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# The Lived Experience of Mothers with Visual Impairment Child-Rearing Practice: The Case of Seven Mothers in Gondar Town

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**WORK ENVIRONMENT EXPERIENCES FOR  
EMPLOYEES WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT  
AT UNIVERSITY OF GONDAR**

**BY**

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BAHIR DAR, ETHIOPIA**

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**Work Environment Experiences for Employees with Visual Impairment at**

**University of Gondar**

**By**

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**A Thesis Submitted to department of special needs and inclusive education; in**

**Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in**

**Special Need and Inclusive Education.**

**JUNE, 2021**

**BAHIR DAR, ETHIOPIA**

## **Declaration**

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “*Work Environment Experiences for Employees with Visual Impairment at University of Gondar*”, submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for degree of Master of Arts in Special Needs and Inclusive Education, Bahir Dar University, is a record of original work carried out by me and has never been submitted to this or any other institution to get any other degree or certificates. The assistance and help I received during the course of this investigation have been duly acknowledged and referenced as expectedly

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**Approval of Thesis for Defense**

I hereby certify that I have supervised, read, and evaluated this thesis titled “*Work Environment Experiences for Employees with Visual Impairment at University of Gondar*” by Habtamu Alamneh prepared under my guidance. I recommend the thesis be submitted for oral defense.

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As members of the board of examiners, we examined this thesis entitled “*Work Environment Experiences for Employees with Visual Impairment at University of Gondar*” by Habtamu Alamneh. We hereby certify that the thesis is accepted for fulfilling the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in Special need and Inclusive Education.

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

<b>CBR:</b>	Community Based Rehabilitation
<b>CRPD:</b>	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
<b>EVI:</b>	Employees with Visual Impairment
<b>SNNPR:</b>	South Nations Nationalities and Peoples Region
<b>UN:</b>	United Nations
<b>UNC:</b>	Convention of United Nation
<b>VI:</b>	Visual Impairment
<b>WHO:</b>	World Health Organization

## **Abstract**

The purpose of this study was to explore the work experience of employees with visual impairment in University of Gondar. In order to achieve the objective of the study, phenomenological research design was employed in the study area and the related literature was reviewed. Qualitative data was gathered through interview and observation. The interview data was collected from seven employees with visual impairments and their respective managers (three) in the university. Comprehensive sampling was used to select the samples. The collected data was transcribed and analyzed through thematic analysis techniques in order to elaborate data that were collected by interview and observation. Based on the analysis of the data, employees with visual impairment in University of Gondar were found active players in their roles and responsibilities. They tried to achieve their job objectives with motivation. In this study, respondent's respective opinion about the impact of their vision problem on their psychosocial activities of the work situation indicated that there were many gaps in the psychosocial relationships where these employees were affected socially and psychologically as a result of their visual impairment in the work place. It was also found that absence of braille display,(braille convertor) lack of professional growth opportunities, lack of provision of new assistive technologies, low awareness creation about disability for the university community, stigma and discrimination and lack of assistance were found the major challenges of employees with visual impairments in UoG. Therefore, there were many challenges in the university that hinders these employees to achieve their professional goal so; it is possible to conclude that there is unsuitable work condition for employees with visual impairments in University of Gondar. As a result, concerned government and non-state actors including academic institutions who are engaged in supporting and giving services to people with visual impairments should strive to make the university suitable for employees with visual impairments.

**Key words:** Environmental Conduciveness, Employees with Visual Impairments, workplace Challenges

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter consists of background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, significance of the study, scope of the study, limitation of the study and definition of key terms.

### **1.1. Background of the Study**

Visual impairment is one among sensory disabilities that faced human beings. It was a term used to describe any kind of reduction in vision or vision loss, including total blindness. A person whose best corrected vision is 20/70 to 20/200 is often referred to as visually impaired or having low vision. According to estimates from the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2012, 285 million people were visually impaired worldwide (WHO, 2012). Many people with disabilities, including visual impairment, did not have equal access to health care, education, and employment opportunities, did not receive the disability related services that they require, and experience exclusion from everyday life activities. Across the world, people with visual impairments were entrepreneurs and self-employed workers, doctors and teachers, shop assistants, artists, and computer technicians. Almost all jobs could be performed by someone with a disability, and given the right environment; most people with disabilities could be productive. However, as documented by several studies, both in developed and developing countries, working age persons with disabilities experience significantly lower employment rates and much higher unemployment rates than persons without disabilities (WHO, 2011).

In many international conventions and national laws and policies, they were recognized that people with disabilities including visual impairments had the right to get appropriate job-related

benefits and should be free from any kind of biases. In Article 27 the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (CRPD) recognizes the right of persons with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others; this includes the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labor market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities (United Nations, 2016). Furthermore, the CRPD prohibits all forms of employment discrimination, promotes access to vocational training, promotes opportunities for self-employment, and calls for reasonable accommodation in the workplace, among other provisions.

To address labor market imperfections and encourage the employment of people with disabilities, many countries had laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability. Enforcing antidiscrimination laws was expected to improve access to the formal economy and had wider social benefits (Yuckman, 1982). Many countries also had specific measures, for example, vocational rehabilitation and employment services job training, counseling, job search assistance, and placement could develop or restore the capabilities of people with disabilities to compete in the labor market and facilitate their inclusion in the labor market (Murray & Heron, 2003). In Ethiopian context, the conduciveness of work place for employees with disability in general and with visual impairment in particular has been recognized by different legislative frameworks. Disability provisions were included in general legislation, such as the 1995 Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, the Labor Proclamation 1993 and the Federal Civil Servant Proclamation 2002, at the heart of all this, changing attitudes in the workplace and creating conducive work environment play a vital role which is recognized by different national and international guidelines.

The total number of persons with visual impairment workers was constantly growing year after year. With appropriate training and equipment, people who were blind or persons with visual impairment have the same range of abilities as anyone else (International Labor Organization (ILO), 2015). Even if there were challenges to be employed, individual's visual impairment faced number of challenges including; productivity differentials; labor market imperfections related to discrimination and prejudice, and disincentives created by disability benefit systems (Jones, 2014). Qualified individuals had employment rights for fair treatment in the workplace. Employer treatment and decisions should be based on an individual's merit instead of the existence or consequence of a visual disability or impairment. Unfavorable employer treatment of a qualified individual because of visual impairment is disability discrimination (Callie et al., 2017). Prohibited discriminatory acts can include unfair treatment, harassment, and denial of reasonable accommodations, retaliation, and improper questions or disclosure of personal information. Even though some organizations tried to minimize disability discrimination, there are many types of disability discriminations that existed in many organizations. Employment disability discrimination for individuals with visual impairments was a multifaceted on employee's productivity that may likely affected psychological and economical dimension of employees with visual impairments.

## **1.2. Statement of the problem**

The employment status of individuals with visual impairment were a major concern to practitioners and scholars in the fields of vocational rehabilitation and education of people with visual impairments. The reason behind this was only 32% of individuals aged 18-69 who are legally blind were employed (American Foundation for the Blind [AFB], 2006) and many more were underemployed (Rumrill & Scheff, 1997). The rate of unemployment among people with

visual impairments (that was, those who are blind or have low vision) is unacceptably high. Although the age, educational level, and health status of people who were visually impaired has an impact on their employment rate (Kirchner, Schmeidler & Todorov, 1999), corporate culture plays a crucial role in successful employment.

For individuals with disabilities, including those with visual impairments, unfair workplace practices might prevent employment or satisfaction with employment (Callie, Victor, Leroy, Thacker, Kelli, Gary, Dianne, Pawluk, and Coolville, 2017). Treatment and hiring decisions by an employer should be based on an individual's merit instead of the existence or consequence of a visual disability or impairment i.e., blindness or low vision. Unfavorable employer treatment of a qualified individual because of visual impairment is disability discrimination. Low achievement in work because of unsuitable work environment for which one was qualified could affect one's self-esteem and personality, increase one's feelings of hostility, and induce dependent relationships (Tuttle, 1984).

Many studies had been done regarding the social and educational experiences, students with visual impairments. Others also conducted studies about the challenges and opportunities of students with visual impairments in the school situation. Although there is no large body of literature on the employment experiences of visual impaired employees, many studies had been conducted on the experiences of visual impaired students. Some researchers tried to study employment opportunities of and Discrimination against Persons with Blind and the Physically Impaired (Mindahun, 2006). Literature from a number of writers and reports indicated that the experienced of employee's visual impairments in different organizations was in a great challenge (Bonaccio et.al, 2019).



Generally, little study had been conducted regarding the lived experiences of employees with visual impairment in Ethiopian context in general and in university of Gondar in particular. Researches had not been available which were conducted on work environment experiences of employees with visual impairment in view of challenges and coping mechanisms. Therefore, there were research gaps since little attention was given on studying experience of EVI in the study area. Moreover, as it was revealed in the above scholarly writing far, little attention had also been paid to the way in which employees with visual impairment encounter challenges in adapting themselves with the work environment, making healthy social interactions with others and in collaborating stakeholders to enhance the effective accomplishment of the organization's objectives. Therefore, to fill the gap, this study was attempted to explore the lived work experience of employees with visual impairment in the study area. Hence, the purpose of this research was exploring the experiences of employees with visual impairments in the working environment in University of Gondar.

The following research questions were addressed in the study:

1. What do employees with visual impairment have in their work and related experience at University of Gondar?
2. How do employees with visual impairment perceive their work environments conduciveness at University of Gondar?
3. What job related challenges do employees with Visual Impairment experience at University of Gondar?

### **1.3. Objectives of the Study**

#### **1.3.1. General objective of the study**

The general objective of this study was to explore the work environment experience for employees with visual impairment at University of Gondar.

