

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT OF BLIND PERSONS AND
THEIR DESIRE TO WORK : LUSAKA AND NDOLA DISTRICTS**

Relationship between social environment of blind persons and their desire to work: Ndola and
Lusaka districts.

BY

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requirement for the award of degree of master of Education (Special Education)**

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TITLE

Relationship between social environment of blind persons and their desire to work: Ndola and Lusaka districts.

DECLARATION

I, Paul Mulenga, do declare that this dissertation is my own work which has not been submitted for a degree at this or any other University.

DEDICATION

To my beloved wife Royce, our beautiful children Chomba, Fulare, Musonda and baby Paul who was born during the time I was doing my part 2 of my master's programme.

COPYRIGHT APPROVAL

This dissertation by Paul Mulenga is approved as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Education (Special Education) of the University of Zambia.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Title	i
Declaration	ii
Dedication	iii
Approval	iv
Copyright Declaration	v
Acknowledgements	vi
Table of Contents	viii
Lists of Tables	x
List of Figures	x
Abstract	xi

CHAPTER ONE

	Page
Introduction	1
Background	3
Statement of the Problem	8
Purpose of the Study	8
Objectives of the Study	8
Research Questions	9
Significance of the Study	9
Theoretical Perspective	9
Limitation	10
Operational Definitions.....	11

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review	13
-------------------------	----

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology	29
Study Design	29
Target Population	29
Study Sample and Sampling Procedure	29
Research Instruments	30
Pre-Testing of Research Instruments.....	30
Data Collection Procedure	31
Data Analysis	31
Data Interpretation	31

Ethical Considerations	32
Constraints encountered during Fieldwork	32

CHAPTER FOUR

Findings of the Study	33
Socio-economic background of Respondents	33
Sex of the Respondents	33
Age of the Respondents	34
Respondents’ geographical location	35
Respondents’ highest academic qualifications	35
Respondents’ professional qualifications	36
Respondents’ employment status	37
Respondents’ number of years served in employment	38
Employers’ and Community attitudes towards blind persons	38
Respondents’ views on employers’ and community attitudes towards the blind persons	39
Respondents’ views on whether employers’ and community attitudes affect the blind persons’ desire to work.....	39
Respondents’ views on equal treatment between the blind and sighted Persons	40
Respondents’ views on whether equal treatment can enhance blind persons desire to work.....	41
Respondents’ views on self-esteem of blind persons	41
Respondents’ views on whether self-esteem affects the blind persons’ desire to work.....	42
Respondents’ views on the type of and benefits of vocational training offered to blind persons	42
Respondents’ views on whether vocational training offered to the blind affect their desire to work	42
Respondents’ views on whether visual impairment limits employment Opportunities	43
Attitudes of sighted co-workers towards the blind persons	43
Respondents’ views on whether attitudes of sighted co-workers affect the blind persons	44
Limitation in participating in social and community activities	44

Respondents’ views on whether limitation in participating in social and community activities affect blind persons’ desire to work	44
Respondents’ views on the status of the blind persons	45
Respondents’ views on whether status affects the blind persons’ desire to work.....	45

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion of the Findings	46
----------------------------------	----

CHAPTER SIX

Summary and Recommendations	61
Recommendations	63
Future Research	65
References	66

APPENDICES

Appendix 1.....	72
Appendix 2	75

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	33
Table 2	38

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.....	34
Figure 2.....	35
Figure 3.....	35
Figure 4.....	36
Figure 5.....	37
Figure 6.....	39
Figure 7.....	40
Figure 8.....	41
Figure 9.....	43

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether social environment of a blind person has an effect on his/her desire to work. This study also investigated whether self-esteem and low vocational training of a blind person have an effect on his/her desire to work.

A sample size of 80 visually impaired adults (20 employed females, 20 unemployed females, 20 employed males and 20 unemployed males) was selected from Ndola and Lusaka districts to participate in the study. These selected respondents had the required characteristics of the study. To select the required sample size, purposive or judgemental sampling method was employed.

To collect information from the respondents, two sets of questionnaires were designed. One set for respondents in employment and another set for respondents not in employment. The questionnaire for the respondents in employment contained 16 items of open-ended questions. While the questionnaire for those not in employments also contained 16 items of open ended questions. Data was analysed by describing and explaining the responses from the respondents using simple tables, graphs and percentages.

The study revealed that social environmental factors such as negative attitudes, prejudice and discrimination perpetuated by employers, sighted co-workers and community, though not directly influential to their desire to work largely limit the blind persons' ability to obtain and retain employment.

The study has also showed that the blind persons are employed by government and mainly in low paying jobs. The majority of these blind employed people are confined to switchboard telephone operating and the rate of employment per year was minute. The study revealed that blind persons have low self-esteem arising from factors such as over protection from parents and community, stressing environments and failure to accept the disability. The results of the study further indicated that low self-esteem was in some ways related to their desire to seek employment

The results also suggested that vocational training programmes offered to persons, though not directly influential to their desire to work largely hinder their ability to seek employment.

In accordance with the findings of the study, the following are some of the recommendations suggested to the Government of Zambia to help create user-friendly social environment that could help in enhancing blind persons' desire to work.

- a. The Government, NGOs and Organisations of blind persons should take actions to raise awareness in society about persons with visual impairment, their rights, their needs, their potential and their contribution to society to overcome negative attitudes, prejudice and discrimination.
- b. The Government should come up with a deliberate policy on the employment of blind Persons and other disabled persons. A statutory instrument must be put in place to Compel

the private sector to include disability issues in their work policy and those sectors employing the persons with disabilities should enjoy tax rebate.

- c. Persons with disabilities should be involved in political offices to create positive role models for other persons with disabilities and to raise awareness among society about their potential. Issues related to the disable population would be best presented through persons with disability. The President should deliberately nominate at least two people with disabilities as members of Parliament.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The coming of the missionaries in the 1900s saw the opening of schools and some craft centres for the disabled people, the earliest school being opened by Dr. and Mrs. Botes in 1905 at Magwero. The school only catered for visually impaired. This made blind people to be the first disabled persons to receive education and skills training in crafts. By the time Presidential decree was declared in 1970, the visually impaired had already made more advances in education, as there were secondary school graduates as well as university graduates (Ministry of Education, 1977). Despite this early advancement in education, their employment opportunities were very limited. Historically, unemployment rates for the persons with disabilities have been high around the world. In the recent years however, some countries like Japan, United States of America and Denmark have passed legislation in hope of reducing barriers of employment for persons with disabilities (Blanchard, 2001).

People who are blind or visually impaired can perform almost any job one can imagine. They can be lawyers, artists, secretaries, teachers, broadcasters, computer programmers, counselors, factory workers and more. It is not possible to count the number of different jobs blind people are engaged in today or will be in future. The possibilities are tremendous. However, blind people are among some of the most excluded and marginalized people in the society. Their exclusion arises out of peoples' prejudices and institution, personal and social barriers which prevent blind people from full participation in society. Often blind people have to deal with

many barriers in normal day-to-day life. Blind people just like any other person have the desire to work and want also to live independently of others. Blind people have Constitutional Right to make their own life choices about education, employment, religion, relationships and so forth. They must be allowed to make personal choices. They should be given opportunities to succeed to the extent of their abilities and desires. Apparently attitudes towards people with disabilities in the workforce and society have not changed much in the past 30 years. CNIB (2003) indicated that many educated people who are blind are living in poverty because they cannot find employment. Many of the barriers they faced 30 years ago still exist today.

Like other groups of disabled individuals, visually impaired people are becoming increasingly aware of their Rights as citizens to discrimination based on their disabilities. As Willoughby (1980) in Heward and Orlansky (1988) observed, many people some of whom work with the visually impaired tend to underestimate the capacities of their blind workmates and deny them a full range of occupational and personal choices. This is not only found at places of work, but even in the community where visually impaired persons live. Society tends to under rate the capabilities of the blind people. The visually impaired do not fully participate in some social and community developmental activities. However, the future will probably bring people a gradual shift away from some of the vocational settings in which visually impaired people have traditionally worked such as telephone operators and sheltered workshops in favour of a more varied range of employment. A wide variety of career choices make a person to have more employment opportunities. In an environment where a person is given a chance to choose his/ her own career, the desire to work is enhanced unlike when the career is imposed on a person. Limitations in career opportunities lead to limited employment opportunities.

Punani (2000) indicate that full participation and equality of opportunities are internationally accepted goals for persons with disabilities. Therefore, with proper assistance and support, many people with disabilities are quite capable of supporting themselves, living outside the family home, developing enriching relationships, and becoming proud, productive contributors to the society.

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Global Picture

World Health Organisation (2002) revealed that more 161 million people were visually impaired, of whom 124 million had low vision and 37 million were blind. However, refractive errors as a cause of impairment were not included, which implies that the actual global magnitude of visual impairment is great. Of this estimated world population, more than 90% of the world’s visually impaired live in developing countries. Visual impairment is unequally distributed across age groups more than 82% of all blind are 50 years of age and older, although they represent only 19% of the worlds population due to the expected numbers of years lived in blindness (blind years).Childhood blindness remains a significant problem, with an estimated 1.4 million blind children below the age of 15.While 5.6 million blind persons are between 15 and 49 years.

It is the accepted norm in society that all people will work, achieve a reasonable level of productivity, contribute to the economic strength of their communities, and through their own endeavours they may achieve a level of income sufficient enough to provide for the support of themselves and their families and enable them to enjoy the fruits of their labours in a variety of

cultural leisure and recreational pursuits (Dobree and Boulter, 1982). However, for a blind person this becomes a nightmare. Though, there has been remarkable and far-reaching progress made in the last 30 years in the preparation and placement of blind people in an ever-widening range of occupations, trades, and professions, the belief persists that blindness is synonymous with idleness and penury.

In 1975 the United Nations General Assembly passed a declaration on the Rights of Disabled persons proclaiming that disabled persons have the same civil and political rights as other persons and provides for equal treatment and services developing to the maximum the capabilities of persons with disabilities. Seven years later, the UN acknowledged that despite many efforts, disabled persons continued to be denied equal opportunities and in many societies remained isolated while progress had been made in raising awareness; too little practical action had yet been taken. However, in most technically developed countries like United States of America, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and most other developed countries, the situation with respect to the employment of blind people has very much improved compared to developing countries.

Dobree and Boulter (1982) indicated that central government bodies of these most developed countries discharge the principal responsibility for funding or administering programmes for the placement of blind people in employment. Such activities are frequently conducted by national and local voluntary organizations that serve as the agents of government. Some of the functions thus discharged are conducting research into potential new areas of employment and the development and supply of technical aids which can be made available from government

sources. Other includes the placement of blind men and women in industrial, commercial, administrative technical and professional occupations, and their placement in employment or referral to appropriate further training courses.

A number of Western countries and some developing countries in the Eastern block have written laws in their statute books for providing universal education and social security to people with visual impairment. For instance, in India, the government issued an executive order declaring that 3% of all class C and D posts in the government sector were to be reserved for people with disabilities. One percent of this total was to be reserved for people with visual impairment. Later the supreme court of India also ruled that similar reservations be allowed for people with disabilities in the class A and B posts also (Fernandez, et al. 1999). In Serbia and Montenegro, blind and severe visually impaired persons are trained for work in four institutions for telephone operators, physiotherapist, office workers and packing workers. According to the regulations from a special law on employment of disabled persons in sheltered workshops, these institutions are obliged to employ 40 % of disabled persons out of total number of workers. For illustrations, here are a few significant statistical data. In Serbia and Montenegro, there are about 12,000 blind and severely visually impaired persons, 60% of whom are over 60 years old. Out of the total number, 1780 persons have been trained for work (14.8%), the number of employed persons is 1380 (11.5%), while 400 persons (3.3%) are unemployed. Out of the total number of employed, telephone operators are 475 (34.4%), and the physiotherapists are 193 (13.9%) (Raznatovic, 2003).

