SIGHTED STUDENTS' PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS ASSISTING PEERS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT IN TANZANIA INCLUSIVE SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

This study analysed sighted students' prosocial behaviour towards assisting their peers with visual impairment (VI) in inclusive secondary schools in Iringa Municipality, Tanzania. An embedded single case study design was used. Seventy six respondents, consisting of teachers and students with and without VI participated in the study. Data was collected through semi-structured and face to face interviews, focus group discussions, and closed-ended questionnaires. Data was analysed through thematic analysis and presented in tables and quotations of participants' actual words. Results have indicated differences in prosocial behaviours between sighted day-students and sighted boarding

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students with the latter being more prosocial as a result of altruistic and egoistic factors; having a positive attitude and due to the influence of religion and school administration . Similarities between sighted students and those with VI were linked to sighted students' prosocial behaviour. The latter students' attributions, and misunderstandings among students. determined their prosocial behaviour towards assisting their peers with VI. Awareness raising and sensitisation of members of the community, as well as replicating the study in inclusive and co-education schools for students with VI are recommended in the paper.

Keywords: altruism, egoism, inclusion, prosocial behaviour, Tanzania, visual impairment

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The philosophy behind Inclusive Education (IE) has led to an increased consensus throughout the world that all children have the right to receive education in mainstreamed classrooms, irrespective of their unique needs. The philosophy stands for equal access to education for marginalized individuals, particularly those with disabilities (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) 2001).

Tanzania is concerned with access, quality and equitable education to all learners (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training 2008). However, meeting the needs of children with special educational needs within inclusive schools in the country has been very challenging due to inadequately trained teachers, a lack of teaching and learning materials, accessibility barriers, inappropriate instructional strategies, negative attitudes towards students with disabilities, and poor infrastructure (Kapinga 2010; Kayombo 2010; Kilulu 2010; Lubanzibwa 2010; Malwisi 2011; Mushi 2010; Tungaraza 2010; 2012; Ministry of Education and Vocational Training 2008). Success for inclusion calls for care and intensive support from families, peers, teachers, the government and the general community.

The defining features of human social nature include prosocial behaviours such as the ability to help, share, care for, and provide comfort to others who are in need (Belete 2009). These behaviours benefit individual persons and the society (Penner, Dovidio, Piliavin and Schroeder 2005; Mullis, Smith and Vollmers as cited in Belete 2009). They also include voluntary actions such as formal helping, informal helping to close others, and informal helping to distant others (Smith as cited in Weymans 2010), which foster psychosocial adjustment (Chen *et al*. 2002; Eisenberg, Fabes and Spinrad 2006), positively influencing academic achievement (Caprara, Barbaranelli, Pastorelli, Bandura and Zimbardo 2000; Miles and Stipek 2000) and generally promoting health and well-being of persons. Helping behaviour fosters happiness in people producing the behaviour (Anik, Aknin, Norton and Dunn 2009).

Hollenbeck and Heatherton (1998) argue that prosocial behaviours promote positive interpersonal relationships and lack of such of behaviours among students can result in school violence and truancy (Weinman 2010). The author further notes that IE positively influences social and academic performance of students with disabilities and their sighted peers. It is noteworthy that inclusive education for non-sighted students is likely to raise altruism levels of sighted peers (Weinman 2010). The findings support Possi's (1986) conclusion that in Tanzania, pupils with blindness in integrated primary schools had better academic performance than those in special schools, due to good social interaction among pupils, as well as peer social support. From the aforementioned literature, it is evident that peer support for children with VI in inclusive secondary school settings is critical in the teaching and learning of children with special needs. However, the literature is replete with studies on the importance of prosocial behaviours among learners with special needs in education contexts, globally as well as in Tanzania; hence the research on which findings are presented in this paper.

DETERMINANTS OF PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

According to Baron *et al*. (2009), personal and situational factors determine people's helping behaviour. The authors argue that people are likely to help those they like, and who are similar to them but not responsible for their problems. Prosocial behaviour is said to be influenced by various factors such as empathy, one's emotional state, belief in the just world hypothesis, social responsibility, internal locus of control and other personality dispositions (Baron *et al*. 2009). It is argued that many altruistic people demonstrate high dimensions of these characteristics, which are typical of people exhibiting prosocial behaviour in various situations (Baron *et al*. 2009).

Contextually, the cost of helping others, characteristics of persons requiring help and the available number of people who can provide help are some of the determining factors for peoples' prosocial behaviour (Baron **et al**. 2009; Horowitz and Bordens 1995). Behaving prosocially towards others is likely to be determined by how the person seeking help is characterised or judged. If the person is considered responsible for the problems facing the individual, help is less likely to be provided and vice versa. The nature of the incurred cost in helping also matters. In most situations, people are more likely to provide help if the rewards outweigh the cost of doing so (Bierhoff 2002; Crisp and Turner 2006; Dovidio, Piliavin, Shroder and Penner 2006). In addition, people are likely to offer help if they are in the position to do so.

