CHAPTER VII

CASE STUDIES

Robert K. Yin defines, "the case study research method as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used." In explaining what a case is, Yin (1989) suggests that the term refers to an event, an entity, an individual or even a unit of analysis. It is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence. Case studies are concerned with how and why things happen, allowing the investigation of contextual realities and the differences between what was planned and what actually occurred. Case study is not intended as a study of the entire organization. Rather is intended to focus on a particular issue, feature or unit of analysis. The concept of case study is frequently associated with qualitative research. Social Scientists, in particular, have used this qualitative research method to examine contemporary real-life situations and provide the basis for application of ideas and extension of methods. For the present study, case study method is used to get in depth knowledge about the whole life experience of visually impaired, which cannot be obtained in quantitative data. In the present study, to understand the everyday experience of visually impaired persons, phenomenological theoretical perspective is used. Phenomenological perspective goes with qualitative data. Phenomenology provides a subjective view of what the participant is experiencing in any given situation (Mertens 1998). It provides a detailed analysis of specific individuals in specific situations. Hence along with quantitative data qualitative data was collected in order to understand the multiple realities of whole life experiences of visually impaired persons.

The present study focused on the following objectives in order to obtain the information on the socio-economic background of the blind, problems faced by visually impaired and the support they received from family, educational institutions and at work place environment.
OBJECTIVES

• To study the socio-economic background and medical history of visually impaired adults of working age.

• To understand the importance of various support systems in the lives of visually impaired and their experiences, reactions and perceptions of significant others.

• To understand the strategies adopted by the visually impaired to cope with visual impairment.

• To study the attitude of the society from the view point of visually impaired persons.

In the present study, 11 case studies have been included. The cases selected were interviewed on several occasions so that detailed information could be procured. Keeping in view, the objectives of the study in depth interviews and probing were relied upon to bring out their subterranean life circumstances. The cases have been presented in this chapter in a systematic manner i.e. their Socio-economic background, their medical history, causes of visual disability, type of treatment they received, role of various support systems in their life and the factors conducive and detrimental for their potential growth and development, the strategies adopted by them to cope up with their disability, and their perception about the attitude of society. In order to maintain secrecy, the cases have been given alphabetical order. An effort has been made to include both successful and not so successful individuals in the study.
CASE A

Case is a 40 year old partially sighted male. He is a Lecturer in Department of Music in a Government College in the state of Punjab. He is also pursuing Ph.D in music. He belongs to upper Caste Hindu Family of a small town in the State of Punjab. He was born in a nuclear family. His father was literate and had a small tea shop. His mother was illiterate. Case A has two brothers and three sisters. His elder brother is also suffering from congenital cataract. His one brother and three sisters are sighted. Due to familial circumstances, his sisters did not study much. His brother who is sighted is a matriculate.

Since Case A and his elder brother suffered from congenital cataract, his parents were quite understanding. They provided him all the medical care. In spite of the fact, that Doctors reported no chance of recovery, his father tried his level best to seek some cure for his sons. He even took them to various religious places for seeking spiritual cure. Case A was operated upon, but operation was not successful. Such a situation made his mother quite bitter. She became over possessive about his normal son and started discriminating against her visually impaired sons. She always ignored and criticized them. She started treating them as burden on the family. Because of her biased attitude towards both visually impaired sons, his father got very upset.

At age of seven his father decided to send his both sons to a private Institute for Blind. He happened to know about this institute from a Blind Teacher, whom he met in the Train. His mother readily agreed to send them to Institute, which had hostel facility. Both case A and his brother came to this Institute, where they were imparted training in music, caning and learnt Braille. There were, however, no proper studies. The students were promoted to Upper classes on the basis of Oral examination. Case A did not like the system. He found that even teachers were not trained to cater to the needs of visually impaired. The life was very difficult as there was lack of basic amenities in the Institute. Case A was dissatisfied with curriculum and the management. When there was no improvement in the situation, he came back. His mother became very upset. Her behaviour became very abusive.
She started discriminating against him with regard to food and care. She always criticized and demeaned him. She also physically abused him for his demands. He tolerated everything but when it became unbearable he decided to become something and stand on his own feet.

His brother, however, continued his stay in the Institute. In the meantime his father expired and there was economic crisis in the family. His mother criticized him for his demanding behavior. Left with no alternative he again joined the institute. He learnt Braille and other mobility skills. Within a few months he developed mastery over daily living skills. Due to his leadership traits he became very popular with other students. He persuaded other visually impaired students to revolt against authorities. With consistent pursuance he was able to improve living conditions in the Institute. Authorities even allowed them to appear for the 8th class examination as private candidates. Readers and writers were arranged for them. All the students through their efforts were able to pass middle examination successfully. Case A became very popular with teacher and students. He got constant support and encouragement from the teachers, as a consequence he started participating in extracurricular activities like poetry recitation and music competitions. Since he was very ambitious, he took all the assignments sincerely and emerged as a winner in all the situations.

After middle, he started taking music tuitions and did caning of chairs to fulfill his economic needs as he was not getting any financial support from his home after the death of his father. His elder brother passed matriculation exams and became tabla instructor. His other siblings, two sisters and one younger brother completed their education up to matriculation. The sisters, never wanted to study further, therefore were married off. He encouraged his elder brother to continue his studies. He continued his studies along with the job and passed Graduation as a private candidate.

Case A, after passing his matriculation in First division joined higher Secondary School in his home town, but he didn’t stay there. Every day he would commute to his school using public transportation and continued to stay at his institution. He took music tuitions, which provided a source of livelihood for him. He had difficulty in procuring study material for higher classes. In
spite of many difficulties, he achieved very good marks in his graduation. He completed B.Ed and then a M.A. in music.

Case A feels that he was not provided adequate medical care by his parents, so when he became economically independent he went to the All Indian Institute of Medical Services (AIIMS, New Delhi) and the Mahatma Gandhi Eye Hospital, Aligarh to take an expert’s opinion. Doctors told him that his vision cannot be regained. It was too late for him to improve his vision now. Case A feels that ignorance and poor economic condition of his parents deteriorated his visual impairment.

In spite of failures at the health front, Case A did not lose his spirit. He qualified the staff selection commission examination and got a clerical job with the State Bank of India and started working as a Telephone operator. In the meantime, he qualified UGC, NET in music and got himself enrolled for PhD from Punjabi University, Patiala. However, he didn’t continue his PhD as he developed difference of opinion with his supervisor. Later he resigned from the job of telephone operator and joined as a lecturer. He is now pursuing PhD in music from Panjab University.

At the age of 26 years, Case A got married to a normal sighted girl who was four years younger to him. She completed her high school but belonged to a low economic background. It was an arranged marriage. They were blessed with a son after one year of their marriage. His wife supported him fully. She took care of the child and house and she never felt annoyed at his busy schedule. They continued to lead a normal married life. After a gap of four years, they were blessed with another son. Both of them are actively involved in parenting. Case A took special care that his wife completes her graduation. The children are happy with their father’s achievements and take pride in sharing his success.

During this period, he actively got involved in the welfare activities of the visually impaired. He joined various organizations to highlight the problems of educated unemployed blind people. He became General Secretary of National Federation for the Blind, Punjab branch and carries out Protests against discriminating policies of the State Government. He was many times put behind bars for his activist’s role.
Case A is a very religious person. Whenever he is upset over, he spends his time reciting prayer. He shares a strong and loving relationship with his wife. His wife leaves no opportunity to encourage and motivate him to fulfill his objectives. After his marriage, Case A has also improved his relations with his mother. Since Case A has achieved so much in life, all his siblings want to get associated with him.

Case A is a social activist, reformist and well-known musician, writer and a poet. His poetry is regularly broadcasted from Lahore and Jalandhar Radio station. He has been honoured with state award for his immense contribution in field of education and creating more employment opportunities for visually impaired. He has two books to his credit-Khawab Likh Raha Hu and Ek Be-Manzil Safar. He is a lover of music and he has been organizing free music workshops for the last 10 years and has also opened a music school in his home town, which provides free class.

He is fully satisfied with his achievements. His personal progress is never hampered because of his positive attitude towards life and strong determination. He copes up with his disability by concentrating on the objectives of life which is to fight for the right of visually impaired.
Case B

Case B is a 40-year-old married woman who was born in a small town in Tamil Nadu. Her husband is partially sighted and she is blessed with two sighted daughters. She is a Christian and belongs to a middle class nuclear family. She started losing her eyesight at the age of 18 due to Retinitis Pigmentosis. She is working as a stenographer in a nationalized bank at Chandigarh.

Her father was a retired cook from the Army. He expired when the case B was 22 years old. Her mother was a simple housewife with no education. The case lost her mother at the age of 29. She is survived by two brothers and three sisters. Her elder sister is a housewife who received primary education only. Other two sisters are qualified up to matriculation and are housewives. Her brothers are also matriculate and are drivers in different Government departments. All her siblings are married and she is the youngest one. Since childhood she was a very naughty and active child. She was always pampered by her parents but her brothers did not show any affection or concern for her. All her needs were fulfilled and were taken care of by her father who was getting a pension. She had very good relations with her sisters as they were caring and took care of her like their own child who was of the same age.

At the age of six, her father got her admitted in a Government school. She was very hardworking and ambitious to study. Case B’s strong interest in studies made her teachers favourite. One of the teachers always helped her to participate in various cultural as well as different competitions. Her brothers were never comfortable with her ambitious nature. They never wanted her to study further. Case B’s higher secondary education became possible only because of her parents’ support. She passed matriculation and higher secondary with first division. Her dream was to become a teacher but when she was in 12th standard she was unable to see the black board and other far off things clearly. Her father consulted many local doctors who gave her some vitamin supplements. No one could diagnose the exact problem. This process went on for three years but there was no improvement in her vision. She started losing her vision gradually. Later on her father took her renowned
hospitals of the city where it was reported that she was suffering from Retinitis pigmentosis and it would result in total blindness.

She took medical and spiritual treatment for 5 years and her father bore the total expenditure and faced a lot of financial difficulty. The cash and jewellery kept for her marriage was sold to bear the expenditure of her treatment. Case B never had any difference of opinion with her parents. At times her brothers also accompanied her to the doctors but didn’t spend any money for her treatment. Her father was traumatized to know about his daughter’s problem and died of a heart attack. After her father’s death, her mother and sisters supported her emotionally but her sisters-in-law blamed her for her disability and considered her as a burden. They ignored her and even stopped talking to her. At times, they criticized her and didn’t pay any heed to her problems. They were least bothered to help Case B out in her daily needs. Her brothers didn’t treat her equally like other sisters. This worsened the situation of the case as she was depressed and helpless. She couldn’t express her feelings to anyone except her mother. Her mother felt helpless as things started falling apart after her father’s death. Her sisters had full sympathies for her but since they were married off in different towns they couldn’t help her. Case B felt sad but with her positive attitude, she learnt to walk the thorny path of life and with her hard work tried her best to make her life meaningful.

A doctor guided her to a local Bible school. Her mother took her regularly to the Bible school where she would listen to the bible and learnt to meditate. One day, one of her father’s friends saw her in this school and made her aware about a local school for the blind. But that school was only up to matriculation. Further, there was no other institution near her house which could provide vocational training to blind. The Director of that school guided her to VRTC Ludhiana, Punjab. He sponsored her for Vocational Rehabilitation Training Center, Ludhiana. Her mother was a little reluctant but thought that it was the best opportunity for her daughter to become independent and allowed her in VRTC.

Initially Case B didn’t feel comfortable and faced problems such as adapting to the new environment. It was very difficult for her to adjust due to
different culture, language and food. Although this institute is being run by Christian's community of Tamil Nadu but a majority of the staff and the teachers belongs to Punjab. But with the passage of time she adjusted with all those problems and felt comfortable. In the first three months at VRTC, she learnt Braille, mobility and orientation programme. She used to get stipend of Rs.75 per month during her training at VRTC at Ludhiana. Then she did a one year diploma in English Braille stenography followed by a 4 months course in telephone operation. These courses provide vocational skills to the visually impaired and help them to secure jobs in banks, private companies, semi-government and government institutes. With the help of various trainings provided at this institute she was able to read and write Braille and felt quiet independent. Case B got individual attention from her teachers. They supported her and helped her to accept her disability. They were very cooperative and were well trained to cater to the needs of the visually impaired.

Except her mother and sisters, none of her brothers or sisters-in-law contacted her during her stay in that institute. They were not at all concerned about her marriage and pretended to be very busy in their lives. After completing the course Case B got a job in that institute as a transcriber for Rs1000 per month. Case B’s job profile was to convert ink printed books into Braille with the help of a Brailler. After two years she started getting Rs1500 per month. Case B continued to work for the period of 5 years on this post.

The Director of that Institute was also visually impaired and was a great source of inspiration for her. He did not only help her in getting training and becoming financially independent but also searched a suitable life partner for Case B. He suggested a partially sighted match for her who was working as a teacher in a blind school. Her brothers objected to this match because he didn’t belong to their community but finally after a lot of persuasion from the Director they gave their consent. The Institute bore the whole expenditure of her marriage as everybody knew that her brothers won’t do anything for her and her mother was helpless.

After marriage Case B left her job and settled with her husband. Case B’s husband is a north Indian and belongs to lower caste, Hindu religion. He
has done MA, B.Ed. He is very caring, understanding and cooperative. She shares her personal things with him and even takes his advice before taking any decisions. They are from different regions and religions but they respect each other’s culture and perform all religious ceremonies together. He helps her out in her daily chores and mobility but sometimes there is difference of opinion regarding daily needs, money matters and mobility but they solve their differences with mutual understanding. He is very cooperative and gives value to her opinions in daily life. He supports and takes care of her. Case B, however, doesn’t have cordial relations with her mother-in-law. Her mother-in-law always wanted a sighted wife for her son.

After marriage she cleared the banking exams for Clerical Post and got a permanent job as a typist in a nationalized bank at Ludhiana. Thus she shifted to Ludhiana where she resided in a rented room in one of her colleague’s house. Her husband used to visit her on weekends. After completing the probationary period of 6 months, she got transferred to Chandigarh as she was on family way. Her husband and mother-in-law took care of her. She gave birth to sighted daughter. After a gap of one year she had another daughter. Case B had partial vision which helped her to take care of her children.

