CONCLUSION:

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This is a research work on a comparative analysis of the changing perspectives of the policies for the visually impaired in India and post-apartheid South Africa. The justification of this comparison is given in the initial part of the Introduction and Chapter I which is briefly given hereunder:

A. Geographically, both the countries are located in the Southern part of their respective continent but the former is situated in the extreme Southern part and the latter constitutes the Southern central peninsula and both the countries are having variety of areas ranging from big deserts to the mountains though the mountains in South Africa are not so high as in India. At the same time, the two-thirds of South Africa are covered with plateau whereas the majority of the area of India is comprised of plains.

B. Climatically, both have three seasons: summer, rainy and winter with the difference that comparatively there is lesser difference between the highest and lowest temperature in different seasons in South Africa.

C. Both the countries are rurally dominant though the gap between the quantum of the population of rural and urban areas of South Africa is lesser than India.

D. Both are dependent upon the agriculture though their reasons vary. In the case of South Africa which is having a trend of subsistent agricultural produce so far as the edible things are concerned, they have to develop greenlands for the animals as animal husbandry is the main occupation of this country in the rural areas. In case of India, it is producing the edible things not only for their need but also as a part of trade.

E. Socially, both the countries are multi-cultural, multi-lingual, multi-racial and multi-religious. But the difference lies in the fact that the racial conflicts were witnessed in the 20th century in South Africa in the apartheid regime but, though not similar conflicts but a period of struggle between
Dravidians and Aryans was the part of history when Aryans attacked India. Though it is not named as racial, one finds conflicts between pro-settlers and no-settlers in the tribal areas of different part of India. Moreover, India has a history of caste conflict, an indelible blot on its history which has been there since many centuries ago. In this regard, conflict remained an inseparable part of the development of both the societies.

F. Historically speaking, both the states had the experiences of British imperialism and, consequently, both have this legacy in different extents.

G. Structurally speaking, both the countries have adopted federal system. However, politically, South Africa has adopted Presidential form of government whereas India adopted Parliamentary form of government. Even then, both have multi-party system and bicameral legislative system.

As visually impaired are one of the diverse sections and as they are the most vulnerable part of the society due to the attitudinal barriers and due to its scattered population which could not make them a decisive vote base, it becomes necessary to find how far both the political systems are conscious to develop policies for this segment of the society in terms of developing such multifarious policies for their all round development so that they may be made a useful segment and a human resource which is not less than almost 1% in both the countries. In this regard, this study becomes unique as conventionally, while talking about the diverse sections of the society, nobody pays heed to the specially challenged in general and visually challenged in particular. Whatever little attention is paid, in most of the cases, it is being paid under the compulsions of the directions of the international agencies. Moreover, if such endeavour is made, it is preferred to club all the specially challenged together. But in this study, a special attention has been paid on the visually impaired because within the section of the specially challenged, it is this section which has not only been looked down upon but also has been doubted in terms of their potentials and contributions due to the attitudinal barriers in terms of over-emphasis of sight and ignorance. It is happening despite the fact that the beginning of
the knowledge starts by hearing even today if we have a critical look upon rearing of
the child.

SUMMARY

Chapter I, under the name of Ecology of the South Africa and India and the Visually
Impaired, has been devoted to the analysis of ecology which includes geographical,
social, economic, historical and political analysis and an endeavour is made to know
the strength, literacy rate and employment status of the visually impaired in both the
countries. That is why, this chapter is divided into four parts, namely, 1. Physical
Environment, 2. Socio-economic Features, 3. Political Features and 4. The Visually
Impaired.

As the similarity and comparison of both the countries is mentioned in the previous
paragraph, it is pertinent to make a description of the position of the visually impaired
in this regards. So far as the census of 2001 is concerned, the Stats SA shows the
strength of the visually challenged in the vicinity of 0.7 to 0.8% whereas the Census
of India shows it more than 1% despite the fact that the voluntary organisations of
both the countries are finding it difficult to accept this number. So far as the rate of
literacy is concerned, the South Africa has got about 73% literate visually challenged
but India has got only about 50% literacy rate under this category. So far as the
employment status is concerned, the employment status of the visually impaired in
South Africa is about 17% whereas in India, it goes up to 39% which is of course
higher and is quite understandable due to two facts: one, India got its reservation
policies in existence from the year 1977 whereas the Constitution of South Africa
came into existence in 1996 and secondly, if it is compared with South Africa, India
has got more active organisations who used the pressure tactics for the
implementation of the reservation orders whereas this could not happen in South
Africa. It is worth mentioning here that the per capita income of South Africa is
higher than India and in a higher economic status, there are all possibilities of
adopter progressive policies. More so, due to this higher economic status, comparatively, South Africa is more modern than India so far as the materialistic analysis of the modernity is concerned. Even as per the developmental analysis in which urbanisation is one of the parameter of analysing the society, South African society is more developed. Hence, there is something which is the cause of this gap because of which this segment could not be carried with the process of its development.