#### **1.3.2. Specific Objectives**

The followings were the specific objectives of this study:

To explore the work and related experiences of employees with visual impairments at University of Gondar.

To explore the work environment conduciveness for employees with visual impairment at University of Gondar.

To identify the job-related challenges that faced employees with impairments in University of Gondar.

### **1.4. Significance of the study**

This study was providing contribution by analyzing the lived work experience of employees with visual impairment in University of Gondar. Therefore, this study was filling the existing gap and adds current updated information in the existing literature. In addition, it gave valuable information to the university management body, human resource department and other employees about appropriate interventions that should be taken to make employees with VI succeeded. Furthermore, using recommendations from the study, it also addressed issues of equity and improvement of work environment in the university. This was ensuring that disability was nothing that couldn't be related to employee's job performance. The findings of the study were informing different policy makers to ensure the practice of their guidelines in the study site

and modify accordingly. Finally, it might be used by other researchers as a reference material and could be a ground for further research work.

### **1.5. Delimitation of the Study**

To make the study manageable considering the available time and financial resource, the study was to be geographically delimited to University of Gondar only. Furthermore, the study was conceptually delimited to only issues of the experiences of employees with visual impairment in the working environment at University of Gondar.

### **1.6. Limitation of the Study**

There might be some problems the researcher might face while conducting this study. Financial resources problem might be the main problem which hinders the researcher throughout the course of this study. The other limitation might relate to Covid-19 and instability. Therefore, he might face challenge while collecting data and might not finish the study on the required time schedule. In addition to this, there might be shortage of reference materials. The last but not the least limitation might be lack of his own assistant. Since He was visual impaired, He hadn't assistant at the beginning of this study, even if He was trying to find his own assistance. However, he tried his best to handle all the above-mentioned limitations influence on the results of the study.

### **1.7. Definition of Operational Terms**

- **Employees with Visual Impairments:** are individuals who have visual problems and they are working at University of Gondar.
- **Work Experience:** is what happened to a person; what is seen, done, felt, or lived through in the work environment.

- **University:** is an institution of higher (or tertiary) education and research which awards academic degrees in various academic disciplines.
- **Visual Impairment:** it is loss of sight completely or totally which is difficult in order to act different activities on the environment.
- **Work place Challenges that** are Career activity obstacles issued by an employee with visual impairments in University of Gondar.
- **Environmental Conduciveness: is the suitability** of the work atmosphere/working ground where the right conditions for something good to happen or exist.
- **Work environment:** is a place which is done different activities on it.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter presented the relevant literatures that had related with the title under study. It was attempts to review literature on concepts of visual impairment, visual impairment and employment, barriers of employees with visual impairment at work and workplace accommodations/ rehabilitation of employees with visual impairment.

#### **2.1. Concept of Visual Impairment**

Visual impairment (VI), a global concern that is likely to escalate with prolonged life expectancies, had gained increasing attention in the realm of eye care. Visual impairments refer to the loss of vision, even when a person makes use of corrective lenses. Visual impairments were the reduced vision caused by eye diseases, accidents or eye conditions presented from birth (WHO, 2012). Visual impairment (VI) is a condition of reduced visual performance that couldn't be remedied by refractive correction (spectacles or contact lenses), surgery or medical methods.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, it results in functional limitations of the visual system that might be characterized by irreversible vision loss, restricted visual field and decreased contrast sensitivity, increased sensitivity to glare as well as decreased ability to perform activities of daily living, such as reading or writing (Naipal & Rampersad, 2018). However, “visual impairment” was a useful term for describing the different kinds of sight conditions people experience. Some people were born with a visual impairment; some experienced sight loss as a result of an accident, while others might have lost their sight as a result of a medical condition. Regardless of the cause, people with sight loss might experience various difficulties arising from their condition. It was

important to understand that any difficulties could be overcome with the right adjustments at work place (Duquette, 2013).

## **2.2. Visual Impairment and Employment**

Individuals with visual impairments could successfully perform a wide variety of job functions and be productive employees despite the challenges and barriers to be overcome (Gamble, Dowler & Orslene, 2006). It has been well documented that working age individuals with visual impairments have lagged behind in workforce participation when compared to their non-visually impaired/ handicapping language counterparts (Cavanaugh, & Rogers, 2002; Golub, 2006; Kelly, 2013; O'Day, 1999).

Key success factors identified in previous studies of employment for individuals with visual impairments include (a) knowledge and understanding of accommodations and assistive technology (Unger et al., 2005), (b) opportunities for on the job training or other work experiences with an employer (McDonnall et al., 2013), and (c) co-worker involvement (Goertz et al., 2010).

## **2.3. Barriers of Employees with Visual Impairment to Acquire and Maintain Work**

There are a number of major barriers to paid employment for people with a variety of significant disabilities. These barriers are structural, institutional, societal and individual / well summarized review/ (Golledge, 2001; Pernice & Lunt, 1998; Smyth & Maynard Campbell, 1997; Rumrill, Schuyler, & Longden, 1997). Similar systemic and attitudinal barriers are identified as being major negative factors to the employment of people with vision impairments (Beatson, 1981; La Grow, 2002).

Negative attitudes, ignorance of employment possibilities and fear of the functional limitations associated with blindness, often lead to over-protection and low expectations of people with

vision impairments, by family, rehabilitation staff and teachers (Malakpa, 1994). An examination of the barriers faced by 12 young people with varying degrees of vision loss, transitioning from school to work, was undertaken by McBroom, Tedder, & Jiin (1990). Many of the young people in the study lacked confidence, were negative about their disabilities, had few leisure time skills and were fearful of taking risks because of the possibility of failure, something many had never been allowed to experience. Yet confidence, comfort with disability and motivation (including risk taking), are the very attributes noted in the literature as being crucial in order to succeed in gaining, retaining and advancing in a range of employment options (Attmore, 1990; Rabby & Croft, 1990; Kirchner, Johnson, & Harkins, 1997).

La Grow (2002) specifically identified the following barriers to employment:

- The vision impairment itself - being unable to undertake tasks which require sight;
- Discrimination - the attitudes of others;
- Transport - access difficulties;
- Employer ignorance - lack of knowledge about the abilities of people with vision impairments;
- Personal attributes, other than the vision impairment - age, lack of qualifications, presence of other health conditions;
- Lack of access to adaptive equipment and training to use this;
- Low self-confidence due to impairment;
- Lack of job opportunities;
- Problems accessing information from government departments; and
- The cost of education.
- The barrier mentioned most often by participants was discrimination

People with a visual impairment who hold a job seem to generally profit from larger and more positive social support than those with no job (Cimarolli & Wang, 2006). They also seem to present a lesser prevalence of symptoms of anxiety (Cimarolli & Wang, 2006); they likewise have a better sense of self-esteem (Goertz, van Lierop, Houkes, & Nijhuis, 2010). However, the consulted literature exposed that numerous personal and environmental factors can constitute obstacles or facilitators, depending on the situation to the participation and the integration to work of blind or visually impaired people.

Among the personal factors that cannot be modified, the following can be found (Bell & Mino, 2013; Clements et al., 2011; Darensbourg, 2013; Duquette & Baril, 2013; La Grow, 2004);:

- The severity of the visual impairment
- Age and Gender
- The age at which the visual disability appeared
- And the presence of one or several other secondary disabilities.

Meanwhile, the modifiable personal factors that also have an influence on the probability of obtaining and maintaining work are (Bell, 2010; Bell & Mino, 2013; Duquette & Baril, 2013):

- The use of diverse means of communication
- The behaviors of the individual
- His or her mobility
- His or her responsibilities
- And his or her level of education

In the same vein, environmental factors can have a notable effect on the integration to work of people with a visual impairment are (Bell & Mino, 2013; Duquette & Baril, 2013; Goertz et al., 2010; Shaw et al., 2007):



- The rendering of specialized schooling services
- Living environment
- Place of residence
- And the workplace (attitude and accessibility)

It also has been demonstrated that social support at work can be a facilitator for blind and visually impaired people (Crudden, 2002). Nevertheless, when it is not adequate, it can represent an important source of difficulties for these people (Dugas & Guay, 2007). According to Slade and Simkiss, cited in Duquette and Baril (2013), the attitude and behaviour of a potential employer can constitute an obstacle to being hired. Additionally, most employers possess a limited knowledge of resources that can help visually impaired people, often showing ignorance toward aspects surrounding their capacities and security at work (Duquette & Baril, 2013). In fact, as the study by McDonnall and colleagues (2014) revealed that the majority of employers proved unable to identify the severity of the disability of their employees. This lack of knowledge concerning the reality of visually impaired people can potentially bring fear and resistance from the part of employers. However, participation at work can be otherwise facilitated if the employer receives information about visual impairment (Duquette & Baril, 2013).

#### **2.4. Visual impairment in Ethiopia**

Ethiopia launched the Vision 2020 Initiative in September 2002. The long-term aim of this important initiative is to develop a sustainable comprehensive health care system to ensure the best possible vision for all people and thereby improve their quality of life. Blindness is not only incapacitating to the individual but also can adversely affect several aspects of poverty reduction

strategies. Approximately 80% of blindness in Ethiopia was believed to be avoidable; i.e., preventable or curable (Yamane, Alemayehu, Abebe and Wondu, 2008).

It is very important to note that elderly people, women, and rural residents are at a greater risk of low vision and blindness. Although age is a biological risk factor gender and residency reflect on the social inequalities in promoting health and accessing health services. Emphasis needs to be given to minimize the gender differences.

