

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of related literature is a foundational step in the research process, essential for the effective planning and implementation of any study. It involves the systematic identification, evaluation, and synthesis of existing scholarly works pertinent to the research problem. This process not only contextualizes the current study within the existing body of knowledge but also highlights gaps, inconsistencies, and areas requiring further investigation (University of Southern California Libraries, 2025).

The review of literature on the present research, “**Exploring Entrepreneurship as a Coping Strategy for Mothers of Visually Challenged Children,**” comprised the following aspects:

2.1. Overview of Visual Impairment (VI)

2.2. Roles and Responsibilities of Mothers in Care of Visually Challenged Children (VCC)

2.3. Stress and Challenges Faced by Mothers

2.3.1 Stressors among Mothers

2.3.2 Theory of Perceived Stress

2.3.3 Quality of Life of Mothers

2.3.4 Challenges Faced by Mothers and Children

2.4. Stress Coping Strategies for Mothers

2.5. Entrepreneurship as a Stress-Alleviation Strategy

2.5.1 Concept and Importance of Entrepreneurship

2.5.2 Need for Entrepreneurship Training for Mothers

2.5.3 Establishment of Supportive Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

2.1 Overview of Visual Impairment (VI)

According to WHO (2022), disability is a part of being human; almost everyone will temporarily or permanently experience disability at some point in their life. Over 1 billion people – about 15% of the global population – currently experience disability, and

this number is increasing due in part to population ageing and an increase in the prevalence of non-communicable disease. Visual Impairment includes conditions like total blindness and low vision, which significantly affect an individual's ability to perform daily tasks. The Journal of Optometry (2023) stresses the need to differentiate between various types of visual impairments, such as uncorrected refractive errors and complete blindness, in order to design suitable strategies for educational and social inclusion (American Optometric Association, 2024).

In the Indian context, visual impairment is officially recognized under the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act of 1995. It is also addressed through initiatives like the National Programme for Control of Blindness and Visual Impairment (NPCB&VI). These frameworks adopt WHO's classification system and categorize VI as follows:

- **Early Visual Impairment (EVI):** Visual acuity between less than 6/12 and 6/18.
- **Moderate Visual Impairment (MVI):** Visual acuity less than 6/18 to 6/60.
- **Severe Visual Impairment (SVI):** Visual acuity less than 6/60 to 3/60.
- **Blindness:** Visual acuity less than 3/60, ranging from perception of light to total absence of vision.

Table 1: Category of Visual Impairment

Category of Visual Impairment	Presenting Visual Acuity		or Central Visual Field*	Classified as
	Maximum less than	Minimum equal to or better than		
1	6/2 0.50 20/40	6/18 0.33 20/60		Mild visual impairment
2	6/18 0.33 20/60	6/60 0.10 20/200		Moderate visual impairment
3	6/60 0.10 20/200	3/60 0.05 20/400	20 degrees or less, but more than 10 degrees	Blindness
4	3/60 0.05 20/400	1/60 (finger counting at 1 meter) 0.02 5/300 (20/1200)	10 degrees or less but more than 5 degrees	Severe blindness
5	1/60 (finger counting at 1 meter) 0.02 5/300	Light perception	5 degrees or less	Very severe blindness
6	No light perception			Total blindness
7	Unspecified			Unspecified

Source: <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC1435919/>

This classification emphasizes functional impairments in individuals with uncorrected refractive errors, cataracts, or other conditions contributing to visual disability.

According to WHO (2023):

- Blindness is defined as visual acuity less than 3/60 or a visual field of less than 10 degrees from the point of fixation.
- Low vision is characterized by visual acuity less than 6/18 to light perception or a visual field less than 10 degrees.

Functional Impairments Associated with VI:

- Reduced visual acuity and fields.
- Symptoms like photophobia (light sensitivity), diplopia (double vision), and perceptual difficulties.

India's Legal and Operational Standards:

In India, individuals with visual acuity less than 6/60 are considered blind. This distinction is necessary for determining access to benefits and services while ensuring support for individuals with severe impairments. Additionally

- **One-Eyed Individuals:** They are excluded from the "blindness" category as they typically exhibit only a 30% impairment, below the 40% threshold for legal disability recognition.
- **Deaf-Blindness:** Combines vision and hearing loss, often associated with significant communication, developmental, and educational challenges.

Table 2: Types and Causes of Visual Impairment

Condition	Definition and Causes	Remarks and Implications
Amblyopia	Reduction in or loss of vision in the weaker eye from lack of use, caused by strabismus, unequal refractive errors, or opacity of the lens or cornea.	Close work may result in high fatigue, loss of place, or poor concentration. Seating should favour the functional eye.
Astigmatism	Distorted or blurred vision caused by irregularities in the cornea or other surfaces of the eye that produce images on the retina in not equal focus (refractive error)	Loss of accommodation when objects are brought close to the face; avoid long periods of reading or close work that causes discomfort; the child may complain of headaches and fluctuating vision.
Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI)	Impaired vision caused by damage to or malfunction of the visual cortex or optic nerve (or both); causes include anoxia, head injury, and infections of the central nervous system; many children with CVI have additional disabilities such as cerebral palsy, seizure disorders, or intellectual disabilities.	Visual functioning method depending on lighting conditions and attention; vision usually does not deteriorate; improvement sometimes occurs over some time; some children with CVI use their peripheral vision; some are photophobic; some are attracted to bright light; may fail the blink at threatening motions; visual images should be simple and presented singly.
Hyperopia (farsightedness)	Difficult seeing their objects clearly but able to focus on distant objects; caused by a shorter than normal eye that prevents light rays from converging on the retina (refractive error).	Loss of accommodation when objects are brought close to the face; avoid long periods of reading or close-up work that causes discomfort.
Muscular Degeneration	The central area of the retina gradually deteriorates, causing loss of clear vision in the center of the visual field; this is common in other adults but relatively rare in children.	Tasks such as reading and writing are complex. Prescribe low-vision aids or closed-circuit TVs; provide good illumination; and avoid glare.

Myopia (nearsightedness)	Distant objects are blurred or not seen at all, but near objects are seen clearly; caused by an elongated eye that focuses images in front of the retina (refractive error)	Encourage the child to wear their prescribed glasses or contact lenses. For near tasks, the child may be more comfortable working without glasses and bringing the work close to their face.
Nystagmus	Rapid, involuntary back-and-forth movement of the eyes, which makes it difficult to focus on objects; when the two eyes cannot focus simultaneously, the brain avoids double image by suppressing the visual input from one eye, the weaker eye (usually the one that turns inward or outward) can lose its ability to see; can occur on its own but is generally associated with other visual impairments.	Close tasks for extended periods can lead to fatigue; some children turn or tilt their head to obtain the best focus; do not criticize this.
Strabismus	Inability to focus on the same object with both eyes because of an inward or outward deviation of one or both eyes, caused by muscle imbalance, secondary to other visual impairments.	Classroom seating should favor students' stronger eyes. Some students may use one eye for distance tasks and the other for near tasks. Frequent rest periods may be needed during close work, and students may need more time to adjust to unfamiliar visual tasks.