According to Rushton (cited in Strong and Brown 2011), prosocial beliefs and behaviours are socially desired by most members of society on the basis of commonly held values. It is believed that the world is just and treats people justly, in that people get what they deserve and deserve what they get (Baron *et al*. 2009; Horowitz and

Bordens 1995; Myers 2008). Willner and Smith (2008) argue that helping is more likely if stability and controllability of the cause are perceived as low by the helper.

The kind of people's attitude towards particular individuals or issues influences their behaviour towards them (Baron *et al*. 2009). Weymans (2010) has demonstrated a positive association between a positive attitude towards helping others and prosocial behaviour. Such attributions and beliefs are said to account for students' help to students with visual impairment in their learning in inclusive secondary school settings. The attributions and beliefs held by the students may have a direct impact on their prosocial practices in the settings above.

Prosocial behaviour depends on the relationships existing between and among people. In most cases, relationships involve giving and receiving. A healthy relationship is consequently determined by how much each party offers in a particular relationship. If an imbalanced relationship is perceived to exist by either of the parties involved, the inferior party may find it difficult to ask for assistance in due course (Wright 1999).

Similarly, the kind of social distance between individuals has been shown to affect people's prosocial behaviour. Twenge, Bartels, Baumeister, DeWall and Ciarocco (2007) note that people are likely to be less prosocial when they feel socially excluded, partly because social exclusion between individuals makes them distanced from one another. People are more obliged to assisting their in-group members than someone from other groups (Stuermer, Snyder and Omoto 2005; Stuermer, Snyder, Kropp and Siem 2006).

Both disabled and non-disabled people go through different experiences in their lives, which shape their behaviours accordingly. The following agents of socialisation, family, which is the first institution; peers, the school, mass media and the general community, affect individuals' behaviours differently. Families that emphasise children's prosocial values early in their lives have greater chances of producing more caring and helpful individuals (Cho and Tsai 2009), who are likely to develop good relationships with others. Likewise, the nature of neighbourhood relations among families determines the behaviour of individuals within that particular community.

It has been reported that people who have experienced traumatic events in their lives are more prosocial than those who have not (Staub and Vollhardt 2008). Therefore, when such people encounter individuals needing help, they are likely to offer such help, other factors being equal. It is from this background information that it was considered important to conduct research on the prosocial behaviours of sighted students towards assisting their peers with VI in inclusive secondary school settings in Tanzania.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study aimed at analysing prosocial behaviours of sighted students towards assisting their peers with VI in inclusive secondary school settings. The analysis was important in evaluating forms of prosocial behaviour displayed by sighted students in inclusive secondary school settings. Another purpose was to assess factors leading to sighted students' prosocial behaviour towards assisting their peers with VI in inclusive secondary school settings. The study attempted to answer the following questions:

- What forms of sighted students' prosocial behaviours are evident in inclusive secondary school settings?
- What factors make sighted students assist their peers with VI in inclusive secondary school settings?
- What factors determine sighted students' prosocial behaviour towards assisting their peers with VI in inclusive secondary school settings?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research design and approach

The qualitative research approach was employed to obtain relevant data. Furthermore, an embedded single case study design was employed in this study, in order to get details of pro-social behaviours in assisting students with visual impairment in the sampled school. Additionally, the study design was used because, in Tanzania, inclusive secondary schools enrolling students with VI are geographically dispersed with at least one school per region in most regions. Therefore, conducting this study in one school meant an in-depth analysis of the sighted students' prosocial behaviours. Semi-structured and face to face interviews, focus group discussions and closed-ended questionnaires were used to collect data for the study.

The study sample and sampling procedures

The study involved 76 respondents comprising teachers, and students with and without VI. This study employed a purposive sampling technique, which is a non-probability form of sampling, whereby participants (cases) are strategically sampled to suit the research problem (Bryman 2012). To get the participants for the study, two types of purposive sampling techniques were used: *criterion* and *snowball* sampling. Whereas criterion sampling occurs when a researcher samples all units (cases or

individuals) that meet a particular criterion, snowball sampling is done when a researcher uses a few initially sampled participants to mention other participants relevant to the research in question (Bryman 2012).

Procedures for interviews and focus group discussions

Appointments with participants for interviews and focus group discussions were made prior to the study to avoid interference with classes. Interviews were conducted in Kiswahili, the national language of Tanzania, to enable the respondents to participate and air their views without a language barrier. Teachers were interviewed in their offices, while students were interviewed in the visually impaired students' resource room. Eight interviews were conducted with eight teachers, only after discovering that there was no new data that could be collected. It is noteworthy that, with qualitative research, a researcher can be satisfied with the amount of data collected when a saturation point is reached in data collection (Bryman 2012; Kumar 2005).