Trachoma, both active Trachoma and Trachoma trachomatous (TT), is concentrated in some regions of the country (Amhara, Oromia and SNNPR) that also account individually and collectively for the large proportion of the country's population. These regions have large rural population and environmental and hygienic conditions that favor trachoma transmission. The above facts clearly indicate eye problems in Ethiopia are among the major public health problems of the country and pose huge economic and social impact for affected individuals and to the society and the nation at large (Yemane, Alemayehu and Abebe, 2006).

In our country visual impairment is not new word for the majority of the society because there are many people with visual impairment. Ethiopia is believed to have one of the world's highest rates of blindness and low vision. However recent data were lacking to accurately determine the magnitude of eye problems in the country. The Federal Ministry of Health along with several non-governmental organizations are working in various parts of the country on blindness prevention and control programs focusing mainly on cataract surgery and trachoma control through the SAFE Strategy (surgery, antibiotics, facial cleanliness and environmental improvement). Planning and tracking the progress of these programs were difficult due to lack of appropriate information on the magnitude of the problems. In order to direct national priorities

for blindness control programs and to have a baseline data for program monitoring and evaluation it was imperative to conduct a national survey on blindness, low vision and their causes (Yemane, Alemayehu and Abebe, 2006).

Based on the current estimated population size of Ethiopia, which is 75 million, overall, there are 1.2 million blind people, 2.8 million people with low vision, 9 million children 1-9 year of age with active trachoma, and 1.3 million adults with Trachoma trachomatous trichiasis. Over all about one million people are blind from avoidable causes. Cataract alone account for over 600, 000 blind individuals, and for over 1.1 million people with low vision. Eye care is a major health issue throughout developing countries where 90 percent blindness is reported. Ethiopia has the reputation of having the highest rate of blindness and impaired vision, and unfortunately, 80 percent of it is believed to be preventable or curable.

The majority of eye disease is found in rural areas where climate, poor ventilation, overcrowding and close proximity to livestock are contributing factors. Women are most affected either due to their work in smoky, wood-burning kitchens or because they have less access to eye care than men, due to their place in society. Illiteracy prevents ability to read instructional materials and slows down education about eye care. Lack of adequate clean water and sanitation also contribute to diseases as does lack of income, a situation exacerbated when the blind person in the family cannot work. Caring for dependent family members can also keep people from full-time employment, again making access to care almost economically impossible. The expense of travel to larger cities where the majority of doctor's work can also prevent needed care (Joyce, 2016). In Ethiopia there are common causes for visual impairments. some of them are the following;

**1. Cataract:** The incidence of this condition is the same as in other parts of Africa. Most cataracts are related to aging. Cataracts are very common in older people. By age 80, more than half of all Americans have either a cataract or have had cataract surgery. A cataract can occur in either or both eyes. It cannot spread from one eye to the other. Developing cataracts is a normal part of growing older. Most people start to develop cataracts after the age of 65, but some people in their forties and fifties can also develop cataracts. Certain things make it more likely that you will develop cataracts:

A. **Diabetes** – people who have diabetes often develop cataracts earlier.

B. **Trauma** – having an eye injury can cause the injured eye to develop a cataract.

C. **Medications** – some prescription drugs can cause cataracts, for example steroids.

D. **Eye surgery** – surgery for a retinal problem will likely lead to cataracts in the affected eye at some point in the future.

E. **Other Eye conditions**, such as retinitis pigmentosa, glaucoma or uveitis, may also cause cataracts.

F. **Having high myopia** (being very short sighted) may cause cataracts.

**2. Trachoma:** Recurrent infections by the organism which is spread by flies moving from person to person feeding from eye and nose secretions eventually cause scarring of the lids. The lids turn inwards and the eyelashes rub the front of the eye cause painful scarring. Management includes access to water for face washing, use of a cheap antibiotic eye ointment locally, donated oral antibiotic tablets and surgery when the eyelids turn in.

**3. Childhood Blindness:** At certain times children are tipped over into frank Vitamin A deficiency. This causes a very rapid onset of eye signs leading to melting of the front surface of the eye. Treatment depends on spotting the eye signs early (or the night blindness) and giving

Vitamin A capsules which are very cheap. This problem can be easily corrected if it is identified at right time for the treatment and the child is not going to be visually impaired.

**4. Refractive errors:** Uncorrected refractive errors are the main cause of low vision and the second cause of blindness. Although refractive errors (myopia, hyperopia and astigmatism) can be easily diagnosed and corrected with spectacles or other refractive corrections to attain normal vision, they affect the whole spectrum of the population irrespective of age, gender, and ethnic group. Uncorrected refractive errors have severe consequences for the individual, family and society. Myopia in particular, can have an impending negative impact on career choice, ocular health, and sometimes self-esteem. School-aged children constitute a special vulnerable group, where uncorrected refractive error may have a remarkable impact on learning capability and educational potential, as well as economic cost to the family and government (Nebiyat, Alemayehu and Tigist, 2015).

“The impact of blindness due to refractive errors is considered in terms of blind-person-years, a person becoming blind due to refractive error at a young age and which is not corrected, would suffer many more years of blindness than a person becoming blind from cataracts in old age and would place a greater socio-economic burden on society. Uncorrected refractive error is easily correctable by a pair of inexpensive spherical or/and cylindrical spectacles. The most accessible and acceptable way to correct visual disorder in children is to embed vision-testing programs in the schools to identify cases and to provide spectacles free-of-charge or at low cost (Zelalem and Abdirahman, 2013).

## **2.5. Psycho-Social Problems**

### **2.5.1. Psychosocial implication of visual impairment and low vision**

Individuals who are blind or have low-vision must face the constant challenge of psychologically and socially adjusting to their disability. The age of onset blindness or impairment can have a significant effect on the affective development of individuals (Rosa, 1993 cited in Schinazi, 2007). Impaired vision significantly reduces activities associated with participation in society and religion, mobility, recreational and daily living etc. Vision loss in later life contributes to limitations on physical activity, reduces independent mobility, causes vision impairment and falls, imbalance, entails risks of hip fracture, mortality and underlines the need for community and/or family support.

People with blindness may suffer from repudiation, umbrage, inferiority complex, anxiety, depression and similar psychological problems because of their incapacity in comparison to healthy people or due to the feeling of low self-esteem (Ishtiaq, Chaudhary, Rana, and Jamil 2016). Visually impaired adults are concerned with securing and maintaining employment, productivity, and independence, as well as maintaining a home and fulfilling family and social obligations. Older adults who have new visual impairment face a significant challenge at a time when they may also be experiencing other major life changes, such as general health limitations or loss of a spouse. Loss of independence and the ability to enjoy leisure activities are predominant concerns of the older adult with a visual impairment.

Wolffe & Candela, (2002) confirmed that “Unemployment is a serious problem for adults with visual impairment, with 69% of the blind and 56% of working age adults with low vision unemployed. Reasonable job accommodations support the employment of individuals with

visual impairment. Such accommodations may include modification of equipment and materials, task restructuring, providing drivers or readers, and creating accessible work environments” (Wolffe & Candela, 2002).

## **2.6. The legal and Policy Frameworks**

Any country must ensure and promote the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all persons with disabilities without discrimination of any kind on the basis of disability. To this end, States Parties undertake:

- To adopt all appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognized in the present Convention;
- To take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to modify or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices that constitute discrimination against persons with disabilities;
- To take into account the protection and promotion of the human rights of persons with disabilities in all policies and programs.

### **2.6.1. International legislations**

#### **2.6.1.1. The universal declaration of human rights (1948)**

The universal declaration of human rights states that everyone has the right of equal access to public services in general and education in particular. It also establishes the principle of free basic compulsory education for citizens to support the full development of human personality, and to strengthen respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

#### **Article 26 of universal declaration of human right**

Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional

education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

#### **2.6.1.2. The declaration on the rights of Person with disability (1975)**

It calls for international and national actions to ensure the rights of the disabled to all services, enable them to develop their capabilities and skills to the maximum possible, and hasten the process of their social integration.

The declaration states that all persons with disabilities have an inherent right to respect for their human dignity. Persons with disabilities, whatever the origin, nature and seriousness of their impairments and disabilities have the same fundamental rights as their fellow-citizens of the right to enjoy a decent life as normal and full possible.

#### **2.6.1.3. Disability Discrimination Act**

The act has been amended several times since being passed. It now provides protection from discrimination in relation to employment and occupation (including being a counselor); trade organizations and qualifications bodies; education; the provision of goods facilities and services; premises (both residential and commercial); and private clubs. From December 2006 all the functions of public bodies (such as arresting someone) will be covered, as well as the provision and use of certain transport vehicles.

Changes will be made to enlarge the scope of the counselor provisions, those relating to housing, private clubs, and qualifications bodies. The act will also impose a duty to promote disability equality on public authorities, including NHS trusts. At the heart of the act lies the duty to make what are known as reasonable adjustments. This means that those covered by the act. Also, employers, educators, service providers, e t c ... must make reasonable adjustment to barriers which hinder disabled people in their access to employment, education, service provision, etc.



#### **2.6.1.4. The standard rules on the equalization of opportunities (1993)**

It recognizes the principle of equal primary, secondary and tertiary education; opportunities for children, young people and adults with special needs in an integrate setting; the education of persons with special needs as an integral part of the education system. It establishes appropriate, adequate and accessible support services accommodate educational provisions for persons with special needs in an inclusive setting.

Integrated education and community-based programs should be seen as complementary approaches in providing cost-effective education and training for persons with disabilities. National community-based programs should encourage communities to use and develop their resources to provide local education to persons with disabilities. In situations where the general school system does not yet adequately meet the needs of all persons with disabilities, special education may be considered. It should be aimed at preparing students for education in the general school system.