Source: <https://www.studocu.com/ph/document/liceo-de-cagayan-university/child-and-adolescence/types-of-learners/713947299>

2.2 Roles and Responsibilities of Mothers in Care of Visually Challenged Children (VCC)

Mothers of visually challenged children often undertake multifaceted roles that extend beyond traditional parenting duties, encompassing emotional support, educational advocacy, and social integration efforts essential for their child's holistic development. From the point of diagnosis, mothers frequently become the primary caregivers, educators, and advocates for their children. This comprehensive involvement is crucial in navigating the unique challenges associated with visual impairment (Soldevila et. al., 2023). Their duties include promoting educational opportunities (Downey, 2024), aiding rehabilitation (Iqbal et al., 2023), encouraging interactive communication, and offering emotional support (Downey, 2024). Grumi et al. (2021) emphasize that mothers of visually impaired children often serve as primary caregivers, assuming roles that include providing educational support and emotional nurturing. These responsibilities are compounded by the child's need for specialized learning and life skills development.

Lupón et al. (2018) found that the caregiving role impacts mothers' psychological well-being, with higher stress levels reported among mothers of totally blind children compared to those with children who have partial vision.

- **Emotional and Psychological Support**

Recent studies have highlighted the significant emotional challenges faced by mothers of visually impaired children, emphasizing the importance of resilience and effective coping strategies. A study by Singh and Singh (2024) found that resilience and optimism are crucial for parents managing the stress associated with caring for children with visual and hearing impairments. The research suggests that resilient parents are better equipped to support their children and maintain their mental health. Similarly, Kara et al. (2023) observed that mothers of visually impaired children often experience higher levels of anxiety and depression, which can impact the mother-child relationship. These findings underscore the need for supportive interventions that enhance parental resilience and well-being.

- **Interactive Communication**

The way mothers interact with their visually impaired children differs significantly from that of sighted children. Research has shown that mothers of visually impaired children may use more descriptive communication and directiveness, which helps in the development of their child's understanding and skills. The increased use of tactile and auditory cues during interactions is key to fostering development in children with visual impairments (Grumi et al., 2021).

- **Educational Advocacy**

Mothers often take on the roles of educators and advocates for their visually impaired children. This advocacy role can include navigating complex educational systems to secure necessary services such as specialized teaching and support (Stinson-Perez, 2021). Studies emphasize their critical role in ensuring access to appropriate schooling, assistive technologies, and therapy programs. These efforts frequently require mothers to acquire specialized knowledge about visual impairment (Hatton et al., 2017).

- **Rehabilitation Efforts**

In terms of rehabilitation, mothers play a crucial role in implementing strategies that support their child's daily life skills. Engaging in rehabilitation programs tailored to

visually impaired children, they contribute to enhancing their children's independence and functional abilities. This proactive approach can significantly impact the child's ability to cope with everyday challenges (Iqbal et al., 2023).

- **Financial and Logistical Management**

Mothers frequently handle financial responsibilities, balancing household budgets to accommodate the costs associated with special education, therapy, and medical care. These financial burdens contribute to stress but also drive mothers to pursue income-generating activities, such as small-scale entrepreneurship (Smith et al., 2020).

- **Social Interaction and Community Engagement**

Ultimately, mothers play a crucial role in facilitating social interactions and community engagement for their visually impaired children. By encouraging participation in social activities and fostering relationships with peers, mothers help their children develop essential social skills. This social integration is vital for enhancing their overall quality of life and helping them build a supportive network (Zhao et al. 2021).

2.3 Stress and its Challenges for Mothers

Recent studies highlight that mothers of visually impaired children face elevated levels of stress compared to parents of sighted children. This stress often stems from the additional caregiving responsibilities, including medical appointments, therapy sessions, and educational support. These demands often lead to feelings of isolation, burnout, and mental health challenges like anxiety and depression. Sakkalou et al. (2018) explored the “parenting stress, anxiety, and depression levels among mothers of visually impaired infants at 1 and 2 years of age. The study revealed significantly higher parenting stress levels among these mothers compared to community norms, with 34.6% falling into the clinical range—notably, mothers of infants with profound visual impairment reported consistently elevated stress levels across both time points. The findings emphasized the strong association between higher parenting stress and increased symptoms of anxiety and depression.”

2.3.1 Stressors among Mothers

According to WHO (2023), Stress is defined as “a natural physiological and psychological response to internal or external demands that are perceived as exceeding an individual's resources or ability to cope. It involves changes that affect nearly every

system in the body, influencing emotions, behavior, and physical health. Stress can arise from various situations, including daily challenges, life transitions, or environmental pressures. It plays a critical role in adaptation and survival when managed effectively.” This phenomenon has various psychological and physical effects, including cardiovascular issues, headaches, sleep disturbances and depression. It is defined as "a physiological or psychological response to internal or external stressors," with significant implications for emotional, physical and mental health (American Psychological Association [APA], 2023).

Stressors are external events or conditions that challenge or threaten an individual's ability to cope, ranging from acute traumatic events to chronic life pressures. Every individual perceives stress differently, as all forms of adaptability invoke the stress response. Additionally, stress is described as "an adaptive response by the body to any demand that creates a state of tension or strain," where stressors include social, environmental, or internal triggers (National Institute of Mental Health [NIMH], 2023).

Mothers of visually challenged children experience significant stress due to caregiving responsibilities, emotional strain, and societal expectations. Parenting stress levels are particularly high when children exhibit profound visual impairments, as seen in longitudinal studies. Stress is compounded by the emotional burden of managing their child's developmental needs and maintaining the parent-child relationship (Sakkalou et al., 2018). A study by Dunst (2022) indicates that “mothers of children with disabilities, including visual impairments, experience significantly higher levels of stress due to the physical and emotional caregiving demands.” The impact of limited social support systems exacerbates feelings of isolation and stress among caregivers.

BMC Pediatrics (2024) found that, “parents often experience frustration, confusion, and doubt before diagnosis, followed by shock and denial upon confirmation, sometimes likened to grieving the loss of a ‘normal’ child. These emotional responses may contribute to marital conflicts and place significant burdens on single mothers balancing childcare and education. Additionally, families frequently encounter substantial financial strain due to medical expenses and transportation, compounded by social stigmatization.”

Parenting stress remains a pervasive issue for caregivers of children with special needs. A South African study by Mokoena et al. (2023) reported, “elevated stress levels

linked to frequent hospital visits, lack of access to appropriate schooling and financial hardships.” The study also observed that older caregivers and single parents faced greater challenges. Similarly, Cheng and Lai (2023) identified, “socioeconomic difficulties, coping with the diagnosis and social isolation as key stressors highlighting the critical role of social support networks from family, friends and professionals in reducing parental stress and promoting resilience.” They further that, “maternal depression symptoms and adolescent coping behaviors interact to influence adolescents’ internalizing problems, highlighting how both maternal and child coping mechanisms affect family well-being.”

Aratti and Zampini (2024) explored, “caregiving for children with Osteogenesis Imperfecta, emphasizing how adaptive coping strategies mitigate parenting stress and improve efficacy.” Additionally, Löchner et al. (2024) reported that, “high parental stress, social isolation and poor relationship quality predicted poorer parental mental health, whereas resilience factors like competence and attachment served as protective buffers over time.”