Chapter II is dealing with the historical background of the policies of both the countries in particular and the history of the policies at the global level in general. During its analysis, it is found that this development is nothing but a changing perspective of the policy-makers due to one or the other reason. That is why, the name of this chapter is Changing Scenario of the Policy Perspectives for the Visually Impaired in South Africa and India: A historical Background. Following aspects have been touched upon under this chapter:

a. A historical account is made about the development of the policies for the visually impaired in particular and the specially challenged in general as in most of the cases, the policies for the visually impaired remained the part of the policies for the specially challenged. This has been dealt in terms of pre-industrial era, industrial era and the present age.

As pre-industrial period is religion ridden, some pages are devoted to the impact of religion on the visually impaired and the consequent attitudinal development about them. For this purpose, all the major religions and their texts were touched upon and it is strongly felt that despite the fact that there is some positive contribution of the religion in the development of some institutes for the visually challenged, but, in majority of the cases, all the religions create misconceptions about the capacity of this segment and narrate miraculous stories about their treatment by the religious representatives or deities.
b. While dealing with the period of industrial revolution and the consequent inventions, an analysis has been made about how new inventions brought about changes in the life of the visually impaired.

c. A section has been devoted to the role of religious group and its impact on the visually impaired. Due appreciation is given to the religious groups for opening charitable homes, schools and other institutions.

d. An exclusive section has been devoted to the impact of social attitudes on the policies and programmes for the visually impaired and it is strongly felt that it is the social attitude which proved to be a hindrance to the proper policy development for this group. In this regard, examples are given from different languages and its connotation and denotation and its impact on the social behaviour towards this section of the society.

e. As a logical outcome, a section is devoted to the awakening and self-dependence and its impact on the visually impaired. In this regard, references of the development in America and Europe has been made and more specifically the reference of the movements of the visually challenged is made which further influenced, to some extent, the movement of the visually challenged in India. Prior to this, some space is devoted to the meaning of the self-help movement which has been explicitly seen in the Disability Rights Movement (DRM). Few pages are devoted to the importance of the year 1973 when a Centre for Independent Living was established in Boston and 1981, the International Year for the Disabled Persons. Under the same section, some pages are devoted on the role of various organisations of the specially challenged in general and the visually impaired in particular and it was concluded by saying that it is the conspicuous awakening role of the organisations of the visually impaired which tried to build a movement for the speedy implementation of the reservation orders in India but the real beneficiaries remained other specially challenged persons. It is also mentioned in the same section that influenced from these developments, some organisations of and for the visually challenged came into existence in South
Africa but they could not exert the desired pressure consequences of which are seen that despite the availability of a progressive policy for the specially challenged in South Africa, the organisations failed to get it implemented in the way it is desired.

f. A section is devoted to make a comparative analysis over this issue. It is found that there is no sincere attempt by the historians of South Africa to make some references of the visually challenged but in the case of India, one finds some references beginning from Dhritarashtra (a character of the famous epics known as Mahabharata) and Soordas (famous poet of the medieval period whose focal point of depiction was the childhood of Krishna, another character of Mahabharata) to Vrijanand, the teacher of Dayanand, the founder of Arya Samaj. It is also found that both the countries failed to develop a sense of secularism in their programmes. The responses of the beneficiaries of both the countries reveal this fact that because of this even after six decades of independence of India, it could present Hindu visually challenged, Muslim visually impaired, Christian visually impaired, North Indian visually impaired, South Indian visually challenged etc. and even after a decade of the winding of the apartheid era, South Africa could produce Indian visually impaired, white visually challenged, coloured visually impaired, Black visually challenged etc. Hence, this scattered minority is further divided into groups and sub-groups which becomes main impediment in their united expression for their genuine demands.

Chapter III has been devoted to the policies for the visually impaired of both South Africa and India. For the convenience of the study, this chapter is being divided into five sections.

First section is moving around the basic policies for the specially challenged at the global level for which some of the basic documents are being touched upon as there is
no special provision, even at the international level, for the visually impaired as such. These documents include:

(a) World Programme of Action Concerning the Disabled Persons,
(b) Standard Rules for the Equalisation of Opportunities for Disabled Persons,
(c) The International Bill of Human Rights etc.

Under this section, two models are also discussed to reveal different trends of policy-making at the global level which include Medical Model and Social model.

As there is a famous say that prevention is better than cure, hence, the second section is devoted to the policies relating to the prevention of the visual impairment and description is made of prevention strategy for the preventable visual impairment at different levels. This section also touches upon the causes of the visual impairment and it is found that in both the countries, poverty and the resultant malnutrition is the main cause of this problem. Apart from this, it is found that ignorance, misconceptions and unnecessary dependence over unscientific treatments like depending upon on the Sangomas, witchcraft, priests, pundits etc. are the hindrance to check the increasing trend of this problem.