Case B lost her total vision at the age of 38. She was mentally prepared for the consequences but still it was difficult for her to bear the situation. Her family acted as a pillar of strength for her. Despite her disability, she is fully satisfied and content with her life.

Although she doesn’t participate in the key decision making process at the workplace but she feels that she is treated at par with normal persons. She is so competent and confident that she never feels her disability to be a hindrance in her progress. According to her, the main elements for achievements in the life of a blind are social and financial support, equal opportunity, awareness of welfare schemes and a good guide. She has a soft corner for other visually impaired and feels that government as well as private sectors must employ such individuals to help them explore their hidden talent and should give them an opportunity to prove themselves in jobs that are best
suited to them. She commutes to her workplace in public transport and uses a cane which gives her a feeling of independence and boosts her confidence.

She feels insecure only while crossing roads. She always gets help for reading, writing and shopping. The general public also lends a helping hand in crossing the roads and identifying the buses. Most of the people lack awareness about the potentials of visually impaired and treat them as sorry figures of the society. Thus, she feels that stigma is still attached to visually impaired in our society. The attitude of people who have adequate awareness about her potentialities at workplace and home is quite positive.
Case C

Case C is a 28 years old partially sighted male, born in an upper caste Hindu family. He is M.B.A. and at the time of recording his case history has been working as a Lecturer in Panjab University along with his job, and he is pursuing Ph.D. from the same University.

Case C’s father is an Engineer, recently retired from a Public Sector Company. His father also served the Indian Navy for the period of 10 years. His mother is a graduate and a home maker. She is an educated liberal lady having unmatched quality of an effective team player, therefore she manages the family very well. Case C has two elder siblings; both of them are without any disability. Case C’s elder brother is a software engineer, who is working with a private company. His elder brother is married and his wife is an MBA and is working with a private company. Case C’s elder sister is a Post Graduate and is happily married. Case C has very cordial relations with his siblings.

Case C was born with congenital cataract. He appeared quite normal at birth. When Case C was three months old, he had severe dysentery and was hospitalized. Doctors advised his mother to consult an Ophthalmologist as they suspected cataract. Case C’s parents consulted Ophthalmologist and after detailed investigations, a tumor was detected in one of his eyes. He was referred to All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi. Case-C’s parents provided him with all the necessary medical treatment. Doctors advised them surgery but did not assure whether the operation would be a success. This was a period of great difficulty for his parents. It took approximately 20 weeks for the doctors to diagnose this case. Finally, they disclosed that there was no tumor. However, the surgery was a must, since case-C was losing vision from the second eye. Case C’s parent accepted doctor’s advice and got him operated but their efforts were not successful. It was very difficult phase for Case C’s parents. As time is the best healer, they accepted the will of God. However, they did not lose hope and continued to provide best of the facilities to him. They continued to take him for routine medical examination.
During childhood his parents were very vigilant towards him. They always were extra careful and never left him unattended. His mother always gave him extra care as compared to his sister who was just two years elder to him. He got equal treatment in the family or some times more care by his parents. He shares a warm relationship with his parents and siblings. They always encouraged and supported him to fulfill his desires. They cultivated in him a positive attitude towards life. It was due to the parents' motivation that he passed all hurdles and succeeded in life. They never felt ashamed of his disability and took him to all family and social functions.

Case C was admitted in a normal school. He listened carefully and with full concentration to what was being taught in the class and tried his best to comprehend. When he became well versed with writing, his friends used to dictate to him whatever was written on the blackboard or provided him their notebooks to complete the pending work. After eighth class, Case C completed his education with the help of magnifying glasses, which affected his speed to a great extent. But with the use of lenses, he became independent. He was always treated as a general student. He faced problem with regard to practical examination but he managed to get good marks by answering the theoretical questions correctly. The main difficulty and backlog that he faced was lack of large format material and audio books. Despite these hurdles he emerged as versatile person competing with general students. He started using manacle lenses to read. Though he had to work hard with a small lens and large bulky books but it all paid off when he proved to be an intelligent and competent student.

His early education was very much difficult as compared to higher education for two reasons. First, he adapted and acclimatized himself with the passage of time to the status-quo, as he developed a fantastic ability to solve complex analytical problems just by listening to what the teacher is saying; second, in the early education, teacher notes were very important but later on the aptitude mattered more as thought process comes into play in higher education and he got more liberty to write on his own.

Since Case C was a very bright student, he secured first division throughout his academic career. After passing B.Sc., he wanted to pursue
M.Sc. in Physics but was discouraged by the authorities because of his low vision. In the meantime, he successfully cleared entrance test and earned his MBA-HR degree from Panjab University, Chandigarh with 65 per cent marks and at the time of recording this case he was pursuing Ph.D.

He has also done graduation in Violin and has a Senior Diploma in vocal music. He has always been a versatile personality having his hand into music, vocal music, violin, poetry and drama but he rarely participated at the school level as nobody guided him to participate in the events in a proper manner. Slowly, he acquired awareness and confidence and participated many times at the college level. He was informed about various institutes, which are working for visually impaired through media. He visited these institutes but did not join any of them. He acquired more information regarding the use of assistive technology. He also became aware regarding the facilities and concessions given by the Government from these institutions and through media.

At the age of 25 years, Case C joined his first job of lecturer in a private University. He got this job through personal contacts and this was Case C’s permanent job and he commuted to his work place through public transport independently with the help of a cane. Before getting this job, he faced rejection many times because of his disability and negative attitude of the employers. He developed cordial relations at his workplace. He participated in the key decision making process at the work place. He continued to work with this job for four months. In the meantime, a job from another Private University in appeared in the Newspaper. He applied for it and was selected with a fifty percent hike in his salary. He joined there. His parents also supported him in all his decisions. He continued to work in this University for two years.

At the age of 27, one vacancy of Lecturer in Panjab University was advertised. He applied for the same and got selected on the basis of his competency and intellectual ability but unfortunately the Medical Board rejected him because of his disability because this post was not of reserved category. He felt very disappointed. He met the authorities, and pleaded his case. After a lot of efforts, he was able to get this job. He moved to Ludhiana
Centre, took a rented accommodation and settled in the new job. However, he is not satisfied with his achievements because he is very ambitious and wants to achieve more in life. Lack of opportunity is one of the major factors which hampered his progress. Case C feels that social support is one of the main elements of achievement in the life of visually impaired persons. He has a notion that people have adequate awareness of his potentialities and he gets social recognition. He feels that stigma is attached to blind in our society. He gets help and support from general public while traveling, locating the places, and for reading and writing. Many times, he was cheated by sighted persons financially as well as emotionally.

Parents of Case C are now looking for a suitable match for him. Case C wants to marry an educated employed but disabled girl. He feels that his life partner should help him to progress further in life. He feels that disabled partner can understand him better. He is very religious and has strong faith in God. According to him, the upsurge of education has widened the thinking and changed the attitude of the people towards impairment and thus has cultivated positive attitude towards them. Nowadays, few people are aware that with the help of assistive devices even the visually impaired can do wonders in many spheres of life. According to him, a large section of people are unaware of the potentialities and hidden talents of the impaired and thus consider them as a burden to the society.
Case D

Case D is a 27 years lower caste Hindu boy. He is a M.A. and B.Ed but is unemployed. He belongs to a poor family from Bihar. He lived in a kucha house with no basic amenities. His father was an agricultural labourer with no education. His mother was a housewife and passed away when Case D was just 2 years old. Case D has one elder brother and one elder sister.

Case D was born with normal sight but immediately after the death of his mother, he developed an eye infection. He did not receive any medical attention. His father took him to a local R.M.P. who did not provide the correct medicine, and as a consequence, Case D lost his vision. Case D did not receive proper care and attention during his childhood. His father would lock him in the house in the morning and leave him unattended. In the evening and on weekends his siblings took care of him. They were not happy to perform the job of a baby sitter, therefore, Case D didn’t learn to walk and talk at an appropriate age. He was physically weak and dependent upon his siblings for all his needs. He was not given any medical treatment and remained confined to home till the age of seven. Poverty and ignorance of his father and family made him completely handicapped.

Case D was taken to a free eye camp held in their city. The doctors told his father that he would never be able to see, which made Case D’s father very upset. The doctors advised his father that he should educate him and make him independent. They also informed him about the various institutions run for the visually impaired in the country. His father did not pay much heed to their advice.

After a few months, Case D’s father decided to move to a city in Punjab as it had become very difficult for them to survive in their hometown. Case D’s father started working as an agricultural labourer and sent his two normal children to government school for studies. It was from school, Case D’s siblings learnt about the Institute for the Blind at Chandigarh. Case D’s father decided to admit him in the institute as it was a charitable institution with free boarding and lodging facilities. When his father took him to the Institute, the Principal initially refused to admit him because he was physically weak and malnourished. His stomach was bloated due to water retention. Furthermore,
he could not read or write, and was not even able to talk effectively. His father pleaded and requested the hostel warden, who took pity on Case D and convinced the Principal to admit him. In the beginning Case D was totally dependent on the staff members of the Institute. One of the caretakers of the Institute helped him in eating, bathing, mobility and other daily activities. He was not able to cope up academically as well because of his weak tactual ability and poor communication skills. He needed to take exams orally up till the third standard and was promoted to the next class. He was unable to read and write in Braille despite many efforts of his teachers, and as a consequence, he failed in the forth standard. With much effort his teachers and caretaker taught him Braille. This helped him become independent. Case D also worked really hard and there was improvement in his ability to read and write Braille. He also had problems of mannerism i.e. meaningless and purposeless movements of the body like rotating his head. Since there was no check on him, he had no control over his body movements resulting in habitual behavior because of which his classmates made fun of him. He was neither taken out for picnics nor outings nor was he encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities due to his physical weakness. He lacked mobility and communicative skills. One of the teachers was assigned to take him for treatment to Post Graduate Institute for Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh. After medication and regular physiotherapy, Case D was able to walk properly. He started using a cane that gave him a feeling of independence and made him confident.

After leaving him in the institute, his father did not come to meet him for three years. Then the school authorities wrote a letter to his father to take him home for the holidays. His father did not respond to the letter and did not come to the institute. One of the school teachers was assigned the job to escort him to his home. His father and siblings were not happy to see him back. They ignored him and even criticized him. They blamed his bad karma for his disability. His brother used to beat him if he demanded anything. Case D’s elder brother was an alcoholic and would trouble him and treat him badly. Due to constant tension between him and his brother, he felt neglected, helpless and abandoned. He felt that it was far better to stay in the Institute
even during holidays. His father dropped him back at the institute before the holidays ended. After his brief stay at home, his father rarely visited him at the Institute. At times, Case D longed to hear his father's voice and would ask himself that why his father loved his siblings more than him. He finally realized that his family treated him as a burden and no longer wanted to keep any relation with him.

As compared to his class mates, he was slow in writing Braille. As a result, his notes were often incomplete and none of his class mates helped him to complete the notes. In order to complete his work, he started taking notes from his classmates without their consent. When this came to their knowledge, they started calling him a thief and knocked him down. Case D took time to adjust with other students at the Institute. But as time passed by, some of them became friendly with him and he started feeling comfortable in their company. A few teachers also went out of their way to help him. They were very cooperative and kept motivating him. They were well trained to cater to the needs of the visually impaired. The warden acted as a father to him and kept on encouraging him. The Institution acted as a pillar of strength for him. He passed his higher secondary exams with 68% marks. He also learnt to type in Punjabi, English and stenography in Braille from the Institute. He became aware of the different concessions and welfare schemes provided by the Government for the Blind. During all these years, he never went to meet his family.

Case D wanted to study further and the Institution authorities helped him in getting admission at the Government College for Men at Chandigarh and arranging accommodation in the college hostel. His admission fee was met from his scholarship provided by the Social Welfare Department. Noticing his zeal and desire to receive higher education, a kind hearted social worker proposed to bear his educational and other expenses till his graduation. As he had earlier studied in a special school, he took time to adjust with normal students and his classmates were quite cooperative. They read out notes to him and also helped him in reading and recording audio cassettes. With their help, he improved upon his problem of mannerism and developed good communication skills. This aided in enhancing his personality and made him
more confident. Social workers helped him by reading and writing for him. In the evening, he used to attend computer classes in National Association for the Blind (NAB), Chandigarh and there he learnt computer operations.

When he was in the second year of graduation he slipped from the stairs and his left foot was injured. It resulted in infection but he didn’t take it seriously and it further led to bone tuberculosis. His partially sighted classmates helped him and took care of him for some time. When his condition did not improve, he was sent to the Institute for the blind for his treatment. A kind hearted social worker bore his food and medical expenses during the treatment. One of the Institute’s attendants used to take him to PGIMER, Chandigarh for treatment. He took some time to recover. After his recovery, he went back to the college. During the holidays he stayed alone while other students went back to their homes. During his ailment the Institute Warden informed his father but no one from his home came to inquire about him.

After a few months of his recovery, his father lost mental balance. His other son took away all the savings and threw him out of the house. One of the neighbourer brought Case D’s father to the Institute for the Blind. One of the teachers made Case D aware of the situation. Case D forgot all the atrocities done to him and broke down, as he still had a soft corner for his father. The Institute authorities tried to help his father by employing him as a worker at the Institute but it served no purpose as his father was not in a condition to perform any work. He kept talking to himself and behaved abnormally. One of the teachers of the Institute took him to a doctor who diagnosed him with psychiatric illness. When the situation became unbearable, Case D admitted his father to Pingalwara Center, a charitable care home near Chandigarh. Case D visits his father once a month. The condition of his father has improved since then and he feels good whenever Case D visits him.

Case D secured 55 percent marks in the graduation. After graduation he aspired to do post graduation but he needed financial help, hence he started looking for a sponsor. Once again, the institute provided him a sponsor to bear the expenses. He successfully completed his MA in Hindi
from Punjab University, Chandigarh with 50 percent marks. During his post
graduation he faced the problem of a reader and a writer. After his post
graduation in Hindi, Case D passed a one year diploma in Hindi translation,
followed by B.Ed from the same university with 62 percent marks. He got Rs
500/- per month from Red Cross Society and Rs 500/- per month from the
Institute for the Blind to meet his daily expenses till he was studying. During
all these years of education, Case D researched for jobs in different
Government Departments but remained unsuccessful in finding any work.