#### **2.6.1.5. The World Education Forum Dakar (2000)**

It is about making the right to education a reality as it is enshrined in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is the extension of the education for all movement and aimed at turning the vision of education for all into a reality; meet basic learning needs for all, including those children and young people with special needs. Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people including children with disabilities and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skill programs.

#### **2.6.1.6. The UN convention on the rights of persons with disabilities**

States parties shall take all necessary measures to ensure that full enjoyment by children with disability of all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with other children, in all actions concerning children with disabilities, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration. Also, the convention States parties shall ensure that children with disabilities have the right to express their views freely in all matters affecting them, their views being given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity, on an equal basis with other children, and to be provided with disability and age-appropriate to realize that right.

### **2.7. National legal Documents**

Through the world there are many agreements and declarations to create best grade score achievable children. As much as possible, all children must put in least restrictive place of education in order to join helpful educational experience. (MOE, 1992) The following international and national declarations and conventions took from ministry of education special needs education strategy.

Article 41(5) of the 1995 Constitution sets out that the states responsibility for the provision of necessary rehabilitation and support services to „the physically and mentally disabled“. The wording of the article is outdated and reflects a narrow, medical understanding of disability. However, under **Article 9(4) and Article 13(2) of the Constitution**, all international agreements ratified by the Ethiopian government automatically become part of the law of the land. The state is therefore obliged to ensure the rights of persons with disabilities as prescribed in the CRPD.

The Proclamation 568/2008 Concerning the Rights of Disabled Persons to Employment, which aims to protect and promote the rights of persons with disabilities to appropriate training, employment opportunities and salaries, and to prevent workplace discrimination.

**The Developmental Social Welfare Policy of 1997**, which makes reference to the inclusion, participation and independence of persons with disabilities, including children. Implementation strategies include creating accessible physical environments, promoting positive attitudes towards disability, and assisting NGOs working on the issue.

The Ethiopian Building Proclamation of 2009 makes it mandatory for public buildings to be physically accessible for persons with disabilities.

**The National Plan of Action for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities 2012 – 2021** is an ambitious policy framework that aims to mainstream disability issues in all fields of society. It makes provision for comprehensive rehabilitation services, equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in education, skills training and work, as well as full participation in the lives of their families, communities and the nation.

**Ethiopia's Growth and Transformation Plan (2010-2015)** identifies disability as a crosscutting development issue. This is the third, 5-year term Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper formulated by Ethiopia since 2000, and it is the first to expressly address disability. It focuses on education and training, rehabilitation and equal access to services and opportunities for persons with disabilities, as well as strategies to prevent disability. In spite of the policy advances above, formal commitment has not yet sufficiently manifested in action (Yibeltal 2013). There are still legislative and policy gaps. For example, Ethiopia has not signed the Optional Protocol to the CRPD, which would allow persons with disabilities whose rights have been violated to bring individual complaints to the Committee on the Rights of People with Disabilities. Several

domestic laws still have to be harmonized with the CRPD, as required by article 4 of the treaty. In addition, monitoring of disability policy implementation, especially in rural areas, remains weak. In recent years, some restrictive policies and legal frameworks that impede activities of disabled peoples' organizations (DPOs) and other civil society organizations in Ethiopia have been adopted. The Charities and Societies Proclamation of 2009 requires all non-governmental organizations working on rights-based advocacy to generate 90% their operational funding only from local sources and not from international collaborations of any sort.

**Ethiopia's Growth and Transformation Plan (2015 -2020) in Social Welfare and Labor Affairs** issues indicates that with regard to Social welfare, the major strategic directions pursued were creating opportunities for the disabled, the elderly and vulnerable population groups to participate and equitably benefit from the political, economic and social activities of the country and to increase citizen's social security service coverage. Thus, to ensure the benefits for persons with disabilities from physical rehabilitation services, three new physical rehabilitation centers were established. Similarly, seven existing centers were equipped and strengthened with equipment and raw materials where all of them have been providing services. Regarding establishment of a system for the effectiveness of the sector's activity, service delivery standards for physical rehabilitation and for the elderly, and guideline for National Coordinating Committee for the convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities were prepared and implemented accordingly. In addition, Social Protection Policy was prepared and ratified by the government and the National action plan for elderly persons was revised.

Social security services which used to be provided only for government organization employees is now being provided for private organization employees as well. It was planned to provide social welfare services to 1,530,606 citizens. Accordingly, the service was provided to 1,632,607

citizens. Although significant efforts have been made to accomplish the objectives of the plan, the services have not been adequate to ensure the benefit for persons with disabilities and coverage and accessibility of social security for citizens. Thus, all stakeholders should work hard to bring long lasting solutions. It is well known that a healthy and stable employee and employer relationship is vital to ensure industrial peace and in turn for industrial development expansion and realization of structural transformation. Thus, strengthening institutional capacity ahead of time is fundamental. In line with this, a number of activities were undertaken during the plan period.

#### **2.7.1. Ethiopian labor proclamation**

In this proclamation the Ethiopia approved labor right special for people with disability in general which has protection for their employment and also when they are on work. It allows them to have employment right.

#### **Article 29. Reduction of Workforce**

1/ In this Proclamation “reduction of workforce” means termination of workforce of an undertaking for any of the reasons provided for by Article 28 (3) of this Proclamation workers representing at least ten percent of the number of workers employed or, in the case where the number of workers employed in an undertaking is between twenty and fifty, termination of at least five employees over a continuous period of not less than ten days.

2/ The expression “number of workers” referred to in Sub-Article (1) of this Article means the average number of the workers employed by an employer concerned within the twelve months preceding the date when the employer took measures of reduction of workers.

3/ whenever a reduction of workforce takes place in accordance with Article 28 (3) of this Proclamation, the employer shall conduct consultation with a Trade Union or workers’ representatives in order to retain workers having skills and higher rate of productivity in their posts. In case of comparable skill and rate of productivity, the workers to be affected first by the reduction shall be in the following order:

- a) Those having the shortest length of service in the Undertaking;
- b) Those having fewer dependents;
- c) The reduction shall affect first workers except those that are listed under
- d) Up to (e) of this Sub-Article;
- e) Those employees with disability;
- f) Those who sustained employment injury in the Undertaking;
- g) Workers’ representatives; and
- h) Expectant mothers and mothers within four months post-natal.

That legislation was focused on the right of people with disabilities on education and job. As they explained people with disabilities have the right to get education, employment opportunities, and workplace accessibilities in different ways based on their special needs in general. People with visual impairment will be suffered on education and workplaces because the stakeholders and some institutions don’t allow them to know their rights.

The government of Ethiopia has taken a number of legislative and policy steps that indicate commitment to advancing the rights of persons with disabilities. In terms of international instruments, these steps include:

Signing and ratifying (in 2010) the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)**, the first international, legally binding treaty aimed at protecting the human rights of persons with disabilities.

Signed and ratified other treaties that advance the rights of people, including those with disabilities, for example the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the Beijing Platform for Action all of which make some reference to protecting the rights of persons with disabilities to fair treatment, appropriate care, inclusion and full participation in society. The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights has drafted a Protocol on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It was released for comment in April 2014 and once finalized, is likely to become part of Ethiopia's policy framework for advancing disability rights. Other important upcoming tools in 2014 are the CRPD Toolkit for Africa and the Accountability Framework for Africa which is part of the Common African position for Post 2015 Development. In terms of national laws and policies, the following have the most direct bearing on the rights of persons with disabilities:

**Article 4** - A National Plan of Action on Human Rights (2013–2015) has been issued by the Ethiopian Council of Ministers and House of Peoples' Representatives in order to promote the full realization of all human rights in the country, persons with disabilities included. In addition to the political, social environmental and developmental rights, the National Plan of Action has devoted one chapter/thematic area regarding the rights of vulnerable sectors of the population such as women, children, persons with disabilities and people affected by HIV/AIDS. A national steering committee composed of high government officials and chaired by the Minister of Justice

has been established. The steering committee is currently exhibiting its fullest engagement in implementing the plan at federal and regional level.

**Article 5** - The employment right law also provides for reasonable accommodation to ensure equality right in employment. On the basis of this law, a number of employees with visual impediment, especially those who are in the public sector have got readers and assistants at office. The Government pays salary for the clerks and secretaries supporting the employees with visual impairment. In certain cases, transport services are provided. The Ministry of Science and Information has for instance assigned a vehicle for three people with visual impairment and two persons with physical disabilities staff to transport them from and to office. The Government has also employed a sign language interpreter for people with hard of hearing official at the central statistics authorities. An assistant has been assigned and employed for an honorable member of the House of Peoples’ Representatives to facilitate his public responsibility on equal basis with other members. Despite the low number of beneficiaries of such service, the practice may serve as one positive experience to be learned and followed by other institutions. In certain cases, persons with disabilities enjoy special benefits secured by law. In a recently issued of Addis Ababa city administration directive on the prohibition of leasing government houses for commercial purposes, it was specially provided that persons with disabilities who may have rented the government house for some commercial purpose will not lose the benefit and maintain the house and use it as a means of income.

### **2.8. Workplace Accommodations/ Rehabilitation of employees with Visual Impairment**

Diminished of participation in the workforce among visually impaired individuals may have resulted from unawareness of assisted technology and the lack of workplace accommodations. Information about how accommodations and assistive devices have been or have not been used



for visually impaired employees will help describe how information about these devices do or do not support the participation in the work force of visually impaired employees and would be presented next. Individuals with vision impairment can increase their ability to perform specific tasks with accommodation, adaptive equipment, and assistive technology devices (Gamble, Dowler, & Hirsh, 2004).