Recent studies indicate that parents of visually challenged children experience distinct stress and coping patterns. Fathers tend to demonstrate stronger coping skills across families with both visually impaired and typically developing children, while mothers often report higher stress levels (Smith & Johnson, 2022). The impact of having a VI child significantly influences family dynamics, involving recognition of challenges and active problem-solving. Although VI itself is not the sole cause of family distress, social stigma related to disability adds considerable pressure on parents. Families from lower socio-economic backgrounds face amplified stress due to difficulties with treatment access, unstable home environments, and financial strain. In contrast, middle and higher-income families more often report community-related and health concerns (Lee et al., 2021).

Mothers of visually challenged children frequently report feelings of frustration and stress, stemming from family conflicts, suboptimal healthcare, and caregiving burdens (Chen & Wang, 2023). Supportive family networks and effective coping strategies can help alleviate parental distress and foster a sense of dedication to caregiving roles. Mothers and siblings from rural or extended family settings sometimes face fewer challenges due to shared responsibilities. Marital satisfaction and spousal support remain

pivotal in improving maternal coping efficacy. Many mothers also rely on spiritual beliefs and inner resilience to manage stress, although behavioural difficulties in visually challenged children continue to be a significant source of maternal strain (Patel & Rao, 2022).

- **Socio-Economic and Family Dynamics**

Malik (2023) examined “the challenges faced by parents of visually impaired children, highlighting that factors such as low socioeconomic status, lack of social support, and limited education significantly impact parenting abilities. The study emphasized that visual impairment alone may not account for parenting difficulties; rather, these challenges are often compounded by socio-economic and cultural factors. Additionally, parents with visual impairments themselves may experience higher levels of stress due to their disability and associated challenges.”

Rani et al. (2022) conducted a study comparing parenting stress levels between parents of visually impaired children and those of speech and hearing impaired children. The research found that parents of visually challenged children reported significantly higher levels of parenting stress. This suggests that the unique challenges associated with visual impairment may contribute to increased stress among parents.”

Cheng and Lai (2023) highlighted that parental stress is influenced by multiple factors such as parental gender, diagnosis-related challenges, socioeconomic status, and social isolation, emphasizing the role of professional and social support in alleviating stress. Aratti and Zampini (2024) found that among parents of children with Osteogenesis Imperfecta, those who perceived higher levels of social support reported lower parenting stress, and that adaptive coping strategies, such as maintaining a positive attitude, significantly reduced caregiver burden. Social support plays a regulatory role in buffering the negative impact of family stress on parental self-efficacy, highlighting the importance of strengthening support networks to improve mental well-being in such families.

Mbatha and Mokwena (2023) found that, “macro stressors major life-altering challenges such as financial strain, lack of institutional support and frequent hospital visits significantly impact mothers of children with developmental disabilities in rural South Africa. These stressors, though less frequent, are more intense and often reshape family roles and future planning. For mothers of visually challenged children, such

stressors may include sudden shifts in caregiving responsibilities, changes in employment and lack of access to specialized education or rehabilitation services. In contrast, Cheng and Lai (2023) highlighted, “the role of micro stressors, which are smaller, day-to-day challenges such as managing the child’s needs, balancing work and caregiving, facing public stigma and navigating bureaucratic hurdles. Though seemingly minor, these stressors accumulate and significantly increase parental stress over time.” Fu, Wang and Zhang (2023) added that the presence of strong perceived social support helps buffer both macro and micro stressors by increasing parental self-efficiency and reducing psychological distress. A successful family is expected to provide emotional support to its members, but this can be challenging. Individuals who are typically independent may find seeking support outside the family particularly stressful. Financial difficulties further exacerbate stress when resources are inadequate to meet familial needs.

- **Stress Associated with Family Dynamics and Child Behaviour**

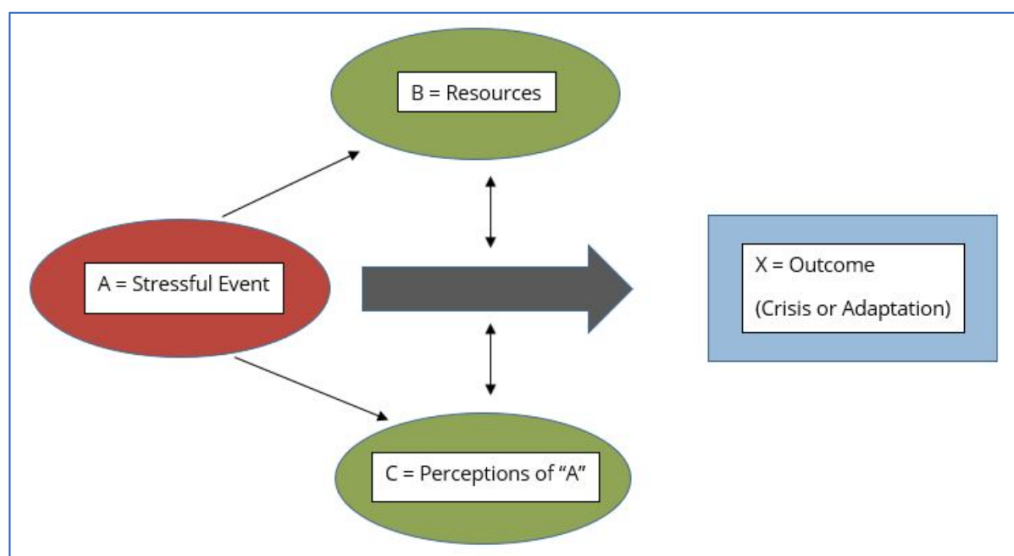
Babu and Paul (2022) examined stress levels among parents of children with various special needs, including VI. The study focused on the parents of visually challenged children, who reported significant stress due to financial burdens, lack of institutional support, and the challenges of navigating healthcare and educational systems. In Kolkata, West Bengal, a qualitative study explored “the experiences of parents of visually impaired children attending a blind school. Parents reported facing societal stigma, communication challenges with their children, and stress related to their children's adaptation to Braille. Instances of domestic strain, including divorce and domestic violence, were also noted, highlighting the profound impact of a child's visual impairment on family relationships.”

Dutton et al. (2021) examined “the stress experienced by mothers of children with visual impairment, focusing on family dynamics and child behaviour. The study found that family conflict, lack of social support, and children's behavioural issues significantly increased maternal stress. Mothers reported higher levels of anxiety and depression, and they experienced emotional fluctuations between guilt, worry, and anger. The research highlighted the role of the father and other family members in alleviating stress by providing emotional and practical support.”

A recent study by Gupta and Sharma (2020) explored “the relationship between children's behavioural problems and parental stress among mothers of visually impaired children. The study found that behaviours such as aggression, tantrums, and lack of communication significantly increased maternal stress. The study suggested that intervention programs targeting behavioural management can be beneficial in reducing stress levels for parents.” Emotional oscillation between pity, resentment, and anxiety creates substantial strain on family unity. Frequent illnesses, fatigue, and chronic stress conditions are prevalent among mothers, with high percentages reporting mental health issues such as depression. Engaging with children who exhibit severe behavioral problems can intensify parental stress, especially during family outings, where managing public behavior poses additional challenges (Southcott, 2016).

2.3.2 Theory of Perceived Stress in the Context of Parents

The ABC-X model, initially developed by Reuben Hill (1958), remains foundational in understanding how families respond to stressors such as raising a child with a disability. However, recent literature has expanded and refined this model to reflect the complex and evolving nature of family stress in today’s sociocultural context (Patterson, 2021; Hayes et al., 2022).



Source. Adapted from the ABCX Stress Model by Reuben Hill (James, n.d.)