Case D passed his M.Ed entrance exam but was rejected during the
counseling due to his disability. He was told that since the course required
practical work, that would not be possible for him to do so because of his
visual impairment. Case D felt dejected and approached the Vice Chancellor
of the University but all his efforts went in vain as he was told about the official
criteria of selection. Case D with the help of a social worker filed a case in the
Consumer Court. He won the case and was told by the University authorities
that he would be admitted in the next academic session. Case D had to
vacate the University hostel. He went to different Institutions meant for the
visually impaired in the hope of getting a job along with accommodation, but
he was disappointed. He contacted a social worker who had helped him
earlier in his studies. She helped him in getting free food and accommodation
in a temple for a few days. Case D felt helpless as he was unable to secure a
job in spite of all his efforts, and good qualification. In this time of despair, he
felt that the Institute for the Blind may once again add a ray of hope in his life.
He contacted the Principal of the Institution, explained his condition to him
and also requested to help him out. The Principal allowed him to stay in the
Institute’s hostel and assured him to try to employ him as a teacher in the
Institute till he finds a suitable source of livelihood and accommodation.

At the time of recording of this case study, he was also searching for a
job. He had applied in different Government Departments for clerical posts.
His interviews went well; however, he was not lucky enough to be selected
due to lack of recommendations and approaches. He applied in Sarv Shiksha
Abhiyan (SSA) as a resource teacher but didn’t get an opportunity due to lack
of experience. He appeared for an interview conducted by SSA but was
disqualified as he had not done special diploma in Teachers Training meant for visually impaired. He had applied for the post of Punjabi typist at Punjab School Education Board and was awaiting a call for an interview at the time of recording of this case history.

He gets frustrated and discouraged when people make him realize that he doesn’t have family support. He overcomes the situation by sitting alone and praying. He feels that family, social and financial support, along with equal opportunity are the main elements for achieving something in life for the visually impaired. He feels that although visually impaired people work hard and study hard, they are not rewarded as per their qualifications. He feels that government as well as private sectors should make reservations for the visually impaired in jobs suitable for them. Employers must have a positive attitude towards blind and must give them an opportunity to prove themselves.

Case D is unmarried and wants to secure a job before getting married. He wants to marry a visually impaired girl as he feels that a person with similar disability has the potential to lead a normal life.

He agrees that there is stigma attached to the visually impaired in our society and feels that if everyone becomes aware of the needs and challenges faced by the visually impaired, they will understand them better and give their full participation in supporting them.
Case-E

Case E is 45 years old visually impaired married man who belongs to upper caste agricultural family of North India. He is M.A. M.Ed and works as Head Master in a school for the blind on a monthly salary of Rs. 25,000. His wife is Post Graduate without any physical disability. He has three daughters who are studying in a convent school.

Case E’s father was renowned landlord of his time. He enjoyed a high social and economic status. His father married thrice. Case E was the son of his father’s second wife. His father’s first wife died during child birth. She had six children, four daughters and two sons. Case E’s mother was his father’s second whom he married after the death of his first wife. At the tender age of nine months, Case E lost his mother due to tuberculosis. Case E and his step siblings were looked after by their grandmother. Since she was also old, his father remarried.

In the beginning, everything went well; however, when the step mother had her own children, she became biased. Since their grandmother was very dominating, she saw to it that her grand children were looked after well. At the age of 5 years, Case E joined the school. He was a bright and intelligent child. Soon he became his teachers’ favourite. At the age of 12 years, he developed difficulty in seeing the black board. He informed his father, who took him to the local Government Hospital. Doctor informed Case E’s father that he should take vitamin ‘A’ supplement and would be fine. In spite of taking vitamin supplements Case-E, did not notice any improvement. Therefore, Case-E and his father consulted some private practitioners. When there was no improvement in his vision, his father took him to Dehradun, then to Lucknow for expert opinion. However, Case-E started losing his vision. His father made every effort for his treatment so that Case-E could regain his vision. Along with the medical treatment, his father took him to various religious places and quacks for treatment. For almost three years, they struggled; by the age of 15 years, Case-E completely lost his vision. Doctors diagnosed it as Retinitis Pigmentosa (RP).

This period of three years was very traumatic for Case-E. His siblings were cooperative and helped him in his studies. But his step mother became
very rude towards him. She abused and cursed him. She considered him a burden and discriminated against him. His father and grandmother tried their best to convince his stepmother to sympathize with Case E but she never bothered. As a consequence, Case E also developed lot of bitterness and hatred towards her.

Case E was under lot of stress during this period because his grades deteriorated due to his visual disability. His teachers provided him extra care and attention. Even the Principal motivated and encouraged him and he passed his Matriculation with good marks. His father was a constant source of encouragement. He supported him financially and emotionally. Case E decided to appear for high school examination as a private candidate. His grandmother passed away and his step mother planned to debar him from the familial property. The agricultural property was sold off and he was given only meager share as compared to his siblings. Despite all these familial circumstances, he passed high school and decided to pursue his academic career. In the school, Case E received special attention from his teachers. Many a times teachers provided him the required assistance; they made adjustments in reading and writing and provided him extra time to finish the exams. The principal gave him psychological support and encouraged him. He informed him about National Institute for Visually Handicapped (NIVH) Dehradun.

Case E decided to join NIVH. His father took him to Dehradun. Within no time, he learnt mobility and Braille which gave him mastery over daily living skills. At the age of 20, he graduated with 55 percent marks. He wanted to become independent and he felt that it was only through education.

During his stay at NIVH, Dehradun, Case E became aware of various welfare schemes being sponsored by the Government of India for the disabled. He availed scholarships and reader allowance during his studies. According to Case E his higher education played very important role in his life. After completing his B.Ed, he got another degree for teaching visually handicapped which is recognized by the Rehabilitation Council of India, New Delhi and secured 70 per cent marks.
At the age of 24, Case E got his first job of teacher in a Model School for visually handicapped. He got accommodation in the school and became warden also. Along with his job he did M.Ed from a private University. He continued to work in the school as it provided him good working environment.

At the age of 29 years, one of his teachers suggested to him to get married. Case E was quite reluctant but with lot of persuasion from his fellow teachers, he changed his mind and got married. It was an arranged marriage. His father and siblings took the responsibility of the arrangements. Case E’s wife was only 18 years old and was educated up to high school. She belonged to poor family background. She proved to be very good life partner. Case E encouraged his wife to continue her education after marriage. With her own hard work and constant encouragement from Case E she completed her Post Graduation. Case E was blessed with a daughter. They continued to lead happy and normal life.

At the age of 34 years, Case E got appointment as a Headmaster in institute for the blind at Chandigarh. He moved to Chandigarh along with his family. Case-E was blessed with two more daughters after coming to Chandigarh. He got his daughters admitted in one of the best school in the city. His daughters are also bright and intelligent and are performing well in academics. Case E adjusted in the new environment. He developed cordial relations with his subordinates and within a short span of time became very popular among teachers and students. Along with administrative tasks, Case E has maintained his keen interest in academics. He keeps himself active by regularly participating in Seminars and Conferences.

At the time of recording of this case history, his eldest daughter was 12 years old and second one 10 years and the third one 2 years old. His daughters are very caring as well as fully oriented with their father’s limitations. Many times, his eldest daughter escorts him to many places. Case-E is a responsible and understanding father. He has maintained good relations with his daughter’s teachers. He attends parent-teacher meetings regularly. He encourages his daughters to become good human beings.

He is very religious and has strong faith in God since childhood. He has been paying obeisance to various religious places along with his father.
It provides him solace and helps him to overcome various difficulties of life. His father, who is very aged now, pays him regular visits. Whenever his father visits him, he takes him for a walk, to temple and gets regular medical checkup. With the passage of time, Case E has improved relations with his step mother. He no longer carries feeling of animosity against her.

Case E has been able to achieve so much despite his disability. He still feels that he is not treated at par with other normal individuals in leadership qualities. He is quite satisfied with his present job and feels that teaching is the best job for visually impaired person. As far as his job of headmaster is concerned, he finds it challenging because it involves practical and analytical ability. He faced various challenges like corruption, nepotism and back door entry approach in order to progress or achieve another job of higher status. In spite of all odds, he feels that he would be able to do justice to his job. He is of the opinion that general public is very helpful to him in exchanging information, assist him while traveling and locating the places and above all as a major source of social support.
Case F

Case F is a 27 year's old visually impaired girl from a small town in Punjab. She belongs to an upper caste, Hindu religion. She is fair good looking girl. She belongs to a nuclear middle class family. Her father is a matriculate who runs his own business. Her mother is a housewife. Case F is the eldest of all her siblings. She has two younger sisters and two younger brothers. One of the sisters is doing her graduation and the other is doing B.Sc in the computer science. Her brother has completed his matriculation and is working with his father. Her younger brother is studying in the tenth standard. Case F herself is highly qualified. Born as a normal sighted child she studied in a convent school till her matriculation. She was very intelligent and was always a topper due to which she was a favourite student of not only her teachers but also of the school principal. Her parents used to take pride in her achievements.

When she was in seventh standard, there was a downfall in her father's business which resulted in loss of funds. Her father became sick and he was admitted to the hospital due to jaundice. There was a lot of stress and strain on the family. It was during this period that Case F started complaining of difficulty while reading from the blackboard. She had to strain her eyes a lot while reading and writing in her notebook. Everyone thought that it was due to the burden of unfavorable circumstances that their family was going through. Even when the situation improved at the financial front Case F did not get any relief and continued to face difficulty in reading. On her persistence she was taken to an eye specialist and it was diagnosed that she was suffering from Retinitis Pigmentosa. Doctor explained that it is a hereditary slow degenerative disease of the retina. The condition affects the peripheral area of retina including rod cells. It may result into night blindness, tunnel vision and inability to see in dark. Though some children are born with poor vision, it begins in middle or advanced age (12-30 years). Visual acuity is often normal and the field of vision is so poor that the person falls in the category of blindness. When Case F realized that there is no cure for her she started feeling that she was suffering because of bad past deeds. Case F has no other disability. All the other members of her family are healthy except her
youngest brother who has also developed the same problem. Case F fears that this problem may be inherited to future generations.

She has been taking medical and spiritual treatment for the last 14 years and her parents have been bearing all the expenditure. At first her parents took her to a local Government Eye Hospital in their home town and then to District level Government Hospital from where she was referred to All India Medical Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Delhi. She even consulted Guru Nanak Dev Government hospital and Sharaf Davakhana Eye hospital where an eye specialist guided her parents to Sohan Lal Eye Hospital, Patiala. For two years, she took treatment from Patiala and then consulted Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER), Chandigarh. She also took homeopathic medicine from Patiala and Mukatsar. After all this tiresome process, she is continuing with homeopathic medicine from a private doctor in Shimla. In spite of all the treatment, Case F couldn't improve her vision. She faced a number of difficulties during the course of her treatment as she had to travel to different places as and when anyone guided her. But there was no improvement at all which depressed her. But with the passage of time, knowledge about cause of visual impairment and its irreparable consequences prepared her to accept her disability.

She continued her studies till tenth by straining her eyes and secured only 50% marks. She wanted to become a Doctor but due to her eyes she opted for Arts. It was not an easy decision for her because she was very ambitious and felt dejected and shattered. Her family and teachers convinced and supported her a lot. They consoled her to accept her disability as a medical problem. Case F’s parents never blamed her for her disabilities. They took her disability as a medical problem and accepted it as will of God. They never considered her as a burden. They didn’t discriminate among their other children and sometimes over protected her. They supported her completely in her studies. They helped her financially and tried to fulfill all her needs. She never had difference of opinion with her parents. Her parents and siblings helped her in reading, mobility and for daily needs. They neither feel ashamed nor hesitate in taking her out to social functions or any other place. She
shares her personal feelings with her siblings. She takes all the major decisions in her life with the advice of her parents. Their positive attitude has helped her to overcome all the obstacles. She finds herself very fortunate because of the unconditional love of her family.

Her sisters acted as a reader and writer for her. With their help, she passed her high school with 60% marks. Despite her problem, she continued with her studies. During all these years, neither she nor her family had any awareness about various facilities available for blind like low vision aids, Braille, etc. She did B.A. and M.A (Political Science) with 50% marks as a private candidate from Punjabi University, Patiala.

As time passed she lost her eyesight completely. At the age of 22 she became totally blind and was left with light perception only. After her graduation, she came to know about school for the visually impaired at Ludhiana from a blind acquaintance. Following his advice, she joined Vocational Rehabilitation Training Centre (VRTC), Ludhiana and did one year diploma in computers enthusiastically with the help of Jaws, software which converts visual symbols into audio and is specially meant for visually impaired. She stood first in that diploma with 80% marks. She learnt English and Bharti Braille at this school. Knowledge of Braille books made her independent and boosted her confidence. This institution played a crucial role in her life. It suited her requirements and she felt comfortable in the educational sitting. It was in this institute that she became aware of the concessions provided by the Government for the disabled.

Seeing her interest in computers, her teachers supported and motivated her and even gave her special attention whenever required which helped her to reach the topmost position in her class. During these years she stayed in Ludhiana and became quite independent. At that moment she felt as if the doors to her future have opened and she could overcome her disability through her hard work.

After completing diploma in computer education, she opened her own computer training centre at her residence. Her father purchased a computer for her and she started teaching computers to children. Case F wanted to be independent so that she could support her family. She started giving tuitions...
and earned up to Rs 3000 per month. She, however, continued her search for a Government job. She used to get a lot of appreciation from her family members as well as from society. As she lived in a small town, she became very famous. People appreciated the fact how a blind girl could overcome her handicap and become independent. One day, a journalist approached her and published her story in the newspaper regarding her efficient computer teaching. Fortunately, at that time, the Head of the National Association for the Blind was in search of a computer teacher to teach visually impaired. He read the story of case F in the newspaper and enquired about her capability from V.R.T.C (Ludhiana). After getting a positive feedback about her, he contacted Case F and offered her the job of a computer teacher in his Institute at Chandigarh. Although it was a temporary job, she decided to accept this opportunity with her parents consent. She started staying in a working women’s hostel in the city and commuted to her workplace in the institutional vehicle. She herself did not use cane as she feels ashamed. However, she is of the opinion that those who use cane for mobility are more independent. She always needs a sighted person to escort her for going to different places. She uses a mobile which helps her to stay in contact with her family members and friends. Despite her disability, she has mastery over daily living skills which aids in enhancing her personality.