Administration of the questionnaires

Teachers' questionnaires

After consultation with the headmaster, 17 questionnaires were administered to teachers. Some questionnaires were completed and returned on the spot, while others were returned after some days of continuous follow-up. Only 12 out of the 17 administered questionnaires were duly filled.

Questionnaires for sighted students and the visually impaired students

After introductory remarks, the researcher distributed 29 questionnaires to the sighted O-Level students who filled in the questionnaires independently. After the task, eleven questionnaires were distributed to visually impaired students, who were assisted by their sighted colleagues to complete the questionnaires. The instruments were collected at the end of the exercise. Through the snowball sampling technique, 20 sighted students from A-Level classes were selected and filled in questionnaires with the help of one of the teachers.

DATA ANALYSIS

In-depth analysis of sighted students' prosocial behaviours was used to obtain relevant data. The data was thematically analysed, following Braun and Clarke's (2006) phases of thematic analysis, namely familiarising with the data; generating initial codes; searching for themes; reviewing themes; defining and naming themes;and producing the report. Other data was analysed quantitatively to determine frequencies and percentages. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 19 aided the analysis. That is, after collecting the completed questionnaires, the researcher assigned identification numbers to the questionnaires for easy reference. Then, the data was entered on the SPSS computer software. When the exercise of entering the data was complete, the frequencies and percentages were determined, which were then presented in tabular form.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Despite its strengths, the following inadequacies are inherent in this study. First, since students' questionnaires involved much self-reporting, the likelihood of self-serving bias was anticipated, among others. To get rid of the bias, informant triangulation was used. This involved comparing data gathered from different informants. Second, it was a bit impractical for the students with VI to complete the questionnaires by themselves. Therefore, the sighted students assisted their peers with VI by reading the questionnaires and marking the appropriate responses. In the process, the sighted students were impressed not to interfere with the choices made by the students with VI with regard to the statements in the closed-ended questionnaires.

STUDY FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Forms of prosocial behaviour displayed by sighted students in inclusive secondary school settings

Findings from questionnaires indicated various forms of prosocial behaviours displayed by sighted students in inclusive secondary school settings, as indicated in Table 1.

Table 1: Forms of Prosocial Behaviour of Sighted Students Mentioned by Teachers (N=12)

Item	Response			
	Disagree		Agree	
	Number	%	Number	%
1. Students with VI cooperate with sighted students in carrying out most school activities.	5	42	7	58
2. Sighted students and students with VI share ideas and materials in doing academic work.	4	33	8	67
3. Sighted students and students with VI work together in performing extracurricular activities.	2	17	10	83
4. There exist friendships between sighted students and students with VI.	3	25	9	75
5. Sighted students guide visually impaired ones as the latter move from one place to another.	2	16	10	83

From the findings in Table 1, it is clear that cooperation, sharing, interaction, friendship and assistance in movement(s) between students with VI and the sighted ones existed in the school. The presence of such forms of prosocial behaviours among sighted students implies that inclusive schools for students with VI would be an ideal setting for their learning, as well as that of their sighted counterparts. For instance, the findings indicate positive social relations in terms of friendship between the sighted students and those with VI. The existence of friendships in an inclusive secondary school may suggest that the sighted students offer help to their peers with VI. This is partly supported by Roe and Aviles *et al*., as cited in Human (2010), that friendships provide emotional and cognitive resources needed by individuals, which are useful for fun, coping with stress and for problem-solving and knowledge acquisition. Definitely, friendships make people care for one another (Small and Simonsohn 2006).

However, the findings in Table 1 further show that a good number of teachers indicated the absence of cooperation and sharing between sighted students and students with VI, respectively, implying that these behaviours were not as 'strong' as other behaviours. The lack of 'strong' friendships between day and boarding students could have been due to the fact that the former do not spend much time with the latter. This means that there were no clearly set goals that would make the students work together, hence developing cooperative habits. Implicitly, teaching

and learning strategies used by teachers are likely to be inadequate in making students learn cooperatively. This in turn whittles away prosocial acts instead of consolidating the same. In order to enhance the prosocial behaviours of students in inclusive schools, instructional strategies need to be suitably chosen.

Similar findings were obtained from interviews, in which cooperation between students with VI and their sighted peers was reported. For example, when asked whether the sighted students and those with VI cooperated, one teacher said, 'I usually see the students doing extracurricular activities together. They compose songs, poems and drama during graduation ceremonies. So, the sighted students cooperate with the visually impaired ones in doing activities like those' (Interview 5 March 2013).

In the same vein, another teacher said, 'They do both academic and non-academic activities together. Besides, the students with VI stay in the same dormitories as the sighted ones' (Interview 5 March 2013).