Despite the remarkable stand taken by countries like India, Denmark, Germany and United States of America, in relation to rights of disabled persons, the blind in particular, discrimination and marginalisation of the blind still prevails. European Blind Union (2003) reveals that people with sight loss face discrimination and infringement of their rights on a daily basis, be it at work, in trying to find work, or in going to a café, supermarket or hospital. Full participation in the life of the community is often restricted, with inadequate support to engage in social, cultural and political opportunities, and to be involved in decision making. Blind people want be part of the society like everyone else, and take part in leisure and cultural activities along side sighted peers. The European Blind Union (2003) also indicated that blind people are undoubtedly among the most vulnerable and neglected and belong, for the most part, to lower income levels of society. Poverty and social exclusion are inextricably linked and caused by a complex combination of factors, such as poor education and housing, unemployment and inadequate social protection, inaccessibility of transport and the built environment, as well as negative attitudes and prejudices in the society. There is evidence that in developed countries the problems disabled persons face meeting their constitutional rights is one of attitude rather than technology.

1.2 Zambian Picture

It is estimated that 2.7% to 3% of the 9.9 million Zambians have a disability of one type or another. Of this, however, an insignificant fraction (approximately 1.6%) is believed to be employed. 0.15% of this approximated percentage of people with disability in employment represent blind persons (CSO, 2000). In 2000 census of population and housing, it was indicated that out of 12754 blind persons who had education only 1.3% had higher level of

education (CSO, 2000). The small number of employed blind persons may indicate Government inadequate social responsibilities. Blind persons generally lack access to relevant education that is very essential to prepare them to meaningful participation in the social and economic life of the society. Mandyata (2000) states that people with disabilities may be denied access to relevant education because of negative attitudes of teachers and other professional educators based on a lack awareness and understanding of the needs of the disabled persons.

Zambia, just like any developing country has not neglected the welfare of the blind persons when it comes to employment opportunities, though it cannot be compared to the developed western countries or something to be proud of. Unlike developed countries, Zambia has no statutory framework on the employment and education of the disabled persons. Disabled persons like the blind are employed through Cabinet office. This solely makes government the only employer of the blind. The Disabled Act Cap 33 of 1996 needs to be strengthened to make the private sector obligated to employ the blind persons. One government officer in the ministry of labour and social services observed that the disabled persons do not have steady jobs to give them income, hence they depend on assistance from government and humanitarian organizations (Post newspaper, 3493, 11-05-2006: 7). Any Government in the world has a constitutional obligation to promote the welfare of its people by securing and protecting as effectively as possible a social order in which social economic and political justice shall inform all the institutions of national life (Fernandez et al, 1999). In Zambia, the persons with disabilities may continue to be excluded from the mainstream society and denied equal access to education, employment, and family life and leisure activities. They may remain among the

poorest and most discriminated against members of society. Government should come up with legislation on rights and non-discrimination policies for disabled persons.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

From the review of literature, one of the features that emanate from the review is that, in Zambia very little has been done in terms of studies on social environment of persons with visual impairment in relation to their desire to work. Persons with visual disability also desire to work and live independently of others. However, they may be limited by social environmental factors. At the moment persons with visual impairment have diminished employment opportunities as compared to the non-disabled persons. It is very difficult for them to find employment of their choice. Currently, there is inadequate documented information on the lack of employment for persons with visual impairment. There is need to find out why persons with visual impairment face employment difficulties.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

People with visual impairment also desire to work and live independently of others. However, they may be limited by social environmental factors. The study seeks to determine the effect of social environment of the blind persons on their desire to work. It further aims at investigating the nature of social environment that blind persons face.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives that guided the study were as follows:

- To determine the relationship between social environment in which the persons with visual impairment live and their desire to work.
- To find out the impact of low self-esteem of the blind persons on their desire to work.
- To investigate the effect of low vocational training offered to blind persons on their desire to work.

The research questions that guided the study are as follows:

- Is there any relationship between the social environment in which blind persons live and their desire to work?
- What impact has low self-esteem of blind persons on their desire to work?
- Can low vocational training offered to blind persons affect their desire to work?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

It is hoped that the study will bring out salient information that government may use to implement the Social Charter. It will also raise awareness among the public and in particular employers in both government and private institutions about attitudes towards the persons with visual impairment and their professional abilities.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Exponents of the social model of disability view disability as the function of the relationship between persons with impairments and their environment. They assert that disability occurs when an individual with impairment encounters environmental factors such as cultural,

physical or social barriers preventing him/her access to facilities and systems available to other citizens (United Nations, 1981; Oliver, 1990; Brown, 1991)

Social model defines disability in terms of the environment and social barriers imposed on disabled people by non disabled society which limit or remove altogether opportunities to take part in community life (Altman, 2002; Abberley, 1997; British Council of Disabled People, 2002).

The European Blind Union (ibid) reviewed that the social model of disability, on the other hand sees the issue as a socially created problem and basically as a matter of the full integration of individuals into society. Disability is not an attribute of an individual but rather a complex collection of conditions many of which are created by the social environment. Hence the management of the problem requires social action and it is the collective responsibility of society at large to make the environmental modifications necessary, or the full participation of people with disabilities in all areas of social life. The issue is therefore attitudinal or ideological one requiring social change, which at the political level becomes a question of human rights. The strength of the social model lies in its placing the onus on society to tackle barriers that prevent access.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

There was very little literature on the subject. The researcher depended on the inter net. Some respondents were reluctant to participate in the study especially that there was no monetary gain. They also indicated that similar past research works has not yielded

anything to change the welfare of the blind. The study was poorly funded and this restricted the researcher only to cover Ndola and Lusaka.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

Social environment: In this study social environment refers to the attitudes of the people in the society or any a given social setting in which the person with visual disability lives. This includes also the attitudes the visually impaired has towards the people he/she comes in contact with. For the visually impaired who are in employment, their immediate social environment is the place of work. They spend much of their time at work. Where as those not in employment, spend their time at home or on the streets vending.

Desire -Strong feeling of wanting to do something without being forced by anyone. However, desire can be fueled or inhibited by social environment.

Self-esteem -Personal judgement of worthiness that is expressed in the attitudes an individual holds towards him/herself. It is individual self evaluation, the way one looks at him/herself, whether he/she thinks to be worthy or worthless.

An impairment -Is the functional defect or limitation of an organ or any part of the bodily system. This can be physical, mental or sensory impairment.

Disability -Is the loss or limitation of opportunities to take part in the normal life of the community on an equal level with others due to

physical and social barriers.

Visual impairment -Blanket phrase covering a variety of conditions ranging from low vision to total blindness.

Blindness - Inability to see objects due to loss of sight, but light may be perceived.

Refractive error -Sight disorders that can be corrected with the help of glasses or contact lenses.

- The terms visually impaired and blind have been used interchangeably in the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Research findings on social environment of blind persons reveal that blind persons just like other people with disabilities are often victims of negative attitudes from society that regard them as unproductive. These attitudes tend to be barriers to the employment of the blind persons. The same barriers erode the blind persons desire to work. Kalabula (1991) indicated that attitude is an interdisciplinary term frequently found in psychological and sociological literature. Thurstone (1929) described attitudes as being highly personal. "He further went on to say that attitudes denote the sum total of a man's inclinations and feelings, prejudice or bias, preconceived ideas, notions, fears, threats and convictions about any specific topic." What Thurstone did not foresee is that even if the attitudes are highly personal, they are vulnerable to change according to the situations and phenomena towards which one may hold certain attitudes (Kalabula, 1991). Warren's dictionary of psychology cited by Kalabula(ibid) defines an attitude as specific mental disposition toward incoming or arousing experience, whereby that experience is modified or a condition of readiness for a certain type of activity. This definition comes very close to Allport's (1935) description of attitudes as "the subject matter of social psychology" and as such the concept of attitude has been widely in attempts to explain and predict behaviour, for attitudes are unique mental processes which determine the behaviour of all members of society- young and old, male and female, rich and poor, educated and uneducated, disabled and non disabled.

According to sociologists attitudes are integrated with concepts of social roles, norms and reference groups; they guide and influence every individual's social actions. Attitudes, therefore always imply a relationship between the individual and objects. He has attitudes towards other individuals, towards social groups, towards different social organizations, and towards the social, political and economic aspects of this world (Kalabula, *ibid*)

Sherif and Sherif (1967) point out that attitudes are formed or learned in relation to identifiable referents, whether these are persons, groups, institutions, objects, values, social issues or ideologies. A person's attitudes are reflected in his social actions but the actions of society often guide and influence a person to form his/her attitudes in the first instance so one can infer that the individual is one with the society in which he/she lives, the society also being one with the individual. Although we have the two aspects existing and influencing each other, there is essentially one existence. The individual and the society are two entities, but in so far as they influence each other's attitudes, we can conceptualise them as also being a single entity (Ikeda, 1988). The attitudes that society may portray towards blind persons may in turn influence his/her attitudes formation negatively or positively.

Blindness is as old as life itself. However, it is perhaps incorrect to say that evolution of services for the blind has always kept pace with the advancement of civilisation. For centuries; blindness has had and still has both negative and positive connotations, with negative attitudes predominating (Fernandez et al, 1999). Helender (1994) pointed out that the most important reason for the difficulties disabled people facing lies in the negative attitudes toward them. We may acknowledge that the blind and those who work with them there is almost universal

agreement that the blind are perceived as helpless and dependent, but we must also accept the fact that the evidence for the existence of these devaluing attitudes is circumstantial and selective (Barker et al as cited in Haring and Schiefelbusch, 1997). Hegarty (1998) observes that people with disabilities are more often than not excluded from mainstream society and denied equal access to education, employment, family life and leisure activities. They are usually among the poorest and most discriminated against members of society. Attitudes toward disability had also been linked to employment in a study by Jenkins and Amos as cited in Rackley (1994) where it was reported that subjects considered their disability as a barrier. There were also implications in this study that attitudes toward their disability might also influence the extent to which the subjects would manifest a desire to work. However, Pfeiffer (1989) indicated that People with disabilities, like the blind, are treated as a result of social attitudes, not as a result of the condition itself.

National Council on Disabilities (2000) observes that individuals with disabilities continue to experience host barriers to participation in work-based learning opportunities, employment and careers. Consequently, post school unemployment remains disproportionately high for persons with disabilities (Blackorby and Wagner, 1996).

Rogan, Banks and Howard (2000) indicated that advances in instructional strategies and technologies continue to be made in the accommodations and support that help young individuals with disabilities to succeed in the work place. These advances along with legal protections from discrimination available through Americans with Disabilities Act

(ADA), and the promotion of work experience by legislation such as the individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) create an environment in which young job seekers with disabilities can better promote their skills and advocate for necessary accommodation. However, in a climate of expanding knowledge of work place support and accommodation, and therefore theoretically better employment opportunities, unemployment remains a reality for many individuals with disabilities seeking employment.

Kamya (2005) a blind person himself revealed that disabled people are generally not active participants in socio-economic life due to limited opportunity to do so. He indicated that most awareness and advocacy campaigns to address this scenario have largely focused on public attitude change towards and about disability. Kamya (ibid: 11) said the following sentiments:

“ As disabled people, we have come to the conclusion that the existing inequalities against us are the result of a social construct. This construct manifests in society that view disabled people as worthless, excluding them from the development process, and doing “ little or nothing ” to make the socio-physical environment friendly for all. In this, we more often than not, fail to realize that our attitudes and actions could greatly influence the way society looks at and treats us. ”

Kamya (ibid) pointed out that disabled people should recognize that they might be a significant factor in their discrimination and marginalisation. They should therefore develop positive attitudes toward themselves and society in order to improve the latter's response. He indicated that disabled people also think and act the way they do because of illiteracy, low self-esteem and lack of exposure knowledge and skills. Disabled persons' negative social outlook could be altered by accessing counseling services, attending local meetings, reading

publications and provision of quality education from primary up to tertiary levels. This is supported by International Labour Organisation (1998) which revealed that in many cases it is disabled persons themselves who have decided to take over equalisation process to ensure that their abilities and real needs are taken into account and endeavoured to become integrated in working life and society. Although their efforts have yielded encouraging results, the fact unfortunately remains that very many countries are still far from meeting the minimum conditions for equalisation of opportunities. For example, the Government of Zambia referred to an economic situation of dependency on foreign aid as a factor inhibiting a policy of employment of disabled persons (ILO, 1998).

