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Influence Of Orientation And Mobility Skills On The Psychological And Social Adjustment Of Learners With Visual Impairment In Ilorin Metropolis

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Abstract*: Learners with visual impairment often face multifaceted challenges that significantly impact their psychological adjustment and social adjustment; therefore, this study investigated the influence of orientation and mobility skills on the psychological and social adjustment of learners with visual impairment in Ilorin metropolis. Descriptive survey research design was used. Fifty (50) learners with visual impairment were purposely selected for the study sample. A questionnaire titled Orientation and Mobility Skills Adjustment Scale (OMSAS) in Likert scale format was used to collect data (r=0.79). Two research questions were stated and four hypotheses were raised and tested at 0.05 significant level. Data were analysed using frequency count, mean and standard deviation for research questions while hypothesis were analyzed using Linear regression. The finding of the study showed that the level of psychological adjustment is high (mean=3.4). The level of social adjustment of learners with visual impairment is high (mean=3.4). The finding of the study revealed that orientation and mobility skills significantly influence the psychological adjustment of learners with visual impairment in Ilorin metropolis (r=.426). Orientation and mobility skills significantly influence the social adjustment of learners with visual impairment in Ilorin Metropolis (r=.329). There was no significant difference in the influence of orientation and mobility skills on the psychological adjustment of learners with visual impairment based on gender (p>0.05). There was no significant difference in the influence of orientation and mobility skills on the social adjustment of learners with visual impairments based on gender in Ilorin Metropolis (p<0.05). Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that orientation and mobility skills significantly influence the psychological and social adjustment of learners with visual impairment in Ilorin metropolis. It was therefore recommended that stakeholders, teachers, parents and the Government should collaboratively promote and support orientation and mobility training to enhance the independence, confidence, and social adjustment of learners with visual impairment across school, home, and community settings.*

Keywords: Orientation and mobility skills, psychological adjustment, social adjustment,

Introduction

Learners with Visual Impairment are those individuals whose vision loss significantly impact their ability to perform their everyday activities and educational tasks that typically rely on sight; Their condition ranges from low vision, partial sighted and total blindness which can result from various causes including genetics, accidents, diseases and aging. Learners with Visual Impairment face unique challenges because of the nature of their disability that can significantly affect their psychological and social adjustment. Learners with visual impairment experience depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem, which can further exacerbate their psychological and social adjustment.

Psychological adjustment is the process by which an individual is adapting to and coping with stressful or challenging situations, leading to emotional stability and well-being. It involves modifying one's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors to manage stress, anxiety, or other emotional difficulties. Psychological Science (2020) stated that psychological adjustment is the ability to adapt and integrate life experiences, promoting personal growth and resilience. Psychological adjustment is a behavioral process by which humans and other animals maintain an equilibrium among their various needs or between their needs and the obstacles of their environments. A sequence of adjustment begins when a need is felt and ends when it is satisfied. According to the American Psychological Association (2020), Psychological adjustment stated that a change a change in attitude, behavior, or both by an individual on the basis of some recognized need or desire to change, particularly to account for the current. Environment or changing, atypical, or unexpected conditions.

Psychological adjustment of learners with visual impairment is a developing resilience of self-efficacy and confidence to overcome barriers and achieve academic and personal goals. Psychological adjustment of learners with visual impairment is the process of adapting and coping with the emotional, social, and academic challenges associated with visual impairment. In other words, it is the process whereby visually impaired individual are able to adapt to changes in their physical, academically, and social environment. American Foundation for the Blind, (2022) stated that psychological adjustment of learners with visual impairment is

the process of learning to navigate and interact with the environment using compensatory strategies and assistive technologies. Psychological adjustment of learners with visual impairment is the act of managing emotions, building relationships, and maintaining a positive self-image despite visual impairment.