Third section is focussed at the educational policies of both the countries which start from traditional special schooling to the extent of integrated or inclusive education system. The case of both types of education has also been dealt with and an attempt is made to see the viability of the integrated or inclusive education system and it is strongly felt that besides its being economically viable, the problems relating to the education of the visually challenged can also be highlighted if they are being taught in the inclusive atmosphere. The relevant documents like White Paper 6 about inclusive education has also been touched upon and integrated or inclusive education is dealt with so far as South Africa is concerned. In the context of India, references have been made of Sarva Siksha Abhiyan of 1986. Various scholarship provisions, facilities in
terms of aids and appliances for the tertiary education have also been touched upon. References of the provisions of the free education is also made in some of the states for the visually challenged as the education is the state subject. References are also made to the fact that there are some provisions of the bursaries (financial assistance) for the specially challenged including the visually impaired which make the problems of this section easier at the tertiary level. Finally, it is strongly felt that the policies of South Africa could make it possible to incorporate modern concepts due to its exposure to the West. The special emphasis on partially sighted and the low vision is the uniqueness of South African educational policy. Moreover, some special provisions at the tertiary level in some of the universities in terms of providing computer facilities with the provision of speech output is an example to be followed by the Indian universities though some such steps have been taken by some of the universities in India but still these are the rarest.

Fourth section is centred on the employment. Unlike India, South Africa derives its policy about the specially challenged from the equality provisions of its constitution and, thereby, talks about some provisions for the diverse section which include Blacks, women and specially challenged altogether. This gamut of provision takes the scattered minority at the marginal level and in the name of preferential treatment or affirmative action, chances are increased of their being treated at the last which makes this marginal section more marginalised. But in the case of India, the provision of 3% reservation of jobs in the ‘C’ and ‘D’ categories of posts since 1977 and later similar reservation in all identified posts in all categories as per the People With Disability Act of 1995 made the minimum assurance of some reservation that is a different point how both the countries are fulfilling its promises over this issue. In the case of India, a reference is also made about the identification of the posts. It is strongly felt that such identification of the posts if this exercise takes place at the regular intervals, gives ample inspiration to the visually challenged as an individual and to the voluntary organisations to take up their cases as per the changing scenario and take up such training programmes to make them equipped with the modern evolving
impairment so far as its policy is concerned, South African policy documents seem to be more conversant with the problem of the low vision and partially sighted.

Over the issue of employment, both the countries have adopted different line of action. Unlike India, South Africa has emphasised on affirmative action or preferential treatment whereas India made an exclusive reservation provisions on the lines of the provisions for the Scheduled castes and Scheduled Tribes with the difference that this has been done only through an Executive Order and have no constitutional backing whatsoever. It is the PWD Act which made it possible for the people to approach the court if they are not being duly benefited.

There are lot of issues involved at the level of rehabilitation on which proper attention is supposed to be given by developing some realistic policies. However, it is needless to say that both the countries are silent about the problems of the rural based visually challenged—may it be by birth or at the later stage. It is a barren area for both the countries.

Chapter IV has been dealing with the implementational aspect of these policies. That is why, this chapter has been named as Policy Implementation and Interaction with Voluntary Organisations of and for the Visually Impaired. This chapter has been divided into nine sections, a brief description of which is given hereunder:

(a) Preventive Measures by the Governments and Involvement of Non-governmental Agencies: This section is dealing with the steps taken by the government and non-governmental agencies in the sphere of the prevention of the visual impairment. A discussion is made about the existence of a Bureau of Prevention of the blindness under the aegis of the South African National Council for the Blind. Its team goes round the country and take up the cases of cataract for operation. As it is a small team, it cannot meet out the requisite demands. However, this initiative is praiseworthy. But there is no effective treatment for glaucoma. During the interviews, it is found that these patients
have to depend upon the private medical facilities which are costly. So far India is concerned, there are some provisions in the big cities but the condition of the rural areas is still pathetic as they still have their traditional blind faith about the treatment of the visual impairment. However, despite all claims, it is found that the number of the patients with visual impairment is not decreasing in both the countries. So far as the use of lenses and some provision of its distribution are concerned, there are some organisations in India which are providing these lenses at the nominal rate but in case of South Africa, it is a dependency on the sponsorers.

(b) This section deals with the special schools for the visually impaired in both the countries. Chronologically speaking, both the countries started the schools for the visually challenged in the ninth decade of the 19th century with the difference of six years. South Africa has about 35 special schools whereas India has got about 250 schools. Considering the ratio of the visual impairment, there is a need to open more special schools in India but despite all claims of integrated education, even South Africa fails to cater the need of all the visually impaired and that is why it has to admit that it has got more than 27% visually challenged who have never visited any school. But if it is compared with the literacy rate of India, South Africa is far better in this regard. Over this issue, various questions were asked to the consumers in terms of educational facilities, library, playground and other recreational facilities. There is a sense of dissatisfaction in most of the respondents. However, it is admitted that some of the schools are catering the needs of their students. Some questions were also asked about the provisions for the low vision but both the countries cut a sorry figure over this issue.

(c) This section deals with the application of the provisions for the integrated education. Variety of the questions were asked about implementation of the various provisions in this regard, but majority of the students of both the countries are of the view that a lot is needed to be done. These schools fail to meet the minimum needs of the visually challenged students to the extent that
sometimes they feel themselves secluded. So far as the education at the tertiary level is concerned, the visually challenged get better chances. However, if a comparative analysis is made, the facilities provided by the universities in South Africa are far better than India. The students of South Africa have access to the computer with voice facility which enables them to go through any print literature with ease. Some such provisions are rarer in India—hardly confined to a couple of universities. The liberal approach of the examination of the universities in South Africa makes their academic lives easier if it is compared with India.

