't do it all on my own. I don't always want to make the effort.

The participants' definitions of disability are considered to include an item that must be relocated or carried to new locations. Because society defines an inability to see as being unable to go on one's own. It is considered that the gap between known and accepted facts is only noticed by the eye and then acted upon. When it comes to a handicapped person, they may not want to go along with this description, but visually impaired people are in a position to create the impression that they cannot do it from the viewpoint of society because they are visually impaired. This is the most frequent occurrence in the participants' six lives. My acquaintance was informed about an upcoming community event by me.

One of my friends joked with another, saying, "You take her," about me. Everyone I've ever known has seen me as a person who has to be transported someplace. And it includes both my parents. They would not allow me to go

on my own, and they would dispute over who would take me to a certain location.

Attendees who are blind or partially sighted describe how they are treated differently in society because of their condition and how they must work twice as hard to meet society's expectations. There were numerous echoes of this in participant 6's university experience.

I'm not able to see and do things. For instance, I'm taking two tests this week. Because I have to take examinations on a computer, I've been working on honing my computer abilities. When I was in college, I always had a reading with me, just in case. The difficulties we face, like whether it is tough to prepare for the test, are quite different from those of sighted people. As a result, we begin to think about topics that other people don't. The things that happen beyond my control, such as. They make me feel like an outsider and an outcast from the rest of society.

Participant 7 (another university student) echoed this sentiment, saying that this "new mood" helped her in both her academics and her personal life.

To improve my knowledge, I'll have to put up more work. I'll need to put in additional hours. When the family is protective, this period may be longer. I have a hard time doing everyday tasks. I've just recently begun utilizing cutting tools in my normal life, but I need to learn how to do that as well.

3.2 The referrals made to define disability and lived experiences

When a person is visually handicapped, it means different things depend on where they reside. This might have a good or a bad connotation. That is to say, the most important aspect in determining a person's disability classification and status is the scenario they find themselves in. Naturally, the person's impression of their handicap changes depending on their mental state, the people around them, and most significantly, their gaze. For example, the person's inability to see may have contributed to the development of their capacity to acknowledge the social support they get from others around them. Such attribution may be seen in the lives of participants.

When I started learning English, I had a hard time finding the things I needed. When it came to reading and tasks, I had to go through many phases when I could either give or receive from the instructor. To seek assistance, I posted a description of my predicament in a Facebook group. A large number of individuals wanted to assist me. I counted maybe 15 individuals as I glanced around. All of them were asked. I volunteered to work on a rotating basis. I started my own Whatsapp group. Because I was handicapped, they wanted to assist me. As I continued to meet with them, I was able to deepen my relationship with them. These aren't the kinds of folks you'd expect to quickly band together in such a situation. A normal person would not have so many friends in such a short period.

The fact that some handicapped participants can only acknowledge this social support when they get it from their peers who have gone through similar difficulties and can manage their limitations in this manner may be an indicator of this. As shown by Participant 2:

It's a lot easier for me to deal with my disability-related issues when I can talk to someone who's going through the same things I am, listen to their solutions, and gain support from them. If he or she is at peace with his or her impairment, this is especially true.

One of the most significant life circumstances that alter the attribution of impairment is the difficulty that someone who is blind has in accessing certain things. Some people expose their obstacles and consider themselves incomplete as a result of not having access to external influences. Participant 3, a university student, characterized her position as a standstill since the materials utilized in the classes were not appropriate for her.

Learning to read music and play the piano has never come easily to me. Visually appealing. For the time being, no such materials have been developed. My friends don't always take the time to fully explain things to me. Teachers, in my opinion, make no effort. In the end, I don't know how to solve this problem.

Several participants, including participant 7, referred to this problem as a lack of social awareness and ability to respond appropriately to others. People's inability to be seen by others, according to him, was a serious flaw.

The only way to observe, notice, and identify individuals at a distance was to look at them. It's difficult for me to make friends. Saying hello to me from a distance, for example, makes it difficult for me to identify the person speaking since I can't see them with my eyes. People then make a blunder. My impairment is reducing my capacity to see well. It may take me a long time to get to know someone when my perception is impaired.

Emotional abilities were seen as the greatest advantageous attribute of visual impairment in the survey. Disabilities, according to most of the participants, made them more sympathetic and allowed them to better understand their peers. Writing poetry, stories, and tales helped participant 2 strengthen her creative writing skills because of her emotional nature and handicap.

Because of my impairment, I've developed a more sensitive side. Because I am an introvert, I prefer to write poetry, fairy tales, and stories that are emotionally charged. This component, I believe, has been beneficial to its growth.

As a result of her condition, participant 7 said she was "grateful" to have her impairment because it allowed her to better comprehend the world around her and the people in it.

Because of my impairment, I was able to relate to others on a deeper level. I was able to understand the world around me. I sometimes consider myself lucky to own it as a result of this.

Rather than focusing on what she couldn't see, participant 3 focused on her connections with others. She reduced the

significance of being disabled. Even she felt sorry for him because of his blindness.

Because of my condition, I've always been able to connect with others. With them, I had a good rapport. Because I couldn't see their facial expressions, I didn't take a bad stance against anybody. It's a chance for me to avoid focusing on the negative aspects of the world.

