

TOPLAMA

(Jurnal Komunikasi Dan Pengabdian Masyarakat)

E-ISSN: 3025-2652

<https://altinriset.com/journal/index.php/toplama>

Vol.3, No. 2, Januari 2026

FROM STIGMA TO SELF-ACCEPTANCE: IDENTITY AND SELF-WORTH THROUGH INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION AMONG THE VISUALLY DISABLED

Aulia Diah Safitri^{1*}, Winda Primasari², Miftakhudin³

Universitas Islam 45, Bekasi^{1*,2,3}

Email: winda.primasari@unismabekasi.ac.id^{1*,2,3}

Abstract

This study focuses on individuals with visual disabilities who struggle to accept themselves due to their physical limitations. This study examines self-acceptance and social interaction of people with visual disability in the context of interpersonal communication. This study aims to find out how their social interactions with the surrounding environment support this process. Through a descriptive qualitative approach. This study interviewed four informants with low vision and total blindness, as well as three key informants who work as social workers. The interviews were recorded, transcribed, and coded. The results of this study are that the five aspects of interpersonal communication, ranging from openness, empathy, supportive attitudes, positive attitudes, to equality, have an important role in the process of self-acceptance of blind people with disabilities. This study can be used as the development of communication science, especially in the field of interpersonal communication in the process of self-acceptance of people with visual disability.

Keywords: Interpersonal communication, Self-acceptance, Visual disability

Abstrak

Penelitian ini berfokus pada individu dengan disabilitas visual yang kesulitan menerima diri mereka sendiri akibat keterbatasan fisik yang mereka miliki. Penelitian ini mengkaji penerimaan diri dan interaksi sosial individu dengan disabilitas visual dalam konteks komunikasi antarpersonal. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui bagaimana interaksi sosial mereka dengan lingkungan sekitar mendukung proses tersebut. Melalui pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif, penelitian ini mewawancarai empat informan dengan penglihatan rendah dan kebutaan total, serta tiga informan kunci yang bekerja sebagai pekerja sosial. Wawancara direkam, ditranskrip, dan dikodekan. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa lima aspek komunikasi interpersonal, mulai dari keterbukaan, empati, sikap mendukung, sikap positif, hingga kesetaraan, memiliki peran penting dalam proses penerimaan diri orang dengan disabilitas penglihatan. Penelitian ini dapat digunakan sebagai pengembangan ilmu komunikasi, terutama dalam bidang komunikasi interpersonal dalam proses penerimaan diri orang dengan disabilitas penglihatan.

Kata kunci: Komunikasi antarpersonal, Penerimaan diri, Disabilitas visual

INTRODUCTION

Self-acceptance is connected to communication in interpersonal contexts. Meanwhile,

according to Mulyana, interpersonal communication is face-to-face communication between people (Harahap & Putra, 2019). Interpersonal communication allows individuals to share their views, feelings, and experiences in depth. Through this process, a person can understand how they are viewed by others. When others perceive individuals, social perception arises. Individuals with physical disabilities may face challenges in receiving social perceptions, such as those who are blind.

Blindness is divided into two categories: total blindness and low vision. Some individuals are not born blind but develop blindness due to certain conditions. Total blindness is a condition where individuals have no vision at all. In contrast, low vision is a condition where individuals can still receive light stimuli from outside but cannot be used optimally because the visibility that can be achieved is only a little (Yanuar et al., 2019). In general, individuals who are blind face obstacles in receiving information and lack the same level of control over their environment and themselves (Himawan, 2020). These limitations hinder their self-acceptance process. Furthermore, previous research shows that people with disabilities often question their condition, and they also receive negative perceptions from society (Prihatini, 2021).