She continued to teach with full devotion but even after three years of service, there was no increment in her salary. As a consequence she started applying for Government job. Fortunately she got a Government job in the electricity Department. She was very enthusiastic about her job but she faced discriminatory attitude at her work place. She has cordial relations with her colleagues and subordinates but unsatisfactory relations with her superordinates. Although she is getting salary according to Governmental scales and accommodation yet at workplace she has not been assigned proper work, she works as a Diarist. Her services remain unutilized. She feels that people have doubts about the capabilities of the educated visually impaired.

At the time of recording this case study, Case F was pursuing B.Ed through correspondence for Disabled from The Bhopal University. But she was facing many problems as the University doesn’t provide study material in
Braille and in audio cassettes. For making lesson plans and reading she takes help from social workers and friends. Case F is very ambitious and does not want to surrender to her disability.

Case F is unmarried and wants a well qualified suitable match for her. Moreover, she is career oriented and therefore wants to continue with her job. Her parents are looking for a suitable match. They are ready to accept a match with some other disability except visual impairment. Case F herself wants to marry a visually impaired. She is of the opinion that only a blind person would be able to understand her situation better. She feels that in order to become successful in life a visually impaired person needs adequate guidance and social support. Although she is not satisfied with her achievements because of lack of opportunities provided by the Government, she tries to cope with her disability by comparing herself with more disabled persons and concentrating on her objectives which gives her courage to move ahead in life.

According to her, people in developed countries are aware of the assistive devices used by visually impaired. But a large section of our society is unaware of these devices and they consider them a burden. There are some individuals who even try to cheat blind people by stealing their belongings and money.
Case G

Case G is 32 years old Sikh unmarried Punjabi boy. He is fair and tall with pleasing personality. He lost his vision at the age of 26 years in a road accident.

Case G lost his father at the age of two. He has one elder brother and one elder sister. His father was a Professor in a college. His mother is an educated lady who is M.A. She started working as a school teacher after his father's death. She had difficult time in bringing up the children as she received no cooperation from Case G’s grandparents. Case G’s mother worked as a school teacher and tried her best to provide a good life to her children. Case G’s elder sister did M.Sc. in Microbiology, got married and is settled in USA. His elder brother after completing high school took to agriculture. Since there was a family dispute, the elder brother of Case G went to their native village to take share in the ancestral property.

Case G after high school did a diploma course in Electronic Engineering. Additionally, he did a computer course. As a result, he got a job as a computer teacher in a private school. Case G was not happy with his job, as he was getting only Rs 1500/- per month. After consulting his sister, who was settled in USA, Case G also decided to settle abroad.

However, destiny had something else in store for him. Case G met with a serious accident at the age of 26. He had a head injury which led to loss of vision. Unfortunately, his mother was not in the country, she had gone to USA to her daughter and all his neighbourer and friends came to his help. They informed his brother in the village and mother in USA and took him to the government hospital. His brother reached immediately. Case G did not respond to the treatment and he was referred to PGI, Chandigarh. His brother took him there. Doctors declared that since his optic nerves were severely damaged, he would never be able to see again. When Case G’s mother arrived, she decided to take him to AIIMS, New Delhi. She even sent his reports to the US for expert opinion. When they got the same reply from all the doctors, Case G was shattered. He was so frustrated that he even
attempted suicide. His friends, brother and mother provided him full support to overcome this disability.

She constantly encouraged Case G. For two years he cut himself off from the world. Case G became very depressed and lonely. He avoided the company of others. His family members especially his mother stood by him and helped him in every possible way by encouraging, counseling and sharing his burden and by being a constant friend, philosopher and guide during this crucial period. His siblings were also constant source of encouragement for him.

One day his cousin brought him information about the Rehabilitation Center for the blind. Case G again developed the hope to overcome the disability in his life. He decided to join VRTC, Ludhiana. He developed mastery over daily needs within a few days and started learning Braille. He took approximately three months to adjust in the new environment. The knowledge of Braille and use of cane made him independent and quite confident. He took admission in English Braille stenography. The Institutions environment suited his requirements. He was helped by his teachers and classmates. He never felt any difference in attitude of blind and normal teachers. He felt comfortable in the company of other blind students. Case G felt that his educational institution played a crucial role in his life in providing him basic mobility and vocational skills and contributed a lot in his rehabilitation.

During his stay at VRTC, Case G got help from a visually impaired girl who was doing computer course. Since he was already well versed in computer applications, he learnt about software which helped blind people to make use of computer more professionally. The computer skills made him more independent. He started appearing for various competitive exams. He faced the problem of a writer. Due to unavailability of a good writer, he failed to qualify the written exams. He didn't get a job even after completing the diploma in Braille Stenography. At times, he feels lonely when no one is there to guide him. He is not satisfied with his achievements. He feels depressed and even frustrated at times. He copes up with his frustration by listening to music and internet surfing. Case G has many good friends who accompany
him to Gurudwara every day. Case G is very religious. His strong faith in god gives him strength to cope up with his disabilities.

At the time of recording this case history Case G was doing B.Ed through correspondence from Bhoj University. He felt that he could opt for teaching as a career. As the University did not provide any study material in Braille, he faced difficulties to make preparation for the course. His mother helped him a lot as she would read notes to him.

He has cleared his many banking examinations but never got through interview. He feels that blindness has restricted his capabilities. He is still optimistic and feels that in next few months, he would get some job. He plans to marry a girl with visual disability. His mother has no problem with his decision. Case G feels that a person with similar disability would understand him in a better way and support him in all the circumstances. Case G believes in destiny. According to him, had he not met with the accident he would have been leading a very different life. It is because of his disability, he has learnt about blind people and their problems.
Case H

Case H is 40yrs old visually impaired unmarried female who was born in a small village in Haryana. She is Hindu with middle class background. She is M. A. History along with various diplomas. At the time of recording this case history, she was working as a primary teacher in a special school on a salary of Rs4000 per month. She has joined BEd through correspondence studies. Her hobbies are Braille reading, writing and listening to music. She is an introvert, dark complexioned lady with short stature.

Case H reported that at the time of her birth, she didn't cry, so the midwife soaked her face in a bucket filled with chilled water as a result, there was swelling in her eyes. She could recall that she was able to see the sparkling water and was able to identify some color and could see blurred images of people around her which indicates that cause of her disability is not congenital. Since childhood she has developed a habit of poking her fingers into her eyes as a consequence her eyes are completely pressed in. With passage of time, she became totally visually impaired.

She lived in a joint family. Her father had education up to eighth standard and worked as a security guard whereas her mother was illiterate housewife. She has one elder brother and three elder sisters. Her siblings did not obtain higher education and are married. None of the family members have any kind of disability. Her parents neither paid any attention nor were worried about her. They were least interested in rendering any treatment to her. They never took her out to any doctor and started treating her like a burden.

She was totally ignored and didn’t get care and attention from her family as a result of which she developed abnormal mannerism like rotation of head, unnecessarily rubbing of eyes and changing of face expressions periodically during her childhood. She was blamed for her disability and held responsible for any mishap or health problems occurring in the family. She was considered a curse by everyone and her parents took her disability as a result of bad deeds of the past. Case H does not have any good memories of her childhood. She was a neglected child and her parents and siblings ill-
treated her. Even the children in the neighborhood did not spare any opportunity to tease her.

During her childhood, she used to spend her time on a broken bullock cart lying in the street and sang folk songs. A woman used to lay thorny bushes on her way and teased her. Children of the locality didn't play with her. At the age of 3 years, she fell from the roof and despite being seriously ill; her parents didn’t show a sign of pity for her. She was not given any medicine for any kind of illness and everyone wanted to get rid of her. As a result, Case H became suspicious about everything around her and smelled every eatable before consuming it as she doubted that her food might have been poisoned. The money spent on her was considered wastage by her brothers. No one took her out to social gatherings, functions or marriages due to the social stigma attached to blindness.

Her family members didn’t allow her to express her views, criticized her and even abused her. They threatened and shouted at her when she expressed her interest to study. Her daily needs were ignored and there were times when her family didn’t even talk to her. As a result she became a very aggressive child.

There was no one to show her a ray of hope in times of despair. Lack of awareness and prejudice attitude of her parents disturbed her as her psychological and emotional needs were not met. She was not taught to interact and integrate with people as a result she didn’t develop any communication skills. She did not get equal treatment in the family especially by her brothers and later on, her sister-in-laws treated her like a domestic help.

When case H was ten years old, her father met an orthopedically handicapped beggar who influenced her father to such an extent, that his thoughts and attitude towards her changed. Her father decided to send her to school. Her father found about special schools for the blind as he was keen to make her independent. Her father taught her domestic work, and daily living skills which made her independent. A local school teacher guided and helped her father in this regard. For her admission in the school her father faced opposition from family and relatives but he remained adamant and got
her admitted in Delhi’s Virja Nand School for visually impaired girls. Case H studied till the eighth standard in this school. She learnt Braille, mobility and got a mastery over her daily living skills. The acquisition of these special skills made her confident and more independent. However, she faced many problems during her stay in the school. Because of her behaviorism, she couldn’t make friends with others and remained quite isolated. Case H had adjustment problem as she had remained aloof most of the times. She reported that even teacher didn’t take special care of her. During vacations, her father used to visit her but never took her home. During her school days she came to know about another school with more facilities for visually impaired. She requested her father to get her admitted to that school. After lot of persuasion, he agreed and she joined VRTC, Ludhiana where she studied till the twelfth standard. Due to family pressures she came back home.

Her sister-in-law posed as an obstacle in her education and convinced her family members that her education was of no use to anyone. She wanted Case H to do domestic chores. She was of the opinion that Case H should get married as she was independent. Case H wanted to marry someone who could understand her and be with her through thick and thin of life. She never wanted to be treated as a burden. Her parents found a match from their caste but the boy demanded dowry as he didn’t suffer from any disability. Case H’s parents never wanted to give dowry they allowed her to continue with studies. They didn’t allow her to go to another place far away from her house for graduation. Her paternal uncle got her admitted in college near their village. Her uncle supported her during this period. He escorted her to college and waited there till her classes were over. He even bore her educational expenses. During her graduation she faced many hardships. She lacked good study material in Braille and moral support of her family and community. The villagers thought that blind were only meant for begging and kirtan. She always faced a problem in finding a reader and writer. In spite of so many difficulties, she completed her Masters in History.

During this period, first her father, then her elder brother expired. The circumstances became worse for her. She suffered constant humiliation and insults at the hands of her sister-in-law. Immediately after completing her
Masters, she decided to do a job. She got a job in a private school on meager salary of Rs200/- per month. She did not lose her heart and continued to work for two years. During this period, she was in constant touch with authorities at VRTC.

After working for two years, she got an offer of school teacher on a salary of Rs4000/- per month from VRTC. She decided to grab the opportunity and moved to Ludhiana. She adjusted in no time and developed cordial relations with her colleagues and subordinates. Since Case H opted for teaching as her career, she decided to join B.Ed through distance education.

She took admission in B.Ed from Kurkeshetra University but she couldn't get through because of incomplete form. She lost 1 year in the process. Next year she joined B.Ed through correspondence from a Private University where she faced a number of difficulties regarding study material, writer and mobility. She met with an accident during this period when she was going for her classes. She was badly injured and could not make her assignments and got no help in writing. She was not allowed to take her exams. Case H requested the authorities but they paid no heed to her requests as they were unaware of the special needs and capabilities of visually impaired.

There is a lot of improvement in Case H's relations with her family. She is financially independent and her sister-in-laws who used to curse and abuse her have now developed a positive attitude towards her. Case H visits her family during vacations. She has very cordial relations with her nephew and even helps him financially.

She feels lonely when there is no one to guide her. She is also staying in the hostel. She has accepted her disability and tries to cope up with it by comparing herself with more disabled persons. She shares her personal things with her friends and takes their advice in some situations. She has now developed confidence to take major decisions of life herself. She also listens to music. Her two stories ‘Parivartan’ and ‘Hardwork and Prayer’ were published in local magazines. Her poem ‘Kal Who Dulhan Ban Ke Aiyee’ was published in Netrahin kalayan Patrika. She got recognition and is selected as the best reader of Braille Dhara Patrika in the year 2000 as she sends her
regular opinion about the articles published in the same. One of her stories 'Roshni' was published in her college magazine. At the time of recording of the case history, Case H was single but plans to get married in near future. She is even applying for different posts in gazetted ranks. She has high hopes for the future.
Case I

Case I is a 33 years old visually impaired unmarried Muslim girl. She was belongs to the state of Uttar Pradesh. She is congenitally blind and later became hard of hearing at the age of 28 years. She manages her hearing disability with the help of a hearing aid.

She lives in a nuclear family. Her father studied up to higher secondary and served in Indian Air Force. Her mother is educated up to middle school and is a housewife. She has four sisters and none of them has any disability. Three of her elder sisters are happily married. All of them are graduates. Case I’s father developed problem of retinal detachment which affected his vision in the old age. Since her father was the only bread earner, they were not financially sound.

Case I’s parents were disturbed when they realized that she was blind. Her father tried his best to provide Case I with medical care but were not successful. He continued to seek medical treatment for about 5 years. He bore all the expenses and took her to various eye specialists all over India. Doctors told them it would not be possible to revive her eyesight since she was congenitally blind due to weak optic nerves.