Rehabilitation professionals can also work with employers to develop strategies for accommodating workers with visual impairments, help them understand and meet their legal obligations and resolve disability related issues (Rumrill & Scheff, 1997). Nevertheless, some people who are visually impaired do not use assistive devices appropriately and do not accept them gracefully. Williams, Sabata, and Zolna (2006) sought to understand types of accommodations that are frequently used by visually impaired workers across various age groups.

The functional ability of an individual with Visual Impairment is not determined solely by the magnitude of vision loss. In addition to the physiology of the eye, other physical, psychological and social factors also influence daily living. Individuals with Visual Impairment experience more symptoms of depression than those without Visual Impairment. The combination of social, functional and psychological disabilities related to Visual Impairment result in an overall reduction in quality of life. Similarly, their impairment can have effect on their job performance if not properly accommodate. As a result, rehabilitation of an individual with Visual Impairment requires a holistic approach that considers social, economic and psychological needs in addition to their visual needs. The rehabilitation of employees with Visual Impairment aims to increase their functionality and independence, aid in their job performance and improve their social interaction. It has been reported that proper management of individuals with Visual Impairment

can provide the same quality of life as that of normally sighted individuals. Rehabilitation services should be made available, accessible and affordable. Early intervention provides effective visual rehabilitation and is vital in reducing the incidence and impact of Visual Impairment.

Accommodations will vary depending on the needs of the individual, but the ones listed below are examples of adjustments or modifications that are often requested by employees who are visually impaired:

1. **Modification of an employment test.** When applying for jobs, a potential applicant who is blind or visually impaired should be able to request that elements of the application process that require sight be modified or made.
2. **Assistive technology.** Assistive technology is one of the most important accommodations for employees who are blind or visually impaired, allowing them to access computers and other systems in the workplace with ease. Popular examples of assistive technology include scanners, magnifiers, and digital recorders, screen reading software, refreshable braille displays and braille embossers.
3. **Accessible website.** Employee portals, message boards and other sites should be accessible to workers without vision. If you cannot access a website or online system that your job requires you to use, you should be able to request that it be made accessible.
4. **Guide dogs.** Even in offices with no-pet policies, employees who use guide dogs should be able to request an exception to allow them to bring their dog to work.
5. **Modified training.** If your workplace is rolling out a new system or upgrading its computer programs, an all-staff training session may not cover keyboard commands or other details specific to assistive technology users. As an employee who is blind or

visually impaired, you should be able to request individualized instruction to allow you to learn these systems properly.

6. **Written materials.** As an employee with a visual impairment, you should feel comfortable requesting that all written materials required for your job be available to you in your preferred accessible format whether that's braille, large print or audio.
7. **Flexible schedule.** Public transportation or other transit services often dictate commuting schedules for people who are blind or visually impaired. Employees should be able to request modified work schedules allowing them to work the requisite number of hours by staying late or coming in early without facing discipline for tardiness caused by transportation.
8. **Work from home option.** As long as it doesn't interfere with productivity, employees who are blind or visually impaired should be able to request a work from home arrangement when their disability makes it difficult for them to travel to the office (e.g., in inclement weather).
9. **Time off.** From time to time, employees who are blind or visually impaired may need to take extended time off either for medical treatment or programs related to their disability (e.g., guide dog training). Even if you don't have enough paid leave accrued, you should be able to request unpaid time off for these events.
10. **Transportation costs.** If transportation is required for you to perform the essential functions of your job, you should be able to ask for a driver or reimbursement for the cost of transportation.

## **Summary of Literature Review**

Visual impairment (VI) is a condition of reduced visual performance that cannot be remedied by refractive correction (spectacles or contact lenses), surgery or medical methods. There are a number of major barriers to paid employment for people with a variety of significant disabilities. These barriers are structural, institutional, societal and individual systemic and attitudinal barriers are identified as being major negative factors to the employment of people with vision impairments. They can be also classified as personal and environmental barriers.

Rehabilitation professionals can also work with employers to develop strategies for accommodating workers with visual impairments, help them understand and meet their legal obligations and resolve disability related issues (Rumrill & Scheff, 1997). Nevertheless, some people who are visually impaired do not use assistive devices appropriately and do not accept them gracefully. The combination of social, functional and psychological disabilities related to Visual Impairment result in an overall reduction in quality of life. Similarly, their impairment can have effect on their job performance if not properly accommodate. As a result, rehabilitation of an individual with Visual Impairment requires a holistic approach that considers social, economic and psychological needs in addition to their visual needs.

Even if accommodations will vary depending on the needs of the individual, adjustments or modifications that are often requested by employees who are visually impaired are: modification of an employment test, assistive technology, accessible website, guide dogs, modified training, written materials, flexible schedule, and work from home option, transportation costs, time off for some events.

## CHAPTER THREE

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

This chapter stated that research approach, research design, sources of data, population of the study, sample and sampling technique, data collection instruments, data collection procedure, data analysis techniques, **trustworthiness** and ethical considerations of participants.

#### 3.1. Research Approach of the study

In this study qualitative research approach was employed in order to explore the existing phenomena and situation. The study was focus on exploring the work experience of employees with visual impairment in University of Gondar.

#### 3.2. Research Design of the study

The study used phenomenological research design in order to describe lived experience of employees with visual impairments and interpret the essential subjective meaning of actions and interactions of an individual with her/his life-world and an inter subjective environment (Holloway & Galvin, 2017; Ritzer & Stepnisky, 2016). Therefore, this study was subscribed to phenomenological design in order to gain deep understanding on the lived experience of employees with visual impairment and their social interaction in the study area.

#### 3.3. Sources of Data

The study was conducted by using data from both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data was obtained through direct communication with respondents. This was done by using interview for respondents by asking individuals concerning the issue through direct

communication with employees with visual impairment, management bodies and human resource management bodies. Observation was also used to get additional information regarding the conduciveness of work environment. Secondary data source including different books, thesis results and journals which provided relevant information about the issue was used.

### **3.4. Population of the study area**

This research was conducted in University of Gondar, one of the higher education institutions in Ethiopia. It is located in Gondar city Administration, Amhara Region. There were around 70 employees with sensory disabilities in University of Gondar (UOG, 2021). Among these disabilities, 7 of the employees had visual impairment. Specifically, the target population of this study was all University of Gondar employees with visual impairment. The reason of selecting University of Gondar is that there was better employment opportunity for individuals with visual impairments in this university than other universities.

### **3.5. Sample and Sampling Technique**

The researcher was used non-probable comprehensive sampling techniques. Furthermore, being a qualitative study in nature, the study aims at giving an in-depth and detailed insight on a small sample selected purposefully (Gall & Borg, 2003). This study employed comprehensive sampling technique. Comprehensive Sampling is a complete treatment of the theory and methodology of sampling in all physical phases and the theory of sample preparation for all major extraction techniques. The reason behind this sampling is that it aims at selecting all concerning participants that were helpful to the researcher in understanding the problem and the research question at hand (Creswell, 2014). The cases were selected on grounds that were typical (Gall et al. 2003, they were VI and those were engaged in formal gainful employment after University of Gondar they were guaranteed a salary. In addition, concerned bodies that had

relations with employment and management of employees with visual impairment were involved as key informant. The selection criterion was based on position for managers and experts. Accordingly, the sample would include employees with visual impairment, human resource experts and their respective concerned managers. Therefore, 7 visually impaired employees and 3 concerned employees (managers and employees) were selected through comprehensive sampling technique, because the researcher expected these bodies might have given brief information about the issue being studied.

### **3.6. Data collection instruments**

Qualitative research method was employed in order to generate qualitative data through qualitative approach. The data gathering tools were interview and observation.

#### **3.6.1. Interview**

For the purpose of this study the researcher utilized semi-structured interviews by making face to face contact with interviewee as it uses to do an intensive exploration (Kothari, 2004). The goal of the interview technique was to capture the voices of different respondents or groups and the interviewer could observe by making face to face contact. This was so because some facts might remain being hidden as a result of cultural taboos, the shy nature of participant individuals and other reasons. For this purpose, the researcher was prepared an interview schedule to get sufficient information regarding the work environment experiences for employees with visual impairment.

#### **3.6.2. Systematic Observation**

Beside the above data collection instrument, systematic observation was employed during practical activity in the work environment. It took place while the employees with visual impairment had accesses in the work activity. By using this tool, the researcher could collect

original information. Observation offered an investigator the opportunity to gather live data from naturally occurring social situations. In this way, the researcher could look directly at what was taking place in situation rather than relying on second-hand accounts. (Choen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). An observation check list was prepared by the researcher. The researcher observed those participants for 5 days on selected areas. While conducting the observation he was supported by research assistant. The assistant guided him during every stages of the observation.

### **3.7. Data Collection Procedure**

The interview guide questions and observation check list were prepared in English. After this, the sample selection was done. Then the researcher was med contact with the sampled employees in order to get the necessary cooperation and support. The respondents were given relevant instructions verbally and assured of confidentiality before being den interview. After getting their willingness, orientations were given to the participants on how to respond to the interview. Likewise, the researcher observed the conduciveness of the work environment for employees with visual impairment and collect the data based on the cheek list. Then after, the data collection was conducted. Finally, the collected data was arranged and prepared to the next stage (data filtering and coding)

### **3.8. Data analysis Techniques**

The study was used thematic analysis techniques in order to elaborate data that was collected by interview and observation. Creswell (2013) states that beyond identifying the themes during the coding process, qualitative researchers could do much with themes to build additional layers of complex analysis. Themes are analyzed for each individual case and across different cases (as in



case studies) or shaped into a general description (as in phenomenology). The researcher was generating codes for a description of the setting or participants as well as categories/themes for data analysis. Then, the descriptions were transcribed into meaningful units to generate a small number, perhaps five to seven, of themes or categories (Creswell, 2013).