4. Discussion

The feeling of lack defined by others, the references used to define disability and lived experiences, assigned roles for the blind and victimization because of unmet needs are four main themes. The first subject, titled "Feeling of Lack Defined by Others," deals with the concept of disability and the preconceived beliefs others have about blind people. People with disabilities are seen as objects that reflect the lives of those without disabilities by society. Disability is a social barrier because disabled people must live according to their limitations, and from their viewpoint, this has resulted in disability being a social barrier. According to the research on this topic, disabled people's dejected pleas, subjugated lives, and emotional revelations of their invisibility are utilized as a weapon against their battles of 'being' or 'living'.

Disabled people's dejected pleas, subjugated lives, and emotional revelations of their invisibility are utilized as a weapon against their battles of 'being' or 'living.' According to the third theme, Assigned Roles for the Blinds, people with disabilities are seen as objects that reflect the lives of those without disabilities by society. Referrals Made to Define Disability and Lived Experiences, the second subject, is linked to the definition of disability by these persons.

4.1 The feeling of Lack Defined by the Others

Both the handicapped and their loved ones go about this process in their unique ways. Society views visually challenged persons as having proclaimed themselves disabled by attempting to remain unnoticed. The handicapped person is always at odds with society or their own family about what should be done. Clinical psychologists are advised to first listen to their clients' experiences, ideas, and emotions. They then attempt to explain the significance of the harsh emotional responses produced by the impaired [25,26].

Instead of reading or remembering stereotypes about the handicapped, disabled individuals and professionals in the disability sector should concentrate on their own experiences. People with disabilities who dislike seeing themselves in the mirror because of their impairments need aesthetic, or compensatory, make-up to complete their visuality. Families have reportedly freed visually impaired children from a variety of restrictions, including those on schooling, mobility, and their potential for independent living. Physicians must consider how complaints help or hinder the lives of people who are blind or visually impaired while addressing the causes and effects. In

counseling, it's critical to focus on the person's grieving process and the grieving process of their family members who are visually impaired [27].

4.2 The Referrals Made to Define Disability and Lived Experiences

People with ableism views place a higher value on socializing and helping others since they believe they will only be recognized as a friend by others like themselves. Having friends helps people forget their limitations by erecting obstacles that prevent them from socializing with others who aren't impaired. The value of visibility in society and the family is emphasized, whereas the impairment of the visually impaired is seen as a disadvantage. Being ableist and being complete are closely linked in this case. The fact that people with an unknown visual condition weep for being impaired reminds us that this is not their life.

Disabilities relate to the facts that can be explained by emotional intelligence, analytical intelligence, and other elements. Those with visual impairments may be better equipped to examine society. For those who have infirmities they see as undesirable and disruptive, this attribution may be viewed to live with their limitations [28].

4.3 Assigned Roles for the Blinds

Ableism is a typical, problem-free individuality or personality that has been produced using material or non-material criteria of excellence [29]. It is regarded to be a severe obstacle for those who identify with a disability as part of their identity. Common themes in these experiences include difficulty adapting to living arrangements and socializing with healthy people. Disabilities are a concept that is constructed by both impaired and complete individuals with a ready-made label of incompleteness, as discussed in previous sections. According to Lacan, being a subject implies that you are dependent on another person and can't live without their wish [30-33].

A child's ability to walk on their own isn't apparent until they ask for help. The family and society want an individual to be a strong, self-reliant person. There is little incentive for them to achieve this, as a result, no two people's walks are the same. Mahler and colleagues (2018) conclude that youngsters have grown more receptive to warnings about strangers in their everyday lives and have begun to walk with the support of the face of their mother as a sign of encouragement. One of the Studies indicates that handicapped people who do not have social support and encouragement have not realized their potential [34-36].

4.4 Victimization and the Emotional Reactions That Occur as a Result of Unmet Needs

Having a visual impairment is synonymous with being a loser and lacking the potential of those who can see. It is common for the handicapped, who are often reared in families that are protective of them, to display signs of ready-made choices that bind them to their current circumstances - a kind of castration. Disabled people who

have been exposed to the idea of incapability are more likely to behave in ways that are expected of them and less likely to engage in activities that are out of character for them. Considered collectively, it is clear that the handicapped participants face genuine hurdles as a result of the limitations imposed by their physical and mental conditions. Disability, according to Freud's theory, is a kind of castration.

Participants who experience loss and castration also experience rage, emotions of incomprehension, and a sense of bond because of this intertwined loss and compensation experience. Because of this, the Freudian framework gives a concept of disability that is both individual and medical. Disability is also acknowledged as a natural loss and a cause of marginalization in the medical paradigm of treatment [37].

5. Conclusion

Society views visually challenged persons as having proclaimed themselves disabled by attempting to remain unnoticed. The handicapped person is always at odds with society or their own family about what should be done. Clinical psychologists are advised to first listen to their clients' experiences, ideas, and emotions. They then attempt to explain the significance of the harsh emotional responses produced by the impaired. Instead of reading or remembering stereotypes about the handicapped, disabled individuals and professionals in the disability sector should concentrate on their own experiences. People with disabilities who dislike seeing themselves in the mirror because of their impairments need aesthetic, or compensatory, make-up to complete their visuality. Families have reportedly freed visually impaired children from a variety of restrictions, including those on schooling, mobility, and their potential for independent living. Physicians must consider how complaints help or hinder the lives of people who are blind or visually impaired while addressing the causes and effects. In counseling, it's critical to focus on the person's grieving process and the grieving process of their family members who are visually impaired.

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