Case I’s father was very supportive. Her father never blamed her or considered her as a burden. At times, Case I’s mother shows little bias towards her. Her sisters were very caring they made her familiar with various shapes, alphabets and taught her counting and helped her with daily chores. Case I’s parents did not realize that she could go to school and get education. When Case I realized that all her sisters were going to school, she also expressed her keen desire to study. At that time, her father was posted at Nasik in Maharashtra. Her father took her to all the schools but they refused to admit a blind child. She continued to remain at home till the age of 19 years. Circumstances became favourable when Case I’s father got posted to Chandigarh, where one of his colleagues informed him about the Institute for the Blind. This gave a ray of hope to Case I. She felt that it was a God sent opportunity.
Her father visited the Institute but the school authorities refused to admit her as admission age was 5 to 14 years. Her father kept on pleading her case; on his repeated requests, Case I was admitted to the school. She was very enthusiastic about her admission. Within a few months, she learnt Braille. She then learnt mobility, orientation and other skills essential for a visually impaired person to become independent. Soon she adjusted in the new educational environment and gained confidence. She felt comfortable in the educational setting. She was helped by her teachers and classmates and was comfortable in the company of other blind students. She got equal opportunity in competing with normal students. The curriculum suited her needs and she got individual attention during her studies. The attitude of the staff and faculty was favourable and motivating towards her and she didn’t find any difference in behaviour of the visually impaired and normal teachers. The institution’s Headmaster and one of her teachers encouraged her and motivated her to develop writing skills. She participated in co-curricular activities like poetry competitions and debates etc. Her desire to study, deep interest and cooperation of family members and teachers helped her to excel in studies and she successfully completed her higher secondary within seven years. She passed her matriculation with 65% and high school with 70% marks. She strongly felt that the institution played a crucial role in her life by providing her basic education and competent skills to lead her life independently. She also became aware regarding the concessions and facilities given by the Government to visually impaired persons from her teachers. She then joined Government Institute for Blind, Jamalpur for a two-year for Teacher Training Course as she wanted to start earning her livelihood. She also completed B.A first year as a private candidate. She discontinued her studies as she had mobility problems and didn’t want to bind any of her family members to always escort her. She also faced problems in finding a suitable reader and writer for higher studies. Above all there were financial constraints in the family.

When Case I came back from Ludhiana, three of her sisters got married; her father also became weak and old. She sensed that her mother had started treating her as a burden. She applied for the post of teachers in
various educational institutes but did not get any success. Case I requested her Institute to accommodate her for a few months so that she could get some experience. However, her request was not acceded to. She decided to join computer course but again due to ill health she could not complete the course.

She became dissatisfied with her achievements even after Teachers Training Course. She appeared in a number of interviews but didn’t get any job. She applied in Sarv Shiksha Abhiyan but was rejected due to lack of teaching experience. She was willingly to work voluntarily but didn’t get a chance anywhere. She got her name registered in the employment exchange but did not get a single call. All this has disappointed her badly. She feels that stigma is still attached with the visually impaired in our society. She strongly expresses her desire that Government must own all the responsibility of disabled children and launch various programmes to create awareness in the society. She desperately wanted to get employed and be financially independent and secure before getting married.

Earlier, her father wanted to marry her in the same religion either with a sighted person or with someone who had any other type of disability like an orthopedically handicapped person. But her sisters insisted their father to ignore the religion bars in her case. They all are still in search of a suitable match.

She feels lonely and economically insecure. She copes with her frustration by writing. She wrote more than 100 poems on the beauties of nature and human life and recited them in the Balsabha. She also wrote a novel, “Snehnirjali”. One of her books, “Jyoti” included different poems on nature and vision and was published in January, 2002. She got social recognition and was honored by the Governor in June, 2002 and even got State Award for her writings. Although she got social recognition but she feels that people do not have adequate awareness of her potentialities. Lack of social and economic support, awareness and opportunity hampered her personal progress also.

Further, familial circumstances forced Case I to remain aloof from the outside world. Her father lost his vision and he became dependent. Her
mother spent most of the time in taking care of Case I's father as a result she was neglected. She became depressed. She was trying to get some job but did not meet any success. She started blaming her disability for her failure.

She started developing negative attitude towards her sisters. She cursed herself for such life. Depression became very acute and she started losing physical health. She became very weak and kept on lying on the bed throughout the day. She would eat very little and would hardly talk to anybody.

Case I developed quite an antagonistic attitude towards her family members. She felt that her parents did not make much effort to make her independent. All types of negative thoughts entered her mind. She lost interest in writing poetry and didn’t interact with outsiders.

At the time of recording of this case history, Case I even refused to meet the researcher after initial meetings.
The case J is 45 years old visually impaired male who belongs to state of Uttar Pradesh. He lost his total vision at the age of 11 years due to Eye Cancer. He belongs to upper caste Hindu lower class family.

He was born in a large nuclear family. His father took education up to middle and worked with a goldsmith. His mother was illiterate. He has four brothers and two sisters. His father suffered with paralysis and remained bed ridden for 10 years. Because of his father’s condition nobody in his family received education beyond primary level. All his brothers are labourers. At the age of 8 years, when Case J was studying in class third he had some vision problem and infection in one eye. He tolerated it and did not share it with anybody in the family. But when the situation became out of control he told his brother who took him to the Eye hospital. After complete investigations the Doctors informed him that he is suffering with Eye cancer and his eye should be removed immediately otherwise it will spread to the other eye also. Soon his one eye was removed but unfortunately his other eye also got infected. The Doctors tried to control the spread of cancer with medicines but within three years, Case J lost the total vision. His treatment was done on charity. Because of his family’s economic condition and negative attitude towards his disability he was not accepted in the family as an equal member. His mother started considering him as a burden. She blamed him for his disability and took his disability as a result of bad deeds of past. The case J himself feels that disability occurs because of the medical and economic reasons not because of the bad deeds of the past. His mother discriminated him in daily needs and never took care of his needs. She always had difference of opinion with him. His siblings were busy in their own life and did not pay any attention to him. The attitude of his father was positive but he himself was helpless because of his illness. His mother always ignored him, criticized and demeaned, insulted, abused, threatened and shouted at him on various occasions. He was not allowed to express his views and if demanded anything his mother physically assaulted him. He tolerated everything and did not react violently. But with the passage of time he realized that his disability
is the cause of his miseries. He took his disability as a challenge and decided to become independent in life. His parents did not support him in his education, financial, psychological and social needs.

One day the case J met one educated visually impaired person who advised him for the education and took him to the Dehra Dun school for the visually impaired. The school authority however refused him admission because of his age. At that time, Case J was 12 years of age. Then he got admission at the Haridwar School for the blind. This school was just like an ashram. Although everything was free but the case J did not feel comfortable. The education system was inadequate. Only music and caning was taught. Since Case J had a strong desire to study, after two years of stay he left that school and came back home. In the meantime his father expired. In these circumstances his family disowned him and moved to another place for livelihood. During his stay at Haridwar, he came to know about another school. He went to Ferozepur and joined School for the blind in class 5th. In this school, he was given training in music, caning and Braille. There was, however, no proper curriculum or examination system. Only students were promoted to upper classes on the basis of oral exams. He did not feel comfortable as his requirements were not met even in this school. Teachers were not trained to cater to the needs of visually impaired. There were only two Music teachers, one Braille teacher, and one cane teacher. The curriculum did not suit him. He did not get individual attention. Even food was not good. He was not satisfied with the educational opportunities and unfavorable attitude of teachers and management. He learnt Braille and other mobility skills which are essential for a visually impaired person to lead an independent life. He also got mastery over daily living skills which enhanced his personality. He started using cane with confidence and started walking independently. With strong determination and motivation he decided to receive good education. He started participating in extra-curricular activities like music competitions etc. He made efforts to improve the education status of that school and brought changes. He along with other visually impaired students appeared for the 8th class examination as a private candidate and passed with 60% marks. After passing the 9th class he left the school due to
the unfavorable circumstances. Since there was lack of provision and facilities for the Board examination, Case J along with other students protested against the management to provide them more facilities. The school authorities felt offended and asked these protesting students to leave the school. Left with no alternative, Case J came to Chandigarh and stayed in a temple. Since he had no work for sometime he washed utensils in a restaurant to manage his daily needs. He did Vishard in Music and started jagran, and other music programmes in the temple. One day he was playing flute. One flute seller was greatly impressed and requested him to teach him flute. Then the case started teaching him. Soon some other students also joined him. One of his students helped him financially and arranged one academy for him where he started coaching classes in music. At the age of 19 years, he got first job of a music teacher in Gurukul School on Rupees 100 along with accommodation. After getting job, he started his studies and passed matriculation with 65% marks. After this there was no end to Case J's achievement, along with his job of Music Teacher and private tuitions, he did higher Secondary Graduation, and then Post Graduation in Music. Later he qualified U.G.C. and joined M.Phil from Panjab University as a regular student. During the course of his studies he always faced the problem of reader, writer and study material but he managed with the help of his students to whom he was teaching music. One of his teachers was very co-operative and helped him in getting a part time job of a Tabla player. In the night he was performing jagran, or other musical programmes and in the morning he attended classes. One of his classmates was very helpful, she was a good singer. The case J wanted to make his own Music club as a professional programmer. He needed one lady singer for that. He requested his classmates to join his team. She agreed and joined his team and he started his musical programmes within no time. He became one of the famous musicians of the city and got full social recognition. One day he got an opportunity to perform some cultural programme for the Police department. The I.G. police was so impressed with his performance that he opened provided him permanent job in the cultural club of Police. He did this job for the three years and then at the age of 28 years he got the job of a music lecturer in a College in Haryana through employment exchange. This job was permanent but in reserve category. After two years he was transferred to
another college. At the time of recording this case, he was working as a lecturer in Government College. He commutes himself. He is satisfied with his job. He has satisfactory relations with his colleagues, subordinates and superiors. He feels that he is treated at par with other normal individuals at work place. Although he got this job after a long struggle but he feels that his disability is not a hindrance in his progress at work place. He is very confident, competent and efficient in teaching music and performs his duty with full devotion. He participates in the key decision making process at the work place as all music programmes are organized with his consent. At the age of 30 years Case J married his music partner. They got married in a temple without any dowry. At the time of marriage, his wife was 25 years old and she belonged to upper Caste Hindu Family. She is M.A. Music but is a house wife. After one year of marriage Case J was blessed with one daughter who also suffered with eye cancer and later died at the age of 5 years. Now he has one sighted son who is 10 years old and studying in class 5th in a convent school. The case has very good relationship with his wife. And he is very happy with his family. His wife helps him in all the spheres of life. She escorts him in social functions; she drops him to his work place in car. She understands him and never gets him hurt because of his disability. She feels proud of her husband’s achievements. They enjoy the musical programmes which they perform together. They have their own house, with all the comforts of life. They have opened one music academy. They give great importance to each other’s opinions and avoid difference of opinions. His wife gives priority to his requirements and never behaves negatively. Case J shares his personal opinion with his wife and friends and takes major decisions of life with the advice of his partner. Case J does not feel lonely and insecure. He copes up with his frustration by interacting with his family and praying as well as listening music. Along with his job he has joined National Association for the Blind to learn computer with special software. The case J feels that these special institutes play a crucial role to excel in life. He feels that people have adequate awareness of his potentialities. He got maximum help from the general public in reading, writing and some time in providing shelter and crossing roads etc.
He strongly expressed that it is the responsibility of the parents to fully support their handicapped child. Government should create awareness among general masses towards disabled. He is fully aware about the concessions and facilities given by the Government for the welfare of visually impaired. He became aware during his adulthood through media and other visually impaired friends. Many times he is cheated financially by the sighted people. He feels that stigma is attached to blind in our society but the attitude of society has changed to some extent in urban areas and among educated people. He feels that society creates desired changes as per our convenience.

Financial support was the major factor which hampered his progress but he crossed all the hurdles of disability in his life with strong determination and positive attitude towards life. He feels that with the help of assistive devices and technology visually impaired can lead independent and successful life. He is fully satisfied with his achievements.
Case K

Case K is a 35 year’s old partially sighted woman who belongs to a small village in Haryana. She belongs to Upper Caste Hindu Family with poor economic background. Her father was just literate and owned a small daily needs shop. Her mother was illiterate and housewife. Case K has three elder brothers and 2 elder sisters. Her siblings are not well educated. Her brothers also joined their father in shop and later on set up their own independent shops. All her siblings are normal and married.

After one year of birth, one of the neighbours pointed out to her mother, that Case K needs medical attention, since her eyes didn’t appear normal. Her eyes showed impression of cataract. She was too young and her parents did not realize that she was not able to see properly. Case K’s parents took her to hospital. Doctors told them that she was suffering from congenital cataract and it could be treated with surgery. She was referred to PGI, Chandigarh, where doctors did not carry out any operation as they found her to be anemia. Her parents were highly disappointed. They started cursing their fate. Case K became a source of depression. Case K remained ignorant about all these thoughts as she was too young. She grew like other normal children as she had partial vision.

Her parents were more attentive towards her and she was given full care. Her mother taught her daily activities. In the mean time, her brother moved to Chandigarh along with his family and opened a shop there. In Chandigarh somebody told her father about (shankaralya netralaya) Madras Eye hospital. Her parents and elder brother took her to Madras where they were told that even after surgery it was not sure if the Case K would get her eyesight back. But her brother insisted for her operation. Surgery was performed but nothing changed. After some time CASE K’s parents took her to AllIMS Delhi where Doctors made it clear that there is no treatment for Congenital Cataract. All hopes were shattered and they were left heartbroken. As time passed by, her parents accepted her disability and stopped seeking medical assistance. However at times they took her to places of religious faith.
Case K did not have cordial relations with her brothers and sisters. She always had difference of opinion with her siblings. They treated her as burden. Her eldest sister was very rude towards her. She always discriminated her for her disability. Her brothers were least interested in her pain and never paid attention to her needs or feelings. They used to ignore her. She used to feel depressed by their attitude but her parents always supported her.