This study was predetermining themes and would analyze and explore the data consecutively through predetermined order. The researcher was taken interview questions and observation checklists a predetermine purpose of themes.

### **3.9. Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness refers to the degree of confidence in data, interpretation, and methods used to ensure the quality of a study (Pilot & Beck, 2014). There are strategies to increase credibility even the best-known strategy to increase credibility is triangulation (Creswell, 2014). For this purpose, confirmation triangulation was employed for this study. Confirmation is the use of two or more data collection instruments and techniques to overcome the bias of using a single-method, single-observer, or single theory approach (Begley, 1996; Shih). This increases the credibility and validity of the findings owing to the convergence and corroboration of data (Connelly, Bott, Hoffart, & Taunton, 1997). For instance, the researcher was collected data by using interviews and observation with two sources of research participants. Then these collected data were triangulated in each theme these are grouped in similar character.

### **3.10. Ethical Considerations**

To carry out this study the entire necessary requirement for data collection process was done. First, the researcher received formal letter in Bahir Dar University from the Department of Special needs and inclusive education, and then it was given to the University Of Gondar. After the researcher got permission, the researcher introduced the purpose of the study; the respondents

were be clearly informed. There was not be any informed of harm and coercion. In addition to this, they were to be informed about their right to withdraw from the study at any time. The researcher was used a digital audio recorder during the interview based on the respondent's consent. Respondents' responses were be kept confidentially and there was not be any obligation to make participants stay in the study. The researcher was be promised to the participants of the study that the information which was collected from the respondents should not be transfer to third party or it would not be exploited for undertaking other than the purpose of the research study.

Besides this, the process of data collection was done anonymously without writing their name, identification number, telephone number, so that the threat of being disclosed was very much minimized. In addition, factious name/false name were given to respondents to keep their confidentiality.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **4. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter mainly focuses on the data interpretation and analysis of findings based on the data obtained from the respondents using interview and observation. The purpose of this study, as it is shown in chapter one, was to explore the work experience of employees with visual impairment in University of Gondar. The main findings cover the following areas which are in line with the findings from literature review and research questions of this study: employees with visual impairment experience in their work at University of Gondar, the work environments conduciveness for employees who have visual impairment and challenges that employees with Visual Impairment experience at University of Gondar. The findings from the interviews are demonstrated following the above-mentioned themes. Discussions of the findings are made after presenting all findings from the data.

#### **4.1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

The following table indicates Profile of the informants/respondents with respect to their sex, age marital status, qualification, occupation and work experience.

**Table 4.1 Profile of the informants/respondents**

No	Respondents Fictions Name	Sex	Age	Marital Status	Onset of impairment	Academic Qualification	Occupation	Work Experience
1.	R1	M	34	Married	After birth/Disease	BA Degree	G/Assistance	3 years
2.	R2	M	52	Widowed	After birth /disease	MA Degree	Lecturer	9 years
3.	R3	M	34	Married	Before birth	MA Degree	Lecturer	5 years
4.	R4	M	48	Married	After birth/Disease	MA Degree	Lawyer	13 years
5.	R5	M	30	Single	After birth /drug	MA Degree	Lecturer	4 years
6.	R6	M	33	Married	After birth/Disease	MA Degree	Lecturer	5 years
7.	R7	M	26	Married	After birth/Disease	BA Degree	G/Assistance	2 years

*Source: Own analysis from interview data (2021)*

As indicated in table 4.1, interview data was collected from 7(seven) employees with visual impairments and 3 (three) human resource management experts. Accordingly, all respondents were males and respondents were lie under the age range of 26-52. In addition, most of the respondents (5) are Master's Degree holders and the rest 2 were bachelor degree holders. Regarding their marital status, 5 (five) respondents are married, 1(one) respondent is single and also the rest 1(one) respondent is widowed. In their occupation, 4(four) of the respondents were lecturers, 2(two) respondent was graduate assistance. With regard to occupation, six employees were reported as academic staff and the rest one was administrative staff.

As indicated in table 4.1, six respondents confirmed that they were aware of the cause of their impairment and reported that they lost their vision after birth. The rest one respondent explained that his impairment was natural and its cause was not known. Accordingly, the cause of their visual impairment was found pandemic disease, glaucoma, excess use of drug, fluid in the brain,

retina problem, scar in the brain and accident were the ground reasons of their vision problem. As stated above, as one of leading causes of visual impairment of the interviewees, infectious diseases (like Trachoma) caused the loss of vision of the respondent at their late age as described hereunder. In the course of the interview, R1 explained that:

I lost my sight while I was seven years old. During a time, pandemic disease was surrounding our locality and I was one of the victims of the disease. My parents brought me to a health center and I got treatment in the health center. After I got medical treatment, all my body parts were distended, similarly to my eyes. My vision was lost after a while. Unfortunately, the ophthalmologists couldn't restore my sight regardless of concerted effort they made to retain my sight. I perceived that the drug I used during a time causes impairment on my eyes. (R1)

Respondent R3, who was naturally blind and couldn't know the cause of the problem, reported that:

I had born blind naturally. As my parents told me, I had no vision while born. They tried to know the cause of the impairment and also attempted to restore my sight. However, the cause of the problem couldn't know and my sight also couldn't restore. (R3)

**Table 4.1 Profile of the concerned university officials**

No	Respondents Factions Name	Sex	Age	Marital Status	Academic Qualification	Occupation	Work Experience
1.	E1	F	34	Married	BA Degree	Junior Human resource expert	7 years
2.	E2	M	50	married	MA Degree	Senior Human resource expert	10 years
3.	E3	M	38	Married	PhD candidate	Disable employees with disabilities representative	10 years

*Source: Own analysis from interview data (2021)*

Regarding the personal profile of the concerned university officials in the employment and management of employees with visual impairments, two of the respondents were males and the rest one was a female. Regarding their age, they exist within the range of 34-50. In addition, one

respondent was PhD candidate, one other master and the rest one Bachelor Degree holder. Regarding their occupation, two of the respondents were human resource management officials and the rest one was a representative of employees with disabilities.

#### **4.2. Employees with Visual Impairment Experience in their work Place**

This section presents the Work-related experience, Practices and Psychosocial activities that employees with visual impairments are experiencing in University of Gondar. This is understood from employees with visual impairments point of view and concerned university officials' point of view. Hence, the findings are demonstrated as follows:

##### **4.2.1. Work and related experience**

Regarding the work-related experiences of employees with visual impairments in University of Gondar, all respondents were asked about their reaction to the work situations as a visual impaired employee. Regardless of their different answer to the question, all respondents did not hesitate to explain their true feeling that they were somewhat feeling frustrated and feared when they first joined the university. However, they explained that they feel satisfied with their occupation in the university and perform tasks effectively and efficiently. Accordingly, five interviewees showed better experiences in their work and feel satisfied. One of these respondents reported his experience as follows:

I found this university better in the employment of individuals with visual impairments. There is no discrimination while employing. Similarly, there are opportunities that you provide talents in the accomplishment of the given tasks. As academic staff, the roles are clearly known and I tried to accomplish my roles properly. The concerned officials recognize me while accomplishing tasks effectively. Such conditions made me patient in my behavior in everyday experience. As a result, I feel satisfied in the working conditions of University of Gondar. (R1)

The other interviewee, respondent 2 also briefly described his experience on his feelings of his job satisfaction as follows:

I am very satisfied with my job in the university. I have a variety of supportive instruments that support and guide me to accomplish activities. Therefore, I know what, how and when to accomplish tasks. Likewise, I have good relationships at work with the co-workers and collaborate when required. My behavior is too patient. As a result, I had cheerful work experience in University of Gondar. (R2)

On the other hand, two interviewees reported that they faced many challenges while working in the university and found not happy in the working condition in the university. Respondent four (R4) described his experience on his feelings of his job as follows:

Even if I love my profession and job, there exist many challenges that made me unsatisfied in the work condition. Since I am employee with visual impairment, I need support almost everywhere. The level of willingness to support me is different from individual to individual. One may will and the other may unwilling to support and soon.as visual impaired individual, I am vulnerable for many problems unless people near to me support me. In addition, there is systematic discrimination against employees with visual impairment in the university officials. For instance, there was unequal peridium payment for equal work. Likewise, there are many problems that challenge me to accomplish my tasks properly. As a result, I am not satisfied with the work condition at University of Gondar.

When they assess their situation or feeling to job satisfaction, two entirely different perceptions were observed; satisfied and unsatisfied. This implies the job satisfactions of employees with visual impairments depend on the level of support they got from coworkers and the concerned officials. Accordingly, it is possible to conclude that respondents were highly committed to their profession and were professionally satisfied.

#### **4.2.2. Psychosocial Activities**

In this area, all respondents were asked about their respective opinion about the impact of their vision problem on their psychosocial activities of the work situation in terms of support, awareness, discrimination and sharing of experience from others. In their response all

respondents unanimously confirmed that their vision impairment had its own adverse effect on their psychosocial condition in the workplace. They further reported that most of the community in the university afraid of them instead of providing support, which is the result of awareness problem.

With regard to their social interaction and interpersonal relationship, most participants (6) affirmed that they could not continue their healthy and reciprocal social contacts with others due to the existing negative attitude of people towards visual impairment in particular and disability in general.

They further explained the situation that most of them had faced systematic rejection and sometimes open discrimination to participate in community- service activities. Some of them also reported that they isolated themselves from the participation of the services of these community-based services being frustrated by the adverse effect of their vision problem and the negative attitude of people to disability. The remaining two interviewees, however, argued that they have never experienced difficulty in their social and interpersonal interaction with their counterparts due to their vision problem.