Visually impaired people have received negative perceptions from others. The results of previous research show that people with disabilities cannot fight back when they receive negative perceptions, so rejection and ridicule have become commonplace for them (Prihatini, 2021). In order to cope with these prejudices toward them, they began to do intrapersonal communication. Intrapersonal communication, which is dialogue with oneself, is one of the ways to overcome people's negative perceptions. Moreover, it also serves as a means to develop self-confidence in responding to people's negative perceptions of them. In addition to support from oneself, individuals with disabilities also need social support.

Blind disabilities need social support, especially those who are not blind from birth, so that they can regulate their emotions and accept themselves when in the community. Previous research shows that blind people with disabilities who are in the Beringin Bhakti Cirebon foundation can accept themselves when they are in the appropriate environment and can motivate themselves that having physical deficiencies is not an obstacle to self-acceptance (Himawan, 2020). Apart from the Beringin Bhakti Alun Cirebon Foundation, in the Bekasi area, there are also foundations that accommodate people with disabilities who need social care. Foundations that accommodate disabilities are divided into two, namely, privately owned foundations and state-owned foundations. One of the state-owned social institutions located in Bekasi is the Pangudi Luhur Bekasi Integrated Center Social Home.

The Pangudi Luhur Integrated Social Center (STPL) Bekasi is structurally the only Technical Implementation Unit of the Indonesian Ministry of Social Affairs that serves and rehabilitates people with welfare problems in the disability category. The main tasks and functions of the Pangudi Luhur Integrated Center (STPL) Bekasi are to provide guidance, services, social rehabilitation, and skills. The goal is that people with disabilities are able to be independent and play an active role in society. By accepting

themselves, visually impaired people can overcome social stigma, rebuild their confidence, and try to contribute positively to the social environment. A positive environment allows them to share experiences and listen to each other's stories, thus strengthening their sense of solidarity and mutual support. Visually impaired people get support from other individuals due to interpersonal communication.

According to Efendy (2005), the essence of interpersonal communication is communication between communicants and communicators, where this communication is considered the most effective in terms of efforts to change one's attitudes, opinions, and behavior because it is dialogical, in the form of conversation, and the backflow is direct (Harahap & Putra, 2019). Effective interpersonal communication will lead to a supportive attitude towards each other. Based on the results of previous research, self-acceptance in the emotional maturity of blind and speech-impaired people can be realized because of support from oneself and the environment (Himawan, 2020). This can create a supportive atmosphere where they feel heard and valued. Visually impaired people can share their experiences and perspectives when they communicate openly with their interlocutors.

Openness in interpersonal communication requires courage and readiness to share personal information that is not usually disclosed to others (Harahap & Putra, 2019). Visually impaired people can be open about their background when communicators can make them feel safe, so that they are not afraid to tell about their life experiences. Openness in communication, especially for visually impaired people, has a positive impact on their psychology. By sharing experiences, it can reduce the emotionality that often arises due to negative perspectives and incomprehension. The communicator's knowledge of the disability experience will foster empathy.

According to Devitto (2004), empathy is the ability to feel what others feel and can realize a sense of concern for what others experience (Rahmi, 2021). When communicators understand the experiences of people who are blind, they will develop a sense of care and be motivated to provide support. The motivation provided by the communicator can be a factor in blind people's efforts to accept their condition. Empathy can appear in verbal and nonverbal forms; nonverbal forms can be seen from facial expressions and body posture. Empathy is communicated with a positive attitude.

A person's positive attitude is very important in social interactions, especially in communication with visually impaired people. A positive attitude allows individuals to act on good judgment without feeling excessive guilt (Rahmi, 2021). When communicators show a positive attitude, this can create a supportive atmosphere for visually impaired people. Effective interpersonal communication involves the ability to listen well and respond positively. When the communicator can provide positive feedback, it can strengthen the confidence of the visually impaired.

The researcher tried to pre-observe by following the activities of the blind both inside STPL and outside STPL. In the activities inside STPL the blind are invited to express themselves through art performances in the international disability day event. While in activities outside STPL, social service staff try to build the confidence of blind people with disabilities by venturing to use public transportation. The purpose of these two

activities is to allow them to socialize with the community. When they dare to plunge into the social environment, they get empathy, as well as positive attitudes from the community in both verbal and non-verbal forms.

METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative research method to explore the self-acceptance process of visually impaired individuals through interpersonal communication. Qualitative research is commonly used to understand social phenomena, individual experiences, and human behavior in depth within natural settings (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Through this approach, researchers aim to obtain a comprehensive understanding of how visually impaired individuals develop self-acceptance while participating in life skills programs. The research data were collected through in-depth interviews and direct observations. In-depth interviews were conducted at the Pangudi Luhur Integrated Social Center (Sentra Terpadu Pangudi Luhur/STPL) in Bekasi, which is a social rehabilitation institution that provides services and empowerment programs for persons with disabilities.

The research informants were determined using specific criteria related to the characteristics of visually impaired individuals participating in the life skills program at STPL Bekasi. The first criterion was visually impaired individuals who had participated in life skills training programs at STPL for approximately one year. The second criterion was individuals who experience total blindness, while the third criterion was individuals with low vision conditions. Based on these criteria, four main informants were selected for this study. Three of the informants were individuals with low vision, identified by the initials SP, FW, and KA, while one informant experienced total blindness and was identified by the initials MJ. In addition to the four main informants, researchers also interviewed three key informants who work at STPL Bekasi as disability cluster leaders and social workers. These key informants were included to provide additional perspectives regarding the rehabilitation process and the interpersonal communication dynamics experienced by visually impaired participants during their training programs.

The interview process lasted between 40 and 70 minutes for each informant to ensure that sufficient and detailed information could be obtained. The data obtained from the interviews were then transcribed and analyzed using the qualitative data analysis method proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which consists of three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Data reduction in this study involved organizing and simplifying the narrative interview transcripts obtained from both the main informants and key informants, including the Head of the Disability Division and social workers (Pekerja Sosial/Peksos) at STPL Bekasi. The data were then presented by categorizing and connecting themes derived from the interview responses. Finally, conclusions were drawn by linking the findings with theoretical concepts related to the process of self-acceptance among visually impaired individuals through interpersonal communication.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In interpersonal communication, openness refers to an individual's honesty in various stimuli, both thoughts and feelings (Endah *et al.*, 2021). This demonstrates a person's willingness to honestly convey their thoughts to others as a form of transparency in social interactions. This effort to open up requires a process, especially for those who are not born blind. They must adapt to their new situation, starting with mental recovery and then being able to re-open themselves to their environment. Openness is one way to determine whether someone has accepted themselves.

Table 1. Openness

NO	INFORMANT	OPENNESS	COMMUNICATION STYLE
1.	SP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informative. • Be honest about personal feelings. • Acknowledge the adaptation process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural. • Using a comparison of experiences before and after becoming blind. • Relax.
2.	MJ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dare to reveal sensitive matters (causes of blindness). • Don't blame others. • Expressive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct and straightforward. • Use everyday language.
3.	FW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge the social impact of the condition. • Expressing rejection without excessive blame. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrative and coherent • A little emotional but still in control
4.	KA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressing positive self-change • Accepting other people's perceptions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relax • Optimistic • Expressive

Source: Researcher Processed Data (2025)

The findings show that the self-acceptance process among visually impaired informants develops gradually and is closely related to openness in interpersonal communication. SP has slowly begun to accept his condition as a blind individual due to the illness he experienced. Although he acknowledges his condition, he is still in the process of adapting to the reality that he can no longer work as he did before. To cope with this situation, SP tries to change his mindset and seek new opportunities by participating in a massage vocation program at STPL. During the interview, SP demonstrated openness by honestly expressing his feelings about his illness and the emotional challenges caused by losing his previous job. His ability to communicate these experiences clearly indicates that he is moving toward a stage of self-acceptance.