Case K was very much interested in going to school by looking at other children in the neighborhood. Her parents ignored this. When she turned 13 one of the neighbours told her father about the school for blind in Chandigarh. As there was no hostel facility for girls her father dropped the idea of sending her to school. She continued to stay at home. Meantime, her Elder brother got married. Case K’s Sister-in-law also didn’t have sympathy for her. She used to blame her of disability. As a result, her parents become over protected, loving and caring towards her. Her father was in constant touch with school authorities, as and when school started transport facilities for girls. Her father got her admission in the school. Due to her strong will, she learnt Braille very fast and soon became one of the favorite students of all the teachers. Teachers gave her individual attention and soon she got adjusted to the school environment. She being a day scholar became friendly with other students and made friends with other visually impaired students and enjoyed their company as no one discriminated her for her disability. Her parents were also very happy to see their daughter studying and both supported her in her education. Case K was promoted to class 3rd on the basis of her academic performance. She was very happy in the institute as all her requirements regarding the study material, reader, and writer were taken care of. The attitude of all her teachers, staff and faculty was favourable and motivating which further enhanced her performance in her studies. She passed her 8th, 10th and 12th in first division and actively participated in the extracurricular activities. She wanted to study further and had full support of her parents. They got her admitted in BA 1st year and also arranged transport for her convenience.

In the meantime, all her siblings got married. They wanted her to settle down in life as well. Case K however, wanted to marry an educated Visually
Impaired who could understand her feelings and emotions in a better way but her parents wanted her to marry a sighted boy of their caste only. This was the only time when she had a difference of opinion with her parents. Her parents never wanted to marry her off to a blind person, they were of the opinion, it would add to Case K’s problem. They feared that progeny of such a union would also likely to be blind resulting in a black future of their daughter. They looked for different matches, ultimately found a normal but poor boy belonging to their own caste. Her marriage was fixed and she had to leave her education in between. On the engagement day Case K came to know that he was uneducated and unemployed. Her parents had promised to arrange some business for the boy and soon the wedding day was fixed. Her siblings were least bothered but her parents were happy to have found a sighted son-in-law of their own caste. Her parents gave cash, jewellery, clothes and spent a lot on her marriage.

After marriage, Case K was not treated well by her husband & in-laws. She was abused and criticized by them on many occasions. Her disability was made fun off by her mother in law. The Case K got depressed and used to cry a lot. She however continued to adjust thinking that things would improve with time.

She got pregnant within two months of marriage and even this didn’t bring any change in the attitude of her husband. No one used to take care of her and she was deprived of the proper diet which she required during pregnancy. When things became worse, she contacted her mother and asked for monetary help. During the 5th month of her pregnancy, the Case K became seriously ill she called her parents. Her parents were shocked to see her condition and were very disappointed. Case K moved to her paternal home. They took her to PGI and got her proper treatment where the doctor advised her complete bed rest due to serious complications.

Case K’s father decided to talk to her husband in order to save her marriage. He tried his best to financially support him. Her father also opened a shop for the boy in 50% partnership with one of Case K’s brothers. The boy was not interested in going and sitting at the shop, the only thing that he was
interested in was getting money without working for it. He did not work and stayed with Case K in her parents’ house.

Throughout her pregnancy, Case K had difficult time, her Blood Pressure was not stabilized and she was hospitalized. Her in-laws did not bother to enquire about her health. All expenses were bore by her parents. She gave birth to baby boy. Everyone in the family was very happy. Even her in-laws paid her visit. However, destiny had stored something else for her. After 8-9 days Case K’s brother discovered that there was some problem in the eyes of the child. Case K insisted her parents to take the child immediately to the Doctor. The Doctor told them that the baby had the same problem which his mother had i.e. Congenital Cataract and confirmed that the child was blind. He suggested surgery but that could be done only after child was 4-5 months old. The whole situation was quite devastating for the Case as she was completely shattered. She passed these months under great stress. After 5 months, the child was taken to the Hospital by Case K’s parents. Her husband was least interested in the whole situation and gave no emotional or monetary support to his wife. On the day of the operation the Case K fasted the whole day and prayed to God for the success of her son’s operation. God was kind to listen to her prayers, the operation was successful and the child regained partial eyesight. Her husband continued to stay with her at her parents’ house and did not care about her and her children.

Within a period of two years, after her first child, she became pregnant again. Her sister-in-law discouraged her from carrying out her pregnancy. They even blamed her for disability and blamed her for giving birth to blind children. Negative attitude of people made her disturbed. Her parents however, fully supported her during that period but the case remained tense throughout her pregnancy, however. she got relief when she came to know that her daughter was normal, she thanked god for blessing her with sighted daughter. With the birth of normal child, her husband also felt happy and started behaving normally.

Case K along with her children and husband became fully dependant on her parents. Her parents were also getting old and they realized that their sons and daughters-in-law were feeling very uncomfortable with Case K and
her family. Case K’s father asked her to get some job so that she should get independent. At that time there was one vacancy of clerk advertised in the newspaper for the visually impaired. Case K applied for the post and her father did every effort to get her this job. At the age of 28, she got the job which was permanent.

After the 6 months of her job, she got Government accommodation. She shifted from her parent’s home to her accommodation. In the beginning, her husband felt very happy. He helped her in all day today activities, even in taking care of children in her absence. Case K’s husband, however, refused to work. He continued with his waywardness and used to take money from her.

She used public transport to commute to her work place. Although she is having cordial relations with her colleagues and subordinates but have unsatisfactory relations with her superordinates because of the negative attitude and lack of awareness. She feels that she is not treated at par with other normal individuals at work place. The case K feels that her disability is a great hindrance in her progress otherwise she could have studied further and would have got a suitable job in teaching and prosper. She is not satisfied with her job because of the discriminatory environment. All the time she has to sit in the office, very rarely she attends telephone calls.

All the responsibility of her family was on her. Case K got her son admitted in Institution for Blind and her daughter in Public School. She even arranged for a Private tutor for her children so that they could get good education.

Due to financial constrains and abusive behaviour of her husband, Case K developed strained marital relations. Her husband started considering his son as a burden and he was biased towards him as compared to his daughter. Abusive language, shouting, and beating became common in their home. When things became unbearable her husband left home, her parents again supported her. She told her parents about her husband’s behaviour. He came back after some days and started misusing her money in gambling and drinking. He started stealing money. He even got all her savings in cashed. When she confronted him, he physically abused her. He asked her to...
get herself transferred from Chandigarh. He blamed her parents for too much interference in their lives. She did not agree for transfer because there was no school for her son’s education. He kept on insisting. When she refused to agree her husband left her and went to village. Case K was left alone to take care of her children. Her parents started living with her. She is all the time busy to provide a good life for her children. She feels lonely whenever she goes out for any function or in social gathering because of the absence of her husband.

She has accepted her disability and copes up with her disability by comparing herself with more disabled. She has strong faith in god. She feels relaxed by interacting with her children. She does not want to divorce her husband because of the social stigma attached to divorced person in our society.

She feels that it is the responsibility of the parents to support their disabled child and they should have a broad vision for their disabled child. Parents should give education and make the disabled child financially independent. The parents should be judicious and foresighted while selecting a partner for a disabled girl. Now her parents have also realized their mistake but nothing could be changed. Their responsibility has increased and they also feel bad when they see their daughter’s struggle.
ANALYSIS

For the purpose of having an in-depth understanding of the problem, it was decided to take up case analysis. These case histories are not representative of the cases discussed in earlier chapters. On the other hand, they are unique or even unusual in a number of ways. Each case perceive his or her situation as unique because visually impaired face different circumstances as compared to sighted individuals, however, these cases share certain common experience like trauma of disability, lack of family support and discriminatory attitude of parents, difficulties during the course of education, struggle to become successful in life and negative attitude of the society. The subsequent analysis highlights their background, role of various support systems, their reaction, perception of significant others and coping mechanism adopted by them to cope with disability.

The present study focused on the educated visually impaired persons who were residing in the state of Punjab and U.T. of Chandigarh at the time of study. Thus both males and females, employed and unemployed, married and unmarried, congenital and adventitious blind were included in the qualitative data. Since the first objective of the present study was to highlight the personal history of visually impaired adults, it becomes imperative to focus on the profile of the cases for analysis.

Background of the cases

In order to know the background of the cases, variables like age, sex, marital status, caste, religion, education, occupation, income etc were discussed. Since in the present study focus is on the visually impaired, an effort has been made to relate the socio-economic and demographic background of the cases with their medical history like type of blindness, onset of visual impairment, causes, treatment taken for their disability and difficulties faced during the course of treatment.

Type of blindness

On the basis of degree of vision, visually impaired are divided into two categories i.e. partially sighted which include low vision, mobile and totally blind.
Out of 11 cases 3 cases i.e. (Case A, C and K) were partially sighted while 8 cases i.e. (case B, D, E, F, G, H, I and J) were totally blind.

**Onset of visual impairment**

Out of 11 cases five cases i.e (Case A, C, H, I and K) were visually impaired since birth while remaining 6 cases i.e. (Case B, D, E, F, G and J) became visually impaired after the birth. Case D became visually impaired in the early childhood, case E, F and J lost their vision in the adolescent, and case G and B became blind in the adulthood. Out of the 5 cases who were visually impaired since birth, 3 cases i.e. (Case A, C and K) were partially sighted whereas those who became visually impaired after the birth, all were totally blind.

**Causes of visual impairment**

Out of 11 cases, 5 cases i.e. (Case A, B, C, E, F and K) were visually impaired due to ocular and anomalies like Retinitis pigmentosa and Cataract. 2 cases that were congenitally impaired, the cause of their impairment was not known because sometimes it is not possible to detect the exact cause of congenital deformities. Therefore, cause of 2 cases i.e. (Case H and I) was not known. In 3 cases i.e. (Case D, J and G) reported wrong medicine, road accident and disease like eye cancer. Out of those cases that were visually impaired due to ocular and anomalies, 3 cases i.e. (Case A, C and K) were partially sighted whereas all the cases that became visually impaired due to some congenital defect, accident or disease were totally blind.

**Treatment**

Out of 11 cases 9 cases i.e. (Case A, B, C, E, F, G, I, J and K) took treatment for their impairment. Remaining 2 cases i.e. (Case D and H) could not get any kind of medical treatment. The mother of case D died when he was an infant. His father was an illiterate labourer and did not provide him any medical treatment. His father left him in one Institute for the blind. Case H was congenitally blind and was considered as a burden and as a result was not
given medical care. Interestingly, Case D was male & Case H was a female. Remaining 9 cases i.e. (Case A, B, D, E, F, G, I, J and K) received medical and surgical treatment. Cases first took treatment at local level i.e. their place of residence. Later on when they did not get satisfactory result, they moved to reputed hospitals in big cities. All the cases who took treatment went to various local eye hospitals and then visited various renowned eye hospitals of India for the treatment. One case i.e. (Case G) even sent his reports to abroad also as his sister was settled in U.S.

Any other disability

Sometimes people have multiple disabilities like problem of mannerism, learning or intellectual disability, hearing disability, etc. Out of 11 cases, 3 cases had disability other than visual impairment. Out of these 3 cases, 2 cases i.e. (Case D and H) were suffering with the problem of mannerism. Both these cases were ignored by their parents and nobody corrected them. One case i.e. (Case I) was suffering with hearing impairment also which affected her learning. She developed this impairment at the age of 28 years and was managing with the help of hearing aid.

Age

Out of 11 cases, 6 cases i.e. (Case C, D, F, G, I and K) were between the age group of 26-35 years and out of these 2 cases i.e. (Case C and K) were partially sighted, while 5 cases i.e. (Case A, B, E, H and J) were between the age group of 36-45 years of age and 1 case i.e. (Case A) was partially sighted.

Sex

Analysis indicates that there were six males (case A, C, D, E, G and J) and five cases i.e. (case B, F, H, I and K) were females and out of these only 1 case i.e. (Case K) was partially sighted where as remaining all female cases were totally blind. Out of 6 males, 2 cases i.e. (Case A and C) were partially sighted. The researcher had intentionally tried to select quite an equal number
of males and females in the sample in order to study the gender differences among visually impaired.

**Marital status**

In the present study both married and unmarried cases were included. Out of 11 cases, 5 cases i.e. (Case A, B, E, J and K) were married while 6 cases i.e. (Case C, D, F, G, H and I) were unmarried. Out of the married cases, 3 cases i.e. (Case A, E and J) were males and the 2 cases i.e. Case (B and K) were females. Out of the married cases 2 cases i.e. (Case A and K) were partially sighted remaining 3 cases were totally blind. Those who were married, their age at marriage and detailed information regarding their partner were procured. The qualitative data show that all the cases got married between the ages of 25-30 years of age. All the cases got married within their own religion and caste, except case B who was Christian but married a lower caste Hindu. Four cases i.e. (Case A, B, E and J) married educated spouse, while 1 case i.e. (Case K) married an illiterate person and unemployed. Case A’s spouse was Undergraduate. Spouses of three cases i.e. (Case B, E and J) were Post-graduates. Spouses of three cases i.e. (Case A, E, and J) were housewives whereas case B’s spouse was a teacher. Findings indicate that out of all married cases; only case B’s husband was employed at salary of Rs 15,000 per month. It is important to note that all married cases had sighted normal life partner except case B who was female and had partially sighted husband.

**Reasons for not getting married**

In the present study out of 11 cases, 6 cases i.e. (Case C, D, F, G, H and I) were unmarried. Out of these, one case i.e. (Case C) was partially sighted and remaining 5 cases were totally blind.

Three cases i.e. (Case C, D and G) were males and three cases i.e. (Case F, H and I) were females. Case C was highly qualified and belonged to good family background; he wanted to marry a girl with other than with same disability. Case D and G were unemployed. They wanted to become economically independent before getting married.
In case of unmarried females, case F’s parents wanted a sighted match but they could not find any. Case H’s parents did not make efforts to marry off their daughter. The third female i.e. Case I was unemployed and totally blind. Her parents wanted her to marry in their own religion (Muslim) with a sighted person but they could not find any match.

The above qualitative analysis of marital status reveals that it is very difficult for visually impaired females to get suitable sighted match as compared to males. Lack of family support, economic insecurity, caste and religion were the major hindrances for the visually impaired females to get married.

Model/Arrangement of marriage

In this study an attempt has been made to find out whether married respondents faced difficulty in finding a suitable life partner. The qualitative data reveals that those cases who were married, majority of them were males and they did not face any kind of difficulty in getting married. Marriage of 2 male cases i.e. (Case A and E) was arranged by relatives and parents. One case i.e. Case J selected his partner on his own. In case of B, when her parents expired her brothers did not try to get her married. However, due to help of non-family member she could get married. Case K was married to an uneducated male of her own caste. Her parents were very rigid, as they wanted to marry her off to a sighted boy of their own caste.