(d) This section provides information of the reading material for the visually challenged. It is found that getting a Braille print material is not difficult in South Africa. But so far as the efforts of the Government is concerned, there is an absence in this regard as the Braille presses in South Africa are generally being run by the voluntary organisations. In case of India, it is the central government which initiated this facility by starting a Central Braille Press. With the passage of time, regional Braille presses were developed by providing grant-in-aid to the regional voluntary organisations. Very recently, some of the voluntary organisations have also taken up this project and started their own Braille presses to meet the educational requirements as education is a state subject and almost each state has got its own syllabus. For the higher studies, computer has made a topsy turvy but the access of the computer is still far away from the ordinary visually challenged as majority of them come from the poverty stricken atmosphere.

(e) As it is not possible to Braille each and everything and as per the need of an individual due to its cost effectiveness, there is a dependency on the recorded material for which there is a need of the recording books library. Keeping this in view, a separate section is spared for this purpose. There are couple of recorded books libraries in South Africa out of which Tape Aids is one of the recorded libraries which have become popular due to its services. But none of them is being run by the government. So far as India is concerned, there is a
section of the National Library under the National Institute for the Visually Handicapped, run by the Central Government which is providing recorded material as per the need. However, with the increase of the literacy in the visually challenged people, various voluntary organisations have also come forward to cater this need. But still, there is a dependency on the use of the contribution of the individuals for the special readings as everybody does not have the access to the library.

(f) This section covers implementational aspect of employment. This is further divided into two, i.e., identification of the jobs and absorption of the visually challenged in those jobs. So far as the identification of the jobs is concerned, no such endeavours have been made by the South African government. But some steps have been taken in this direction in India since 1981, the IYDP. It is this identification which made easier for the employers to find jobs for the visually challenged. Moreover, due to the different line of action as was mentioned in some section of Chapter III and more so, due to the comparatively passive attitude of the voluntary organisations of and for the visually challenged, the desired result could not be achieved in the government sector of South Africa if it is compared with the government sector of India. A comprehensive list of the jobs doing by the visually challenged is given in the book called Diamond History of SANCB. But when it is inquired from the consumers, they could only paint a gloomy picture of the employment facilities in South Africa. So far as the responses from India are concerned, it is also not very enthusiastic. But the comparative analysis in terms of number is made, one finds that numerically speaking, India got better strength of the visually impaired in the government sector than South Africa despite the fact that the South Africa has adopted the scheme of affirmative action and generally, it is said that the affirmative action provides better result. Perhaps, there is something to do with the globalisation and its acceptance in South Africa which becomes one of the causes of the shrinking of the posts in the government sector. For this purpose, a separate section is provided in this
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chapter. Nevertheless, it is strongly felt that both the countries are non-serious about the use of this segment of the society as its human resource for the national development. Some jobs are found in private sectors in South Africa but, as per most of the respondents, in most of the cases, these jobs are confined to the jobs like switch board operator. Example of Japan is given in this regard where physiotherapy uses to be treated as a special profession for the visually impaired. A part of this section covers the issues relating to the self-employment. During the course of interviews, it is found that there are nominal facilities of financial support for self-employment in South Africa but some initiatives have very recently been made by India in terms of Creating National Handicapped Development Finance Corporation but it is not accessible for all due to its strict conditions.

(g) This section covers other rehabilitational aspects like facilities of accommodation, loan facilities for accommodation, provision of conveyance allowance when one is in the job, old age homes for the visually challenged etc. So far as loan facilities for the accommodation are concerned, South Africa is liberal over this issue despite the fact that there is no reservation or provision of quota for the visually impaired in the accommodation. So far as India is concerned, it has got some provisions for reservation in accommodation and these provisions vary from state to state. Both the countries failed to have any provision of old aged homes. Both the countries have some concessions in bus fair so far as the local travel is concerned. But in the case of India, there are some states which provide concession in interstate travelling for the visually challenged. India is having special concession in the trains and air travelling which is not in practice to South Africa. It is strongly felt that as the life of the visually challenged is costly, there is a need of concession to make things easily accessible.

(h) This section has been devoted to the description of the organisations of and for the visually impaired of both the countries. It is found that majority of the organisations in South Africa are service providing whereas in India, there are
some organisations which work as a pressure group. It is this character of the organisations which make it possible for a speedy implementation of the reservation policy through its pressure tactics.

(i) Last but not the least, a section is devoted to the impact of globalisation on the policies for the visually challenged. Under this section, an attempt is made to define globalisation and its impact on the diverse section, particularly, on the specially challenged in general and visually impaired in particular. It is strongly felt that as open market system was, by and large, accepted in South Africa which caused in the lessening of the jobs for the diverse sections even during the apartheid period so far as the government jobs are concerned, but even in the post-apartheid era, there are all possibilities of the jobs for those diverse sections which can be vote banks, but so far as the scattered minority like specially challenged is concerned, there is not much scope for them. It is happening despite the fact that in the computer age, things are becoming easier even for the visually challenged if they are provided jobs. It seems that it is a mere excuse that one needs competence and economic viability in the jobs. It is strongly felt that the days have gone by when a visually challenged is asking any favour out of sympathy. This is the age of competence and one can find competent visually challenged employees. But the shrinking of the jobs and the policy of appeasement of both the countries are closing the venues for them.