Figure 1: The ABCX Stress Model

Key Components of Model:**A: The Stressor Event**

According to Mbatha and Mokwena (2023), “A stressor is any event or challenge that disrupts a family's stability. For parents of visually impaired children, this could be the diagnosis itself, the onset of caregiving responsibilities, or difficulties in accessing inclusive education. Recent studies show that early lack of information, social stigma, and uncertainty about the child’s future amplify this stressor.”

B: Family Resources

This refers to both internal and external resources, such as emotional resilience, spousal support, family income, healthcare access, and institutional backing. Research indicates that psychological flexibility, parenting self-efficacy, and social support networks significantly buffer the effects of stress (Wang et al., 2023). Indian studies also show that access to community-based rehabilitation services and extended family support reduces parental distress (Kumar & Raj, 2022).

C: Family Perception (Appraisal)

“The way a family interprets and gives meaning to the stressor plays a pivotal role. Modern applications emphasize cognitive reappraisal—the ability to reframe challenges positively.” For example, families who view the child’s impairment not as a burden but as a unique circumstance requiring adaptive strategies tend to fare better emotionally (Hayes et al., 2022).

X: The Crisis

The “crisis” outcome depends on the dynamic interaction of stressor (A), resources (B), and perception (C). If the family lacks resources and views the situation negatively, they are more likely to experience emotional breakdowns, conflict, or burnout. However, active coping strategies, such as problem-solving, spiritual support, and therapy, have been shown to prevent crisis states (Luijckx et al., 2024).

The model suggests that the interplay between these factors determines whether a family succumbs to or overcomes a stressful event. For example, parents with strong social networks and positive coping strategies are less likely to experience a crisis when faced with the challenges of raising a visually impaired child. Despite its utility, the

ABC-X model has faced criticism for its linear and deterministic approach. It assumes that stress progression follows a straightforward path and may not account for the dynamic, cyclical nature of family stress and adaptation. Moreover, it overlooks external systemic factors, such as societal stigma and policy inadequacies, which can influence outcomes.

According to the World Health Organisation (2021) and Sakkalou et al. (2018), “the primary factors contributing to stress among mothers include financial strain, time management difficulties, lack of access to resources, and the emotional toll of managing their child’s condition. These stressors are exacerbated by the need for medical interventions, educational support, and managing behavioral challenges associated with disabilities.” Borg et al. (2022), along with WHO and UNICEF (2022), highlight that while assistive technologies play a vital role in enhancing the independence and quality of life of individuals with functional limitations, their high costs and limited availability create significant barriers for many families. These financial burdens are compounded by the expenses associated with specialized education and medical care, placing considerable strain on caregivers. Morris et al. (2020) further emphasize that the funding and ongoing maintenance costs of such technologies are among the primary obstacles to their adoption, which in turn limits the potential to alleviate caregiver workload. Similarly, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2017) notes that although assistive devices can reduce caregiver burden, affordability and access remain persistent challenges.

“Parents of children with developmental disorders often face both public stigma and self-directed stigma (courtesy/affiliate stigma). This stigma leads to emotional distress, social isolation, and lower overall well-being, particularly when family and community support are lacking (Tekola et al., 2020).” Negrão et al. (2022) conducted a case-control study in a developing country to assess everyday functioning in visually impaired children using the Pediatric Evaluation of Disability Inventory (PEDI). Results showed that children with bilateral visual impairment scored significantly lower in self-care, mobility, and social function compared to typically developing peers. These children required markedly more caregiver assistance across daily tasks. The increased caregiving demands placed substantial time and energy burdens on parents, particularly mothers. Such responsibilities may limit opportunities for self-care and engagement in other family duties.

Five primary factors increase the vulnerability to stress among mothers of visually impaired children: individual factors, family factors, job-related factors, financial factors, and socio-cultural factors.

- **Individual Factors:** Individual factors play a significant role in the stress levels experienced by mothers of visually challenged children. Key variables such as the mother's mental health, personality traits, and coping mechanisms can influence their ability to manage stress effectively. Research indicates that mothers with higher resilience tend to cope better with the challenges of caring for a visually impaired child compared to those with lower resilience (Singh, 2022). The emotional strain inherent in caregiving can impede daily functioning, leading to chronic stress. Moreover, mothers who adopt positive coping strategies and possess a strong sense of coherence are more likely to experience post-traumatic growth, enabling them to adapt proactively to their children's behavioural challenges (Momeni et al., 2024)
- **Family Factors:** Family dynamics significantly contribute to the stress mothers face. Caring for a child with visual impairment often alters family roles, which may lead to conflicts and isolation. If partners are unable to share caregiving responsibilities or if family members fail to comprehend the demands of raising a visually challenged child, mothers may feel isolated (Rani et al., 2022). The stress of caregiving can result in social isolation and negative cognitive attitudes, as mothers disengage from social interactions that mothers of typically developing children might otherwise engage in (Currie, 2020). Feelings of loneliness, guilt, and depression are common, further complicated by a reluctance to partake in social activities where comparisons with peers may arise (Kleanthous, 2021).
- **Job Factors:** Employment-related stress magnifies the challenges faced by mothers. Many working mothers struggle to balance job responsibilities with caregiving tasks, notably when workplace flexibility is lacking. This dual burden often leads to feelings of inadequacy and burnout as they strive to meet both family and work demands (Rani et al., 2022)
- **Financial Factors:** Financial constraints significantly impact the stress that mothers endure. High medical costs, therapy expenses, and potentially

reduced income from working fewer hours create substantial economic pressures. Mothers often bear the economic burdens associated with caring for a child with disabilities, leading to various crises that necessitate the use of coping resources to manage these stressors. Such financial strain adversely affects both maternal and child well-being and may perpetuate a cycle of mental health challenges and caregiving difficulties (Rani et.al. and Singh, 2022).

- **Socio-Cultural Factors:** Socio-cultural factors can either alleviate or heighten stress among mothers. Cultural attitudes towards disabilities, societal support systems, and access to proper resources significantly affect their experiences. In cultures where disabilities are stigmatized, mothers may face additional pressure and isolation, complicating their ability to seek support (Rani et al. and Singh, 2022).

2.3.3 Quality of Life of Mothers

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines Quality of Life (QoL) as an individual's perception of their position within the cultural and value systems they inhabit, particularly about their goals, expectations, standards, and concerns. This definition emphasizes that QoL is a multifaceted concept influenced by various factors including physical health, psychological well-being, social relationships, personal beliefs, and one's interaction with significant environmental elements. The quality of life (QoL) of mothers raising children with visual impairments (VI) has become a growing area of research focus. Studies indicate that the emotional, social, and physical demands associated with caring for a child with a disability can significantly impact the overall well-being of mothers. Lupon al. (2018) studied the quality of life (QoL) of mothers raising children with visual impairments (VI), highlighting various factors that influence their well-being. They are as follows.

- **Emotional Well-being:** The emotional health of mothers is often compromised as they navigate the stress of raising a child with VI. Studies have shown that mothers experience higher levels of anxiety, depression, and stress compared to mothers of children without disabilities. These emotional strains are often intensified by concerns about their child's future, social inclusion, and educational opportunities (Southcott, 2016).