A similar openness was observed in the second informant, MJ. During the interview, MJ openly explained that his blindness resulted from excessive alcohol consumption, which eventually caused total vision loss. His willingness to share sensitive personal experiences without blaming others reflects the beginning of self-acceptance. According to one of the social workers at STPL, MJ has shown positive behavioral changes and is currently in the

orientation stage as he adapts to his new environment and condition. His openness in communication has helped him build positive interactions, gain social support, and increase his confidence in adjusting to life as a blind individual.

However, the experience of FW differs from the other informants. FW reported receiving negative treatment from both her community and family after losing her sight due to low vision. Despite feeling socially rejected, she was still able to express her experiences and emotions without excessively blaming others. Meanwhile, KA, the youngest informant with low vision, demonstrated increasing confidence and optimism. He has begun to accept others' perceptions as motivation for personal improvement and can express his feelings openly when facing unfavorable treatment.

Empathy

Empathy is the ability to understand and feel what others are feeling by putting oneself in their shoes (Juliansyah, 2020). In this study, the empathy shown by the STPL staff to the blind took the form of good service. The staff strived to create a comfortable and safe environment. The goal was to help them adapt easily to their new surroundings. The empathy they received was not only from the staff but also from their fellow blind people.

Table 2. Empathy

NO	INFORMANT	EMPATHY	CHANGE IN ATTITUDE
1.	SP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibility for fulfilling the needs that SP provides when sick 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The emergence of a sense of trust. • Openly express needs. • Gratitude.
2.	MJ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide real support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased independence. • Able to adapt to new environments. • Feeling appreciated.
3.	FW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional empathy. • Motivation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased independence • start opening up to socialize • willingness to learn and develop
4.	KA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social worker motivation • each other with friends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing self-awareness and responsibility • Increased sense of enthusiasm • Growing sense of security

Source: Researcher Processed Data (2025)

The findings indicate that interpersonal communication between social workers and visually impaired beneficiaries at STPL reflects a strong element of empathy. SP explained that whenever he experiences difficulties, such as illness, he must first report to his assigned social worker. The social worker then communicates with other staff members to ensure that SP receives appropriate care until he is able to resume his activities. This supportive response demonstrates the responsibility and concern shown by social workers toward beneficiaries. As a result, SP develops a sense of trust toward

his social worker, which encourages him to openly express his needs while staying at STPL and fosters gratitude for being in a supportive environment.

Empathy is also reflected in the way social workers understand the initial conditions of visually impaired individuals who newly arrive at STPL. Many beneficiaries experience non-congenital blindness, requiring a longer adaptation period. Social workers address this by directing them to participate in orientation and environmental mobility training. This gradual approach helps them adjust emotionally and physically to their new condition and environment. For example, MJ, who became totally blind due to alcohol abuse, found that orientation activities and supportive interactions with peers and staff helped him adapt and regain confidence. Similarly, FW initially withdrew due to negative treatment from her community but gradually re-engaged through encouragement from friends and staff. KA also experienced empathy from social workers and peers, which motivated her to focus on independence and personal development while at STPL.

Supportive Attitude

Effective interpersonal communication is characterized by an attitude of mutual support (Nasution in Alam & Ramadhan, 2020) In the context of communication, relationships based on support will create more open and honest interactions. The attitude of responding to what is expressed in communication activities, so that communication occurs in two directions. This two-way communication can result in the exchange of messages that are not only verbal but also emotional, so that each party feels appreciated. The existence of a supportive attitude makes the process of accepting the blind person easier.