Sheila (1988) and Oliver (1990) two writers with disability themselves underline the negative role played by the social environment in discouraging full participation of persons with disability in the social and economic life of the society. Sheila further asserts that they are victims of stigma, low status, prejudice indifference or neglect. In other words, attitudes erode their self-esteem and limit their social participation. Besides, according to Oliver, such attitudes constitute the social and physical barriers that aggravate disability and curtail employment opportunities for the individuals with disability, like the blind. Carmelle (2003) another blind person said that he did not believe that sighted people were evil. However, most of them fail to understand that they have everything society designed for their convenience and because of this many things are far more difficult, if not impossible for them blind people.

These attitudes range from sympathy to outright rejection. Generally, attitudes towards persons with disability have been discouraging. Society normally underrates the ability of a person

with disability and looks at him/her as one who is expected to depend on the non-disabled (Semakula, 1994) and always satisfied with whatever is done for him/her. Such attitudes tend to demoralize the individual leading often to his/her failure to seek for ways of self-sustenance. This is compounded at times by the fact that society also limits employment opportunities for persons with disability by providing for them training in low skill vocations and hence low-income earning jobs (Isiko, 1994; Katende, 1994). Brinker et al (2001) indicated that society has the duty to accept disabled people as normal beings with their particular specificities. On the other hand the disabled and their organisations have the task to inform society on every aspect of their disability. On the same, Mike (2003) revealed that the goals of the nation properly include the goal of providing individuals, like the blind with tools necessary to make informed choices and decisions; and achieve equality of opportunity, full inclusion and integration in society, employment, independent living, and economic and social self-sufficiency. This emphasis in the law on making informed choices, along with other trends means that as a blind person one will have ever more options to choose from in the type of training you receive. It has been observed that the blind persons just like any disabled people tend work in isolation. They form organisations and don't want to employ the sighted professions to work with them.

Kamya (ibid) pointed out that disability is not a sector of an island, but one among many, requiring the contribution of everybody for any meaningful change to occur. Ironically the blind blame society for their non-participation in other sectors. Many non-disabled professionals who have tried to work with the blind persons have been frustrated and quit, disillusioned. Others have persisted and somehow learnt to live with the situation. He went on

to say that disability is a challenging condition. Many who find themselves disabled fail or take long time to cope or remain in self-pity and hostile. They may blame others, however become shrewd and use their condition to manipulate society. However, he reminded his disabled colleagues in the following assertions:

“ Society can more willingly accept us when we package ourselves in an acceptable manner. While it may be true that the majority live in abject poverty, it is not right for us to forego cleanliness, lose confidence and develop low voices. Also blind persons need not develop peculiar mannerism such as tracing direction like a bat, unnecessary facing the sky and groping unnecessary.” (P.12)

Kamya (ibid) also claimed that aggressive campaigns aimed at achieving positive societal thinking and practices towards disabled persons have been conducted over decades. Nevertheless, attitudes change is a very slow process. Disabled person should ponder. While we expect society to change, they too expect the blind to do likewise and perhaps meet minimum societal standards and norms.

Fernandez et al (1999) observed that since a large number of blind persons in the country still linger on in the mind of ordinary people. Many blind people are victims of parental rejection either open or disguised. Most of the people believe that a blind person is always at the receiving end, not knowing that he/she is productive in all aspects of production. Generally, a blind person is regarded as incomplete by society and not capable of doing what the able bodied can do. Kasonde-N’gandu and Moberg (2001) observe that, sometimes the negative attitudes stem from misinformation and cultural beliefs. There is need for a change in attitudes toward people with disability in the society.

However, this incompleteness may be created by over protection and negative attitudes towards the blind persons. Overprotection and negative attitudes towards the blind persons are deemed as barriers to employment and may limit their desire to work. To succeed, the blind person is told, he/she must change his/her beliefs about blindness, most of all, his/her belief that he/she is basically fine and only needs one or two services. The cooperative client is one who welcomes all the services provided; the uncooperative client is the one who fails to realise how many and great his/her needs are-who is in denial (Scott in Davis, 1997).

Hollins (1989) reviewed that organisations that receive donations of time and money from the public in order to provide services to some members of the blind population, have had a mixed effect on societal attitudes. On the negative side some of these organisations appeal to the public's fear of blindness in their fund-raising activities, portraying "the blind" as despairing people who are in need of charity and sympathy because they "live in darkness." Although such an approach may increase donations, it has the unintended side effects of fostering harmful stereotypes.

Minton (2005) observed that people with disabilities face many barriers everyday- from physical obstacles in buildings to systemic barriers in employment and civic programs. Yet, often, the most difficult barriers to overcome are attitudes other people carry regarding people with disabilities whether born from ignorance, fear, misunderstanding or hate, these attitudes keep people from appreciating and experience- the full potential a person with a disability can achieve. The most pervasive negative attitude is focusing on a person's disability rather than on an individual's ability. He expresses a more insidious attitude- that society doesn't expect

people with disabilities to perform up to standard, and when people with disabilities do, they are somehow courageous. This attitude has the effect of patronising people with disabilities, usually relegating them to low-skill jobs, setting different job standards (sometimes lower standards which tend to alienate co-workers, sometimes higher standards to prove they cannot handle a job) or expecting a worker with disability to appreciate the opportunity to work instead of demanding equal pay, equal benefits, equal opportunity and equal access to workplace amenities. It is not possible for a person either sighted or blind to have that inner peace and desire to work with people or an employer who show/s negative attitude towards him/her. Society creates these obstacles to maintain the low status of the blind persons.

McInnes(1992) observed that people with visual disability have historically been denied opportunities for employment. This was due largely to misinformation, prejudice and discrimination. In recent years, attitudes, legislation and workforce demographics have all been changing that. Re (1992) had the same view. “Attitudes have been described as our greatest barrier, and while studies conducted over past years indicate attitudes have improved somewhat, further progress remains necessary.” Adopting a true nation wide “full employment” programme might help to make some tangible dint in our level of unemployment. Changes in attitudes towards the blind persons may be there. However, this change is so insignificant to be proud of.

However, McBroom et al (1998) state that people with severe visual impairment continue to be substantially underrepresented in the competitive labour force despite persistent efforts by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), policy makers, service providers, and

consumers. A study by Cornell University as cited in (Dutton, 2000) illustrated that one of the most prominent barriers to employment for people with disabilities is the negative attitudes supervisors and coworkers hold regarding this population. These attitudes can lead to discriminatory practices, hampering an individual's chance to become a fully functioning member of the community (Anthony, 1972). Vash (2001) states that "attitudes drive our behaviour" and in order to learn more about discriminating behaviour we must first look at attitudes of those who may be discriminating. Gilbride (2000) Indicated that persons with disabilities have endured poor treatment and, more recently, high rates of unemployment. He revealed that one of the main goals of professionals in the field of vocational rehabilitation is successful job placement. However, negative attitudes of employers have been identified as major barriers to successful job placement and it has become critical that employer's attitudes are understood and addressed.

Lueking and Mooney (2000) pointed out that historically, conflicting outlooks on disability and contradictory approaches to the concept of disability have characterised employer perceptions. For example, Hernadez (2000) conducted a literature review of 37 studies of employer attitudes concerning hiring and accommodation of workers with disabilities. He found that employers expressed generally positive attitudes toward workers with disabilities, and expressed affirmative and humane views about disabilities. Hernadez uncovered findings that affirmed other views indicating that when appropriate supports were provided, employers' attitudes toward workers with disabilities improved. Employers with prior positive contact held more favorable attitudes toward workers with disabilities. Overall, this review concluded that employers expressed willingness to hire applicants with disabilities still exceeded actual

hire practices. Blanchard (2001) carried out a study on attitudes of employers toward persons with disabilities in German and United States of America. The study indicated that the aggregate attitude of employers surveyed was favorable toward persons with disabilities. Age of respondents did not appear to have an impact on the reported attitudes. However, Butteerworth and Pitt-Catsouphes (1997) indicated that employers often fail to recognise individuals with disabilities as an important member of a community's available labour pool. When they are aware of this available labour resource, employers typically feel unprepared to adequately support the employment needs of individuals with disabilities.

American Committee on Disabilities (1986) pointed out that the reasons for high unemployment and underemployment among the persons with disabilities included the lack of an effective transition process from school to work for youths with disabilities; societal attitudes which cause employers to discriminate against persons with disabilities, like the blind, physical and communication barriers in buildings, transportation, and worksite; and lack of appropriate training opportunities for persons with disabilities. Blanchard (2001) indicated that historically, people with disabilities have endured poor treatment and more recently, high rates of unemployment. Dobree and Boulter (1982) indicated that telephone switchboard operating occupation which serves as the major source of employment for thousands of blind persons, seemed a short while ago to be in danger of becoming a casualty of the technological age because of certain switchboards which blind employees operated by touch were being replaced by boards which give visual signals and whose power source was too low to permit their adaptation for the blind operators.

International Labour Organisation (1998) states that the workplace environment should not cater only for persons who have no disability. It should be adapted to make it accessible to all persons with disabilities who are able to work, if necessary with appropriate medical or physical aids. Further more, the rights of persons with disabilities for equal opportunities can be secured in the first place through political and social action. Through the adoption of relevant legislation, persons with disabilities have been given the right and opportunity to attend school, obtain employment and avail themselves of community services, physical and cultural barriers have been lifted and discrimination against them has been prohibited.

Moore and Wolffe (1997) summarised a list of barriers that rehabilitation professionals and researchers considered significant contributors to the under representation of persons with visual impairment in the labour force. These barriers include (a) negative attitudes of employers toward people with visual impairments; (b) lack of employment and employment-related skills; (c) lack of motivation for employment; (d) government-generated work disincentives, such as entitlement programmes that provide welfare or disability benefits; (e) lack of housing and family supports; (f) lack of transportation; (g) lack of access to information. These barriers do not only curtail employment opportunities of the blind persons, however also lower their self-confidence to get and keep good jobs. These factors can also affect the desire of the blind persons to get good jobs. Though, this statement has to be proven by the study to be carried out. While Dahl (1982) identified the following barriers to employment for people with severe disabilities, blind persons inclusive: *unrealistic attitudes and opinions of society lack of employer knowledge about people with disabilities, and clients' low expectation.*

The American Foundation for the Blind conducted a study to identify barriers that rehabilitation professionals experience when providing services to persons with visual disabilities (Link, 1975). Seven barriers to placement and employment include (a) caseloads that are too heavy and overemphasise case closures; (b) increasing numbers of consumers with multiple disabilities; (c) over –utilisation of segregated employment settings; (d) personal, social, and vocational skill deficits in people with visual disabilities; (e) lack of understanding of employment options and demands; (f) financial work disincentives.

In a discussion of the views of rehabilitation professionals employed in private agencies, Hopf (1991) stated that some rehabilitation professionals may not generate realistic vocational goals with persons pursuing college training and that college graduates who are visually impaired may not be held to the same standards as sighted peers. The perceived failure of the educational system to provide adequate training in job readiness skills and basic adaptive techniques is another barrier to competitive employment. Arnold, et al. (1996) also indicated that socioeconomic factors, such as low population densities, high unemployment rates, low education levels, low wages, and a distinct rural culture provide barriers to successful employment for people with disabilities in rural areas. All these factors can have effect on the desire of the blind persons to get and maintain good jobs. In the case where a large number of the blind persons are not in employment and very few attain higher level of education to see them get a well-paid job. Blind persons will not have role models and those living in rural areas may not even know the jobs on market. This will create a vacuum in them. They will not have a driving force to look for employment. Desire and self-confidence may not be there.