- **Social Support:** Strong social support networks correlate with improved mental health among mothers of children with learning disabilities. Similarly, Kumari et al. (2023) observed that mothers of children with intellectual disabilities experience lower levels of social support, leading to increased anxiety and depression. Community-based interventions have shown promise. A study in rural South India highlighted that parent support groups foster peer connections, self-efficacy, and advocacy skills, thereby reducing feelings of isolation (Science Direct, 2024).
- **Physical Health:** The physical demands of caregiving can take a toll on mothers' health, leading to fatigue, sleep deprivation, and neglect of personal health. These physical demands can contribute to chronic health issues such as musculoskeletal pain and increased vulnerability to illness.
- **Impact on Family Dynamics:** Raising a child with a disability, including visual impairments, can strain family relationships. Positive family communication and support can help buffer some of the stress, thereby improving the overall family dynamic.
- **Economic Impact:** Financial strain is another significant factor affecting the QoL of mothers of children with VI. Many mothers face the challenge of balancing caregiving with employment, and some may have to reduce working hours or leave the workforce entirely.

Timely and effective communication by healthcare providers significantly impacts the QoL of caregivers. Studies show that early diagnosis and psychological support help parents adapt better to their child's condition. Conversely, delays in these areas exacerbate stress and dissatisfaction (CDC, 2023). A study focusing on children with congenital cataracts found that psychosocial dimensions of parental QoL are more impacted than physical health concerns. This includes anxiety about their child's social integration and prospects, highlighting the need for targeted interventions for caregivers (Philippine Journal of Ophthalmology, 2023).

A recent Indian study by Kumar and Singh (2023) using the WHOQOL-BREF revealed that mothers of children with intellectual or locomotor disabilities experience significantly poorer quality of life across all domains—including physical health, psychological well-being, social relationships, and environmental conditions—compared

to mothers of typically developing children. The caregiving role was closely associated with heightened stress, emotional strain, and social isolation. These findings echo similar conclusions drawn in Lupón et al.'s (2018, 2023) research, underscoring the urgent need for comprehensive support services—such as counseling, community support groups, and accessible healthcare—to bolster the well-being of mothers raising children with visual or other disabilities.

2.3.4 Challenges Faced by Mothers and Children

Raising Children with visual impairments brings significant challenges for mothers, including emotional stress, the need for continuous caregiving and social misconceptions about disabilities. Issues like lack of proper educational resources and support services adds to the burden. Additionally time and energy required to meet the child's needs often heighten levels of stress in the family (Sullivan and Knutson, 2017; Parveen, 2022). Mothers of visually challenged children encounter numerous challenges that affect their quality of life, stemming from caregiving demands, emotional stress and societal perceptions.

- **Emotional and Psychological Challenges:** Mothers of children with visual impairment often experience heightened parenting stress. A study published in *Frontiers in Psychology* in 2023 found that “the complete absence of vision from birth adversely affects parenting stress and perceived social support.” Research in *Psychology, Health and Medicine* in 2022 examined the psychosocial and occupational experience of parents of children with visual impairment. Participants reported “overwhelming emotions following their child's diagnosis, including grief, fear and anxiety, highlighting the significant mental health impact on parents.” Phukubje (2017), in “Psychological and Social Stress in Mothers of Children with Visual Impairments” identified that “mothers of visually impaired children face higher levels of anxiety, stress and withdrawal behavior. They are also more introverted and neurotic, compared to mothers of typically developing children.” The emotional strain experienced by mothers of children with disabilities, including those with visual impairments, often extends beyond caregiving demands to encompass feelings of shame, blame, and self-blame.

Currie and Szabo (2020) found that parents of children with rare neurodevelopmental disorders frequently reported social withdrawal, humiliation, and a sense of being misunderstood, experiences that mirror those of mothers coping with visual impairment in their children. Similarly, an Indian study on caregivers of children with physical and mental disabilities documented experiences of shame, social rejection, and guilt, with many resorting to avoidance as an emotional coping mechanism (Indian Journal of Psychological Medicine, 2016). These findings indicate that such emotional responses are not only culturally pervasive but are also intensified by societal stigma and the perceived judgment of others, particularly among younger and more educated mothers who may face heightened expectations regarding their parenting roles.

- **Caregiving Demands and Social Challenges:** A phenomenological study published in “Global Social Research in 2023, explored the role of mothers in rehabilitating their children with adventitious visual impairment. The study found that “mothers face various challenges, including societal misconceptions and the need for continuous support, which can affect their ability to provide effective rehabilitation.” A growing body of research shows that having a child with a disability, such as a visual impairment or developmental delay, significantly elevates parental stress. This stress is often more pronounced in mothers and may contribute to family tension and marital strain. A recent review in the Journal of Family Medicine and Primary Care highlighted that the mental and physical health of parents can be adversely affected, with increased risks of relational breakdown and reduced family cohesion (Sharma & Sinha, 2022). Kumari et al. (2023) found that these mothers report lower levels of perceived social support, leading to increased anxiety and depression. The caregiving demands can also strain familial relationships as mothers may have limited time and energy for other family members, potentially leading to neglect and tension within the household. Mourya et al. (2016) observed that the severity of a child’s intellectual disability correlates with increased perceived stigma and restricted social life for mothers. Additionally, a study in Kerala revealed that 48 per cent of individuals with disabilities had poor social networks, with 33 per cent exhibiting depressive symptoms, highlighting the critical role of social support in mental well-being (Devassy et al., 2023). This social exclusion leads to limited support networks, affecting both emotional well-being and access to resources.”

- **Time Challenges:** Mothers of visually challenged children frequently encounter difficulties in managing their time effectively due to the extensive commitments that accompany caring for a child with special needs. They often juggle multiple roles, including caregiver, advocate, and household manager, which can lead to a perpetual sense of being overwhelmed. Scheduling medical appointments, therapy sessions, and educational meetings demands considerable time and organizational skills. Many mothers report struggling with the demands of ensuring their child's safety and development while also attending to household responsibilities and other family members. This duality can result in feelings of inadequacy and guilt, creating a cycle of stress. The lack of time often leaves little room for self-care, further exacerbating their stress levels. Without sufficient time to recharge, mothers may experience burnout, which negatively affects their physical and mental health (Khooshab et al., 2016).
- **Energy Challenges:** The energy required to care for a visually challenged child can be exhausting, both physically and emotionally. Mothers often find themselves in a state of constant alertness, needing to be available to meet their child's needs throughout the day. This continuous demand can lead to significant fatigue and emotional depletion, as many mothers find it challenging to prioritize their well-being amidst their caregiving responsibilities. Additionally, the emotional toll of managing a child with a disability often goes unrecognized. Mothers may experience stress ranging from chronic worry about their child's future to feelings of isolation and helplessness. The cumulative effect of managing all these emotions, coupled with physical tiredness, can be overwhelming and result in an increased risk of anxiety and depression (Khooshab et al., 2016).
- **Financial Challenges:** Financial management adds another layer of complexity to the already challenging lives of mothers with VCC. The costs associated with medical care, therapy services, assistive technologies, and specialized education can be substantial. Without the proper financial planning and support, many families struggle to meet these expenses, leading to increased financial instability and stress. This financial strain can manifest in various ways, including anxiety about future expenses and the emotional burden of feeling responsible for ensuring their child's access to necessary resources. The awareness of these

financial needs often contradicts the reality of limited financial resources, creating a stressful dynamic that affects the mothers' mental well-being. Furthermore, navigating insurance processes and seeking financial assistance can be frustrating and time-consuming, compounding the stress of already tight schedules (Khooshab et al., 2016).