Table 3. Attitudes

NO	INFORMANT	SUPPORTIVE ATTITUDE	CHANGE IN ATTITUDE
1.	SP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studying together • Embracing each other • Support friends who are experiencing difficulties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't feel alone • Try to be active • Feeling optimistic
2.	MJ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friend's help • Motivation from both social workers and fellow blind friends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't feel alone • Desire to learn from passive to active
3.	FW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in several existing programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have useful skills
4.	KA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family support in the form of motivation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From hopeless to motivated • Increase self-confidence

Source: Researcher Processed Data (2025)

During her time at STPL, SP felt strong support in interpersonal communication between fellow visually impaired people and staff. SP described the relationships formed in this environment as brotherly, where they embraced and helped each other in various situations. This support was evident in their habit of helping each other when facing difficulties in the learning process. The supportive environment made SP feel less alone and more active in participating in massage training. Seeing many people with similar conditions who remained enthusiastic about building their careers also fostered a sense of optimism in her.

Leviana Kusumaningrum explained that the process of self-acceptance among visually impaired people generally begins in a supportive social environment. When individuals feel comfortable and accepted by their friends, the process of adapting to their limitations becomes easier. Support is also evident in training activities, such as massage internship programs that require participants to serve at least 30 customers as hands-on practice and skill evaluation. This program helps boost confidence and introduces their potential to the community. In addition to support from institutions and peers, family support also plays an important role, as experienced by KA, who regained her confidence thanks to motivation from her parents.

Positive Attitude

Interpersonal communication will be effective if it receives positive attention from others. Positive feelings generally play a crucial role in creating productive interactions. Nothing is more encouraging than communicating with someone who doesn't enjoy the interaction or the atmosphere (Rahmi, 2021). A positive attitude plays a role in the self-acceptance process for blind people. A positive environment makes them feel accepted by those around them, enabling them to recognize that their existence still has meaning and potential.

Table 4. Positive Attitudes

NO	INFORMANT	POSITIVE ATTITUDE	CHANGE IN ATTITUDE
1.	SP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduced special technology for the blind 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The emergence of self-confidence
2.	MJ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taught to be disciplined 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn a lot of new things
3.	FW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motivation Togetherness Learn from other people's conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-confidence Optimistic From passive to active
4.	KA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support from the environment Taught to be independent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can return to socializing with the environment

Source: Researcher Processed Data (2025)

SP showed a positive attitude in his ability to adapt and rebuild social relationships despite his physical limitations. At first, SP had difficulty using communication technologies

such as mobile phones. However, his attitude changed when he saw other blind friends able to use them and willing to teach him. Through this process, SP regained his confidence and was willing to learn from individuals with the same condition. This shows that communication is not only related to the ability to speak or see, but also the willingness to connect, accept help, and adapt emotionally and socially. The STPL environment also plays an important role in shaping positive attitudes among the visually impaired. Support from staff and peers motivated FW to rebuild his lost confidence. This togetherness made FW feel accepted and not alone in facing life's challenges. In addition, KA also felt positive changes by becoming more independent, courageous, and open in interacting. This positive attitude was also reinforced by the personal approach of social workers who understood each individual's background, creating a sense of security and comfort in the STPL environment.

Equality

Interpersonal communication will be more effective when conducted in an atmosphere of equality. This equality implies that the communicator and the recipient recognize each other's value and dignity (Achmad & Nurhadianto, 2022). Neither party feels superior or inferior, thus creating mutually respectful communication. Furthermore, in equal communication, each individual is considered to have a meaningful contribution, and each party is believed to have important views, experiences, or information to share. This is what the visually impaired PMs at STPL feel, as explained in the following table:

Table 3. Equality

NO	INFORMANT	EQUALITY	ATTITUDE
1.	SP	Always wear glasses when meeting new people	Fear that other people will feel uncomfortable with SP's condition
2.	MJ	Lack of confidence when meeting new people	Feeling of having physical differences
3.	FW	Always afraid to have an opinion with normal individuals	Feeling of having physical differences
4.	KA	Considers himself and other individuals to have the same rights	Not feeling any difference with other individuals

Source: Researcher Processed Data (2025)