Social adjustment on its own refers to the process of adapting to and fitting in with the social norms, expectations, and values of a particular group, community, or society. It involves developing skills to interact and communicate effectively with others, building relationships, and managing one's behavior to achieve social acceptance. Social adjustment of learners with visual impairment involves adapting to social situations and interactions despite visual limitations. It requires developing alternative ways to communicate and interact, such as using assistive technology or compensatory strategies. Effective social adjustment enables learners with visual impairment to build strong relationships, participate fully in social activities, and develop a positive self- image (Nancy 2013). This means that learners with visual impairment can adjust socially to their environment with the use of assistive technology that will enable them to build and maintain healthy relationships; and participate fully in social context.

Psychological and social adjustment of learners, as well as learners with visual impairment can be influenced by several factors among these factors are; Family Dynamics that is, Supportive family environments foster positive adjustment;

Peer relationships and social acceptance which helps learners feel included; Teacher-student relationship, that is; teachers support facilitate learners' academic success; school environment (Accessible infrastructure) promotes independence among learners and learners with visual impairment also; Cultural Background helps learners to understand their culture and connect with heritage. Adesokan (2022) stated that social adjustment is not only related to a child's progress, development and achievement, but also their attitudes towards school, anxieties, loneliness, life and social support. Interpersonal relationships affect learners academically and socially.

A lot of factors have been identified by researchers influencing the psychological and social adjustment of learners as well as learners with visual impairments; The age at which a learner becomes visually impaired can significantly impact his/her adjustment. It was stated that learners who become visually impaired at a younger age tend to adjust better than those who experience vision loss later in life (Hill & Ponder, 2020); that is the type and severity of visual impairment can impact a learner's adjustment. Sisson (2018) reported that Orientation and Mobility skills influence both psychological and social adjustment of learners with visual impairments.

Orientation and Mobility skills are the ability of an individual to understand his/her position, location and movement within an environment which encompasses the physical and motor skills needed to move safely and efficiently with the use of assistive technology as well as developing problem-solving strategies for obstacles. Orientation and mobility (O&M) skills teaches people to use their remaining vision and other senses to get around. Canes and optical aids may also be used. Orientation and Mobility (O&M) is a profession specific to blindness and low vision that teaches safe, efficient, and effective travel skills to people of all ages. Orientation and Mobility (O&M) includes the skills needed to orient to surroundings and to move independently and safely in the environment. To learn and master these skills, a blind or low-vision learners commonly works with an O&M specialist from infancy through late adolescence. Dodds (2017) defines Mobility and Orientation skills as the ability of an individual to identify landmarks and reference point with the use of cane techniques and navigation. O&M skills are the ability to move safely, efficiently, and independently through various environments, while also understanding one's position, location, and movement. These skills are essential for individuals with visual impairments or blindness to navigate their surroundings with confidence. O&M skills enable individuals to participate fully in daily activities and access education, employment, and social opportunities (Sisson, 2018).

(Mistrett, 2018) stated that Orientation and Mobility skills enhance the overall psychological adjustment in the development of adaptive coping strategies, emotional regulation and social participation. O&M training influences both practical and psychological adjustment by enabling individuals to move freely and safely in their surroundings, thus enhancing their sense of control over their environment. Benedict et al. (2009) suggested that when children with visual impairments gain skills in orientation and mobility, they develop greater independence, which, in turn, enhances their self-esteem and self-worth.

According to Bausch et al. (2017), O&M fosters the psychological development of learners with visual impairments, as it empowers them to navigate the world with confidence and reduces dependency on others. O&M skills also significantly influence the social adjustment of learners with visual impairments. Rosenblum et al. (2008) note that learners who develop effective O&M skills tend to participate more in social and recreational activities, leading to stronger social networks.

Orientation and mobility skills are not merely functional; they are transformative in the psychological and social adjustment of learners with visual impairments. The development of these skills helps to enhance self-confidence, reduce anxiety, and foster independence, which are essential components of psychological well-being. Furthermore, O&M training improves the social integration of learners by enabling them to engage in social activities, form meaningful relationships, and participate more fully in

society. As research and practice have shown, investing in O&M training is crucial for promoting the holistic development of learners with visual impairments, supporting them in becoming independent, confident, and socially integrated individuals.