Teachers confirmed friendships among students with total blindness (VI) and partial VI as well as those with other disabilities. Similar findings were reported by Under the Same Sun (2010) on the interaction between students with albinism who had partial sightedness and those with total blindness. The data implies that forms of students' prosocial behaviours in inclusive secondary schools are, to a great extent, influenced by the nature of school, that is, whether the school is a day or boarding one. It is noteworthy that students with VI do not depend solely on their sighted counterparts, hence there is a need for training on a number of issues to make them independent. However, this does not mean that they should not be assisted by their sighted colleagues.

Given the forms of prosocial behaviour displayed by the sighted students as previously discussed, I established that the sighted students helped their peers with VI in a number of ways, ranging from academic to social ones. As the findings in Table 1 and direct responses from teachers' interviews indicate by means of inference, sighted students assisted their peers with VI during movements, in doing academic work, and other social-related assistance and support. In their entirety, these kinds of assistance have been found to be very useful in making the students with VI learn more successfully within the inclusive school. Thus, it is important that prosocial values are accordingly cultivated within the schools.

FACTORS LEADING TO SIGHTED STUDENTS' PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Twelve teachers and 46 sighted students completed questionnaires that required them to indicate factors leading to prosocial behaviour among them. Following are the findings on these factors.

Altruistic factors

The summary of the findings on altruism from the questionnaires are presented in Table 2. Items 1, 3 and 4 are extracted from the sighted students' questionnaire and items 2 and 5 are from the teachers' questionnaire. These items were meant to assess whether altruistically the students assisted their peers with VI.

Table 2: Altruism as a Factor for Sighted Students' Prosocial Behaviour

Item	**Response**			
	Disagree		**Agree**	
	Number	**%**	**Number**	**%**
1. The reason why I always assist my friends with VI is that I want them to be happy and enjoy at school.	1	2	45	98
2. Sighted students assist those with VI because they want them to be happy and enjoy their stay at school.	3	25	9	75
3. I do not expect to get anything from them in return for the help I offer them.	6	13	38	83
4. I sometimes assist students with VI because I expect to get something from them.	42	91	3	7
5. Primarily, all sighted students assist those with VI with the expectation of getting some material rewards out of doing so.	11	92	1	8

The findings in Table 2 indicate that the vast majority of sighted students and teachers pointed out that the sighted students did not, to a considerable extent, help those with VI for material rewards or other self-benefits. They also suggest that the sighted students' prosocial behaviour towards their visually impaired counterparts was strongly influenced by altruistic motives.

Teachers and students said that expectations of material rewards from students with VI had little or nothing to do with sighted students' prosocial behaviour in inclusive secondary schools.

Results from interviews are congruent with those from questionnaires. For instance, one of the teachers pointed out that sighted students did not help students with VI for material rewards. The teacher said, 'Helping is generally done voluntarily. The sighted students assist their counterparts in many ways: they read to them,

lend them class notes, and the like. Overall, they don't do so for material rewards' (Interview 05 March 2013).

Similarly, when asked about reasons why sighted students assist those with VI, one of the sighted students said, 'I just help them … I help them because they are our friends. It's a bit difficult to explain it, but that is what I do …' (Interview 07 March 2013). This suggests that, like most sighted students, this particular student altruistically helped the students with VI.

The findings show that sighted students were altruistically motivated to assist those with VI. Conceivably, this was the reason why there were very few sighted students showing concern for their peers with VI. These findings support the view that altruism is effective when people emotionally help others and that it is limited to close individuals who have similar attributes or who are genetically related. This observation is similar to the views of Batson *et al*. (2002) on the power of altruistic motivation as the authors contend that people's empathic feelings are more likely to be felt for those who are similar in some ways and/or those who are closely related. More importantly, Batson *et al*. accentuate that, like any emotion, empathic feelings are non-lasting. This means that if the altruistic motives of the sighted students diminish, those with VI will be affected socially and academically.

The fact that the majority of the sighted students were not emotionally attached to those with VI indicates that altruistic motivation did not work for them, hence egoistic motivation. It is noteworthy that extrinsic motivation increases sighted students' prosocial behaviour in inclusive secondary school settings. It is possible that altruistic and egoistic motives complement each other, and that helping behaviour of the sighted students may consequently last longer. This implies that material rewards are necessary to enhance students' prosocial behaviour. The implication, however, does not ignore the fact that there are times that when extrinsic motivation is used in promoting prosociality, this may hamper the intended behaviour (Bénabou and Tirole 2005; Falk 2007; Karlan and List 2007; Meier 2007). All in all, it is not viable to assume that this observation cuts across all situations. It is only made to emphasise the fact that material rewards are useful in certain situations and that intrinsic motivation comes from one's inner feeling and is hence more genuine.