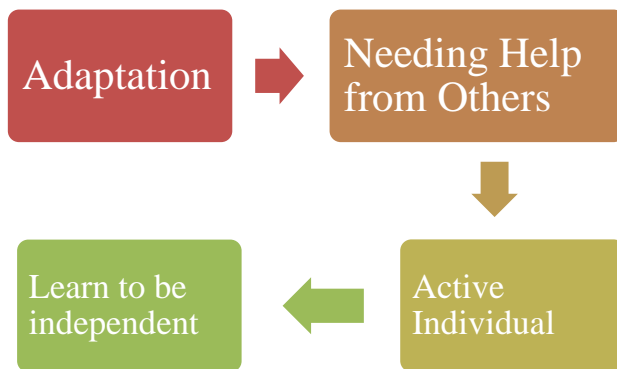
SP's statement indicates an imbalance in the interpersonal communication process. SP feels that he is not fully accepted by others because of his blindness. He realizes that not everyone can be neutral towards his differences, and some even find his condition uncomfortable. This makes SP feel inferior and uncomfortable when interacting with new people, so he tries to adapt, for example by wearing glasses when communicating with

people who do not have disabilities. MJ and FW experience similar feelings. MJ admits that he feels insecure when interacting with new people because he is aware of his physical differences. FW feels the same way, and past experiences of rejection have made him afraid of making mistakes when communicating with others. Unlike them, KA is able to accept his condition well. He does not use his limitations as an excuse to feel inferior, so he can communicate with confidence and create equality in interpersonal relationships.

Self-Adjustment

During the process of self-adjustment, individuals are able to identify their strengths and weaknesses and develop a deep sense of self-confidence and self-esteem. This allows them to accept criticism. Self-acceptance, coupled with a sense of security, provides a foundation for objective self-evaluation, which in turn allows for optimal utilization of their potential. This is reflected in the process of self-acceptance for blind individuals, as explained in the following diagram:

Chart 1. Self-Acceptance Process



Source: Data processed by researchers (2025)

Chart 1 explains the process of adjustment for visually impaired individuals in their environment, particularly in the STPL environment. Initially, they experience disappointment due to the loss of their sense of sight. This disappointment makes them afraid to socialize because they feel different from other individuals. After passing through the disappointment phase, they enter a self-evaluation phase to control their emotions, so they are willing to return to their environment. If the self-evaluation is successful, they will try to adapt to an environment with a different physical condition, namely being visually impaired. This adaptation, for example, they begin learning how to walk using a cane, improve their sense of touch and hearing to understand things around them. If adaptation to their environment is successful, their self-confidence will slowly emerge, as shown in table 4.8 below.

Table 6. Adjustment

NO	INFORMANT	SELF-ADJUSTMENT
1.	SP	Have accepted the condition of the illness experienced Able to accept other people's opinions
2.	MJ	Can adapt to new environments
3.	FW	Returning to socializing in the environment

4. | KA | The return of self-confidence after becoming a blind individual

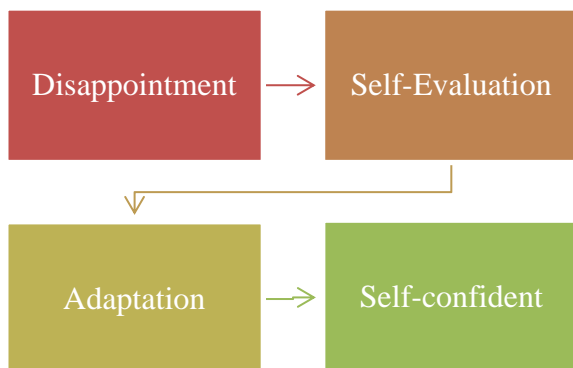
Source: Researcher Processed Data (2025)

Table 6 illustrates the adjustment process experienced by visually impaired individuals at STPL. The four informants showed different forms of adaptation according to their respective experiences and conditions. The first informant, SP, was able to accept his loss of vision. This acceptance made SP more open to other people's opinions and better able to manage his emotions when interacting with his environment. The second informant, MJ, is still in the process of adapting to his new condition as a totally blind person. At STPL, MJ learned various basic skills such as walking with a cane and massage training. His past experiences and desire to help others, especially since his family had difficulty accessing medical treatment, motivated MJ to improve himself. The third informant, FW, initially arrived withdrawn and reluctant to socialize. However, with the support of staff and fellow blind friends, he began to interact more and develop his skills. Meanwhile, KA successfully rebuilt his self-confidence through various programs at STPL and is now a more expressive and active person.