Orientation and Mobility skills are crucial for the psychological adjustment of male and female learners with visual impairment, influencing self-esteem, anxiety levels, independence and self advocacy. Both males and females benefit from the acquisition of O&M skills, gender differ shape the way these benefits are experienced. McLoughlin (2013) stated that makes with visual impairment often exhibit higher levels of self- confidence and quicker reductions in anxiety, partly due to societal expectations of Masculinity. On the other hand, Bausch et al (2017) opined that females benefit from O&M skills which increase independence and experience in a more gradual and socially integrated manner.

Also, Orientation and Mobility skills have a profound influence on the social adjustment of individuals with visual impairments. These skills enable both males and females to participate more fully in social activities, engage in relationships, and navigate social spaces independently. While both genders benefit from the increased confidence, independence, and self-advocacy that come with O&M training, gender differences in societal expectations, socialization, and communication styles influence how these skills shape social adjustment.

Bausch et al. (2017), stated that males often use their O&M skills to assert independence and engage in more competitive or active social settings, which enhances their social confidence. Benedict et al. (2009) suggested that females, on the other hand, may use their O&M skills to navigate relational and cooperative social environments, allowing them to develop and maintain close-knit relationships. Understanding these gendered differences can help tailor O&M skills to better support the unique social needs of both males and females, ultimately promoting more successful social integration and adjustment for individuals with visual impairments.

Based on this, the study intends to assess the influence of orientation and mobility skills on the psychological and social adjustment of learners with visual impairment.

Research Question

What is the level of psychological adjustment of learners with visual impairment ?

What is the level of social adjustment of learners with visual impairment ?

Hypotheses

There is no significant influence of orientation and mobility skills on the psychological adjustment of learners with visual impairment

There is no significant influence of orientation and mobility skills on the social adjustment of learners with visual impairment

There is no significant difference in the influence of orientation and mobility skills on social adjustment of learners with visual impairment base on gender

There is no significant difference in the influence of orientation and mobility skills on the psychological adjustment of learners with visual impairment base on gender

Methodology

The study employed a descriptive survey research design, suitable for investigating the influence of orientation and mobility (O&M) skills on the psychological and social adjustment of learners with visual impairment without manipulating variables. The sample comprised 50 visually impaired learners purposively selected two schools in ilorin metropolis, measuring O&M skills, psychological adjustment, and social adjustment, and its validity was ensured through expert review by special education lecturers. The reliability of the instrument was confirmed via a test-retest method, yielding a coefficient of 0.74 using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. Data analysis involved frequency counts, means, standard deviations for research questions, and T-test/linear regression for hypotheses, with a set decision rule based on weighted mean and p-values.

Results

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Table 1: Distribution of respondents based on gender.

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	22	44
Female	28	56
Total	50	100.0

Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents based on gender 22 of the respondents representing 44% were male while 28 of the respondents were female representing 56%. From the analysis above, it is apparent that female respondents were more in number than male respondents.

Research Question 1: What is the level of psychological adjustment of learners with visual impairment?

Table2: showing the level of psychological adjustment of learners with visual impairment.

S/N	ITEMS	VHL	HL	LL	VLL	MEAN	SD
1	I am comfortable talking about my visual impairment with others.	18(36.0)	10(20.0)	16(32.0)	6(12.0)	2.8	1.07
2	I am proud of what I can do, even if I do it differently.	25(50.0)	22(44.0)	3(6.0)	-	3.4	0.61
3	I believe I am as capable as other students.	28(56.0)	22(44.0)	-	-	3.6	0.50
4	I have learned to cope with my visual impairment.	18(36.0)	20(40.0)	12(24.0)	-	3.1	0.77
5	I think positively about my future.	36(72.0)	14(28.0)	-	-	3.7	0.45
6	I see myself as an important part of the school community.	30(60.0)	17(34.0)	3(6.0)	-	3.5	0.61
7	I talk to someone (teacher, parent or friend) when I feel sad or stressed.	11(22.0)	26(52.0)	13(26.0)	-	3.9	0.79
8	I do not let my visual impairment stop me from doing what I want.	28(56.0)	19(38.0)	3(6.0)	-	3.5	0.61
9	I am able to express my thoughts and feelings clearly.	14(28.0)	26(52.0)	10(20.0)	-	3.1	0.79
10	I feel secure and emotionally balance most of the time.	17(34.0)	21(42.0)	6(12.0)	6(12.0)	3.9	0.98