- Sullivan and Knutson (2017) in “Maltreatment and Disabilities: A Population-Based Epidemiological Study” highlighted that “mothers of children with disabilities often experience heightened emotional distress and financial burdens, including anxiety and depression as a result of caregiving responsibilities and social isolation. They also noted that many families struggle to afford resources like braille tools and mobility aids.”
- Time, energy, and financial management are critical factors that contribute to the elevated stress levels experienced by mothers of VCC. The pressures of effective time allocation, managing physical and emotional energy, and addressing financial concerns create a heavy burden that can lead to significant psychological stress. By acknowledging these challenges and seeking appropriate supports and resources, including community programs and counselling services, these mothers can alleviate some of their stress and enhance their overall quality of life.

2.4 Stress Coping Strategies for Mothers of Visually Challenged Children

Coping strategies for mothers of visually impaired children often include establishing support networks, engaging in therapy, and maintaining open communication within the family. Support from peers and community networks plays a pivotal role in helping mothers of children with disabilities cope with stress and build emotional resilience. When mothers connect with others who share similar experiences, it eases their emotional burdens and fosters a sense of belonging. Many also benefit from engaging in self-care routines and seeking professional counselling to navigate their emotional challenges better. Pati and Srivastava (2021) and Sharma (2020) emphasized that such strategies significantly enhance mental well-being and equip mothers to manage caregiving responsibilities more effectively. Arakkathara and Bance (2019) introduced the POWER (Promotion of Well-being, Resilience, and Stress Management) program, which demonstrated notable reductions in parental stress and improvements in resilience and emotional health through structured interventions.

Dodds and Singer (2022) highlighted the effectiveness of peer-led support systems, such as the Parent to Parent (P2P) program, which helps reduce feelings of isolation and encourages adaptive coping strategies. In India, community-based initiatives, such as those implemented in Mandya district, Karnataka, provide comprehensive support through skill development, accessible healthcare, and family support services, fostering inclusive growth (Times of India, 2025). These interventions reflect the importance of integrating professional and informal support to improve psychological well-being and overall quality of life for mothers of children with disabilities. It is also noted that coping mechanisms vary depending on the child's condition; for instance, mothers of VIC often exhibit overprotective behaviours, which can inadvertently increase their stress levels (Ravenscroft and John, 2019).

2.4.1 Stress and Family Dynamics

Mothers of VIC respond to stress in different ways; some manage to adapt positively, while others may struggle, leading to emotional strain within the family unit. Elevated stress in these mothers is frequently associated with child-specific behavioural concerns such as attention difficulties, alongside personal emotional challenges like loneliness, guilt, and depressive symptoms. Their coping capacity is shaped by both personal traits and the quality of family interactions (Opie and Jill, 2018). Stress is commonly viewed as a dynamic process influenced by an individual's interpretation and response to challenging circumstances. In this framework, primary appraisal refers to recognising a situation as a threat or challenge, whereas secondary appraisal involves identifying resources and strategies to manage the stressor (Ravenscroft and John, 2019).

The caregiving responsibilities for children with VI often become a source of chronic stress, particularly when accompanied by issues like seizures or limited comprehension, which can interfere with daily routines. To manage these pressures, mothers frequently resort to coping methods such as practicing acceptance and accessing psychological support systems (Palan and Ruchi, 2020). Notably, individuals who maintain meaningful social relationships and find comfort in close friendships tend to be more resilient in managing the psychological demands of caregiving.

2.4.2 Social Support and Religious Practices

Mothers of visually challenged children often rely on social interactions and spiritual practices to manage the stresses associated with caregiving. Engaging in

conversations with friends about their children's behaviours provides emotional relief and mitigate feelings of isolation, while engagement in religious activities provides inner peace and a sense of purpose. These coping strategies serve as vital emotional outlets, particularly during periods of heightened stress (Singh & Kumar, 2022). Despite the challenges they face, many caregivers exhibit resilience, shaped by their past experiences of loss and their positive outlook on caregiving roles. Commonly adopted coping mechanisms include problem-focused approaches and spiritual engagement. The chronic nature of their children's disabilities, coupled with acute parental anxieties, contributes to significant stress levels (Jaffrin et al., 2022)

2.4.3 Parental Education and Access to Resources

Parental guidance programs that encourage active involvement in the rehabilitation process of visually challenged children have been found to produce being often decrease parenting stress significantly and support groups contributes significantly to enhancing mothers' emotional strength and their sense of fulfilment in caregiving, which in turn positively influences their perception of their children's difficulties (Al-Harrasi, 2019). Kumar and Sharma (2022) reported, "Effective guidance interventions have been shown to significantly reduce parenting stress and enhance family dynamics among caregivers of visually impaired children. Tailoring counselling services to align with the cultural and contextual nuances of families is essential to address the multifaceted needs associated with VI. Notably, early interventions play a pivotal role in fostering resilience within families. For instance, life skills training programs have been effective in reducing parenting stress among mothers of blind children, highlighting the importance of culturally sensitive approaches." Additionally, self-compassion training has been shown to significantly decrease parenting stress, emphasising the value of early and empathetic support mechanisms (Patel & Singh, 2023).

Kulkarni et al. (2022) conducted a qualitative study to examine the impact of early intervention services on children with VI and how parents perceive these services in terms of their child's development and family dynamics. The study involved in-depth interviews with parents of children who had received early intervention services at a tertiary care facility in Pune, Maharashtra. The findings revealed that parents who were educated and had access to resources were better equipped to engage with early intervention programs, leading to improved outcomes for their children. These parents demonstrated proactive involvement in their child's rehabilitation, effectively utilizing

the available services and support systems. The study highlighted that parental education played a crucial role in understanding and implementing intervention strategies, thereby enhancing the coping mechanisms of mothers caring for VIC.

2.4.4 Resource Management Strategies to Alleviate Stress

Managing available resources efficiently is essential in reducing the stress associated with caregiving responsibilities. This includes prudent handling of time, financial resources and emotional support systems. Mothers of VCC often benefit from access to specialized education programs, government-provided disability benefits and support from local community initiatives. Implementing early intervention measures and maintaining open, consistent communication within the family are recognized as key approaches to easing caregiving burdens and enhancing overall family well-being (Sarma, 2023 and Kumar, 2022).

a. Time Management Strategies

According to Farrell, 2017; Helmick, 2024; Yadav et al., 2023, “Time management is critical for reducing the feelings of being overwhelmed that many mothers experience.” Many mothers report feeling overwhelmed by scheduling specialized medical appointments, coordinating therapy sessions and managing educational needs (Shrivastava et al., 2024). Programs like Life Skills Training have been shown to help these mothers reduce parenting stress (Khooshab et al., 2016), ultimately enhancing their time management skills by providing structured methods to organize their daily tasks and responsibilities.

- **Prioritization:** Mothers can create a list of tasks based on urgency and importance. This can help them focus on what needs to be tackled first, reducing the feeling of being overwhelmed.
- **Structured Scheduling:** Utilizing calendars and planners can streamline appointments, therapy sessions and everyday activities. This structured approach can lessen anxiety about forgetting commitments and improve overall time efficiency.
- **Task Delegation:** Where possible, mothers should seek help from family members or community resources. Delegating tasks can alleviate the workload and provide opportunities for shared responsibilities, ensuring that not every task falls solely on one person.