Another study looked at consumer perspective on barriers to employment among the blind persons. Salomone and Paige (1984) researched barriers to employment from the view of consumers with visual disabilities who were not successful in retaining competitive employment. The most common barrier identified by participants was lack of knowledge among the general public about the scope and variety of mental and physical capabilities of persons with visual impairments. Other issues included lack of successful personal and vocational experiences contributing to a positive self-concept, employer resistance to hiring persons with disabilities, transportation difficulties, and insufficient vocational training and career planning experience.

Malakpa (1994) also identified the following barriers to employment for people with visual impairments and additional disabilities: inadequate transportation resources, difficulty in locating appropriate jobs, lack of long-term job coaches, inadequate funding for on-the-job assistive technology, communication difficulties with employers and co-workers, lack of vocational counselors and outreach workers, inadequate public education, limited employer cooperation, overprotection by significant others, difficulties with self-care, low self-confidence, and lack of interpersonal skills. All these barriers arise from the attitudes that society has towards the blind persons. *People are not necessarily interested in educating the blind to be independent and prevent them from enhancing potential.* Traditionally people thought that disability meant talent. This point of view makes blind individual sit down and expect help. This makes them lose self-confidence and desire to work.

Lorenzo (1988) blind by the age of two years, revealed that the biggest obstacle to visually impaired persons is not their physical limitations. It is the barriers to opportunity and growth which result from negative, regressive attitudes. Society's values and beliefs are learned phenomena. They are reinforced by daily contacts and experiences. Pfeiffer (1989) also indicated that people with disabilities are treated as a result of societal attitudes, not as a result of the condition itself.

Dodds (1993) connects physical disability with lower negative self-esteem, saying that persons with disability react to their disability by seeing their situation as hopeless and refusing to help themselves or helped. This feeling of dependency is a major problem because it hinders the growth of a sense of self-sufficiency.

Family members may urge the blind person to be careful when moving about, may hurry to do for the blind person things that he/she can accomplish independently and may avoid burdening him/her with everyday life family problems and decision making. Although this solicitous behaviour is well intentioned, it has the effect of hindering the blind person's development of self-confidence (Hollins, 1989). This overprotection erodes the blind persons' self-esteem and desire to work. It will stick in his/her mind that he/she is helpless and un independent.

The connection between lack of work and self-esteem has been observed for people with or without disability leading to feeling of helplessness, low morale and usually negative feelings about life (Karugu, 1984). Self-esteem is a learned structure formulated by the environment the individual functions in. If the overall outlook of the society is negative the person exerts a

negative self-concept and an overall negativity towards the individual. Overall the person will act according to the way they are expected by the environment. Society's biases and negative preconception of the disabled persons can be detrimental to their self-esteem and desire to work. The concepts which society or employers may have of the visually impaired persons become the concepts which the visually impaired persons have themselves. However, the effects on individual persons may vary from situation to another.

Rosenberg (1989) indicates that the self-esteem motive confronts incoming information about the self that is negative. One strategy to cope with negative information involves acknowledging a "pocket of incompetence." Through recognising the kinds of situations that reveal one's fault, one can avoid such negative encounters. However, in the case of blind person it is not easy to accept their incompetence as they tend to blame society or the impairment. This situation tends to erode their desire to work.

Rosenberg's (1979) and Harter's (1978) theories on the development of self-esteem stressed the necessity of perceived competence for the development of self-acceptance and self-worth. In addition, Eckart (1988) found that people with disabilities are better adjusted and have higher self-esteem when they are encouraged to develop various skills.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The chapter is segmented into nine sub-sections. The first four sections discuss the study design, population, sample and sampling procedures and research instruments. The other five sections describe data collection procedures, data analysis, ethical concerns and constraints encountered during fieldwork.

STUDY DESIGN

In an effort to make an in depth study and analysis of the relationship between the social environment of the blind persons and their desire to work, the researcher adopted survey research design. Survey is the most commonly used descriptive method in educational research. Cohen and Manion (1998) indicate that surveys gather data at a particular point in time with the intention of describing the nature of existing conditions or determining or identifying standards against which existing conditions can be compared or determining the relationship that exist between specific events or variables. Additionally, a survey focuses on facts, beliefs, opinions, attitudes and behaviour pertaining to the existing situations and allows for changes in the course of study (Thio, 1986; Bless and Achola, 1990). It was therefore, appropriate for this study.

TARGET POPULATION

The target population comprised 600 visually impaired adults, employed and unemployed. These were drawn from the two selected districts, that is, Ndola and Lusaka.

STUDY SAMPLE AND SAMPLING PROCEDURE

The study sample consisted of 80 visually impaired adults in formal and informal employment. Male and female participants were selected on equal representation in terms of gender. Meaning that 40 male and 40 female respondents were selected. The study also took into considerations their employment status (employed or unemployed) of the respondents. The

selection was on the bases of proportional representation (1:1) that is 40 employed and 40 unemployed. To come up with the required sample size of 40 blind persons employed and 40 unemployed blind persons, the researcher employed the purposive, theoretical or judgemental sampling, which is common in qualitative studies (Tesch, 1990). In this case, the researcher had to handpick the 80 respondents who had the required characteristics of the study from a list provided by Zambia Federation for Blind. The researcher took into consideration the location of the respondents when handpicking them. Some had no proper addresses, therefore, only those to be allocated were picked.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The questionnaires were used to collect information from the participants. Two questionnaire checklists were prepared, one for those in formal employment and another for those in informal employment. The checklist for those in employment comprised 16 items taking into consideration the variables of the study. The checklist for those in informal employment had 16 items. These checklists contained open-ended questions. The questionnaire was selected because the researcher wanted to probe in depth the views of the subjects about the variables of the study.

PRE-TESTING OF RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The Pre-testing of research instruments was done in Chingola and Kitwe. Eight blind people, that is, four in formal employment and the other four in informal employment were involved. The two districts were chosen because they had both the employed and the unemployed visually impaired persons. The essence of testing the instruments was to establish the internal consistency. It was aimed to determine whether the research instruments were measuring what was intended to capture in the research. The pre-testing of instruments provided an opportunity to clarify some statements which were not clear to the respondents or that may tend to measure what was not intended for. Following the pre-testing of research instruments, corrections were made in the rephrasing ambiguous statements and sequencing the questions.

DATA COLLECTION

Data was collected from mid March up to the end of June. The questionnaires were distributed by the researcher to respondents at their work places and homes. The respondents were given three to four days to go through the items in the questionnaire before putting their views on the questionnaire in print on the day of collection. Respondents were allowed to seek the assistance of their workmate or relative in the completion of the questionnaire. This was done in the presence of the researcher who also took notes of the responses. Where the respondents had no sighted person to assist in completing the questionnaire, researcher had to take down the responses for questionnaire. However, respondents who had writing frames and stylus answered in Braille and the researcher had to transcribe into print. The exercise lasted from 1 hour 30 minutes to 2 hours. The researcher organised responses into themes according to the objectives of the study. The participants were assured of anonymity and total confidentiality. Hence, there was no writing of names of the interviewees or their addresses.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data was analysed qualitatively. This was done by describing and explaining the responses from the participants using tables, graphs, charts and percentages. The analysis of the data followed the procedures suggested by Delamont (1992), Glaser and Strauss (1967), Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Miles and Huberman (1984), included coding the data and developing themes using the constant comparative method described by Glaser (1978).

DATA INTERPRETATION

In this study, data interpretation was done by the use of fractions and percentages. Data collected was organised and coded according to emerging themes. The responses of the respondents were categorised according to the similarities and differences. These were reflected in form of tables and graphs with detailed description of the observed situation in the study.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical issues were highly considered in this study. Permission was first sought from the Zambia Federation for the Blind. At the institutions where blind persons worked, the immediate supervisor was seen and asked for his/her consent to interview the visually impaired person. Where the respondent/s refused to be interviewed, the researcher did not force them but thanked them for their response.

CONSTRAINTS ENCOUNTERED DURING FIELD WORK

The researcher had problems in tracing the homes of the respondents, as there were no records of house numbers for both employed and unemployed visually impaired persons. The researcher depended on the verbal descriptions given by the President of the Zambia Federation for the Blind. Lack of proper statistical information on the employment status of the visually impaired persons made it difficult for the researcher to come up with specific target population numerically. Some respondents were unwilling to be interviewed. The researcher had to plead with the respondents for days.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. 1. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

This section presents the findings of the study to determine the relationship between social environment of blind persons and their desire to work. A sample of 75 blind persons were exposed to questionnaires and yielded the findings under the headings coming from the objectives and research questions of the study. The findings are presented under the headings as indicated below.

4.2.0. SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND OF RESPONDENTS

In this area the study looked at the respondents' sex, age, geographical location, highest academic qualifications, professional qualifications, employment status of the respondents and *number of years served in employment.*

4.2.1. Sex of the respondents in the study

Table 1. Respondents' sex

n=75

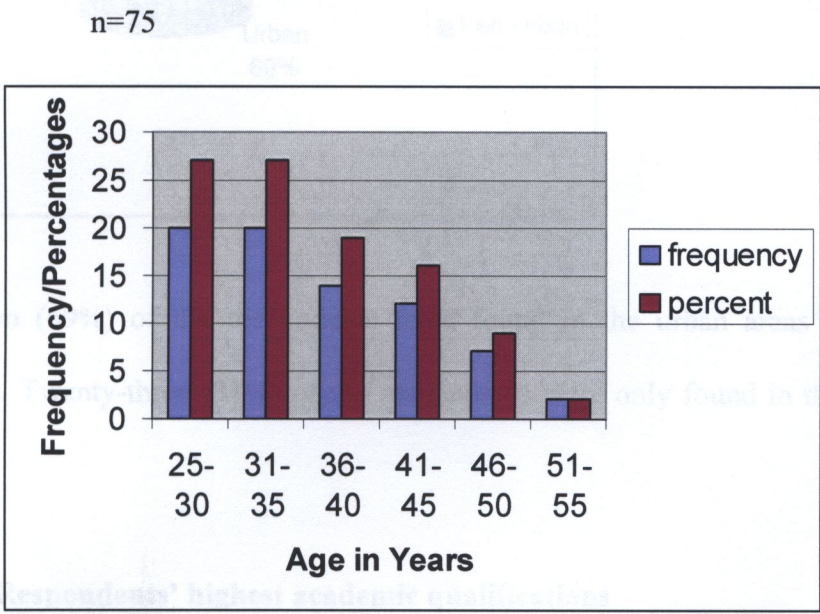
Respondents	Employed	Unemployed	%
Male	20 (27%)	18 (24%)	51
Female	20 (27%)	17 (22%)	49
TOTAL	40 (54%)	35 (46%)	100

Out of 75, thirty-eight (51%) were male and thirty-seven (49%) female respondents. Of the seventy-five respondents, thirty-five (46%) of them were unemployed, out of which seventeen

(22%) were female and eighteen (24%) were male. While forty (54%) of the respondents were employed. Twenty (27%) of them were male and eighteen (24%) were female.