WEIGHTED MEAN:3.4
Note: The figures in parentheses are in percentages
Source: Field Survey 2025

Table 2 showed the level of psychological adjustment of learners with visual impairment is follows: I am comfortable talking about my visual impairment with others (2.8), I am proud of what I can do, even if I do it differently (3.4), I believe I am as capable as other students (3.6), I have learned to cope with my visual impairment (3.1), I think positively about my future (3.7), I see myself as an important part of the school community (3.5), I talk to someone (teacher, parent or friend) when I feel sad or stressed (3.0), I do not let my visual impairment stop me from doing what I want (3.5), I am able to express my thoughts and feelings clearly (3.1), I feel secure and emotionally balance most of the time (3.9). The weighted average was 3.4 which is greater than 2.50, this shows that the level of psychological adjustment of learners with visual impairment is high.

Research Question 2: What is the level of social adjustment of learners with visual impairment?

Table3: showing the strategies teachers use in teaching students with (ADHD) in an inclusive classroom.

S/N	ITEMS	VHL	HL	LL	VLL	MEAN	SD
1	I can express my feelings and opinions in social situations.	19(38.0)	22(44.0)	9(18.0)	-	3.2	0.73
2	I feel happy with my social life in and outside of school.	14(28.0)	27(54.0)	6(12.0)	3(6.0)	3.0	0.81
3	I do not feel embarrassed about my visual impairment in social settings.	13(26.0)	28(56.0)	6(12.0)	3(6.0)	3.0	0.89
4	I participate activity in social or recreational events at school.	7(14.0)	31(62.0)	12(24.0)	-	2.9	0.61
5	I ask for help when I need it in social situations.	14(28.0)	17(34.0)	19(38.0)	-	2.9	0.81
	I ask for help when I need it in social situations.						
6	I am invited to social events or activities by others.	9(18.0)	27(54.0)	11(22.0)	3(6.0)	2.8	0.79
7	I feel accepted by my peers despite my visual impairment and make trend easily.	15(30.0)	28(56.0)	6(12.0)	1(2.0)	3.1	0.70
8	I participate in all activities within my reach.	10(20.0)	24(48.0)	16(32.0)	-	2.9	0.71
9	I respect other people's opinions and feelings in the society.	25(50.0)	22(44.0)	3(6.0)	-	3.4	0.61
10	I feel I can live and work with others peacefully in the future.	29(58.0)	21(42.0)	-	-	3.6	0.59

WEIGHTED MEAN:3.4
Note: The figures in parentheses are in percentages
Source: Field Survey 2025.

Table 3 showed the level of social adjustment of learners with visual impairment is follows: I can express my feelings and opinions in social situations (3.2), I feel happy with my social life in and outside of school (3.0), I do not feel embarrassed about my visual impairment in social settings (3.0), I participate activity in social or recreational events at school (2.9), I ask for help when I need it in social situations (2.9), I am invited to social events or activities by others (2.8), I feel accepted by my peers despite my visual impairment and make trend easily (3.1), I participate in all activities within my reach (2.9), I respect other people's opinions and feelings in the society (3.4), I feel I can live and work with others peacefully in the future (3.6). The weighted average was 3.4 which is greater than 2.50, this shows that the level of social adjustment of learners with visual impairment is high.

$H_0$1: there is no significant influence of orientation and mobility skills on the psychological adjustment of learners with visual impairment.