Egoistic factors

The study assessed whether the sighted students assisted their peers with VI as a result of egoistic motives. Results indicate that egoism stimulated sighted students' prosocial behaviour in inclusive secondary school settings. Table 3 summarises the findings extracted from the sighted students' questionnaire items 1 and 2 as well as item 3 from the teachers' questionnaire.

Table 3: Egoism as a Factor for Sighted Students' Prosocial Behaviour

Item	Disagree		Agree	
	Number	%	Number	%
1. I usually help my friends with VI because I don't like seeing them face difficulties in my presence.	6	13	40	87
2. Some sighted students help those with VI because they expect to get something from them.	39	85	7	15
3. Some sighted students assist those with VI because they expect to get something in return.	11	92	1	8

The findings in Table 3 portray the extent to which egoistic motives influence sighted students' prosocial behaviour. They show that some sighted students' prosocial behaviour was influenced by egoistic motives. As the data indicates, some of the students who participated in this study said that they helped their peers with visual impairment in order to rid themselves of distress. This implies that, while the majority of students who help those with VI are altruistically driven, there are some who do so for some self-benefits.

The literature shows that individuals provide assistance in order to get rid of something, to get something tangible or to get social approval. Some participants in the study said that they helped their visually impaired peers in order to rid themselves of distress. The findings support Miller's (2010) view on a global helping trait that negative affect augments helping in relieving a negative mood in conjunction with other independent motives to help. The findings show that there was a combination of factors that made sighted students assist their peers with VI.

Sighted students' attitudes towards helping those with VI

To determine sighted students' attitude towards helping those with VI, questionnaires and interviews were used. The findings from the questionnaires are summarised in Table 4.

Table 4: The Kind of Sighted Students' Attitudes towards their Peers with VI as a Factor for their Prosocial Behaviour (N=46)

Item	Response			
	Disagree		Agree	
	Number	%	Number	%
1. Students with VI should be assisted because their impairment makes it difficult for them to learn on their own.	9	20	37	80
2. I have no time to assist students with VI.	41	89	4	9
3. Students with VI usually perform poorly even if they are assisted. This at times makes me feel bad about them.	39	85	6	13
4. I usually assist my visually impaired peers because I know that everyone may develop a disability at any time in life.	4	9	41	89
5. There should be members of staff to look after students with VI.	35	86	9	20
6. I help students with VI because the school administration requires me to do so.	43	94	2	4

Data in Table 4 shows that the majority of sighted students in inclusive secondary schools had a positive attitude towards assisting their peers with VI. These findings are akin to the findings by Weymans (2010), who showed that people with positive attitudes towards charitable organisations or helping others were more prosocial than those with negative attitudes. Therefore, positive attitudes among students in inclusive schools should be developed.

The findings do not support those from previous studies (e.g. Kapinga 2010; Malagila 2010 and Tungaraza 2010), which reported the existence of negative attitudes towards the inclusion of students with disabilities in mainstream classrooms. It should be noted, however, that the current findings are a reflection of sighted students who assisted those with VI and not all sighted students in the studied school.

During interview sessions with teachers, it was pointed out that, on average, sighted students had positive attitudes towards students with disabilities. In terms of sighted students' perceptions of their disabled counterparts, especially those with VI, one teacher said:

> Generally, they see them as normal, perhaps due to the fact that they are used to them, and some of them do better in their studies than those without disabilities. This has made students without disabilities regard students with disabilities as normal students (Interview 7 March 2013).

It is evident from the foregoing comment that some of the students with disabilities perform better than those without disabilities in inclusive secondary school settings. It is therefore important to enhance the helping behaviour of all students in such schools. More importantly, helping behaviour will enable students to work together at school.

Religious influence

Religion influences human behaviour. In this study, findings from questionnaires indicate that the majority of sighted students (89.1%) pointed out that their helping behaviour was in part influenced by religious teachings. Such students agreed with the following statement: 'I help my classmates with VI because my religion teaches people to do good things to others.'

It is not known how often the students attended religious lessons or went for worship in their respective prayer houses. However, religious classes were observed to be conducted during the allocated periods in the general school timetable. There were a number of students' religious organisations in the school, which included Tanzania Young Catholic Students (TYCS), Tanzania Muslim Students' Association (TAMSA) and Umoja wa Kikristo wa Wanafunzi Tanzania (UKWATA). In relation to this, one sighted student said, 'During religious sessions, we are told about helping each other. We sometimes talk about assisting our friends with disabilities' (Interview 15 March 2013).

It can therefore be argued that both religious teachings and students' participation in religious organisations may have helped consolidate prosocial behaviour among students. Bonner, Koven and Patrick, as cited in Anderson and Costello (2009),

established that religiosity gives people a sense of worth, fulfillment, and the ability to reach their potential, which is also likely to be provided by prosocial acts. Linking religiosity and prosocial behaviour, Hardy and Carlo (2005) reported that adolescents' involvement in religious matters predicted their prosocial behaviours such as kindness. Arguably, sighted students' prosocial behaviours in the studied school are partly associated with their involvement in religious teachings.