As there is a lot to be done in the policies of both the countries so far as the problems of the visually challenged are concerned, fifth chapter is devoted to look into the possibilities of developing alternative policies for both the countries for the need of some special emphasis on the problems of the visually challenged. Keeping this in view, semi-structured interviews were taken of the governmental officials and the members of the voluntary organisations of both the countries to know their opinion over this issue. As there can be two probable line of actions which are possible, i.e., exclusive policies for the visually challenged in both the countries or a some reform
in the policy by way of including more provisions for the visually challenged by emphasising their problems to cover their multifarious issues.

A section has been devoted to know the views of the experts in this field. It is found that the experts of both the countries have emphasised on the indigenous policy so that it can be adjusted in the atmosphere of the state. They expressed their concern over the copying out the West. It is also emphasised that there is a need of removing the attitudinal barriers in addition to the material barriers. It is also suggested that the policy-makers should also include the representative of and for the voluntary organisation of and for the visually challenged so that the level of participation can be enhanced. This will help in removing the prejudices and ignorance from the mind of the policy-makers through the interactional process. This will also help the policy-makers to have a judicious policy perspective.

On the basis of the analysis of the views of different contributory groups of the policy-makers, it can be concluded that all the contributors are wishing that there is a need of the involvement of the beneficiaries by way of some representatives of the voluntary organisations of and for the visually challenged. It is also strongly believed that while making this policy, nobody is desiring to do the window dressing but finding the possibilities of developing such a policy through which such facilities be provided to give a positive atmosphere of education and training which, in turn, prepare this segment of society which can be used as a useful human resource.

Another section of Chapter V is devoted to the expectations of the international agencies not only in terms of policies for the specially challenged in general and visually challenged in particular but also about developing such policies through which the expenditure on the structure may be curtailed in the name of structural adjustment programme which is brought to remove the so-called economic burden as some international agencies are providing financial support to them to cover the deficit. It is strongly felt that there is a contradiction between these two types of
international dictums and develops a vicious circle and it is difficult to get rid of until and unless some indigenous resources are developed for the welfare programme.

**Findings of the Research**

On the basis of the above mentioned summary of the chapters and the analysis made therein, following are the findings given hereunder seriatim:

1. The data relating to visually impaired of both the countries is based on the census of the respective countries compiled for the year 2001. However, the civil societies in both the countries do not find it conclusive. Whatever the limitations, this leads us to the finding that the literacy rate of visually impaired in South Africa is 73% whereas in case of India, it is around 50%. Hence, South Africa is better than India. But, surprisingly, the employment status of this segment in South Africa is far less than those in India. To be accurate, in the former case, it is 17% but in the case of latter, it is 39%. If this data of the employment is further divided in terms of government and private sector, it is found that, in case of South Africa, majority of the jobs have been provided in the private sector but in the case of India, the condition is vice versa because, whatever gear is changed in the employment in India, it was basically after the declaration of the Executive Order of reservation in the ‘C’ and ‘D’ categories of posts.

2. Religious organisation in both the countries have played a vital role in developing educational institutions for visually impaired despite the fact that religions have played negative role so far as the attitudinal development regarding visually impaired are concerned. In case of India, it has been the understanding that the cause of special challenge is one’s *Karma* of the previous life. If it is accepted, there is no point to poke nose in the affairs of god and, hence, there is no need to take up the progressive steps. In case of South Africa, it is due to the bad deeds of the forefathers. However, notably, the Christian missionaries in both the countries were the first to develop educational institutions for visually impaired opening the way for further
philanthropic work by the civil society organisations. It is also found that in both the countries, first school was initiated during the dying years of 19th century.

3. Policies for visually impaired in South Africa have originated from its constitution under its clause on non-discrimination whereas in India, the source of these policies are the directive principles of the state policy of constitution. These principles are nothing but normative statements.

4. Due to their different origin, different steps were taken for the policy formulation. In South Africa, steps were taken to develop White Papers and various policies on education and employment, but in the case of India, no substantial steps were taken for at least two decades. Whatever little steps had been taken, these were in the sphere of education, particularly, in terms of opening schools and, regional and national Braille Presses, developing scholarship programmes, last but not the least, initiating programmes for integrated education etc. In the eighth decade of 20th century, due to Bangladesh war, a declaration was made in the Parliament by Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India, for reserving the posts for the war-disabled. The same reservation was opened for all the specially challenged within four years by the Executive Orders for the reservation for them in ‘C’ and ‘D’ categories of posts. Due to the nationwide pressures from the voluntary organisations of varying challenges and due to the pressure of the international agencies, PWD Act, 1995 was brought in the dying hours of the winter session of the Parliament and was passed without debate.