4. 2 .2. Age of the respondents in the study

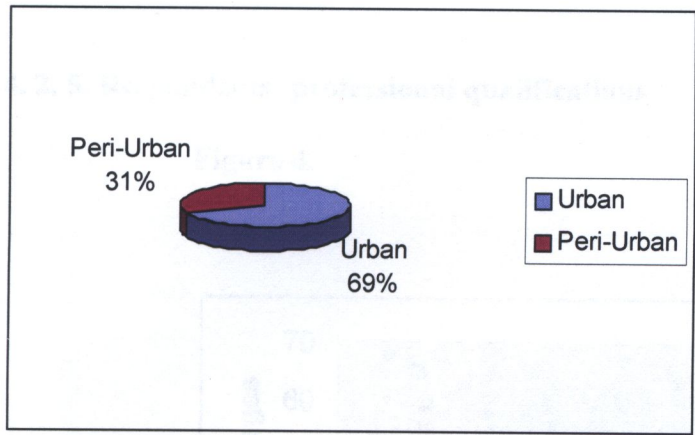
Figure 1. Age distribution in the study



From the above table 1, respondents' age ranged from 25 to 55 years. The majority forty (53%) of the respondents were found in the age range of 25 to 35 years. Fourteen (19%) of the respondents were the age group of 36 to 40 years. This is followed by twelve (16%) of the respondents in the age range of 41 to 45 years. Seven (9%) of the respondents fall in the age group of 46 to 50years. The last age group comprised two (3%) of the respondents that fall in the age group 51 to 55 years.

4. 2. 3. Geographical location of the respondents in the study

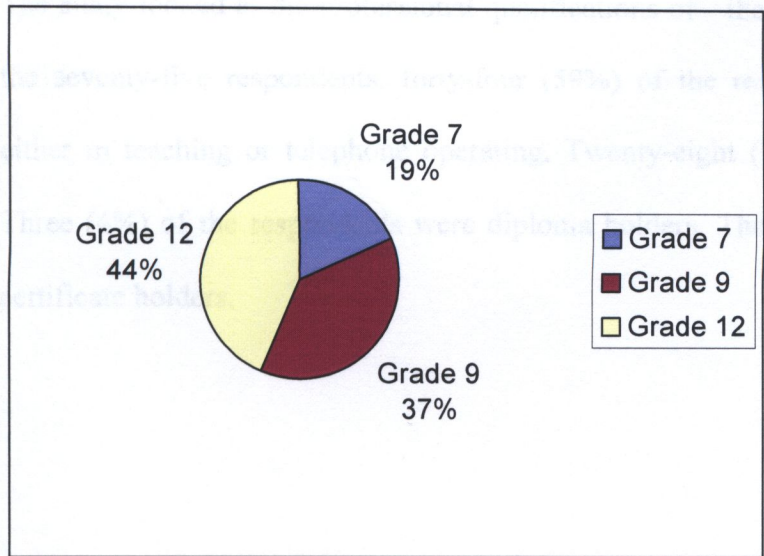
Figure 2.



Fifty-two (69%) of the respondents were found in the urban areas of Lusaka and Ndola districts. Twenty-three (31%) of the respondents were only found in the peri-urban of Ndola district.

4. 2. 4. Respondents' highest academic qualifications

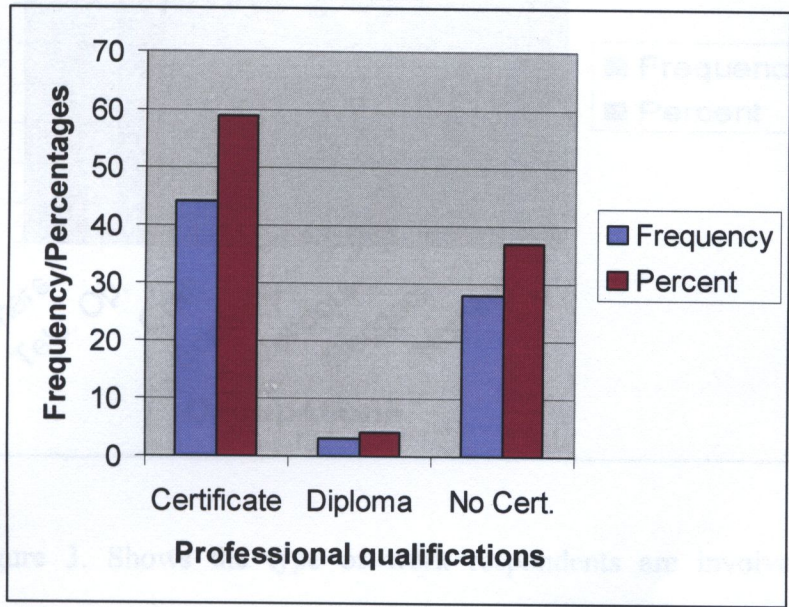
Figure 3.



Of the seventy-five respondents, fourteen (19%) had grade seven certificates, twenty-eight (37%) had completed junior secondary education and thirty-three (44%) went up to grade 12.

4. 2. 5. Respondents’ professional qualifications

Figure 4.

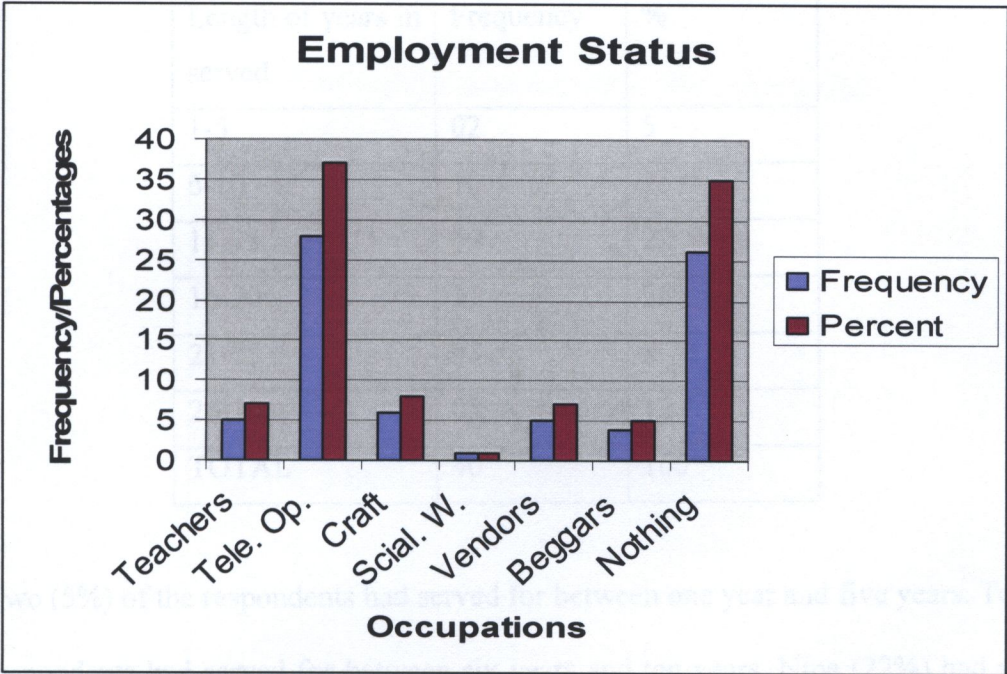


The above figure 3. Shows the professional qualifications of the respondents. Of the 75 respondents, five (7%) of the respondents were teachers. Twenty-eight (37%) were telephone

The study looked at the professional qualifications of the seventy-five (75) respondents. Of the seventy-five respondents, forty-four (59%) of the respondents were certificate holders either in teaching or telephone operating. Twenty-eight (37%) of them had no certificates. Three (4%) of the respondents were diploma holders. The majority of the respondents were certificate holders.

4. 2. 6. Respondents’ employment status

Figure 5.



The above figure 3. Shows the type of work respondents are involved in. Of the 75 respondents, five (7%) of the respondents were teachers. Twenty-eight (37%) were telephone operators. Six (8%) were crafts makers working in Kangonga and Kambowa centres in the peri- urban of Ndola. One (1%) of the respondents was social welfare worker. Five (7%) were street venders. 26 (35%) were not engaged in any work, while 4 (5%) were street beggars.

4. 3. 9. Employers’ and Community attitudes towards blind persons

In this area the study looked at the respondents’ views on various themes of the study arising from the objectives and research questions.

4. 2. 6. Respondents’ number of years served in employment

Table 2.

n=40

Length of years in served	Frequency	%
1-5	02	5
6-10	10	25
11-15	09	22
16-20	11	28
21-25	03	8
26-30	05	12
TOTAL	40	100

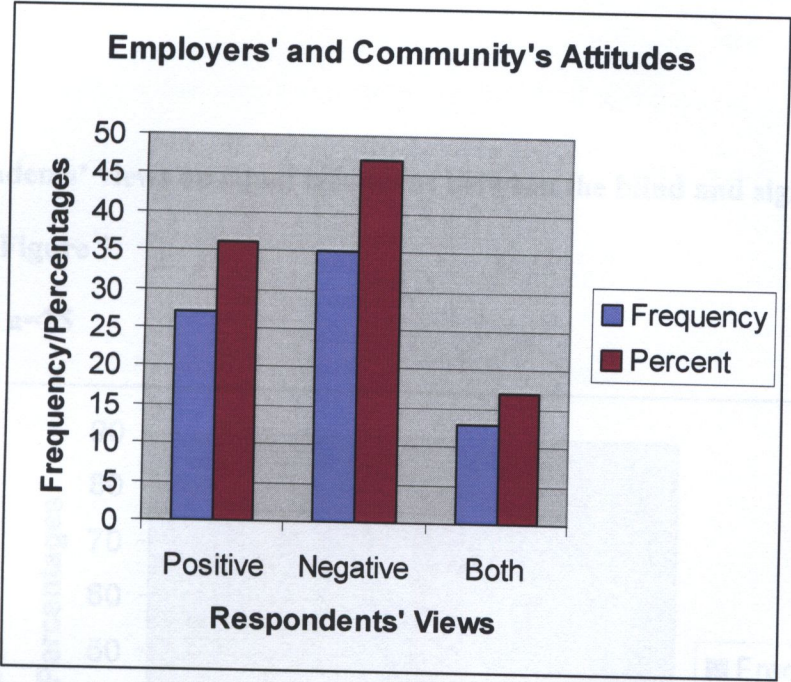
Two (5%) of the respondents had served for between one year and five years. Ten (25%) of the respondents had served for between six years and ten years. Nine (22%) had served between eleven and fifteen years. Eleven (28%) of the respondents had served between sixteen and twenty years, and these were the majority. Three (8%) of them have worked between twenty-one and twenty-five years. While five (12%) of the respondents worked for between twenty-six and thirty years.

4. 3. 0. Employers’ and Community attitudes towards blind persons

In this area the study looked at the respondents’ views on major themes of the study arising from the objectives and research questions.

4. 3. 1. Respondents' views on employers' and community attitudes towards the blind persons

Figure 6.



Of the seventy-five respondents, twenty-seven (36%) of the respondents observed that employers and community had positive attitudes towards the blind persons. Thirty-five (47%) of them claimed that employers' and community's attitudes towards the blind was negative. While thirteen (17%) of the respondents revealed that employers and community have both good and bad attitudes towards the blind persons.