The influence of the school administration on sighted students' prosocial behaviour

This study also examined whether the school administration had contributed to the sighted students' prosocial behaviour. It was generally found that the school administration had some influence on the sighted students' helping behaviour. The findings presented in Table 5 show the extent to which the school administration influences sighted students' prosocial behaviour.

Table 5: The Influence of the School Administration on Sighted Students' Prosocial Behaviour

Item	**Response**			
	Disagree		**Agree**	
	Number	**%**	**Number**	**%**
1. Most of the sighted students help their counterparts with VI because the school administration requires them to do so.	6	50	6	50
2. I help students with VI because the school administration requires us to do so.	27	59	19	41

The findings indicate that, on average, the school administration positively influences sighted students' prosocial behaviour towards assisting their peers with VI. A good number of sighted students (58.7%) did not indicate the administration as a factor for their prosocial behaviour while 41.3% mentioned it as one of the factors. Whereas the former is related to other factors such as altruism and egoism, the latter is related to the role of the school administration in instilling prosocial behaviour among students. The factors contributing to sighted students' prosocial behaviours include altruistic, egoistic and other social factors, such as religion in the studied inclusive secondary school.

DETERMINANTS OF SIGHTED STUDENTS' PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN INCLUSIVE SECONDARY SCHOOL SETTINGS

The study findings have shown various determinants of sighted students' prosocial behaviour towards their peers with VI in the study sample areas as indicated in the following subsections.

Disability-related similarities

Data from interviews and observations shows that disability-related similarities were among the determinants of the prosocial behaviours of sighted students. A good number of teachers and students showed that students with partial VI, including those with albinism, played a significant role in assisting those with complete VI. The students showed high levels of helping behaviour. During an interview with one of the teachers, the following words were recorded:

> You know, the school enrolls both O-level day-students and A-level boarding students. But some O-level students live at school because they have certain disabilities and most of their friends have disabilities as well. In the dormitories, we usually mix sighted students with those with disabilities, but those with disabilities tend to stay alone. In classes, students with VI sit close to those with albinism, even if you tell them not to isolate themselves (Interview 05 March 2013).

These findings are similar to those by Human (2010), who carried out a study on the social inclusion of learners with VI in one of the mainstream secondary schools in Namibia. The author reported that in most cases, students with total blindness and those with partial sightedness isolated themselves and conversed among themselves.

It was observed in the current research that students with albinism played a critical role in assisting those with VI, because they considered the latter to be like themselves. The finding supports what was pointed out by Staub and Vollhardt (2008), namely that individuals who have suffered and experienced difficulties in life tend to perceive similarity to and identify with those going through difficulties in their life. Accordingly, individuals who have experienced traumatic and victimising life events are more likely to have prosocial values because such events increase awareness of other people's suffering among those experiencing such events (Staub and Vollhardt 2008).

In recent years, there have been widespread cases of victimising persons with albinism in Tanzania and other countries for various reasons, despite measures by the government, non-governmental organisations and the general public to protect people with albinism. The killings have led to perpetual fear among people with albinism, who live a traumatic life. In support of this fact from the existing literature are the writings of Staub and Vollhardt (2008). It can therefore be argued that students with

albinism's prosocial behaviour might be explained from this perspective. Under the Same Sun (2010) has indicated killings of people with albinism due to superstitious behaviours and lack of social support..

One interviewed teacher said that there were students with partial blindness who did not need much support in the dormitories. The teacher also noted that students with partial VI assisted those with complete blindness. Similarly, when one student with VI was asked about how many sighted friends she had and who among them assisted her most, the student said:

> Frankly speaking, all of them are my friends, although they don't like reading to me in class! We students with disabilities assist each other. Some of us have partial visual impairment and others have total blindness. The former help the latter, particularly reading for them what has been written (Focus group 07 March 2013).

The findings are a clear indication of friendships between sighted students and those with VI, despite the fact that most of the sighted students are not willing to help those with VI academically. Hence, students with partial VI helped those with total blindness. These findings support those of Staub and Vollhardt (2008), who indicated that a person who has experienced life problems is far more likely to behave prosocially towards individuals experiencing similar problems than a person who does not.

Sighted students' attributions

Attributions affected the prosocial behaviour of the sighted students. Findings from the questionnaire indicate that sighted students assisted those with VI because the impairment is beyond their control, as show in Table 6.