5. Experiences show that there is no exclusive policy for the visually impaired in both the countries. This has denied the visually impaired the maximum benefit they could have enjoyed from reservation that was set apart from them under the policy. Within physical challenges, visually impaired are not given due weightage which is evident from the data of the census of both the countries. This segregation view is due to the fact that there are lot of preconceived notions, misbelieves and ignorance about the visually challenged because of the overdependence on the vision by the major chunk of the world. In this regard, both the countries under research are no exception.
6. The policy documents of both the countries talk about barrier-free environment in a
generalistic manner about physically impaired people but in this process, little efforts
have been made in both the countries to provide such friendly environment to the
specially challenged and more so, to the visually challenged. This is due to the similar
trends visible in policy-making which ignores them as a separate entity within the
specially challenged.

7. As policies are formulated under the guidelines of international agencies,
indigenisation of policy implementation in both the countries is overlooked. Hence,
despite all claims by the government to make all round development of the specially
challenged in general and the visually impaired in particular, the onus of the policy is
favouring the city dwellers. This can be judged from the fact that in both the
countries, the concept like integrated education are practised in the urban areas
despite the fact that majority of the specially challenged come from the poor rural
background. If this fact is accepted, the rationale of providing homely atmosphere
provided to the specially challenged in general and the visually challenged in
particular under the integrated education remain an imagination. Moreover, no
concerted efforts have been made to provide employment in the rural area.

8. According to the survey of WHOM, the specially challenged constitute 10% of any
society. In case of both the countries, this percentage is 2 to 6 percent. In the case of
the visually challenged, in both the countries, it is around 1%. Applying this formula
to Indian situation, it is found that 10 million people which is a huge human resource
and, in case of South Africa, it is about 0.4 millions. But no substantial policy for its
maximum use has been made so far by both the countries. This shows an indifference
of the bureaucrats and the leaders of both the countries as by making no use, this
human resource has been reduced to a burden on the respective nations.

9. Due to the economic sanctions posed by the international agencies under the
impact of globalisation and resultant liberalisation, a down ward trend is visible in
welfare work and, under the guise of so-called trend of inclusion, the targeted group
is being ignored.
In sum, it can be stated that the perspectives of the policy-makers have been changing with the change in the society which ranges from the elimination to inclusion; from a medical entity to social entity and so on and so forth. But, in majority of the cases, as the policy for the visually challenged has remained the inseparable part of the broader policy for the specially challenged, desirable attention cannot be paid for the visually challenged and that is why, this bigger human resource has remained unutilised.

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the above mentioned findings of the research, following recommendations are made which will be, for the convenience of the understanding, divided under five heads:

(1) Removing attitudinal barriers,
(2) Prevention of the visual impairment,
(3) Education for the visually challenged,
(4) Training and Employment for the visually challenged,
(5) Issues relating to the rehabilitation of the visually challenged.

It is to be noted that these recommendations will be general in nature and may be applicable for both India and South Africa as despite some differences, the problems of the visually impaired of both the countries are more or less similar and it is hoped that these recommendations may help the policy-makers to develop or reformulate their policies. It is also to be understood that these recommendations are developed on the views of the various contributors of policy formulation and on the basis of the shortcomings which have been pointed out during the course of policy analysis. Of course, the recommendations mentioned below are not the ultimate recommendations as there is no research which can be termed as last research because there is a dialectical relationship between the development and its critical analysis and this dialectics continues ceaselessly.
(1) REMOVING ATTITUDBINAL BARRIERS

1. There is a need to develop a white paper on the attitudinal barriers relating to the visually impaired. This barrier should be brought out in all recognised languages and dialects of the concerned nations.

2. It should not only describe the attitudes of the society at large but it should also describe the scientific logic for the removal of these baseless attitudes.

3. Religion has also played a role in creating misconceptions but while referring these misconceptions for the purpose of removing, there is a need of careful dealing and endeavours should be made to discuss over this matter carefully without hurting the religious emotions.

4. As everybody is not literate, there is a need of using other media like radio and television to spread the message to the far flung areas by organising talks, discussions, features and plays.

5. Public meetings, streets shows, stage plays etc. should be organised to remove these attitudinal barriers in the public places and such activities should also be organised in the schools, colleges and universities.

6. There is a need of including some topics relating to the attitudinal barriers in the syllabus and such lessons should be presented in such an interactional manner so that such things could be taught in a practical way.

7. The issues relating to the attitudinal barriers should be included not only in the higher education but should also be made the part of the training of the highest rank and file so that these officers could be socialised in this matter and be mentally prepared while formulating policies for them.

(2) PREVENTION OF THE VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

8. People at different levels should be socialised about the prevention of the preventable visual impairment.

9. Programmes should be taken through all media to highlight the importance of the cause and effect relationship and it should be highlighted that the same is true for the visual impairment.
10. Use of the visually challenged should be made for interacting with the society at large for making people aware of the fact that visual impairment occurs due to some diseases and there are some such diseases which can be preventable.

11. The policies relating to the prevention should be rural oriented as the majority of the visual impairment occurs in villages.

12. There is a need of financial support base for the cataract patients when they are being operated so that the chances of cent percent positive result can be obtained.

13. There should be free of cost treatment of all diseases relating to the visual impairment so that no prevention can be ceased in want of financial support.