Respondent 4 briefly elaborated how he experienced such social stigma and the challenges related to psychosocial activities of the work situation as follows:

I understand that most of people with visual impairment face almost the same problem. I faced many challenges while communicating with the university community. Most people in the university consider disability as inability and undermine us. To talk frankly, the university hadn't problem regarding providing employment opportunity. Despite, there is wide spread awareness problem. Even the concerned officials of the university haven't enough understanding about disability and didn't provide enough support for us. (R4)

Similar to the above idea, other respondents (R1, R3, and R6) confirmed that there are many challenges on psychosocial relationships between employees with visual impairments and their



counterparts. Regarding this R1 explained that vision loss has an impact on ongoing friendship and intimacy of friends. Similarly, R6 explained the psychosocial work condition of the university for employees with visual impairments as unpleasant.

On the contrary, R2 and R7 confirmed that there is no that much challenge in psychosocial condition regarding employees with visual impairments in University of Gondar. Respondent 7 explained this as follows:

Starting from the date of employment, I got special support and relationships in the university. I have best friends where our relationship stretched up to family level. The university community had been given priority for me in some services, for instance in taxi service. I also share my experiences with my visual friends at the work place. Therefore, the psychosocial relationship of me as an employee with visual impairments is good.

Generally, the respondent's respective opinion about the impact of their vision problem on their psychosocial activities of the work situation in terms of support, awareness, discrimination and sharing of experience from others indicates there is gap in the psychosocial relationships.

#### **4.3. Experiences Related With Adaptation and Provision of Resources**

In this part, respondents were asked about the provision of adaptive equipment like latest technology, lap top, braille type and jaws training. They also asked about the conduciveness of the physical environment for those employees. In this regard, all employees perceive their work environment as conducive. The assistive materials are also in shortage. Regarding this, R4 respond as follows:

It is obvious that assistive materials are required for disabled employees in general and employees with visual impairments in particular. For me, some assistive materials like computer and walking guide (ken) were provided. However, there are many assistive materials that are in shortage but needed for effectively accomplishing tasks. Regarding the conduciveness of the surrounding environment, it is not safe for me. The university's buildings lack ramps and lifts. There is also no access to toilets. (R4)

In addition, respondent five also explained the challenges as follows:

As an employee with visual impairments, I need assistive materials and technological accommodations for the better achievement of professional goals. There is absence of technological assistance like braille display (braille converter), books prepared with braille etc. and also shortage of assistive materials.

Other respondents also explained similar to the above idea and explained that there is widespread shortage of assistive instruments and similarly the surrounding environment is unsuitable for free movement.

Beyond the interview data, the availability of different adaptive Equipment and Materials and work environment conduciveness were triangulated through observation. Accordingly, with respect to assistive materials and equipment's, only computers with jaws were accessed. However, lack of access of braille printed documents, lack of electronic devices/calculator and lack of library reading corner were observed challenges.

According to the researcher's observation, the university's buildings lack ramps and lifts. The buildings were built without considering employees with disabilities in general and with visual impairments in particular. Similarly, there is no access to toilets.

Regarding the conduciveness of the environment outside the building, there are walk ways and pathways in some of the routes. This is a good attempt, but it needs further strengthening and addressing all routes.

#### **4.4. Challenges that employees with Visual Impairment experience in their work place**

Employees with visual impairments face many challenges in University of Gondar. The challenges that faced all respondents were almost similar. Therefore, all respondents agreed on such challenges: absence of braille display, lack of professional growth opportunities, lack of

Provision of new assistive technologies, low awareness creation about disability for the university community, and lack of assistance. These challenges were mentioned by all respondents as common. For instance, R5 explained these challenges as follows:

From the beginning of employment, I faced many challenges in this university. I didn't get induction training; because of this I didn't know what and when to do tasks. In addition, shortage of assistive materials, lack of on the job and off the job training and lack of assistance who guide and support in the work condition were the major challenges. These challenges impede me to accomplish tasks properly. For instance, I am always confused to decide what to do and in what way in the work situation.

Similar to employees with visual impairments response, the respective officials also confirmed the existence of the aforementioned challenges. Regarding this, official 3(E3) explained as follows:

Employees with visual impairments need special support and assistive materials in order to couple up with their counter parts and to accomplish their roles and responsibilities. To do so, University of Gondar was being strived its best. However, there are many assistive materials that are in shortage because of unavailability in local market and shortage of budget. The physical environment is also not enough conducive for such employees. Even if there are walk ways, starting from its topography, there are many conducive situations that impede the work activities of employees with visual impairments. (E3)

Generally, unsupportiveness and conduciveness of the work environment, absents of braille display, lack of professional growth opportunities, lack of Provision of new assistive technologies, low awareness creation about disability for the university community, and lack of assistance were found the major challenges of employees with visual impairments in University of Gondar.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **5. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter supposed to triangulate study findings with your reflection as a researcher and instant literatures which both support or disagree with findings. Be consistent with this inclusion under each sub-topic.

#### **5.1. Employees with Visual Impairment Experience in their work place**

Exploring the work-related experiences of employees with visual impairments in University of Gondar was the first basic question of this study. Interview results and field observation indicated that employees with visual impairments in University of Gondar were found active players in their roles and responsibilities. They tried to achieve their job objectives with motivation. This indicates they had better experiences in their work and feel satisfied. Regarding this idea, other scholars also stressed the attempts made by employees with visual impairments to success in their job. People with visual impairment who hold a job seem to generally profit from larger and more positive social support than those with no job (Cimarolli & Wang, 2006). It also seems to present a lesser prevalence of symptoms of anxiety (Cimarolli & Wang, 2006); they likewise have a better sense of self-esteem (Goertz, van Lierop, Houkes, & Nijhuis, 2010).

In this study, respondent's respective opinion about the impact of their vision problem on their psychosocial activities of the work situation in terms of support, awareness, discrimination and sharing of experience from others indicates there are many gaps in the psychosocial relationships where these employees were affected socially and psychologically as a result of their visual impairments. Similar to this finding Schinazi (2007) contended that Individuals who are blind or

have low-vision must face the constant challenge of psychologically and socially adjusting to their disability. In addition, People with visual impairments may suffer from repudiation, umbrage, inferiority complex, anxiety, depression and similar psychological problems because of their incapacity in comparison to healthy people or due to the feeling of low self-esteem (Ishtiaq, Chaudhary, Rana, and Jamil, 2016). In this regard, it is possible to conclude that with lots of challenge, employees with visual impairments strived to do their professional roles and responsibilities. However, vision problem has its impact on employee's psychosocial activities in the work situation and adversely affect the work performance of employees with visual impairments. This is resulted from negative attitude of the university community towards disability in general and visual impairments in particular. Therefore, it needs further awareness creation activities regarding visual impairments.

## **5.2. Perceived work environment conduciveness and existence of Adaptive Equipment and Materials to employees with visual impairment**

A good Physical environment is vital in supporting employee's performance and motivation. As far as it can be seen in the data, certain provision and support were provided to employees with visual impairments. However, there is several main areas call for researchers, educators, decision makers and service providers' attention which are obstacles for employees with visual impairments in the work condition. Unsupportiveness and conduciveness of the work environment, absents of braille display, lack of professional growth opportunities, lack of Provision of new assistive technologies, low awareness creation about disability for the university community, and lack of assistance were found the major challenges of employees with visual impairments in University of Gondar. In other literatures, reasonable job accommodations support the employment of individuals with visual impairment like modification of equipment and materials, task restructuring, providing drivers or readers, and creating accessible work environments are

required to make employees effective (Wolffe & Candela, 2002). This implies the university needs further adjustment in order to make the university conducive for employees with visual impairments.

### **5.3 Challenges that employees with Visual Impairment experience in their work place**

It was found that absents of braille display, lack of professional growth opportunities, lack of Provision of new assistive technologies, low awareness creation about disability for the university community, and lack of assistance were found the major challenges of employees with visual impairments in University of Gondar. Similar to this finding, La Grow (2002) specifically identified the challenges of employees with visual impairments as; discrimination, transport access difficulties, Employer ignorance and lack of access to adaptive equipment and training. In general, the finding implies the existence of many challenges that impede employees with visual impairments in their work environment. Therefore, these challenges affect these employees to do their activities effectively.

### **5.4. Work Environment and Accessibilities**

In University of Gondar, Employees with visual impairments faced many challenges due to the case of many barriers. Therefore, they need special support and assistive materials in order to coup up with their counter parts and to accomplish their roles and responsibilities. To do so, University of Gondar was being strived its best. However, there are many assistive materials that are in shortage because of unavailability in local market and shortage of budget. The physical environment is also not enough conducive for such employees. Even if there are walk ways, starting from its topography, there are many conducive situations that impede the work activities of employees with visual impairments. Similarly to this study finding, Golledge (2001); Pernice

& Lunt (1998); Smyth & Maynard Campbell (1997); Rumrill, Schuyler, & Longden (1997) noted that there are a number of major barriers to paid employment for people with a variety of significant disabilities like barriers are structural, institutional, societal and individual. In addition, systemic and attitudinal barriers are identified as being major negative factors to the employment of people with vision impairments (Beatson, 1981; La Grow, 2002). This implies that different challenges could affect employees with visual employment to be implemented their work properly. Therefore, University of Gondar should create conducive work environments these employees.

## CHAPTER SIX

### 6. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION and RECOMMENDATION

#### Introduction

This chapter consists of the major findings of the study, conclusions drawn from the major findings and possible recommendations that are suggested for further improvement.