Table 6: Sighted Students' Attributions as Determinants of their Prosocial Behaviour (N=46)

Item	**Response**			
	Disagree		**Agree**	
	Number	**%**	**Number**	**%**
I help students with VI because I know they did not ask to be born blind.	7	15	39	85
I usually assist my visually impaired peers because I know that everyone is prone to different types of disabilities.	4	9	41	89

The findings in Table 6 support those by Willner and Smith (2008), who found that people are more likely to help if they perceive the stability and controllability of the cause for impairment to be low on the part of the helped recipient, meaning that if helpers attribute the impairment to external and uncontrollable causes, they are likely to help and vice versa. The findings in Table 6 also imply that sighted students conceived that any person has the likelihood of acquiring a disability. Implicitly, the understanding triggered their helping behaviour towards those with VI. However, in some instances, some students with partial VI were regarded as lazy. Such students were not helped by their sighted peers.

In addition, some of the sighted students did not help the students with VI because the latter isolated themselves from the other students. They said that there were some students with VI who isolated themselves from others and that there were some who did not seek the help of the sighted students, even if they could not understand what teachers taught them. One sighted student said:

> Some of students with visual impairment don't like cooperating with us. Even if you try to explain to them what has been taught, they don't cooperate. They study only when they like doing so, and if they are not in the mood you cannot tell them anything. Others do nothing, even when they face difficulties in their studies; they don't seek help. Some do not take part in activities like cleaning the school environment (Interview 15 March 2013).

From the findings, it can be pointed out that there was an asymmetrical relationship between students with VI and their sighted peers. The relationship between the sighted students and those with VI in the school resulted in the isolation of students with VI from their colleagues and not asking them for help, even when and where they needed it. This observation echoes what is in literature. Wright (1999) contends that in a perceived imbalance of relationships between sighted persons and those with disabilities, the frequency of seeking assistance by those with disabilities is likely to be low.

However, the findings have shown that in some cases, sighted students committed the Fundamental Attribution Error (FAE) because they simply attributed the inability of students with VI to participate fully in various activities to personal factors such as laziness. In this case, the sighted students had little consideration of external factors for the failure of their peers with VI in performing the required activities. They did not consider factors such as the severity of their impairment in comparison to the nature of the assigned tasks. Views from students with VI support the finding, as one of the students said, 'Sometimes our sighted peers regard us as not being active in doing activities at the school; and that we take our impairment as an excuse for doing such activities while it is not so'(Interview 07 March 2013).

This finding is in line with the view that people are more willing to behave prosocially towards individuals whose needs are free from internal causes (Weiner 1980). The point is not that students with VI should not be involved in various extra-curricular activities in inclusive secondary schools. What is important is to

overcome the challenges that are likely to prevent students with VI from carrying out the activities successfully.

The nature of the costs incurred

Help-giving involves incurring costs. The findings from questionnaires indicate that some sighted students were unwilling to help their peers with VI when much time was to be expended, as shown in Table 7, with items 1 and 2 representing teachers' and sighted students' responses, respectively.

Table 7: Time as a Determinant of Sighted Students' Prosocial Behaviour

Item	**Response**			
	Disagree		**Agree**	
	Number	**%**	**Number**	**%**
1. Some sighted students are not ready to assist students with VI, especially if they have to spend a long time doing so.	4	33	8	67
2. Some sighted students are not ready to assist students with VI, especially if they have to spend a long time doing so.	26	56	20	43

Data in Table 7 indicates that while 56 % of sighted students disagreed with the given statement, only 33% of teachers disagreed with the same statement. The reason for this variation might be that all the sighted students who completed the questionnaires had taken part in assisting their peers with VI; hence, to these students, time might not have been a strong factor for the sighted students' failure in assisting their visually impaired peers. Teachers' views corroborated students' views in such a way that time cannot be neglected in determining sighted students' prosocial behaviour, as the data indicates.

It was reported that sighted students at times could not lend their visually impaired counterparts exercise books, because doing so interfered with their private reading timetables. One of the students with VI said, 'If you ask for an exercise book from a classmate she tells you that she intends to read it at home. She says that so that she may not lend you the exercise book' (Focus group 7 March 2013).

Closely related to the aforementioned issue is the fear of failing examinations on the part of the sighted students. Some of them said that assisting the students with VI was time-consuming and hence made them fail examinations. The literature has shown that when giving help, people tend to weigh the costs and benefits that might result from giving the sought help (Bierhoff 2002; Crisp and Turner 2006; Dovidio,

Piliavin, Shroder and Penner 2006). It is therefore possible that the sighted students in the school where the present study was carried outweighed the costs and benefits of helping the students with VI in terms of time.

The nature of sighted students

The students in the school came from diverse social backgrounds and were raised in families with varied cultural backgrounds and values. Consequently, some of the sighted students did not assist those with VI because of their attitudes towards such students and others. Data gathered through interviews with the teachers and students showed that students' values and beliefs made some of the sighted students not to develop prosocial behaviour. For instance, one of the students with VI said, 'Some students were born into families where helping values are not emphasized. Such students cannot help those with disabilities' (Interview 15 March 2013).