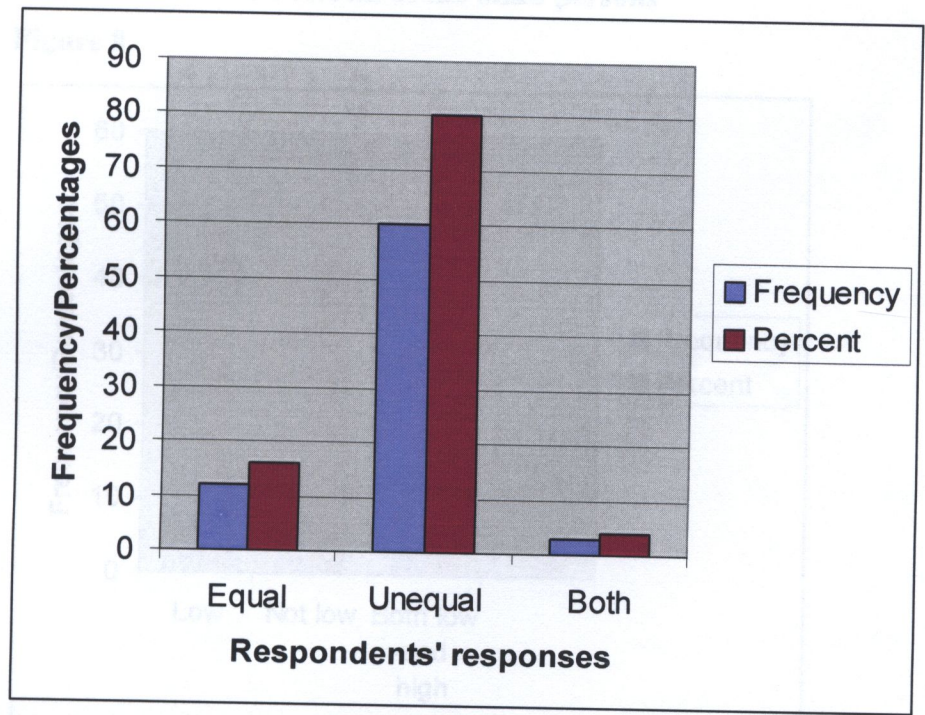
4. 3. 2. Respondents' views on whether employers' and community attitudes affect blind persons' desire to work.

Sixty-two (83%) of them indicated that negative attitudes from the employers and community does affect their desire to work. Twelve (16%) of the respondents said that negative attitudes from the employers and community do not affect their desire to work. While one (1%) of the respondents did not know whether or not negative attitudes do affect the blind persons' desire to work.

4. 3. 3. Respondents' views on equal treatment between the blind and sighted persons

Figure 7.

n=75



Of the seventy-five respondents, twelve (16%) of them revealed that employers and community treat the blind and sighted persons equally. Sixty (80%) of the respondents reported that employers and community do not treat the blind and sighted persons equally.

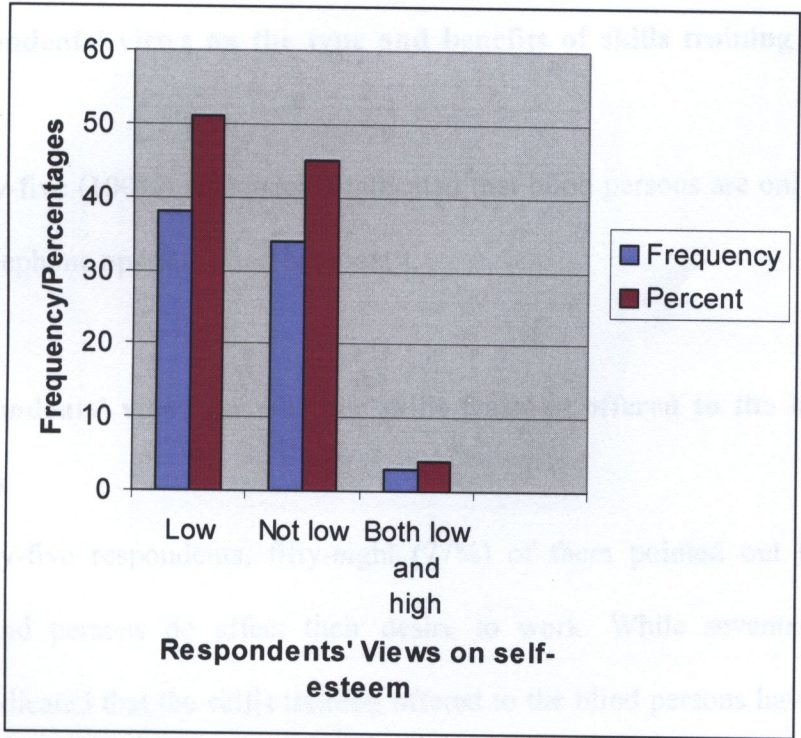
Three (4%) of the respondents revealed that there was no consistence in equal treatment of the blind persons and sighted persons from the employers and community.

4. 3. 4. Respondents' views on whether equal treatment can enhance blind persons desire to work

Sixty-nine (92%) claimed that equal treatment of the blind and sighted persons can enhance blind persons desire to work. Six (8%) of the respondents did not agree that blind persons desire to work can be enhanced by equal treatment.

4. 3. 5. Respondents' views on self-esteem of the blind persons

Figure 8



Thirty-eight (51%) of the respondents claimed that blind persons have low self-esteem. Thirty-four (45%) of them indicated that blind persons do not have low self-esteem. Three (4%) of the respondents observed that blind persons have both low and high self-esteem.

4. 3. 6. Respondents’ views on whether self-esteem affects the blind persons’ desire to work

Of the seventy-five respondents, fifty-one (68%) of them claimed that low self-esteem affects blind persons desire to work negatively. While twenty-four (32%) of the respondents postulated that low self-esteem does not affect blind persons’ desire to work.

4. 3. 7. Respondents’ views on the type and benefits of skills training offered to blind persons

All the seventy-five (100%) respondents indicated that blind persons are only offered training in teaching, telephone operating and handicraft.

4. 3. 8. Respondents’ views on whether skills training offered to the blind affect their desire to work

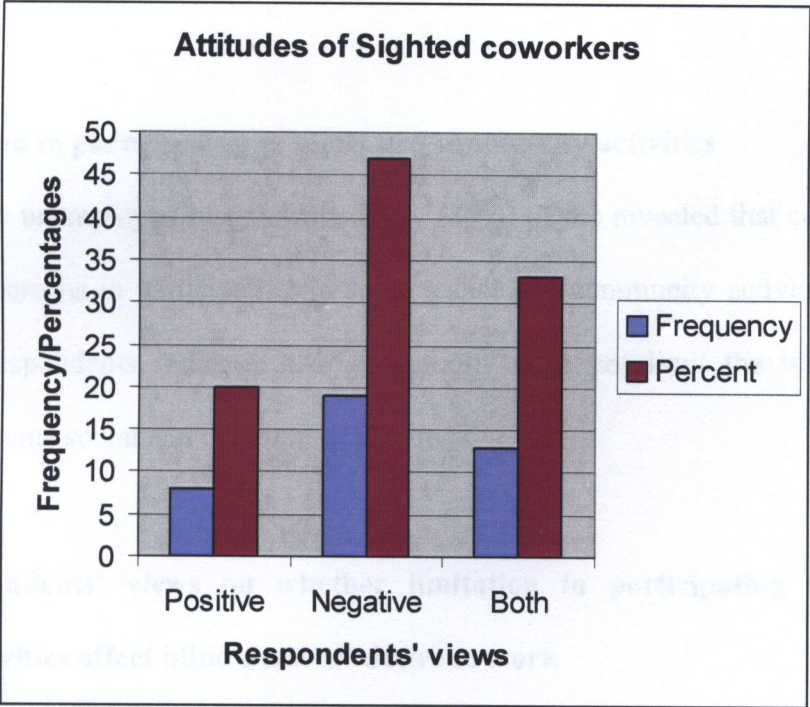
Of the seventy-five respondents, fifty-eight (77%) of them pointed out that the trainings offered to blind persons do affect their desire to work. While seventeen (23%) of the respondents indicated that the skills training offered to the blind persons have no affect on the desire to work.

4. 3. 9. Respondents’ views on whether visual impairment limits employment opportunities

Thirty-one (77%) of the respondents believed that visual impairment limits employment opportunities for afflicted persons. However, nine (23%) of the respondents disputed this notion.

4. 4. 0. Attitudes of sighted co-workers towards the blind persons

Figure 9.



Nineteen (47%) of the respondents noted that sighted co-workers had negative attitudes towards the blind persons they worked with. Eight (20%) of the respondents observed that sighted co-workers had positive attitudes towards the blind. While thirteen (33%) of them

indicated that sighted co-workers had both negative and positive attitudes toward the blind coworkers.

4. 4. 1. Respondents’ views on whether attitudes of sighted co-workers affect the blind persons

Thirty-six (90%) of the respondents observed that sighted co-workers’ attitudes had impact on the blind persons’ desire to work. Three (7%) of them indicated that sighted co-workers’ attitudes had no impact on the blind persons’ desire to work. One (3%) of the respondents could not tell whether or not attitudes of sighted co-workers had an affect the on blind persons desire to work.

4. 4. 2. Limitation in participating in social and community activities

Of the thirty-five unemployed respondents, thirty (86%) of the revealed that community does limit the blind persons in participating in some social and community activities. While five (14%) of the respondents indicated that community does not limit the blind persons in participating in some social and community activities.

4. 4. 3. Respondents’ views on whether limitation in participating in social and community activities affect blind persons’ desire to work

Sixteen (46%) of the respondents pointed out that limitation in participating in social and community activities had some effect on the blind persons’ desire to work. However, nineteen (54%) of them claimed that blind persons’ desire to work is not affected by community limitation in participating in social and community activities.

4. 4. 4. Respondents' views on the status of the blind persons

All the thirty-five (100%) respondents revealed that blind person are given low status in society.

4. 4. 5. Respondents' views on whether status affects blind persons' desire to work

Of the thirty-five unemployed respondents, thirty-four (97%) indicated that low-status given to the blind persons does affect their desire to work. One (3%) of the respondents said that low status does not affect the blind persons' desire to work.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. 1. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

This chapter unveils the discussion of the findings of the study presented in the preceding chapter. The discussion follows the variable upon which data was based and generated the major themes. The findings are discussed in the sequence as presented in chapter four and open with employment status of the respondents.

The findings on employment status of the respondents revealed that majority of the blind persons are employed in low paying jobs. The findings agree with those of Isiko (1994), Katende (1994) and Arnold et al (1996) who revealed in their studies that persons with disabilities are mostly engaged in low income earning jobs. Most of the respondents ply as telephone operators and are followed by those working in craft centers of Kangonga and Kambowa. The two centres are poorly funded and infrastructure needs immediate rehabilitation. The other group consists of respondents working as teachers in the residential school for the visually impaired. The respondents indicated that the way in which employers perceive blind persons plays an important part in their employment. Some employers are still simply afraid to employ blind persons because they think it is a burden and doubted their capabilities. The respondents also revealed that being blind did not mean that the blind persons could only work as telephone operators, teachers and/ or as craft makers. However, due to negative attitudes, prejudice and discrimination coming from both the employers and society, they think blind persons cannot do any other work apart from the three mentioned above.

Taking a critical view on the findings on respondents' number of years served in employment shown in table 1 clearly indicates that not more than 30 blind persons were employed in the last 15 years in the two districts. Statistically, this gives an average of two blind persons employed per year in the two districts. Respondents revealed that employment opportunities for blind persons have become very scarce because at the moment government was the only sole employer of the blind. The number of blind persons employed in the Private sector is very minute. The respondents indicated that blind persons who were employed in banking institutions have been retrenched. The study also revealed that Government has not created other employment opportunities especially that this problem does not involve the majority of the nation and no frantic efforts have been made to remedy the situation. International Labour Organisation (1998) revealed that the Government of Zambia referred to an economic situation of dependence on foreign aid as a factor inhibiting a policy on employment of persons with disabilities, like the blind. The study also revealed that many blind persons are still confined to the telephone operating and crafts. One respondent based on the Copperbelt said the following:

“The demise of the UNIP government has led to more unemployment among the blind persons. The current government has no political will in the employment of the blind and other disabled persons. Government has powers to come up with a law to compel private sectors to employ the persons with disabilities. It should create incentives like tax rebates for private companies that would employ the persons with disabilities.”