Number and age of children

All the married cases had 2 to 3 children between the age group of 2 to 14 years and all were studying in good schools. In order to find out some genetic and hereditary defects, health status of children was also studied. Case A, B and E had normal children. Case J, a male, had one visually impaired daughter and one normal son. Case J himself suffered from eye cancer and lost his eyesight due to it. His daughter also suffered from eye cancer and died at the age of five years. Case K, a female with partial blindness had one son who is visually impaired and a daughter who is normal. Interestingly the spouses of both the cases were normal.
Caste

Out of 11 cases, 6 cases belonged to upper caste i.e. (Case A, C, E, F, G and J), 2 cases were from middle caste category i.e. (Case H and K) and remaining 3 were from lower caste i.e. (Case B, D and I). Out of 6 cases, which were from upper caste, Case A & C were congenitally visually impaired & were partially sighted and case E, F, G & J were adventitious and totally blind. Two cases that were from middle caste categories, case H was congenitally and totally blind while case K was congenitally partially blind. Out of 3 cases that were from lower caste, Case I was congenitally and total blind, Case B & D were adventitious and total blind. There was no striking difference in caste background and type of blindness in the cases under study.

It has been assumed that congenital deformities are more prevalent in lower caste group which is related to the lower socio-economic status of the family. People belonging to lower caste, have low socio-economic status and thus, are more prone to disabilities because of the poor hygienic conditions and lack of preventive measures.

Analysis of case studies indicates that the problem of visual impairment was prevalent in all the caste groups but number of cases under study was more from the upper caste. For the present study the focused group is educated visually impaired of working age adults. In India a large percent of disabled who belong to the lower caste are illiterate and they lack awareness regarding the education of visually impaired. Further they don't have knowledge about the welfare schemes and scholarships given by the Government. As a consequence very a few people belonging to lower caste provide education to their disabled children.

Residential Background

Out of 11 cases, 4 cases were from Urban background i.e. (Case A, B, C, F) and 7 cases were from rural background i.e. (D, E, G, H, I, J and K). After the education and employment all the cases were residing in urban areas except case G who was unemployed continued to live with his mother in the rural area. Out of the 4 cases that were from urban background, case A and C were partially sighted and out of the 7 cases that were from rural
background, only case K was partially sighted remaining six cases were totally blind.

**Religion**

Qualitative data indicates that there were 8 cases (Case A, C, D, E, F, H, J and K) who were Hindus. There was one case each from other religions; case B was Christian, case G was Sikh and case I was Muslim. All the cases who were partially sighted i.e. (Case A, C and K) were from Hindu religion.

**Education**

Out of 11 cases, 2 cases i.e. (Case A and C) were Ph.D. Five cases i.e. (Case D, E, F, H and J) were Post graduates and Case G, who was totally blind was B.Sc., B.Ed with diploma in computers and English Braille stenography. Three cases i.e. (case B, I and K) had education up to high school with training as telephone operator and shorthand and teacher training. All these were females. Case K was partially sighted and remaining two cases were totally blind. Majority of the cases were highly educated but it was mainly females who left their studies after high school because of the family circumstances, financial constrains and lack of hostel facility for higher education. Out of 7 cases that attained higher level of education, 2 cases i.e. (Case A and C) were partially sighted whereas remaining 5 cases i.e. (Case D, E, F, H and J) were totally blind. This analysis of case studies shows that total absence of sight was not any kind of hindrance in the attainment of education.

**Occupation**

Out of the 11 cases only eight were employed. Four cases i.e. (A, C, E and J) were occupying higher level occupations, in which Case A, C and J were working as lecturers and Case E was working as a headmaster. Case A & C were partially sighted and Case E & J were totally blind. Four cases i.e. (Case B, F, H and K) were occupying middle level of occupations. Out of these cases only case K was partially sighted. Case B, F and K were working
as clerks and Stenographer. Case H was employed as teacher. Analysis reveal that visually impaired males were occupying positions of higher status than females, as all the visually impaired females were engaged in middle level occupations only.

Out of the 8 cases who were employed, 7 cases i.e. (Case A, B, C, E, F, J and K) were working in the Government department where as Case H was in the charitable institutions. Case A, C, E, F and J got their present job on the basis of their abilities, case B and K used their personal sources for getting the job. Case H who was working in the charitable institutions got jobs through personal contact.

Three cases i.e. Case D, G and I were unemployed. Out of these unemployed cases, case I was female and case D and G were males. All these unemployed cases were totally blind.

**Income**

Income determines the social status of individuals. There were 4 cases i.e. (Case A, C, E and J) were earning more than Rs. 15000 per month. 3 cases i.e. (Case B, F and K) were earning up to Rs10000 to Rs 15000 per month. Case H was earning up to Rs. 5000 per month. Her qualification was M.A., B.Ed but she was employed as a teacher in the charitable institutions.

Those who were earning salary above 15000 per month, Case A and C were partially sighted and Case K who had monthly salary of Rs1C, 000-15,000 was partially sighted. Since Case D, G and I were unemployed and they had no income. Results also reveal that only male cases were earning more than Rs 15000 per month.

**Family of Orientation of the Respondents**

In order to have in-depth understanding of the cases, information on family background of the respondents was also obtained.

In the present study only three cases i.e. (Case C, E and H) belonged to joint family. Remaining 8 cases i.e. (Case A, B, D, F, G, I, J and K) were from nuclear family. Case E belonged to very large family as he had step
siblings also. Case A, B, F, H, I, J and K had large size family and remaining 3 cases, i.e. (case C, D and G) had medium sized family.

Parents of Case C and G were highly educated i.e. post-graduates with professional degrees whereas Parents of 4 cases i.e. (Case A, D, J and K) were illiterate or had education up to primary level. There were six cases i.e. (Case B, E, F, H and I) whose parents studied up to high school. This analysis shows that majority of parents were either illiterate or have low level of education.

Accordingly only in two cases i.e. (case C and G) parents were engaged in high level of occupation while parents of 3 cases i.e. (case A, D and J) were labourers. Parents of case B, H and I had retired and Case E, F and K's parents were farmers and shopkeepers.

Case I's father became visually impaired due to Retinitis Pigmentosa in his middle age. Parents of all other cases were not suffering from any visual impairment. However, there were 2 cases i.e. (Case A and F) that had visually impaired siblings with the same cause.

Role of social support systems

As one of the objectives of the present study was to understand the role of various social support systems i.e. family, education and work place environment, information on these support systems was procured.

Parental support

In the present study an attempt has been made to find out the role of family support on the well-being of a visually impaired person. In order to study this objective in depth information was collected. The role of parents with regards to day to day behaviour was assessed. The main issues on which difference of opinion usually occurred were money matters, daily needs, mobility etc. Out of 11, 8 Cases i.e. (A, B, D, E, H, I, J and K) reported that they had difference of opinion with their family members.

Case C’s parents were highly educated and belonged to upper-class. They brought him up like a normal child and gave him equal treatment. He
was given full support in all his needs because of his disability. Out of all the Case studies he is the only one who went to a normal school and even completed his MBA because of the support provided to him by his parents that gave him the confidence and made him competent and skillful.

Case F and G were adventitious blind. It was very difficult for these Cases as well as for their parents to accept the trauma of disability in the later part of life. Case F’s parents had low education and belonged to a lower income group but they still gave full support to his daughter. Case G’s mother was an educated lady and she gave full moral and financial support to her disabled son.

Case A and J’s father died when they were 14 years of age. Their mothers were illiterate and had no source of income. Case A’s elder brother was also visually impaired because of the same cause i.e. (Congenital Cataract). It was difficult for their mother to accept disability of her sons. She started treating them as her liability on her one younger sighted son. She did not consider them as useful and productive member of the family. She discriminated them on daily needs and as a consequence, Case A always had difference of opinion with her. When his father was alive, he was admitted in one of the Special School for the Blind with boarding and lodging facilities. Case A’s mother was very happy to send them away.

Case B did not have any difference of opinion with her parents. Her brothers, who were married, however considered her as a burden and liability. They never paid any attention to her needs. After her father’s death she didn’t get any support from her siblings.

Case D’s mother died when he was 2 years old. His father was illiterate and worked as a daily wager. Case D was the youngest child in the family. His father left him in an Institute for the Blind. Case D’s father did not take any responsibility of his son. Whenever Case D went home on holidays, he was ill-treated by his siblings.

Case E received full support from his father and even step siblings but did not develop cordial relations with his step mother. His mother discriminated against him because of his disability.
Case H was congenitally blind female. Her family members considered her a burden and a curse on the family. Her parents wanted to get rid of her and she was held responsible for bad happenings in the family.

Case K was partially sighted but her parents did not take her out in social gathering because of the stigma. She did not get care and love from sisters-in-law and brothers.

Case A, D, E, H, J and K experienced negative behaviour of their parents and family members and Case B and K were ill-treated by their siblings and sister-in-laws. At times, they were physically abused also. Insulting and abusive behaviour was often used by their family members. When these cases were ill-treated they reacted differently. Some of cases got depressed, frustrated, some became violent and revengeful, and even some of the cases tolerated the whole situation silently and took their disability as a challenge and decided to become independent in life, not to remain burden on their family.

Case A, E and J got frustrated, tolerated everything and decided to become independent. When they became independent their negative attitude towards their parents changed and they gave support to their parents. Case B, D, I and H felt bad and depressed. Case K became revengeful. Case A, D, H and J felt that because of the absence of family support their life was unplanned and without any direction. They lacked confidence and had no emotional security. Case H and D were totally ignored by the family and they developed the habit of mannerism (useless rotation of head), and did not know how to communicate with others. Parents of case A, D, H, I, J, K related their disability with the bad deeds of the past. Case C, E, F and G got full support of their parents in all aspects of life. Case C’s parents accepted his disability as a medical problem. They had positive approach and were solution oriented.

The qualitative analyses reveal that parents who were well educated with high income supported their visually impaired children. Those parents who were illiterate, economically poor and had more than one visually impaired child were biased and did not treat them equally. Since they lacked knowledge regarding the abilities, potentialities and capabilities of a disabled
child, they did not spend any money on them and did not support them financially, psychologically and socially.

**Family of procreation**

Since in the present study, the respondents were adults, along with family of orientation, family of procreation was also studied. An attempt was made to study the support of the spouse in the lives of visually impaired. Out of 11 cases, 5 cases i.e. (Case A, B, E, J and K) were married. All married respondents reported that they had difference of opinions with their spouses but they solved the matters with mutual co-operation and understanding except one case i.e. (Case K) a female who had marital conflict with her spouse on issues like money matters, daily needs, mobility etc. Out of 5 married cases, 2 cases i.e. (Case B and K) experienced negative behaviour of their spouse and family members. They were ignored, criticized, demeaned, denied permission to express views and were insulted on various occasions. Case K's was threatened, abused and many times even physically assaulted by her husband. Case B was ill-treated by her mother-in-law. Case B initially tolerated the situation silently but after some time she started resenting aggressive behaviour of her mother-in-law. Such finding reveals that only the female cases had experienced negative behaviour of their spouse and other family members whereas male cases had smooth and happy family life.

**Educational support**

The visually impaired individuals, who are blind since birth or become blind in the childhood, start their education from the special schools whereas those who become visually impaired in the later age have experience of both normal schools and special school. The adventitious blind after the impairment join some special institutions for their rehabilitation; learn basic skills of daily life, reading and writing skills and mobility skills. In the present study out of 11 cases 7 cases that were either congenital blind or became impaired in the childhood, studied from the special schools except 1 case i.e. (Case C) who was since birth partially sighted, but studied in the normal school. Case C’s parents were highly educated, from higher socio-economic
background but they were not aware about the special schools and education of visually impaired. His parents admitted their child in the normal school. Initially, the school authority refused but later on after continuous persuasion they admitted him. The case C faced a number of difficulties because the teachers were also not aware about his needs. There was not any provision for the special devices or large ink print material. Teachers never gave him any kind of special attention or time etc. He got sufficient support in reading and writing from his parents and classmates. His classmates were helping him in reading ink print books and case C in return, helped them in solving the difficult questions as he was very intelligent. Therefore, with the support of his parents, classmates and his strong determination, he completed his M.B.A and even pursued Ph.D.

Out of the 6 cases that started their education from the special school, 2 cases i.e. (Case A and J) studied from the Ferozepur School for the blind. Both these cases were from very poor background, did not get any family support. Both these cases were not satisfied with the school facilities and educational system. This school was just like an Ashram, there was no trained staff. No attention was given to the basic requirements of the students. Case J caned chairs, took music tuitions and studied further as a private candidate. He completed his graduation, post-graduation and qualified U.G.C. During the course of his education, except the financial difficulty, he faced number of difficulties like problem of reader-writer and no study material in Braille or audio-cassettes. He took the help of his students for reading and writing. During the course of his education, case A also faced a number of difficulties such as no arrangement of readers-writers, non-availability of study material in Braille or audio-cassettes and financial difficulties for paying admission fee and examination fee.

Case D who became visually impaired in the early childhood, his father left him in the institute for blind and never supported him. He was too weak to walk independently and read Braille with his fingers. But with the passage of time and efforts of teacher he learnt Braille and started his studies. He received every kind of support from the teachers of the Institute. His higher education was sponsored by some social workers arranged by the Institute.
He faced the problem of reader and writer as well as study material during higher education.

Out of the 5 female cases 3 cases i.e. (Case H, I and K) were visually impaired since birth and 2 cases i.e. (Case F and B) were adventitious blind. Case H was considered as a burden or curse on the family. She wanted to study, after lot of opposition her father got her admitted in Delhi’s Virja Nand School for visually impaired girls, where she studied till the eighth grade. In this school, she learnt Braille, mobility and got a mastery over daily living skills. The acquisition of these special skills made her confident and more independent. After the 8th standard she requested her father to admit her in V.R.T.C. from where she passed her high school and came back home. Her sisters-in-law posed as an obstacle in her education and convinced everyone that her education is of no use. After a lot of persuasion, she convinced her father & paternal uncle and took admission in the college near their village. Her uncle used to escort her on Bi-cycle and waited outside the college till her classes were over. She also faced the problem of non-availability of study material in Braille, audio-cassettes and problem of reader and writer. But with great hardships she completed her Post Graduation. Then she joined B.Ed through correspondence where she faced a number of difficulties regarding study material, writer, mobility and discrimination by the teachers and classmates. She completed her 2 years B.Ed course in 4 years. This shows that with great hardships and struggle case H had completed her education.