14. Encouragement should be given to the ophthalmologists who express their wilfulness to work in the rural areas.

15. Arrangements should be made to give some incentives to those for this purpose.

16. If the provision of the incentive fail to work, it should be made compulsory for the doctors to work in the rural areas for a certain period of time.

17. People should be educated about the importance of the Vitamin A which should be one of the causes of the visual impairment.

18. Some funds should be allocated for the research in the field of the treatment of the visual impairment so that some innovative work can be taken up for the prevention of the visual impairment.

19. Some awards should be created for those who make some innovation in this field or who shows their commitment by way of highest number of treating the patients.

20. This is true that in the country like India and South Africa, there is a need of the operation of cataract in bulk and one is forced to take the help of Lions, Rotary or Rotaract Clubs, but some provisions should be made to follow up in the absence of which the whole exercise may go astray.

(3) EDUCATION FOR THE VISUALLY CHALLENGED

a. Special Education

21. There should be a provision which may force the school to appoint teachers having special training in teaching the visually challenged.
22. For this purpose, there is a need to open special teachers training centres to teach the visually challenged.

23. There should be proper arrangements of all teaching equipments for the students and the teachers should make the students aware of these equipments in practice.

24. Preference in the teaching staff should be given to the visually challenged. This will not only help them to get the jobs but can handle the students properly as it is the visually challenged who knows their problem in reality.

25. The visually challenged should be made aware of different branches of mathematics and the aids like algebra pegs, Bonham device etc.

26. Despite the limitation of the visual impairment, he should be made aware of various equipments of science even if they cannot make experiments. To develop proper concepts, he should be taught with the help of tactile models.

27. As there are two concepts of education, namely, Athenian and Spartan, there should be a balance between the both. For this purpose, there is a need of playground for the visually impaired and they should be compelled to remain in playground for a certain period of time as a part of the educational curriculum. This makes them confident to stand in the competitive market. Visual impairment in this matter should not be used as an excuse.

28. There is a need of proper eye check up to determine the level of visual impairment.

29. In case of low vision or sufficient vision to read ink print, the student should not be compelled to read Braille.

30. In such cases, proper atmosphere is provided so that they may learn through magnifying glass or may make use of close circuit.

31. In case of the multiple disabilities, proper arrangements be provided to meet their special need and he should not be refused on the ground of his or her multiple injuries.

32. There is a need of opening new special schools without the gender bias.

33. As majority of the special schools are residential, there is a need of the maintenance of proper standard in terms of the living space, proper uniform and
proper arrangement of food. It is observed that in the name of opening the school, compromise is made with the quality and that have negative impact on the behaviour of the visually impaired which affects their physical and mental health.

34. Provisions should be made to have a uniformed syllabus at the school level even in the country like India where the education falls in the state list. This will help in developing a wider perspective through the education.

35. Provisions should be made of ample grant-in-aid to the special schools so that they may not have to depend upon the donations as this will help in proper personality development and will also help in changing the outlook of the society.

B. INTEGRATED OR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

36. There should be a blind friendly atmosphere for the movement of the visually challenged in the integrated schools.

37. There should be at least one visually challenged or such ordinary teacher who is trained in teaching the visually impaired as per their specific need.

38. There should be the allocation of ample funds to meet the cost of the special aids and appliances meant for the visually challenged.

39. Use of the black board is a normal practice in the mainstream schools but if a class is having a visually challenged student, the teacher is directed to adjust his teaching method as per his specific need.

40. Generally, the use of computer is not common at all levels of education, special attention in terms of providing the scribe should be made for the visually challenged students to write his tests while making an internal assessment.

41. If there is a provision of computer at a certain level of teaching, the visually challenged should also be introduced with computer along with the speech softwares. This will help in performing at par with the sighted counterpart.

42. The visually challenged should be relaxed while appearing in the examinations or internal tests from the graphic based questions or from the questions which are totally
vision based. He should be asked some alternative questions in such cases. This will help him to be treated at par.

43. If no arrangement of special teacher can be made, the school should have a resource room.

44. As all the above mentioned arrangements are cost effective, the policy should be laid down to open one or two integrated or inclusive schools at least in a district.

45. If such schools are far away, the arrangement of the conveyance should be made without asking the parents to bear its cost as it will become an excuse for them not to bring their visually challenged student to the school.

46. Necessary arrangements should be made to give him a maximum feeling of inclusion by stimulating him to participate at least in those extra curricular activities where vision has no role to play. This is true that fake inclusion should be avoided.

C. TERTIARY EDUCATION

47. It should be mandatory for all the institutes not to refuse any student because of the visual impairment.

48. If necessary, some percentage of the seats should be reserved for this segment of the society exclusively.

49. Special aids and appliances should preferably be provided free of cost. If it is not possible, efforts should be made to provide it at the maximum possible subsidised rates. This provision should not be made on any charity but it should be treated as bare need.

50. Separate computer with the necessary reading and scanning software should be provided to all the visually challenged students as it provides a chance of performing at par with the sighted counterparts.