Respondents also indicated that the work of telephone operator was diminishing. Once the equipment is broken down the employers do not procure new ones. On the other hand, due to advancement in technology many employers have opted to using cell phones and other advanced switchboards. This supported by Dobree and Boulter (1982) who discovered in their

research that telephone switchboard operating occupation which serves as the major source of employment for thousands of blind persons was becoming casualty of the technological age. Certain switchboards which blind employees operated by touch were being replaced by boards which give visual signals and whose power source was too low to permit their adaptation for the blind operators. What future has a blind person who is confined to telephone operator? A female respondent working at the Ministry of Education Headquarters in Lusaka indicated the following sentiments:

“The disabled persons in country are under represented that is why even problems relating to employment, training and societal attitudes would never change. In other countries like Uganda, there are persons with disabilities who are members of parliament nominated by the President. Unlike here where we are represented by a non disabled person. The weight of salt is felt by the carrier. The non-disabled representative cannot represent the persons with disability adequately because he/she has not experienced what the disabled persons pass through.”

The literature available on attitudes of employers and community towards the blind persons indicates that negative attitudes, prejudice and discrimination do exist and practiced by some employers and a section of the community (Fernandez et al (1999) Helender (1994) Semakula (1994) and Minton (2005). In this study, it is evident that some employers and a cross section of the community have negative attitudes, discrimination and prejudice toward blind persons. However, the findings contradicted to that of Hernadez (2000) and Blanchard (2001). In his study, Hernadez (2000) revealed that employers expressed positive attitudes toward workers with disabilities. Similarly the study by Blanchard (2001) showed that attitudes of employers surveyed were favorable toward persons with disabilities.

The study showed that 47% of the respondents indicated that employers and community had negative attitudes whilst 36% indicated that employers and community had positive attitudes toward persons with disabilities. The findings were further supported by the findings of Butterworth and Pitt-Catsoupes (1997) who showed that some employers often failed to recognise persons with disabilities as an important part of a community's labour pool. When they are aware of this available labour resource, employers typically felt unprepared to adequately support the employment needs of individuals with disabilities. While 17% of the respondents revealed that the community and employers had both positive and negative attitudes toward blind persons. The study also revealed that it was not easy for the blind persons to be accepted by both the community and employers as they lack knowledge about blindness. These attitudes have a very long history, which could not be changed in the minds of the sighted persons easily. Telephone operators claimed that the offices from which they operate leave much to be desired. They were put in very small offices, which serve at times as kitchens. They also indicated that employers tend to be segregative. Blind persons are left in some activities at their work places. One respondent from Lusaka had this to say:

“Government was good at signing some United Nations’ Charters but fail to honour the obligations. Blind persons have to fight nearly for everything at their place of work. The government was supposed to come with a deliberate policy to make the work easier for blind persons, whether working as a teacher or telephone operator.”

The study showed that unemployment blind persons despite spending most of their time with sighted persons in the community are always associated with begging and non productivity. The findings agree the findings of Semakula (1994) who indicated that society normally underrates the ability of a person with disability, and looks at him or her as one who is

expected to depend on the non-disabled and always satisfied with whatever is done for him/her. On the same, Brinker et al (2001) pointed out that society has the duty to accept blind persons and other disabled people as normal beings with particular specificities. On the other hand blind persons and their organisations have the task to inform society on every aspect of their disability. It has been observed that the blind persons just like any disabled people tend to work in isolation. Kanya (2005) pointed out that disability is not a sector of an island, but one among many, requiring the contribution of everybody for any meaningful change to occur. Ironically the blind persons blame society for their non-participation in other sectors. Many non-disabled professionals have tried to work with the blind have been frustrated and disillusioned. Others have persisted and somehow learnt to live with the situation.

Going by the findings on respondents' views on whether attitudes portrayed by the community and some employers affect their desire to work, there was a clear indication that attitude, especially negative attitudes do affect the blind persons' desire to work. 83% said that negative attitudes affect their desire to work while 16% did not agree to the assertions. The findings are in agreement with those of Malakpa (1994) Jenkins and Amos (1983) as cited in Rackley (1994) and Scott as cited in Davis (1997) who revealed in their studies that attitudes toward the visually impaired disability might also influence the extent to which the persons with disabilities would manifest their desire to work. The respondents indicated that there were frustrated and demotivated by the way they are treated. The eagerness to work is destroyed by community and employers, who display negative attitudes, discriminate and underrate the capabilities of blind persons. Daly (1997) also stated that there was underlying belief to the goal of the Americans Disabilities Act that "all individuals regardless of their impairment have

a desire and right to work.” However, the employers and community tend to look at the disability instead of looking at the ability of blind persons.

The findings of the study in relation to equal treatment between blind and sighted persons indicate that there was unequal treatment between blind and sighted persons. The study revealed that sixty (80%) of the respondents indicated that employers and community do not treat the blind and sighted persons equally. The findings are consistent with that of Gilbride (2001) who revealed that historically, people with disabilities have endured poor treatment and recently, high rates of unemployment. Isiko (1994) Katende (1994) and Anthony (1972) who indicated in their studies that community do not provide equal opportunity to persons with disabilities. These inequalities stem from negative attitudes, prejudice and discrimination which community perpetuates toward the persons with disabilities. The study also showed that blind employees were considered as under achievers and always sidelined when it came to promotions and some activities taking place at work places. The findings are consistent with those of Hegarty (1998) who observed that people with disabilities are more often than not excluded from the mainstream society and denied equal access to education, employment, family life and leisure activities. There is a distinction given to the sighted persons. For instance, a blind person is less considered for promotions despite being qualified. Minton (2005) revealed that the most pervasive negative attitude is focusing on a person’s disability rather than on an individual’s ability. He expresses a more insidious attitude that society doesn’t expect persons with disabilities to perform up to standard, and when they do, they somehow courageous. This attitude has the effect to patronising people with disabilities, usually relegating them to low-skills jobs, setting different job standards or expecting a worker

with disability to appreciate the opportunity to work instead of demanding equal pay, equal benefits, equal opportunity and equal access to workplace

On the respondents' views on whether equal treatment can enhance blind persons' desire to work, the results show that the majority of the respondents (92%) indicated that equal treatment can enhance blind persons desire to work. The blind persons want equality in terms of employment opportunities, promotions in their work, recognition of abilities, adequate representation, and involvement in activities at place of work and full acceptance by the employers, community and coworkers. The respondents also indicated that community should learn to appreciate whatever little work blind persons do and stop labeling them as difficult people. One respondent revealed that the desire to work is fuelled up when is considered to part and parcel of the company or community he/she works for.

Research on self-esteem of disabled persons, blind persons inclusive, show that the blind persons have low self-esteem. The study by Karugu (1984) and that of Hollins (1989) show that the connection between lack of work and self-esteem has been observed for persons with or without disability leading to feeling helplessness, low morale and usually negative feelings about life. In this study, it is evident that blind persons have low self-esteem. 51% of the respondents indicated that blind persons have low self-esteem. 45% said that blind persons do not have low self-esteem. The findings agree with those of Dodds (1993) and Karugu (1984) who connected physical disability with lower negative self-esteem, saying that persons with disabilities react to their disability by seeing their situation as hopeless and refusing to help themselves or be helped. This feeling of dependency is a major problem because it hinders the

growth of a sense of self sufficiency. One strategy to cope with negative information involves acknowledging a "pocket of incompetence." Through recognising the kind of situations that reveals one's fault, one can avoid such negative encounters. However, in the case of blind persons, it is not easy to accept their incompetence as they tend to blame society or the impairment. This situation tends to erode their desire to work. The respondents (57%) revealed that low self-esteem was due to over protection and stressing environment. Blind persons are not given chance to prove their abilities and capabilities. They are deemed to be under achievers and people who cannot stand on their own (Semakula, 1994). One male respondent, a vendor who sells sweets, biscuits and cigarettes at the corner Chilufya Mulenga road near the taxi rank of Lusaka Intercontinental hotel, had this to say:

"My parents made understand that as a blind person everything was to be done for me. However, I proved it wrong when I went to the boarding school. if it was not for the boarding school, today I could have been on the street begging. My parents did not prepare me to be independent. They did everything for me. They washed my clothes, fetched water and bathed me."

The respondents also claimed that even in the sighted persons there are some with low self-esteem. However, 45% of the respondents did not agree with the notion that blind persons have low self-esteem. They indicated that it is personal and situational. Going by numbers, the majority indicated that blind persons have low self-esteem and the findings are consistent with the findings of Dodds (1993), Hollins (1989), Karugu (1984) and Rosenberg (1989).

Regarding to the respondents' views on whether self esteem affect the blind persons' desire to work, the findings of the study revealed that low self-esteem do affect the blind persons' desire

to work. The findings agree with the findings of Karugu (1984 and Rosenberg (1989) who pointed out in their study that self-esteem is molded by society. If society has biases and negative perceptions toward the disabled persons, it can be detrimental to their self-esteem and desire to work. Especially that the self-esteem motive confronts incoming information about self that is negative. 68% of respondents said that desire to work is eroded in most of the blind persons. One female respondent based in Lusaka said the following:

“We tend to react to our disability by seeing our situation as useless, hopeless and deny to help ourselves or helped. We further more develop helplessness and negative feeling about life.”

The above sentiments made by the respondent is in line with the findings of Kamya (2005) who indicated that many who find themselves blind fail or take long time to cope or remain in self-pity and hostile. This situation leads to low self-esteem that in turn affects the desire to work.

The findings of the study on the type and benefits of vocational trainings offered to the blind persons in Zambia indicated that blind persons have only three main areas of vocational training programmes namely teacher training, switchboard telephone operating and handicraft. Respondents revealed that the vocation training programmes are beneficial though it is not easy to find employment after completion of the vocational training programmes. The study indicated that blind persons have career limitation and this limits their employment opportunities. As a result blind persons end up doing low-income earning jobs. Respondents questioned the purpose of the government for signing the United Nations’ Social Charter when

many blind persons and other disabled people are still and will continue to wallow in poverty and very low paying jobs.

From the study, it is evident that in Zambia blind persons are to some large extent only employed in low-income paying jobs. The findings are consistent with the findings of Isiko (1994), Katende (1994) and American Committee on Disabilities (1986) pointed out in their studies that society limits employment opportunities for persons with disability by providing for them low skill vocations and hence low income earning jobs. The study revealed that blind persons could also train in other fields like law, public administration, broadcasting, human resource management, economy and many others. However, the government has failed to remove the social constructs which hinder them to venture in other programmes. The study established that blind persons are confined to specifically to two career choices namely teaching and switchboard telephone operating. The craft skills are acquired through apprenticeship.

On respondents' views on whether the vocational training programmes offered to blind persons affect their desire to work, it is evident from the findings that vocational training programmes offered to the blind persons do affect their desire to work. The respondents revealed that these vocational training programmes are imposed on them. They are not given a variety of vocational training programmes choices the way it is with the sighted colleagues. For blind persons, there are only three distinctive areas of training, that is, teaching, switchboard telephone operating and crafts. Not all blind persons want to be teachers or telephone operators. The respondents indicated that they could perform to their expectations if

they were given chance to choose the training to venture into. However, in Zambia blind persons have no choice in the career prospective. A Lusaka respondent had this to say:

*“Why are we treated in this way? Is it because we are blind?
The same people talk about equality. Where is equality
here? We are always given raw deal and when we
complain, we are labeled to be difficulty.”*

From the available literature on whether visual impairment limits employment opportunities, it is indicated that to some large extent visual impairment does not limit employment opportunities. Problem is prejudice, discrimination and the negative attitudes focusing on person's disability rather than on an individual's ability (Minton, 2005). The findings are consistent with that of Lorenzo (1988) blind by the age of two years, pointed out that the biggest obstacle for visually impaired persons is not their physical limitations, but the barriers coming from negative attitudes society holds toward the visually impaired persons. The findings are also consistent with that of Pfeiffer (1989) who revealed that people with disabilities, like the blind are treated as a result of societal attitudes, no as a result of the disability itself. However, the findings in the study were contrary to the existing literature. The findings revealed that visual impairment limits employment opportunities for afflicted people. 77% of the respondents who are in employment indicated that blind persons are confined to telephone operating and crafts because of the disability. They cannot venture in any other training here in Zambia. While (23%) of the respondents claimed that visual impairment does not limit employment opportunities, but social environment does. In most cases, they are denied chances to enter the world of employment by barriers brought about by society and not the disability.