#### 6.1. Summary of Findings

The main objective of the study was to explore the work experience of visual impaired employees in University of Gondar. In order to achieve the objective of the study, the research was attempted to answer the following question: -

1. What do employees with visual impairment have in their work and related experience at University of Gondar?
2. How do employees with visual impairment perceive their work environments conduciveness in University of Gondar?
3. What job related challenges do employees with Visual Impairment experience at University of Gondar?

Accordingly, the phenomenological research design was employed in the study area and the related literature was reviewed. Qualitative data was gathered through interview and observation. The interview data was collected from employees with visual impairments and their respective managers in the university. Data was collected from seven employees with visual impairments and there concerned officials. Comprehensive sampling was used to select the samples. The connected data was transcribed and analyzed through thematic analysis techniques in order to elaborate data that would be collected by interview and observation.



Based on the analysis of the data, the following findings were obtained:

- Employees with visual impairments in University of Gondar were found strived to do their professional roles and responsibilities. They tried to achieve their job objectives with motivation. This indicates they had better experiences in their work and feel satisfied. Regarding this idea, other scholars also stressed the attempts made by employees with visual impairments to success in their job.
- In this study, respondent's respective opinion about the impact of their vision problem on their psychosocial activities of the work situation indicated that there are many gaps in the psychosocial relationships where these employees were affected socially and psychologically as a result of their visual impairments in the work place.
- It was found that absents of braille display, lack of professional growth opportunities, lack of Provision of new assistive technologies, low awareness creation about disability for the university community, stigma and discrimination and lack of assistance were found the major challenges of employees with visual impairments in University of Gondar.

## **6.2. Conclusion**

In University of Gondar, there was a better employment opportunity for people with visual impairments. Hence, employees with visual impairments in University of Gondar were found attempted to be successful in their professional area. However, there are many challenges in the university such as lack of assistive technology, low awareness about disability for universities communities and lack of personal assistant were a major challenge for those employers that hinder these employees to achieve their professional goal. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that there is unsuitable work condition for employees with visual impairments in University of Gondar.

### 6.3. Recommendation

Based on the key findings of the study, the following recommendations are identified and suggested to provide valuable input about lived experience of employees with visual impairments and related issues for concerned government and non-state actors including academic institutions who are engaged in supporting and giving services to people with visual impairments. It is believed that the findings of the research would enable researchers to identify the gap and conduct further study on the issue respectively to enrich the quality of the proposed recommendations.

- ✚ The relevant executive bodies of the government should give recognition and have concern on vision loss as one of diversity of impairments that may endanger the future life career of employees. Therefore, University of Gondar should mainstream this unique issue in their respective service delivery.
- ✚ Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Science and Higher Education, Ministry of Health and other relevant government institutions should contribute in the policy formulation and implementation about employees with visual impairments. They should review the incumbent civil servant as well as labor proclamations to include provisions that ensure the work guarantee of people who faced visual and other impairments at their late age.
- ✚ The legislations international and national documents which are adapted and developed like the conventions on the right of persons with disabilities and the Ethiopian Constitution should be properly implemented to meet the needs of peoples with visual impairments which are related to rights of people with disabilities on work.

- ✚ The work environment should be adopted in line with the needs of employees with visual impairments.
- ✚ Special education or rehabilitation services like Training in Braille communication or keyboarding, Training in the use of information technology, Training in orientation and mobility, Career counseling etc should be provided by the university.
- ✚ The working environment should be adopted since Encouragement, support and cooperation for these employees is needed. Therefore, Workplace/accessibility, resources (materials, equipment, technologies, etc.) and information should be adapted so as to be accessible to employees with VI.
- ✚ Finally, awareness creation activities should be provided to the internal and external environment of the university.

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# Appendices

## Appendix A: Budget Breakdown

Budget request for thesis or project work

SN	Budget item	Budget item description	Unit	Unit price	Total price
1.	Transport	Travelling to the target place		250	1000
2.	Printing	For proposal, and interview questions with final thesis printing	12	12*40+5*150	800
3	Translator and transcribers	For questionnaire data collectors			3000
		For in-depth interview data transcribers and translators			3210
4	Duplication (for instruments, protocols and thesis/project drafts)				500
5.	Refreshments & Compensation during data collection.	Compensation for both in-depth interview and questionnaire participates to get relevant information from the concerned bodies. Therefore, the participants will expect any financial compensation.			6200
6	Battery	For audio records	10	25	250
7.	Grand total cost				15000

## Appendix B: Activities Break Down in Time Table

No	Main activities	Estimated time
1	Writing the introduction of the study	Dec 10-18, 2013(E.C)
2	Design of the study	Dec 19-30, 2013(E.C)
3	Organizing review of related literature	Jan 1-10 2013(E.C)
4	Preparing data gathering instrument	Jan 11-20 2013(E.C)
5	Data collecting	March 21-30, 2013(E.C)
6	Data analysis	April 1-10, 2013(E.C)
7	Discussion of the result of the study	May 1 - 10, 2013(E.C)
8	Conclusion and recommendation	May 10-15, 2013(E.C)
9	Writing the first draft of the paper	May 20-25, 2013(E.C)
10	Writing the second draft of the paper	June 10-15, 2013(E.C)
11	Writing the final draft of the paper	June 20, 2013(E.C)
12	Submission of the final Research	June,25, 2013(E.C)



## **Appendix C: In-depth Interview Guide**

**BAHIR DAR UNIVERSITY**

**COLLAGE OF EDUCATIONAL AND BEHEVIOURAL SCIENCE**

**DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL NEED AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**

**Research Title: Work Environment Experiences of Employees with Visual**

**Impairment at University of Gondar**

### **Interview guide**

Hello my colleague! My name is Habtamu Alamneh. I am post graduate student with visual impairment, conducting a research aimed at work environment experiences for employees with visual impairment. Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. You can ask for any clarification about the research. You can refuse to answer particular questions or withdraw from the research at any stage of the process. Your participation will remain confidential and information gathered from this direct interview will be used in a way that will not identify you. As far as possible, I will ensure your anonymity and confidentiality.

I would like to thank you for your willingness to take part in this study. It will not be possible without the participation and partnership of you. Therefore, I kindly request your participation by providing genuine information, which is very imperative for the success of the study.

If it is willing to be recorded which is essential to correctly capture the conversations for later use, the recordings will be kept in a safe place and will not be exposed to another party. The notes that I will take and the record will be destroyed after four months. The final results of the study, which will not include any information that could identify you, will be submitted to the department of special needs and inclusive education. The interview will take a maximum of 40 minutes. If something is unclear or if you have any doubts what so ever, please inform me. I would like you to sign below if you agree to participate in the study. I thank you in advance for your participation.

I agree to participate in the study

Participant's name \_\_\_\_\_

Participant's code \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I certify that in our presence the participant has been informed about the possible benefits and risks of participation in the research and has been given the opportunity to ask any questions.

## **PART I: BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Participant code \_\_\_\_\_

1. Sex-----
2. Age -----
3. Marital status-----
4. Education level/qualification-----
5. Onset of impairment /before birth ..... after birth.....
6. Cause of impairment.....

## **Part II - In-depth Interview Guide questions for employees with visual impairment at university of Gonder.**

### **Domain 1: Work experience or Practices**

1. What do you feel about working environment at university of Gonder?(probe principles , teaching or administrative strategy, assistance or reader)
2. How do you describe yourself? (Probe; - patients, aggressiveness, laxiospher, why?)
3. What are your responsibilities? (Probe; -administrative, researcher, community service)

### **Domain 2: Psychosocial activities**

1. How do you explain communities' attitude /towards / employees with visual impairment/ in this university? (probe; - support, awareness, discrimination, sharing of experience from others)
2. How do you describe your social interaction/ social relationship/ relation with others? (probe; - different social activities, sharing information, access to different trainings)
3. How do you define yourself? (Probe; - in terms of the impairment, job, strength or weakness how?)

### **Domain3: Adaptive Equipment and Materials on Job**

1. How does UOG address adaptive equipment for you? (Probe; -latest technology, lap top, braille type and jaws training)
2. What type of accessibility do you have /laptop or desk top, computer jaws, tape recorders or printing Braille machines and white cane / to facilitate your work?

### **Domain4: Challenges and Opportunities**

1. Do you get appropriate service from UOG (probe; - library, transport, mobility assistant, diagnosing)
2. Do you face the challenge when you move with in UOG? (Probe; - office, classroom, lounge, toilet, library)
3. How do you evaluate the working area? (Probe; - physical, attitudinal, social environment)

### **Appendix D: Interview guide for concerned university officials using key informant interview**

1. Do you have the knowledge about different needs of workers with visual impairment?
2. What kind of support/intervention do you give for workers with visual impairment in UOG? Any adapted materials provided so far?
3. What do you think about the conduciveness of your work environment for persons with visual impairment?
4. Does UOG create awareness regarding on principles and strategies which are related the job for employees with visually impairment?
5. How do you give treatment for employees with visual impairment in the working environment?

## Appendix E: Observation check list guide

This observation checklist will be observed by data collector regarding on the selecting area in the working environment

1. Date of Visit---

2. Work pace /office Observed ---

3. Time of observation---

Instruction: Put a check mark "\_/" in the column which tells: 1 = not available 2 = available but needs emphasis 3 = available

No	Variable to be observed	1	2	3
	<b>Materials and Equipment</b>			
1	Access to computer with jaws			
2	Access to braille printed policy documents			
3	Access to electronic devices/ talking watch, calculator			
4	Access to braille printed materials relevant to his/her job			
5	Access to library reading corner/site			
	<b>Physical Environment</b>			
6	Access to buildings with ramps/lefts			
7	Access to Walkways and path ways			
8	Access to toilet rooms			
9	work environment			
10	Office and its required accessories			