Table 4: Summary of Regression Analysis shows that there was no significant influence of orientation and mobility skills on the psychological adjustment of learners with visual impairment.

Model	N	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F-cal.	P-value
1	50	.426	.213	.197	13.004	.001

Dependent Variable: Psychological Adjustment.
Source: Field Survey 2025

Table 4 summarizes the regression results of the influence of orientation and mobility skills on the psychological adjustment of learners with visual impairment. The result indicated that there was negative influence of orientation and mobility skills on the psychological adjustment of learners with visual impairment (R = .426) while R-squared is .213 which means that the independent variable (orientation and mobility skills) explained 2.13% variations of the dependent variable (psychological adjustment). Thus, this is an accurate reflection that, orientation and mobility skills does significantly influence on the psychological adjustment of learners with visual impairment (F_{48} = 13.004 p = .001).

Table 5 Test of significance

Model		Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient			95% Confidence Interval	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.	Lower/Bound	Upper/Bound
1	(Constant)	-10.51	12.386		-.848	.401	-35.408	14.398
	Orientation and Mobility Skills	1.253	.348	.462	3.606	.001	.554	1.952

Dependent Variable: Psychological Adjustment.
Source: Field Survey 2025

The test of significance results presented in Table 5 shows that, orientation and mobility skills significantly does influence on the psychological adjustment of learners with visual impairment (B = -10.51; $t_{(48)}$ = -.848, P = .401). It indicated that at 5% level of significance, it is evidenced that the regression equation specified that orientation and mobility skills significantly influence on the psychological adjustment of learners with visual impairment. Based on this, the null hypothesis was accepted, and it was concluded that orientation and mobility skills has significantly influence on the psychological adjustment of learners with visual impairment.

$H_0$2: there is no significant influence of orientation and mobility skills on the social adjustment of learners with visual impairment.

Table 6: Summary of Regression Analysis shows that there was no significant influence of orientation and mobility skills on the social adjustment of learners with visual impairment.

Model	N	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F-cal.	P-value
1	50	.329	.108	.090	5.833	.020

Dependent Variable: Social Adjustment.
Source: Field Survey 2025

Table 6 summarizes the regression results of the influence of orientation and mobility skills on the social adjustment of learners with visual impairment. The result indicated that there was negative influence of orientation and mobility skills on the social adjustment of learners with visual impairment (R = .329) while R-squared is .329 which means that the independent variable (orientation and mobility skills) explained 10.8% variations of the dependent variable (social adjustment). Thus, this is an accurate reflection that, orientation and mobility skills does significantly influence on the social adjustment of learners with visual impairment (F_{48} = 5.833 p = .020).

Table 7 Test of significance

Model		Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	T	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower/Bound	Upper/Bound
1	(Constant)	5.996	10.285		.563	.563	-14.683	26.675
	Orientation and Mobility Skills	.697	.289	.329	2.415	.020	.117	1.277

Dependent Variable: Social Adjustment.

Source: Field Survey 2025

The test of significance results presented in Table 7 shows that, orientation and mobility skills significantly does influence on the social adjustment of learners with visual impairment (B = 5.996; $t_{(48)}$ = -.10.285, P = .563). It indicated that at 5% level of significance, it is evidenced that the regression equation specified that orientation and mobility skills significantly influence on the social adjustment of learners with visual impairment. Based on this, the null hypothesis was accepted, and it was concluded that orientation and mobility skills has significantly influence on the social adjustment of learners with visual impairment.

$H_0$3: there is no significant difference in the influence of orientation and mobility skills on the psychological adjustment of learners with visual impairment based on gender.