On attitudes of sighted coworkers toward the blind persons, the findings of the study reveal that sighted coworkers have negative toward blind persons. The findings are consistent with the findings of Cornell University as cited in Dutton (2000) illustrated that one of the most prominent barriers to employment for people with disabilities is the negative attitudes supervisors and coworkers hold regarding this population. Anthony (1972) revealed that these attitudes could lead to discriminatory practices, hampering an individual's chance to become a fully functioning member of the community. The respondents indicated that sighted coworkers negative attitudes are copied from their superiors. Sighted coworkers have no regards for blind workers. The respondents working as telephone operators revealed that sighted coworkers just enter their office without knocking and when denied access to the telephone; they are shouted at and labeled to be difficulty. On the hand, 33% of respondents claimed that sighted coworkers have both positive and negative attitudes toward the blind persons. The respondents indicated that attitudes depend on individual human being and the situation prevailing at that particular time.

With regard to whether the attitudes of sighted coworkers affect the blind persons' desire to work, the findings clearly show that negative attitudes of sighted coworkers do affect the blind persons' desire to work. The study revealed that negative attitudes toward any person not necessarily blind person could hamper the desire to work. The respondents also indicated that they are not fully recognised and looked at as people who just earn the income for less work done. Sentiments from their sighted coworkers reduce the eager to work. The respondents went on say that they too are human beings just like the sighted colleagues; therefore working

in an environment where people have no regards, discriminate and look at you to be incomplete because of the disability; the eagerness to work is inhibited.

Observation on the limitation on participation of blind persons in social and community activities, the study revealed that blind persons do not adequately participate in social and community activities. This is supported by the study of Kanya (2005) who pointed out that disabled people are generally not active participants in socio-economic life due to limited opportunity to do so. Sheila (1988) and Oliver (1990) two writers with disability themselves also underlined the negative role played by social environment in discouraging full participation of persons with disability in the social and economic life of the society. The respondents indicated that they experience limitations to participate in social and economic activities the society because of stigma, discrimination, prejudice and negative attitudes portrayed community. One can be willing to do some community work together with the sighted, but just to be stopped and told that you cannot do this or that because you are blindness. The respondents also indicated that they do understand community's reaction because community is not knowledgeable on the abilities and capabilities of blind persons.

With regards to respondents' views on whether limitation in participating in social and community activities affect blind persons' desire to work, the study revealed that community limitation on blind person in participating in social and community activities affect their desire to work. The limitation stems from the negative role played by social environment in discouraging full participation of blind person in social and community activities. The

respondents revealed that there was too much underrating of blind persons' abilities and capabilities by society.

The findings on respondents' views on the status of the blind persons showed that blind persons are given low status in society. The findings are consistent with that of Sheila (1988) who revealed that persons with disabilities are victims of stigma, low status prejudice indifference or neglect. The respondents indicated that low status could be given to any person who is poor, unemployed or employed but earning low income and those with low education level. Hence, "we the blind persons coupled with a disability and negative attitudes from the society, we are automatically embraced in the low status." One Ndola respondent observed the following:

"Blind persons live in a society where they are not regarded as productive members. They are always underrated, looked at as second class citizens and doing low income earning jobs."

There was evidence from 97% of the respondents that low status given to the blind persons does affect their desire to work or look for employment. The respondents indicated that blind persons are the highly unemployed group of people. Employment is not there and if one gets employed then it is one of those low income-earning jobs. The findings of the study are in concord agreement with Semakula (1994) who revealed that society normally underrates the ability of a person with disability and looks at him/her as one who is expected to depend on the non-disabled. Isiko (1994 and Katende (1994) indicated that society also limits employment opportunities for persons with disabilities by providing them with low skills vocation training and hence low-income earning jobs. It takes a blind person many years to get employment

compared to the sighted colleagues. One respondent indicated that the longer they stay unemployed the more the desire to work gets diminished. Especially, if one is on the urban areas where he/she can even make a bit of money from begging or vending. The eagerness to look for employed slowly fades away.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Summary

The main purpose of this study was to find out the views of the blind persons in employment and those not in employment whether their desire to work was affected by the social environment. It also sought to find out whether self-esteem and low vocational training of a blind person have an effect on his/her desire to work.

Through the assessment of the views of the respondents about social environment and their desire to work, the study has:

- a. revealed that social environmental factors such as negative attitudes, prejudice and discrimination perpetuated by employers, sighted coworkers and community have an affect on the blind persons' desire to work and largely limit their ability to obtain and retain employment.
- b. shown that the blind persons are employed by government and mainly in low paying jobs. Majority is confined to switchboard telephone operating and the rate of employment per year was very minute.
- c. revealed that blind persons have low self-esteem which stem from from factors such as over protection from parents and community, stressing

environments and failure to accept the disability. The results of the study further indicated that low self-esteem was in some ways related to their desire to seek for work.

- d. revealed that in Zambia there are only three areas of vocational training for blind persons and these are teaching, switchboard telephone operating and crafts. These vocational training programmes see blind persons get employed in low paying jobs.
- e. Revealed that vocational training programmes offered to blind persons, though not directly influential to their to work largely hinder their ability to seek employment.
- f. though available literature indicated that an impairment may not limit one's Employment opportunities, the study has shown that visual impairment limits employment opportunities of the afflicted person. This has made the blind persons to be confined to low-income earning jobs such as telephone operating, craft and teaching.
- g. revealed that blind persons do not actively participate in social and community activities. However, this does not affect the desire to work of the blind person.
- h. shown that blind persons occupy low status place in community. It was revealed that this status has adverse effect on the blind persons' desire to work.

6.2. RECOMMENDATIONS

In accordance with the findings of the study, the following are some recommendation suggested to the Government of Zambia to help create user-friendly social environment that could help in enhancing blind persons' desire to work.

- a. Government should initiate and support awareness-raising campaign designed to overcome negative attitudes, prejudice and discrimination concerning workers with visual impairment and other disabled workers.
- b. The Government, NGOs and Organisations of the blind persons should take action to raise awareness in society about persons with visual impairment, their rights, their needs, their potential and their contribution to society.
- c. The Government should come up with a deliberate policy on the employment of blind persons and other disabled persons. Statutory instrument must be put in place to compel private sector to include disability issues in their work policy and those sectors employing persons with disability should enjoy tax rebate.
- d. The Government, Labour movements and employers should cooperate with organisations of blind persons to ensure equitable training, equitable employment opportunities, promotion policies and other conditions of service enjoyed by their sighted coworkers.

- e. The Government in conjunction with mass media and other stakeholders should initiate and support information campaigns concerning persons with disability and disability policies, conveying the message that persons with disabilities are citizens with the same rights and obligations as others. Therefore, all obstacles to full participation should be removed.
- f. Making community and parents of the blind persons aware of the disadvantages of over protecting the children with disabilities, which tends to lead to dependency in later life.
- g. Persons with disability should be involved in political offices to create positive role models for other persons with disability and to raise awareness among society about their potential. Issues related to the disabled population could be presented adequately through persons with disability. The President should deliberately nominate at least two or more people with disabilities as members of Parliament.

6.3. SUGGESTION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

1. Attitudes of employers toward people with disabilities: A comparison of a town in Zambia and a town in Uganda or Kenya.
2. Barriers to employment among persons who are blind or visually impaired.

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APPENDIX 1

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT OF BLIND PERSONS AND
THEIR DESIRE TO WORK.**

QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is to be complete by blind persons in formal employment.

Province:.....

District:.....

Gender:.....

Age:.....

Marital Status:.....

Highest Academic Qualifications.....

Highest Professional Qualifications:.....

.....

Any Addition Professional Qualifications:.....

.....

Type of Work

Occupation:.....

Name of Employer:.....(GRZ or Private)

**Work Place Setting:.....(Urban, Peri-Urban or
Rural)**

Number of years served as a worker:.....

This questionnaire is to be completed by visually impaired persons in formal employment.

- 1. How did you get the current job you are doing?**
.....
- 2. Are you satisfied with job?.....**
.....
- 3. What are the employers attitudes towards the blind?.....**
.....
.....
- 4.Do you think the attitudes of the employer could affect the visually impaired persons’ desire to work? (State the reasons for your answer)**
.....
.....
- 5. Do the employers treat the visually impaired persons and sighted equally? (Give reasons for answer).....**
.....
.....
- 6. Do you think visually impaired persons’ desire to can be enhanced by treatment from the employer? (state reasons)**
.....
.....
- 7. Does visual impairment limit employment opportunities? (Give reasons).....**
.....
.....
- 8. What are the attitudes of sighted co-workers toward visually impaired workers?.....**
.....
- 9.Do you think the attitudes of the sighted co-workers could affect the visually impaired persons’ desire to work? (State your reasons)**

-
-
- 10. Are the visually impaired persons offered any assistance by the sighted co-workers?
(Give reasons).....**
-
-
- 11. Do you think assistance from sighted co-workers could promote the visually impaired
persons' desire to work? (Give reasons).....**
-
-
- 12. Do the visually impaired persons have low self-esteem (ones' self evaluation)? (Give
reasons).....**
-
-
- 13. Do you think that self esteem can have an impact on the visually impaired persons'
desire to work? (Give reasons.).....**
-
-
- 14. What type of vocational skills training in your is given to the visually impaired
persons?**
-
- 15. Are the vocational skills acquire able to help the visually impaired to enter formal or
informal employment and sustain themselves?**
-
-
- 16. Do you think the type of vocational skills training offered to visually impaired
persons could affect their desire to work? (Give reasons for your answer.).....**
-

APPENDIX 2

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT OF BLIND PERSONS AND
THEIR DESIRE TO WORK.**

QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is to be complete by blind persons in informal employment.

Province:.....

District:.....

Gender:.....

Age:.....

Marital Status:.....

Highest Academic Qualifications.....

Highest Professional Qualifications:.....

.....

Any Addition Professional Qualifications:.....

.....

Type of Work

Occupation:.....

**Work Place Setting:.....(Urban, Peri-Urban or
Rural)**

Number of years in your worker:.....

This questionnaire is to be completed by visually impaired persons in informal employment.

- 1. What do you do for living? (For how long?)**
.....
.....
- 2. Do you receive any assistance from Community, Government, NGOs to sustain yourself? (If yes, what kind of assistance?)**
.....
.....
- 3. What are the attitudes of the community towards the visually impaired persons?**
.....
.....
- 4. Do you think the attitudes of community could hamper the visually impaired persons' desire to work? (Give reasons to your answer.)**
.....
.....
- 5. Does the visual impairment limit employment opportunities? (Give reasons)**
.....
.....
.....
- 6. Does the community treat the visually impaired persons and sighted equally? (Give reasons).....**
.....
.....
- 7. Do you think visually impaired persons' desire to work can be enhanced by equal treatment from the community? (State reasons.)**
.....
.....
- 8. Does the community limit you in social and community participation? (Give reasons to your answer.)**
.....
.....

9. Do you think the limitations from community can hinder the visually impaired persons' desire to work? (Give reasons).....
.....
10. What status is given to the visually impaired persons in the community? (Give reasons.).....
.....
11. Does the status given to the visually impaired persons affect their desire to work? (Give reasons).....
.....
.....
12. Do the visually impaired persons have low self esteem? (State the reasons for your answer.).....
.....
.....
13. Do you think that self esteem can have an impact on the visually impaired persons' desire to work? (Give reasons)
.....
.....
.....
14. What of type vocational skills training in your opinion is given to the visually impaired persons?.....
.....
.....
15. Are the vocational skills acquired able to help the visually impaired persons to enter formal or informal employment and sustain themselves?.....
.....
.....
16. Do you think low skill training offered to visually impaired persons could affect their desire to work? (state the reasons for your answer.).....
.....