51. Despite all the technological development and despite the provision of free or subsidised rate of aid and appliances for the visually challenged, there is a need of making some provisions of the scholarships/bursaries by the government or any funding agencies so that they may be able to meet the cost of studies.
52. The provisions should be made to develop a separate reading room in each college as for the purpose of higher studies, either they have to depend upon the computer with speaking software or on the readers to read the manuscripts.

53. The colleges/universities should be directed to provide blind friendly environment in terms of developing such texture of the floor to point out the turnings, staircases and other hurdles.

54. Provisions should be made to easy access of all types of information like name of the building, room numbers, identification of the floor while using lift, accessible lift operating buttons etc. For this purpose, information should be provided verbally and in Braille.

55. Arrangements should be made to provide all the informations both in Braille and e-text as it is not necessary for every visually challenged to be computer friendly.

(4) TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT FOR THE VISUALLY CHALLENGED

A. TRAINING

56. Irrespective of all claims of inclusion, it is recommended that such provisions be laid down to establish special training centres to provide training in skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled jobs so that those visually impaired who cannot pursue their higher studies can be imparted such training.

57. Provisions should be made for scholarship during the training period.

58. As these centres will be residential, all norms mentioned above for the residential schools should be followed.

59. While providing training, provisions should be made to impart training in all possible up-dated skills without any prejudice, so that the visually challenged may be competent enough to compete in the open market.

60. If such training is imparted in the mainstream training centre, provisions be made to have a blind friendly atmosphere and to arrange necessary aids and appliances to make them self-dependent.
B. EMPLOYMENT

61. Without falling into the controversy of reservation vs. affirmative action, special drives should be made to absorb the trained and qualified visually challenged so that they may contribute their worth in the developmental process of the nation.

62. Provisions should be made to direct the employers to make all arrangements as per the need to make self-sufficient the visually challenged employees. If needed, the arrangements should be made to change all visible signals into audio or tactile signals as to make the employee self-dependent and easy accessible.

63. Provisions should be made to absorb certain number of visually challenged employees to ascertain their constructive role in the nation-building environment and provide them to make the best use of the skills obtained during the training period.

64. Provisions should be made to absorb the visually challenged in the administrative posts as higher one goes in the hierarchy of jobs, there is lesser involvement of sight. More so, in the age of the technological development, such techniques are developed to change the vision into audio. Hence, in almost all kinds of official work, visual impairment is no excuse.

65. Such provisions are needed to be made through which those administrators, who fail to employ certain amount of visually challenged, should be penalised.

66. Irrespective of the fact that there are chances of limiting the job venues, the provisions should be made to identify some posts as to give an idea what kind of jobs can be performed by the visually challenged.

67. While earmarking the jobs for the visually challenged, the provisions should be made to interchange with the other categories of the specially challenged until and unless it is ascertained that there is no qualified and duly trained person with visual impairment available. Such identification should be up-dated keeping in view the technological development.

68. If there is a real intention to make best use of the human resource with visual challenged, there is a need to create a register at the centre and state/provincial level from the day a person with visual impairment comes into being and this data based register should be up-dated, and the moment a visually challenged finishes his
education/training, the attempt should be made to provide him job as per his qualification and capability.

69. Those persons with visual challenge who are interested in self-employment, the state should provide a support base in terms of soft loan to run the business.

70. If there is any provision of quota, a special provision should be made to make necessary reservation in the distribution of raw material so that their business may not suffer in the want of raw material.

(5) ISSUES RELATING TO THE REHABILITATION OF THE VISUALLY CHALLENGED

71. Provisions should be made for all round rehabilitation of the visually impaired.

72. There is a need to make a fixed quota for the allotment of the out of term accommodation.

73. For this purpose, some provision should be made for soft loan and the visual impairment should not be a hindrance in it.

74. Provisions should be made to exempt the visually challenged from the license fee, if any, on radio, television or other media of entertainment.

75. Provisions should be made of free travel in bus, railways and aeroplanes. If not possible, provisions should be made to use these means on the concessional rates as in general case, the life of the visually impaired is costlier in comparison with the sighted counterpart.

76. Provisions should be made for free postage at national and international level by air or otherwise.

77. It should be made compulsory to provide audible signals on the crossings.

78. Where there is a multi storey building and one has to use lift, provisions should be made to provide audible signals to tell where one has reached.

79. It should be the duty of the government to provide old age homes with the minimum facility of board and lodging. It would be better if such homes may provide source of entertainment and some programmes relating to the social issues so that the residents may feel at home.
80. The sports played by the visually challenged should be given due recognition as in the case of the sports played by the sighted. The visually challenged should get the same facilities as are provided to the sighted counterpart.

In sum, it is needed to be stated here that the aim of such recommendations is to suggest such provisions to the policy-makers through which the visually impaired becomes a contributory segment of the society by using his worth and play a constructive role in the development of the nation. It is strongly felt that in the absence of such positive attitude, this group of human resource will become a burden on the society and for this, all blame goes to the policy-makers, not to the persons with visual impairment who are one of the capable human resources but need a support base to get a direction so that their latent potentials may be used for the nation-building. It is also strongly felt that in the absence of any constructive policy, there are all chances for this segment to get neglected as it is a scattered minority and in a democratic network, only the voice of vote bank is heard.