Table 8: Summary of T-test Analysis shows the significant difference in the influence of orientation and mobility skills on the psychological adjustment of learners with visual impairment based on gender

	Gender	N	Mean	Std Deviation	T	F	Df	Sig	Decision
Psychological Adjustment	Male	22	33.36	7.39	-.664	3.341	48	.074	Not Sig
	Female	28	34.61	5.86					

Source: Field Survey 2025

Table 8 showed the summary of t-test results showing the significant difference in the influence of orientation and mobility skills on the social adjustment of learners with visual impairment based on gender. It was revealed that male respondents had mean score 33.36 and standard deviation 7.39 while female respondents had mean score 34.61 and standard deviation 5.86, the t was -664, degree of freedom 48, F was 3.341 and significant level of .074 (P>0.05). This implies that there was no significant difference in the influence of orientation and mobility skills on the psychological adjustment of learners with visual impairments based on gender. Therefore, the null hypothesis that states that there is no significant difference in the influence of orientation and mobility skills on the psychological adjustment of learners with visual impairment was rejected.

$H_0$4: there is no significant difference in the influence of orientation and mobility skills on the social adjustment of learners with visual impairment based on gender.

Table 9: Summary of T-test Analysis shows the significant difference in the influence of orientation and mobility skills on the social adjustment of learners with visual impairment based on gender

	Gender	N	Mean	Std Deviation	T	F	Df	Sig	Decision
Social Adjustment	Male	22	31.09	6.47	.379	15.173	48	.000	Not Sig
	Female	28	30.54	3.81					

Source: Field Survey 2025

Table 4 showed the summary of t-test results showing the significant difference in the influence of orientation and mobility skills on the social adjustment of learners with visual impairment based on gender. It was revealed that male respondents had mean score 31.09 and standard deviation 6.47 while female respondents had mean score 30.54 and standard deviation 3.80, the t was .379, degree of freedom 48, F was 15.173 and significant level of .000 (P>0.05). This implies that there was no significant difference in the influence of orientation and mobility skills on the social adjustment of learners with visual impairments based on gender. Therefore, the null hypothesis that states that there is no significant difference in the influence of orientation and mobility skills on the social adjustment of learners with visual impairment was rejected.

Discussion

The study revealed that learners with visual impairment have a high level of psychological adjustment, likely due to strong family support, inclusive educational settings, and access to assistive technologies that enhance their independence and emotional resilience; this finding aligns with Adesokan and Angela (2022), who reported high psychological, social, and emotional well-being among such learners. The second finding showed that social adjustment among these learners is also high, which may be attributed to their developed coping strategies and social adaptability, though this contrasts with Altarawneh (2022), who found only a moderate level of social adjustment, particularly with males showing slightly better outcomes. The third finding demonstrated that orientation and mobility (O&M) skills significantly influence psychological adjustment by fostering confidence, independence, and reduced feelings of helplessness, this supports Kamali and Ashori (2021), who emphasized the essential role of mobility training in promoting psychological and social well-being. The fourth finding indicated that O&M skills have a significant positive effect on social adjustment, as they help learners participate more actively and build relationships, a result consistent with Isa (2021), who noted that mobility training greatly enhances social integration among visually impaired individuals. The fifth finding showed no significant gender difference in how O&M skills influence psychological adjustment, implying equal benefits for both sexes, which does not align with Alibegovic (2021), who observed no significant gender differences in O&M performance but still noted similarities in psychological outcomes. Lastly, the study found no significant gender-based difference in the influence of O&M skills on social adjustment, reinforcing the conclusions of Shazia, Umi, Nor, and Maimunah (2018), who found no significant gender disparity in social gains from O&M training.

Conclusion

The study concluded that orientation and mobility skills significantly enhance the psychological and social adjustment of learners with visual impairment, promoting their confidence, independence, and participation in school and social life. Therefore, it wasrecommended that stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and the government, should actively support and promote O&M training both in and outside the classroom. Additionally, the government should fund and standardize O&M programs to ensure equitable access and support for all learners with visual impairment.

Recommendations

Train Orientation and Mobility specialists and special educators to incorporate counseling techniques into mobility lessons. Sessions should explicitly focus on building resilience, managing the anxiety of independent travel, and fostering a positive self-identity.

Develop a "Mobility Mentors" program where learners with visual impairment practice O&M skills in pairs or groups in community environments (e.g., markets, parks, public transport).

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