The results imply that families play a critical role in inculcating prosocial values in children. If children get exposed to such values early in their life and practise them for a long time, they will develop prosocial behaviour. This observation is consistent with the findings by Cho and Tsai (2009), who reported that parents' role and early timing in instilling prosocial behaviour among children are important. This observation is also in line with the findings by King *et al*. (2005), who found out that a supportive and well functioning family, in addition to a cohesive neighbourhood, had a positive influence on prosocial behaviour among children.

Misunderstandings between sighted students and those with VI

Through interviews, it was found that sighted students' helping behaviour decreased with the occurrence of misunderstandings between sighted students and those with VI. It was also reported that disagreements between the non-disabled students and those with VI lead to quarrels among them, due to preconceived notions about one another. Consequently, students with disabilities may not ask for their counterparts' help and the other students may not offer help if they are asked to. During an interview session with teachers, one teacher said, 'Misunderstandings occur because the students with VI may not know why they are being helped. Or if a sighted student says something, a visually impaired student may think that the other student was talking about him in a negative way' (Interview 08 March 2013).

Similarly, when asked whether misunderstandings between the sighted students and those with VI affected the helping behaviour of the former, one of the sighted students said:

> Yes, sometimes we quarrel with students with VI while cleaning the dormitories and other school premises. Some of them think that they are mistreated if they are asked to participate in the activities. Thus, it is difficult for us to help them (Interview 07 March 2013).

The findings indicate misunderstandings between the sighted students and the non-sighted ones. They are also consistent with Baron's view (as cited in Baron *et al*. 2009) that faulty attributions and poor communication between individuals trigger misunderstandings between them. Such misunderstandings negatively affect prosocial behaviours and hence should be addressed, so that students with impairments can live in peaceful environments and study well for success.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The study has identified various forms of prosocial behaviour among the sighted students in the sampled school, such as voluntary assistance to students with VI as well as friendships between the sighted students and those with VI. Sighted students assisted their peers with VI in academic and social and emotional issues. It was also found that altruistic, egoistic and religious factors, and the influence of the school administration contributed to prosocial behaviour towards students with VI. It was, however, established that altruistic factors had a great influence on the prosocial behaviour of the sighted students; for instance, the sighted students had positive attitudes towards their visually impaired counterparts.

Similarities between sighted students and those with visual impairment in terms of disability and mode of schooling played a fundamental role in shaping the prosocial behaviour of the former students. Other determinants included attributions made by the sighted students towards those with VI, the nature of the costs to be incurred in helping others, and occurrence of misunderstandings between the sighted students and those with VI. There were differences in strategies used to enhance the prosocial behaviour of the sighted students towards students with VI by teachers and the school administration. Generally, the school administration and the teachers made use of advice and encouragement to promote cooperation and interaction between the sighted students and the visually impaired students.

Conclusions

The present study sought to analyse the prosocial behaviour of sighted students in relation to the help they offer students with VI in inclusive secondary school settings. It has been found that sighted students helped their visually impaired counterparts in a number of ways, such as guiding them in movements. It has also been established that various factors determined the helping behaviour of the sighted students one of which was the social distance between boarding students and day-students and the distance between the sighted students and the students with VI. It can be concluded that sighted day-students do not help their peers with VI. Similarly, the findings have

indicated that some sighted students lack important skills for living with students with VI.

Recommendations

Consistent with the findings, the following is recommended.

Recommendations for action

This study has shown that sighted day-students do not help their peers with VI. The findings have also indicated that some sighted students lack important skills for living with students with VI. Therefore, school-based programmes for promoting students' prosocial behaviours should be established in the school. To this end, the school administration and other interested individuals can initiate the move. Of equal importance is that the media should be used for awareness raising and sensitisation to the importance and benefits of interacting with individuals with special needs. Furthermore, efforts should be made by the school administration to reduce the social distance between day-students and boarding students and between sighted students and students with VI.

Recommendations for further research

Since this study was conducted in a school where only girls with VI are enrolled, a similar study should be conducted in schools with both boys and girls with VI to investigate whether sex differences have any impact on sighted students' prosocial behaviour. The current study has revealed that sighted students who assisted their peers with VI had positive attitudes towards them; therefore, a study focusing on sighted students' attitudes towards students with other kinds of disabilities should be conducted. This study was conducted on one research site; thus, a multiple embedded case study should be done, covering more inclusive schools for analytical generalisation purposes.

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LIST OF INTERVIEWS:

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Student with visual impairment's interview with auther, March 07, 2013

Sighted student's interview with author, March 15, 2013

Students with visual impairment's focus group discussion with author, March 07, 2013

Sighted student's interview with author, March 07, 2013

Teacher's interview with author, March 05, 2013

Teacher's interview with author, March 07, 2013

Teacher's interview with author, March 08, 2013