Additionally, they may rely on support from family members or community resources, which allows for a distribution of responsibilities and alleviates the heavy time burden of sole caregiving (Torres et al., 2024).

b. Energy Management Strategies

According to Dugan and Barnes-Farrell, (2020) and Butler et al., (2019), “Managing energy levels is crucial for maintaining physical and mental well-being” Oskam, (2020). Many mothers report significant fatigue resulting from the constant vigilance required to ensure their child’s safety and facilitate learning. (Khooshab et al., 2020).

The following techniques can help mothers recharge and sustain their energy:

- **Self-Care Practices:** Mothers should prioritize self-care activities such as regular exercise, sufficient sleep and mindfulness practices, including yoga or meditation. These practices can help reduce stress and promote overall health.
- **Short Breaks:** Incorporating short, intentional breaks throughout the day can provide much-needed moments to relax and recharge. Activities like deep breathing, stretching, or simply taking a walk can be rejuvenating.
- **Support Networks:** Engaging with support groups or connecting with other mothers facing similar challenges can offer emotional relief and shared strategies. This social interaction not only provides support but also helps to mitigate feelings of isolation (Hill, 2024).

c. Financial Management Strategies: Mothers of visually challenged children often face substantial financial challenges, including the costs of medical care, specialized therapies, and educational resources. According to reports, the total expenses associated with raising a child with disabilities can exceed \$500,000 over their lifetime due to increased medical and educational needs (Goodwin, 2018). This reality necessitates careful financial planning, including the establishment of special needs trusts, budgeting for medical expenses, and reviewing government assistance options. Effective financial management can significantly reduce financial stress. Here are some strategies (Demmin and Silverstein, 2020; Setyaningrum et al., 2023) that can help mothers manage their resources more effectively:

- **Budgeting:** Establishing a budget helps mothers keep track of expenses related to their child's care. This practice can help identify areas for cost reduction and ensure that essential needs are met without financial strain.
- **Research Assistance Programs:** Many organizations offer financial assistance and resources for families of children with disabilities. Mothers should actively seek out these programs, from grants to scholarships, which can alleviate some financial burdens.
- **Regular Financial Reviews:** Reviewing financial situations regularly can help mothers adjust their budgets and spending habits based on changing circumstances. This proactive approach can lead to better financial stability and less anxiety about finances.

Resource management strategies in time, energy, and finance can play a crucial role in alleviating stress for mothers of visually impaired children. By implementing structured time management techniques, prioritizing energy conservation, and developing effective financial practices, these mothers can significantly improve their overall well-being. Support from community resources and peer networks further enhances these strategies, creating a more manageable and fulfilling experience for caregivers.

Financial Assistance

Financial interventions can include applying for grants and scholarships specifically designed for families of children with disabilities, seeking guidance through financial planning counsellors familiar with special needs, and tapping into community resources. (Shahat and Greco, 2021). In India, several organizations, such as the Blind Welfare Society, are significant organizations in New Delhi, Chennai, and Mumbai, India, focused on improving the lives of individuals with visual impairments. It provides crucial resources for education, rehabilitation, and financial assistance, aiming to empower visually impaired individuals by enhancing their independence.

Indian Association for the Blind (IAB) is a prominent organization dedicated to the welfare and empowerment of visually impaired individuals in India, headquartered in Madurai, Tamil Nadu, by offering services like early intervention, education support, vocational training, and rehabilitation. They also facilitate community integration for

people with vision impairments, ensuring they have equal access to opportunities and resources. The National Association for the Blind (NAB), established in 1952 in Mumbai, India, offers similar support through education, vocational training, and a range of livelihood support programs. They also run awareness campaigns to help reduce stigma around disabilities and promote inclusion for blind people and schemes (Scholarships for Students with Disabilities launched in 2016): the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment provides scholarships for students with disabilities to pursue higher education. Other scholarships are also provided by various state governments, which aid in covering tuition, books, and transportation costs.

The National Fellowship for Students with Disabilities (NFSFD) is a government-sponsored scholarship program in India, launched in 2007 by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. Under this program, students with disabilities are eligible to participate in research and postgraduate studies. It enhances academic opportunities for individuals with disabilities by providing financial aid to cover living expenses and tuition. Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY launched in 2015: Families can obtain reasonably priced coverage with this life insurance plan, which is especially advantageous for those who are struggling financially (Low Income Groups).

2.5 Entrepreneurship Stress-Alleviation Strategy

Entrepreneurship can be a valuable stress-alleviation strategy for mothers of children with disabilities, including those with visual impairments. The impact of entrepreneurial stress is minimized by the flexibility and control entrepreneurship offers, enabling mothers to manage caregiving duties and improve their well-being and financial independence.

2.5.1 Concept and Importance of Entrepreneurship

The concept of entrepreneurship for mothers is gaining recognition due to its potential to address the specific needs of caregiving. Studies indicate that entrepreneurship allows mothers to manage their time flexibly, work from home, and develop skills that provide both financial and emotional benefits (Barrett & Mendelow, 2020). This is especially crucial for mothers of children with visual impairments, as they often face heightened levels of stress due to the demands of caregiving, limited access to support, and societal stigma. Entrepreneurship in India has witnessed significant growth, with over 140,000 officially recognized startups as of June 2024, positioning the country

as the third-largest start-up hub globally (Singh, 2025). Government initiatives, such as Startup India and the Atal Innovation Mission, have been instrumental in fostering this entrepreneurial ecosystem by providing support through incubation centers and innovation labs. The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) 2023 report highlights, “a Total early-stage Entrepreneurial Activity (TEA) rate of nearly 12% in India, indicating a robust entrepreneurial intent among the population.” Sixty-three per cent of Indian finance professionals express a desire to pursue entrepreneurship, reflecting a shift towards self-driven career paths (Economic Times, 2025). Women entrepreneurs are also making significant strides, with over 67,000 start-ups having at least one woman director as of June 2024, showcasing increased gender diversity in the entrepreneurial landscape (Singh, 2025). State-level initiatives, such as Telangana’s empowerment of one crore women through skilling and entrepreneurship programs, further highlight the emphasis on inclusive growth (Times of India, 2025). The expansion of incubation infrastructure in Delhi aims to bolster micro food enterprises and the startup ecosystem, aligning with the “Viksit Bharat” vision (Times of India, 2025). These developments collectively signify a dynamic and evolving entrepreneurial environment in India, driven by supportive policies, educational reforms, and a cultural shift towards innovation and self-employment.

Entrepreneurs are driven by a distinct set of traits and competencies that shape their journey towards success. Confidence, as highlighted by Sahu and Rath (2023), remains a critical factor that empowers individuals to take initiative and influence others through effective communication and assertive decision-making. Raj and Menon (2022) emphasized that, “perception and self-efficacy enable entrepreneurs to foresee opportunities and develop innovative solutions. These perceptions are influenced by their prior knowledge and socio-cultural background.” “Traits such as creativity, risk-taking ability, and adaptability were found essential for navigating uncertainties in entrepreneurial ventures (Kumar & Bansal, 2024).” According to Das & Rao (2023), “planning, organizing skills, and the ability to network are crucial for mobilizing resources effectively.” “Motivation, perseverance, and problem-solving capabilities significantly contribute to entrepreneurial intent and resilience in challenging situations (Verma & Shah, 2022).” “Entrepreneurs are proactive and adaptable individuals who modify existing methods, explore innovative resources, and establish new markets, all while effectively managing uncertainty and risk to accomplish their objectives (Kumar et

al., 2015).” These traits not only help in enterprise development but also play a transformative role in empowering individuals, especially women entrepreneurs in India.

