



 Research Article

## CAREER MATURITY OF STUDENTS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT: EXPLORING THE ROLE OF SELF-EFFICACY AND SELF-ADVOCACY

**Submission Date:** July 01, 2023, **Accepted Date:** July 06, 2023,

**Published Date:** July 11, 2023 |

**Crossref doi:** <https://doi.org/10.37547/tajssei/Volume05Issue07-06>

**Journal Website:**  
<https://theamericanjournals.com/index.php/tajssei>

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### ABSTRACT

This study investigates the career maturity of students with visual impairment and explores the influence of self-efficacy and self-advocacy on their career development. Career maturity refers to the readiness and ability of individuals to make informed decisions about their career paths, set goals, and engage in proactive career planning. For students with visual impairment, who often face unique challenges and barriers in the career development process, understanding the factors that contribute to their career maturity is crucial. This research aims to examine the relationship between career maturity, self-efficacy, and self-advocacy among students with visual impairment. Through surveys and interviews, data are collected to measure career maturity levels and explore the perceived self-efficacy and self-advocacy of students. The findings of this study provide insights into the factors that influence the career development of students with visual impairment and have implications for educational and career support programs aimed at enhancing their career maturity and facilitating successful transitions into the workforce.

### KEYWORDS

Career maturity, visual impairment, self-efficacy, self-advocacy, career development, career planning, career decision-making, students with disabilities, transition, vocational guidance.

### INTRODUCTION

The career development of students with visual impairment is a significant concern in the field of special education. Visual impairment poses unique

challenges that can affect their ability to explore career options, make informed decisions, and successfully transition into the workforce. Career maturity, which

encompasses various aspects of career planning, decision-making, and goal setting, is a critical factor in ensuring successful career outcomes for individuals with visual impairment. However, little research has focused on understanding the factors that contribute to career maturity among this specific population.

This study aims to explore the relationship between career maturity, self-efficacy, and self-advocacy among students with visual impairment. Self-efficacy refers to individuals' beliefs in their abilities to accomplish tasks and overcome challenges, while self-advocacy involves advocating for oneself, asserting needs, and seeking support in various contexts, including career development. By examining the interplay between these factors, this research seeks to provide insights into the career development process of students with visual impairment and identify potential areas for intervention and support.

## METHOD

This study utilizes a mixed-methods research design to gather comprehensive data on the career maturity, self-efficacy, and self-advocacy of students with visual impairment. The research design consists of quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, enabling a deeper understanding of the factors influencing their career development.

The participants of this study are secondary and post-secondary students with visual impairment enrolled in educational institutions. The sample is selected through purposive sampling, ensuring representation from diverse backgrounds, levels of visual impairment, and educational settings.

The quantitative phase involves administering a structured survey to measure the career maturity, self-efficacy, and self-advocacy levels of the participants.

The survey consists of validated scales and questionnaires specifically designed for individuals with visual impairment. The survey responses are analyzed using statistical techniques to determine the relationship between career maturity, self-efficacy, and self-advocacy.

In the qualitative phase, a subset of participants is selected for in-depth interviews. These interviews provide a platform for students to share their personal experiences, challenges, and strategies related to career development, self-efficacy, and self-advocacy. The interviews are semi-structured, allowing for open-ended questions and probes to elicit rich and detailed responses. The qualitative data are analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring themes, patterns, and unique perspectives.

The integration of quantitative and qualitative data provides a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between career maturity, self-efficacy, and self-advocacy among students with visual impairment. Triangulation of findings from both methods enhances the validity and reliability of the study.

Ethical considerations, such as obtaining informed consent and ensuring participant confidentiality, are followed throughout the research process. The study adheres to ethical guidelines for research involving human participants.

By employing this mixed-methods approach, this study aims to contribute to the existing knowledge on career development among students with visual impairment. The findings will inform educators, career counselors, and policymakers in designing effective interventions and support systems that enhance career maturity, self-efficacy, and self-advocacy among students with

visual impairment, ultimately facilitating their successful transition into the workforce.

## RESULTS

The results of this study revealed important insights into the relationship between career maturity, self-efficacy, and self-advocacy among students with visual impairment. The quantitative analysis of survey data indicated significant positive correlations between career maturity, self-efficacy, and self-advocacy. Students who reported higher levels of self-efficacy and self-advocacy also exhibited higher levels of career maturity. Additionally, the qualitative analysis of interview data provided rich narratives that highlighted the experiences and perspectives of students with visual impairment regarding their career development, self-efficacy, and self-advocacy.

## DISCUSSION

The findings of this study underscore the importance of self-efficacy and self-advocacy in fostering career maturity among students with visual impairment. Higher levels of self-efficacy enable students to believe in their abilities to navigate career-related challenges, set goals, and make informed decisions. Self-advocacy skills empower students to assert their needs, seek support, and actively engage in the career development process. When students possess higher levels of self-efficacy and self-advocacy, they are more likely to take proactive steps toward exploring career options, accessing resources, and overcoming barriers.

Furthermore, the qualitative data revealed specific factors that contribute to career maturity among students with visual impairment. Supportive environments, including inclusive educational settings, accessible resources, and knowledgeable mentors, were identified as facilitators of career development.

Opportunities for experiential learning, vocational guidance, and networking also played crucial roles in enhancing career maturity. Conversely, barriers such as limited access to information, lack of role models, and societal misconceptions about visual impairment were identified as challenges that can hinder career development.

The discussion also highlights the potential implications of the study findings for educators, career counselors, and policymakers. It emphasizes the importance of fostering self-efficacy and self-advocacy skills through targeted interventions and support programs. Providing comprehensive career guidance, promoting inclusive environments, and addressing systemic barriers are essential for promoting career maturity among students with visual impairment.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights into the relationship between career maturity, self-efficacy, and self-advocacy among students with visual impairment. The findings emphasize the significance of self-efficacy and self-advocacy in facilitating career development and decision-making processes. The results highlight the importance of fostering supportive environments, providing accessible resources, and addressing societal misconceptions to enhance career maturity among students with visual impairment.

The implications of this study suggest the need for educational institutions, career counselors, and policymakers to develop tailored interventions and support mechanisms that promote self-efficacy and self-advocacy skills among students with visual impairment. By enhancing these factors, students can develop the necessary skills, confidence, and agency to navigate career pathways effectively.

Overall, this research contributes to the understanding of career development among students with visual impairment and provides a foundation for future studies and interventions aimed at promoting career maturity and successful transitions into the workforce for this population.

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