Social Adjustment

In the context of social adjustment, individuals who are able to accept themselves tend to feel more secure in interacting with others. This is especially true in the process of accepting the disability of blind individuals. Those who are not born blind must adjust to their new condition. Many things they can no longer do when their vision deteriorates. This forces them to learn to adapt to their new environment and conditions. This adjustment for blind individuals can be explained in chart 2:

Chart 2. Adjustment Process



Source: Processed data from researchers (2025)

Chart 2 explains the social adjustment process for blind individuals during their stay at STPL. Upon arrival, there is an adaptation period, and the institution provides a program called environmental mobility. In the environmental mobility program, they are taught how to walk using a cane, *guiding blocks*, and memorize their surroundings. During the adaptation process, they will initially need the assistance of others to adjust to their social environment. This assistance comes in the form of guidance while walking and helping to train their sense of hearing to compensate for their impaired sense of sight. Once they can adapt to their new environment, they will gradually become independent individuals

and will no longer always need the assistance of others. This independence can also transform them from passive individuals to active ones. This can be seen in Table 4.9 below.

Table 4. Social Adjustment

NO	INFORMANT	SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT	LACK
1.	SP	Changing your mindset to get a new job	Still feel other people are uncomfortable with SP's eye condition
2.	MJ	Learn a lot of new things, from skills to learning to become an independent person.	Feeling insecure when meeting new people
3.	FW	Willingness to learn to hone skills by participating in various programs at STPL	Feeling of having physical differences
4.	KA	Willingness to learn to hone skills by participating in various programs at STPL	-

Source: Researcher Processed Data (2025)

Table 7 illustrates the social adjustment process of visually impaired individuals at STPL. After going through the stage of self-acceptance, they began to learn to adapt to their new social environment. The supportive, empathetic, and positive environment at STPL makes the informants feel safer to interact. SP tries to adapt by learning massage skills as preparation for a new job, although he still feels insecure when meeting new people. MJ is also still in the process of adapting by learning various skills such as massage and braille, in preparation for returning to society. Meanwhile, FW began to develop through vocational activities at STPL, although the trauma of past rejection still made him hesitant to face the outside environment. Unlike the three informants, KA managed to adapt well through various training and counseling programs. Overall, interpersonal communication full of empathy, support, and motivation from staff and fellow people with disabilities played an important role in boosting their confidence and helping their social adjustment process.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research on self-acceptance among visually impaired people through interpersonal communication at the Pangudi Luhur Integrated Center (STPL) in Bekasi, it can be concluded that interpersonal communication plays an important role in helping the process of self-acceptance. Aspects of interpersonal communication such as openness, empathy, supportive attitudes, positive attitudes, and equality are factors that support visually impaired people in understanding and accepting their condition. Through

effective communication between fellow people with disabilities, social workers, and staff, an environment is created that provides a sense of security and encourages them to be more confident in their daily lives.

In addition, support from institutions also plays a major role in this process. Various programs provided, such as vocational massage training and other skill development activities, are designed to build independence and foster entrepreneurship among people with visual impairments. These programs provide opportunities for them to develop their potential and skills that can be utilized when they return to society. However, in the process of self-acceptance, the aspect of equality in interpersonal communication is still in the development stage. Some individuals still feel insecure because they have not fully mastered the skills they are learning. Nevertheless, various efforts made by the institution and the camaraderie among the visually impaired have created a supportive environment, helping them to undergo the adaptation process gradually.

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