2.5.2 Need for Entrepreneurship Training for Mothers

“Entrepreneurship training equips mothers of visually challenged children with skills that enhance their self-reliance and financial stability. Many of these mothers face constraints in seeking conventional employment due to their full-time caregiving responsibilities. Training in small-scale enterprises or home-based businesses enables them to generate income without compromising their caregiving duties. It also contributes to improved self-esteem, decision-making skills, and psychological well-being. Training programs in entrepreneurship can equip mothers with the necessary tools and skills to navigate the challenges of business creation and management. The need for such programs is emphasized in recent research, which highlights the importance of targeted entrepreneurial training to improve coping mechanisms and help mothers reduce stress (Bergek, 2021). Entrepreneurial engagement reduces stress by offering a sense of purpose and social inclusion. Furthermore, it fosters community interaction and peer learning among mothers in similar situations. Supportive training programs tailored to their unique needs can lead to sustainable livelihoods. Government and NGO-led initiatives play a key role in building entrepreneurial capacity among these women. Thus, entrepreneurship becomes a tool for empowerment, both economically and emotionally (Chakraborty and Prasad, 2023).”

A research paper explored how entrepreneur-mothers experience and perceive independence in their transition to entrepreneurship. The study found that, for many of these women, independence is not an opportunity-driven choice but a necessity due to the demands of motherhood. The authors identified a significant difference between pursuing independence for autonomy and needing it to meet family obligations. To address this distinction, they proposed the concept of "family-driven entrepreneurship," highlighting the social and institutional factors compel women with caregiving responsibilities toward self-employment. This rethinking of entrepreneurial motivations and suggested that policymakers recognize and support this unique category of entrepreneurship (Foley et al., 2018).

Hanko et.al. (2022), suggest that entrepreneurial training acts as a powerful means of empowerment for mothers, helping them navigate their specific challenges while enabling both economic independence and personal development. The benefits includes:

- **Financial Independence:** Entrepreneurship training is essential for mothers of visually impaired children as it promotes financial independence. By acquiring the skills needed to start and manage their own businesses, these mothers can generate income beyond traditional employment opportunities. This financial stability is vital in ensuring that they can better support their family's needs and enhance their overall quality of life.
- **Personal Fulfilment:** Participating in entrepreneurship training offers mothers a pathway to personal fulfilment. Engaging in self-employment allows them to tap into their interests and passions while balancing their family responsibilities. This pursuit of personal goals contributes significantly to their mental well-being and self-esteem, making them more effective caregivers for their children.
- **Development of Skills:** Entrepreneurship training equips mothers with essential skills that can be applied both personally and professionally. These skills include business management, marketing, financial literacy and problem-solving abilities. Such training not only enhances their capability to operate a business but also fosters a growth mindset, enabling them to tackle challenges in their everyday lives.
- **Building Support Networks:** Entrepreneurship training often facilitates the creation of support networks among participants. These networks provide an opportunity for mothers to connect, share experiences and provide emotional support to one another. Such connections can be instrumental in combating feelings of isolation that many mothers of visually impaired children experience, fostering a sense of community and shared purpose.
- **Enhancing Advocacy Skills:** Mothers of visually impaired children often find themselves advocating for their children's needs within various systems, including education and healthcare. Entrepreneurship training can enhance their advocacy skills, enabling them to effectively communicate and negotiate for resources and services that benefit their families. By becoming empowered in this

area, these mothers can play a critical role in improving access to services for their children and others in similar situations (Paul, 2022).

The role of entrepreneurship in alleviating stress among mothers of VCC represents a significant, yet underexplored, area of research. Although the existing literature addresses the caregiving challenges and financial constraints experienced by parents of children with disabilities, there remains a substantial gap in examining entrepreneurial as a practical strategy for stress reduction for this specific group.

Mothers of VCC often experience heightened stress due to the multifaceted demands of caregiving and the financial responsibilities tied to their child's condition. Conventional employment frameworks frequently lack the flexibility required to balance these caregiving obligations, thereby intensifying emotional strain. In contrast, entrepreneurship offers a more adaptable structure, enabling mothers to manage their responsibilities while also generating income and achieving a sense of autonomy.

This study aims to address the existing gap by investigating the impact of entrepreneurial engagement on the emotional well-being of mothers caring for visually challenged children. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of evidence-based interventions and policies that promote entrepreneurship as a viable means of psychological and financial empowerment.

2.5.3 Establishment of Supportive Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

Entrepreneurship ventures can foster resilience by providing mothers with a sense of control, accomplishment and purpose. The flexibility associated with entrepreneurship allows for better management of caregiving responsibilities and reduced emotional fatigue associated with rigid work schedules (McLean, 2020). To support this transition, the establishment of a comprehensive entrepreneurial ecosystem is essential. This ecosystem should include mentorship, access to capital, peer support and skill-building opportunities. These elements collectively address both the emotional and logistic challenges that may arise during entrepreneurial engagement (Smith and Schmitz, 2022).

Home-based entrepreneurial activities are particularly beneficial for mothers in caregiving roles, as they allow for simultaneous participation in child care and economic productivity. Furthermore, such ventures promote social inclusion and enable mothers to harness their skills and lived experiences to create meaningful work. Engagement in entrepreneurial activities enhances coping capacity, promotes mental well-being and

supports the development of adaptive strategies for stress management (Widerstrom, 2018).

Recent studies highlight that a supportive entrepreneurial ecosystem, particularly one tailored to the needs and mothers, significantly enhances the likelihood of success. Access to mentorship, financial resources and training programmes during the initial stages of entrepreneurship contributes to increased confidence, reduced emotional distress and long-term sustainability. However, structural barriers such as restricted access to credit, lack of entrepreneurial education and persistent childcare duties continue to impede women's full participation in entrepreneurship. To address these issues, there is a need for dedicated networks that provide flexible training, financial assistance and emotional support. Such interventions not only promote economic independence but also contribute to holistic well-being by enabling mothers to manage both family and business responsibilities effectively (Macan, 2023).

In summary, the promotion of entrepreneurship, supported by an inclusive and well-resourced ecosystem, can serve as a transformative tool for mothers of visually challenged children. It offers not only economic benefits but also strengthens emotional resilience, fosters autonomy and improves quality of life. Integrating entrepreneurship and life skills training into community-based programs for these mothers could therefore represent a sustainable, empowering solution to the complex challenges they face.

Research Gap

- Limited research exists on the impact of entrepreneurship programs specifically designed for mothers of visually challenged children (VCC).
- There is a limited exploration on developing and accessing entrepreneurial skills tailored to the needs of these mothers.
- There is limited empirical research on how entrepreneurship can reduce stress and improve the well-being of mothers caring for VCC.
- There is a lack of exploration on integration of support systems in entrepreneurship training.
- There is limited research on incorporating fathers and extended family members in entrepreneurship training and caregiving training programmes, despite their potential influence on family dynamics and stress management.