Case I was not given education for 19 years as her parents were not aware of the fact that there are special schools for the blind. She was given home schooling by her sisters. It was when her father got transferred to Chandigarh; she was admitted in the institute for the blind. Although she joined School late with in short span she became Favourite of the teachers and developed writing skills. After completion of high school she could not continue her education. She studied till she got help from her family and transport facility of the institute. She did not join college for higher studies due to absence of any escort. Further, lack of hostel facility and financial constraints of the family also posed obstacles in her education.
Case K studied till 11th standard as her parents wanted her to marry as soon as possible. She could not pursue higher studies as her parents married her off at an early stage. Case B, lost her vision in the adulthood after completing her high school. Her father expired and siblings did not pay any attention to her needs. She came to know about the special school in Punjab from a Bible school. She convinced her mother and elder brother and joined the V.R.T.C. She adjusted in the new environment and learnt Braille, mobility skills and successfully completed vocational courses such as Braille stenography and telephone operator.

Other 3 cases i.e. (Case E, F and G) who were adventitious blind, Case E completed his M.Ed and Case F, completed her post-graduation, B.Ed and one year diploma in computer. Case G who entered the special institution after completing his B.Sc. He learnt basic skills to lead independent life. He also did Braille stenography and B.Ed through correspondence after his impairment.

The main findings emerged from the qualitative analysis of the educational support are that, despite impairment and absence of family support, it is the individual’s own motivation and aspiration which help them in achieving higher level of education. Analysis also reveals that in some of the special schools, their basic requirements were not taken care off and all the cases who pursued for higher education, experienced major difficulties such as lack of study material in Braille or audio-cassettes, problem of reader and writer, less educational opportunities and lack of awareness of teachers etc.

Work place

An effort was also made to know the Work place environment of visually impaired cases. For the qualitative data, information was procured on interaction, type of relationships and support which they received from their subordinates, colleagues and super-ordinates, their job satisfaction and the types of difficulties they face in performing their work.

Out of 11 cases only 8 cases i.e. (Case A, B, C, E, F, H, J and K) were employed in Government as well as charitable organizations and 3 cases i.e. (Case D, G and I) were unemployed. Case A, B, C, H and J had cordial
relations with their super-ordinates, subordinates and colleagues. They received equal opportunities of work related to their subjects and had good interaction with their colleagues and performed their duties efficiently while 3 cases i.e. (Case E, F and K) had cordial relations with their colleagues and subordinates. But Case E had satisfactory relationships with his super-ordinates while Case K and F had unsatisfactory relationships with their super-ordinate. Case E was not treated equally in leadership quality. Case K and F were appointed as clerks but they were supposed to sit in the office all the time and never got any opportunity to work. Due to lack of awareness and negative attitude, their super-ordinate never interacted with them and always refused to let them work. Their employer were of the opinion that due to the government policy, visually impaired have to be accommodated otherwise they are not capable.

Case A was heading his department and was managing his department very well. Case B who was working as a stenographer had got special device like Braille shorthand machine on which she note down the dictation and type on an ordinary typewriter and perform her duty independently and skillfully to the satisfaction of her superiors. Out of 8 cases, 5 cases i.e. (Case A, B, C, E and J) were satisfied with their jobs. 3 cases i.e. (case F, H and K) were not satisfied. Case H had a temporary job with less salary. Case f and K were unsatisfied from their job due to absence of any kind of work and discriminatory attitude of their employer. Case C was working as a lecturer, was performing his duty efficiently. He used low vision aid like lens to read ink print materials and prepare his lectures. He was fully satisfied with his job. Other 2 cases, who were music lecturers i.e. (Case A and J) were the incharge of their music departments. They had the full privilege to organize the programmes, take decisions and teach music independently. 1 case i.e. (Case E) was working as a headmaster. Although, his job was challenging and requires practical and analytical ability, he performs his administrative job with his competency and co-operation of his colleagues and satisfied with his job.

From the above analysis, it can be concluded that visually impaired can do any type of jobs like administrative, teaching, skilled and unskilled type of
jobs. Although, it was difficult for visually impaired to get higher status jobs but when they perform their duties independently and efficiently, surrounding people recognize their abilities and they get sufficient support from their colleagues, subordinates and super-ordinates. When the people become aware of their capabilities, they consider them as normal human beings and provide them support. Besides this, there were few employers who had negative attitude towards visually impaired and not willing to give any opportunities to them to explore their hidden talents and abilities. They had pre-conceived notion regarding the image of visually impaired and discriminate against them.

Strategies adopted by visually impaired or coping mechanism

There are different mechanisms used by visually impaired persons to overcome psychological stress and traumas of visual impairment such as music therapy, social interaction, compose poetry, read Braille books etc. Further, multimedia channels provide enormous amount of information regarding the educational programmes. Traditional approach was only music therapy for visually impaired but with the advancement of technology, visually impaired is using computer, internet with the help of special software which is a major source of entertainment.

For the qualitative data, researcher has procured information on various coping strategies adopted by visually impaired.

Concentrated on the objectives of life

Some of the visually impaired understudy received biased treatment in the family and when they realized that they were considered as a liability and non-productive member of the family, they took their disability as a challenge and decided to overcome it by becoming successful in life. They concentrated on the objectives of life and sometime when were disappointed compared themselves with more disabled. In the present study out of the 11 cases, 6 cases i.e. (Case A, B, C, E, J and K) did not think much about their disability. Remaining 5 cases i.e. (Case D,F,G,H and I) along with the objectives of life, compared themselves with more disabled to console themselves.
Case A was a social activist and decided to help other visually impaired. Case E also tried to create awareness regarding their capabilities among visually impaired persons. Both these cases have been awarded by the state government for their immense contribution in the society.

**Music therapy**

Music is one of the oldest methods of relaxing mind not only for visually impaired but also for the normal persons. In the present study, it was noticed in almost all the cases reported that whenever they felt lonely, they tried to overcome the stress by listening to music. 3 cases i.e. (Case A, C and J) used to play some musical instruments and were also good singers. They had been participating in various musical programmes.

**News**

The second traditional method used by the visually impaired persons to cope with their loneliness was to listen to the news. This method was also used by almost all the cases to keep their knowledge up to date. According to most of them this way they were able to divert their attention to the outside world.

**Poetry**

Besides music, 4 cases i.e. (Case A, C, H and I) used to write poetry whenever they felt lonely and frustrated. Case A's poetry had been regularly broadcasted from Lahore and Jalandhar Radio station and published. He was received honours for it. Case H was also a well recognised Poet. Case I was honoured by the governor with state award for her poetry.

**Computer Application** In modern times, visually impaired can also operate computer with the help of screen reading software which is one of the major source of knowledge and entertainment for them. Case A, C, E, F, G and J used computers to cope with their frustration. Case G, who was adventitious impaired person was staying at home and waiting for job. Whenever he felt lonely he used computer and internet.

**Crying and Praying**

There were some situations in life when visually impaired were not satisfied by their achievements and sometimes did not find any solution of
their problems. Due to absence of any kind of support most of the female cases mentioned that they used to cry and pray to relax themselves. All the cases were religious and used to meditate for peace of mind on routine basis.

**Family interaction**

In the present study, out of 11 cases 5 cases i.e. (Case A, B, E, J and K) were married and had children between the age group of 2-14 years of age. All these cases were quiet busy with the family and interacted with their spouses and children to relax themselves. They did not feel lonely. Out of 5 married cases 4 cases i.e. (Case A, B, E and J) shared their personal problems with their spouse and also with their friends. Case K shared her personal matters and problems with her colleagues as her husband deserted her.

**Perception of attitude of society**

In the present study an attempt was also made to study the perception of visually impaired about the attitude of society. Almost all the cases reported that the attitude of the society towards visually impaired people is changing in present times. Earlier, visually impaired people were considered as the most marginalized group of the society. General public had very limited exposure of the visually impaired people and were not aware of their capabilities. The impairment was associated with sins or bad deeds of past. They suffered due to denial of educational opportunities, segregation and isolation because of imposition of physical and social barriers. However, the provision of affirmative social, cultural, economic, legal and health care actions and support through barrier free environmental setting with the help of scientific technical aids and appliances have significantly reduced their handicaps and paved the way for their smooth interaction and adaptation with the society and surroundings.

All the cases reported that people are becoming aware about disability. All the cases reported that they got help from the general public except case I because being a Muslim girl she had no freedom to move alone. She was always escorted by her family members. Ten cases i.e. (Case A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, J and K) got help from general public while traveling, crossing roads, locating the places and identifying the number of buses, for reading and...
writing. Some of the cases expressed that people had cheated them in many ways. This was mostly done by illiterate people like rickshaw puller and sales men. Case B, C, E, H, J and K were cheated emotionally and financially. They reported that people did not make them aware regarding the surrounding environment.

Hence it can be concluded that visually impaired persons receive help from the general public or from their surroundings and their social support is a good source of interaction and exchange of information. Their acceptance in the society also depends on their social networks.

Conclusion

People with visual impairment constitute a heterogeneous group. There are differences in the nature of visual impairment. These differences can be in the form of onset of visual impairment, degree of vision, intensity of vision loss, socio-economic and demographic background. These differences have significant effect on the kind of social support one receive in the family and community. These differences also affect the kind of challenges one faces in the family, educational institutions and work place environment. In the qualitative analysis an effort has been made to study the implications of visual impairment on the family life, education, work place environment and their perception about the attitude of society.

It has been noticed that reactions of the parents towards their visually impaired child vary according to the onset of visual impairment. Parents of a congenitally blind child often feel socially stigmatized with the disability and consider their child as a burden. Whereas the parents of an adventitiously blind have different experiences because of the prior relationship, these parents provide more support and help them in becoming independent. In case of visual deterioration or degeneration, impaired person and his/her parents are continuously occupied with the fear of complete vision loss, which had also influence parental response and familial support.

Different variables like gender, class, and onset of visual impairment all play a crucial role in shaping the family environment of the visually impaired and their successful integration in the society. Qualitative data clearly
indicates that a majority of the congenitally visually impaired cases didn't receive support from their family irrespective of the gender differences. These cases faced discrimination in their basic needs, were considered permanent liability on their sighted siblings, non-productive and stigma on the family. In spite of lack of family support, negative behaviour and ill-treatment, a majority of the visually impaired men achieved education and occupied higher social status in the society. But, it is apparent that, in our male dominated society, the visually impaired women have to face more difficulties and disabled women face lifetime dependence. In case of men, lack of family support does not exclude the possibilities of success, only increase the obstacles. However due to absence of family support and negative attitude of family members, women either left their studies, or married off to an illiterate person or even remained single.

Additionally it has been noticed that positive attitude of the family members and socio-economic status of the family also play a crucial role in the life of the visually impaired. Those cases whose parents were educated with higher economic status and had positive attitude gave ample support to their visually impaired child. They tried to support their visually children in best possible ways; they helped them in learning daily living skills, reading ink print books, escorting them and even searching for a suitable life partner for them. As a result, these cases were more confident and well-integrated in the society and leading fairly successful lives. On the contrary those cases who were from lower socio-economic background and who faced negative attitude of parents suffered a lot. They were either disowned or left in the charitable institutions. It was in exceptional cases; where in spite of harsh and stressful circumstances, they focused on their abilities and fought for their rights. They were able to earn a livelihood, become independent and achieved success in life. However, even these successful visually impaired cases bare the marks of their lack of family support. They feel lonely, frustrated, and inferior and lack confidence. Additionally, with decreased family support, the risk factors for these cases increased. They reported insecurities in all matters of life. Though interestingly, when these visually impaired cases found employment and settled in life, their parents and siblings began to show respect for them,
developed good relations with them. It is important to mention that all the married visually impaired men have sighted and educated spouses, who support them in all the matters of life. However, visually impaired married women faced abuse not only at the hands of their husbands but also parents-in-law.

The case analysis highlights that in spite of the various scholarships and welfare schemes, visually impaired have to face a number of difficulties in attaining quality education. A majority of the congenitally blind cases started their education from the special schools and the adventitious visually impaired joined these institutions for the rehabilitation. It is worth mentioning here that, all the residential schools were not well equipped with modern technological devices, trained personnel, their basic needs were not taken care of, any mastery over the special skills or knowledge essential for further education, gainful employment and independent living to integrate was not imparted. Since all the cases who persuaded higher education faced multiple difficulties. Study material was not available in the alternative formats like large prints or low vision aids like magnifying glasses for partially sighted. Teachers of higher education were not sensitive towards their special needs and alternative techniques, problem of scribe, limited choice of subjects, no equal opportunities of participation in the cultural as well as academic activities like group discussion were some of the problems faced by visually impaired.

Although employment scenario of the visually impaired has shown remarkable improvement in the status of visually impaired in the society yet they faced difficulties in finding a job. There are limited employment avenues or prospects for the blind as most of the occupations don’t have any provision of accessible technology. Additionally they face discrimination and rejection due to visual impairment, like they were not involved in the interaction, ignored in leadership qualities, not assigned any work responsibility mainly due to lack of awareness and sensitivity about the capabilities of visually impaired. These factors lead to disrespect and dissatisfaction among the visually impaired. Furthermore absence of family support, absence of vocational training facilities, lack of mobility, and career planning and counseling programmes resulted in unemployment for the adventitious blind.
Through qualitative analysis it has been indicated that many individuals with visual impairment are leading a successful family as well as social life. They are good poets, musicians, administrators, lecturers and few were even honoured with state awards for their immense contribution and achievements. Time and again it is argued that social support is very essential for the well being of visually impaired individual to get fully integrated in the society. However a majority of the cases in the present study lacked support yet achieved success in life due to their positive attitude and strong determination. Visual impairment can not pose an impediment for the talents to bloom rather it is the attitude of the family and society which obstruct their growth and development. Family and society must be more sensitive towards the needs, capabilities and potentialities of visually impaired.