

The Link Between Confidence in Transportation Skills and Employment Outcomes

What Were We Trying to Learn?

Difficulty with transportation has been identified as a major employment barrier for individuals with BVI. This study sought to determine the levels of transportation self-efficacy among individuals with BVI and whether a strong sense of transportation self-efficacy is associated with more favorable employment outcomes.

Key Terms

Transportation self-efficacy refers to a person's confidence in their ability to plan and use transportation. High transportation self-efficacy can help an individual persevere when they encounter transportation difficulties, while a person with low transportation self-efficacy might find transportation challenges overwhelming. An individual who has successfully overcome transportation challenges in the past would be expected to have higher transportation self-efficacy.

What Are the Most Important Things We Learned?

Transportation self-efficacy was found to be linked with employment outcomes. **In general, the greater an individual's transportation self-efficacy, the greater the chances that they were employed.**

Transportation self-efficacy was a particularly strong predictor of employment for younger people and for individuals who experienced their vision loss more recently. In other words, **a strong sense of transportation self-efficacy increased the odds of employment much more for young people and for people whose vision loss occurred more recently.**

Individuals who were employed full-time reported higher confidence in their ability to perform transportation-related tasks. But regardless of employment status, individuals with BVI reported being the least confident in their ability to arrange transportation to and from work with a coworker or someone who works nearby, finding and hiring a driver, and negotiating a fair price with a driver.

How Do These Findings Relate to Me?

- **Ensure that orientation and mobility (O&M) training is widely available**, especially for young people and for those who have recently experienced vision loss. These were the two groups that reaped the greatest benefits from a strong sense of transportation self-efficacy, so helping these individuals build confidence in their ability to navigate through their communities is essential. O&M training plays a critical role in helping individuals with BVI acquire transportation skills and develop the confidence to use their skills. Ideally, young people should receive O&M training that includes real-world experiences as part of their educational program beyond traditional school hours and after completing secondary school, and adults who experience vision loss should receive O&M training as soon as possible after vision loss occurs.

Research Takeaway

Reliable transportation is crucial for employment, but securing transportation can be a particularly difficult challenge for individuals with blindness and visual impairment (BVI) who do not drive. Self-efficacy is a person's confidence in his or her ability to perform a task successfully, and in this study we wanted to know how transportation self-efficacy was linked to employment outcomes for individuals with BVI. Higher levels of transportation self-efficacy were found to increase the odds of employment, indicating the importance of assisting individuals with BVI to confidently address their transportation needs.

How Do These Findings Relate to Me? Continued

- **Don't let transportation conversations fall through the cracks.** No single entity is officially responsible for helping an individual with BVI secure transportation to and from work. Most vocational rehabilitation (VR) consumers in our study reported that they did not receive assistance from their VR agency with locating transportation, and O&M training may not specifically cover finding transportation to and from work. However, transportation is essential for successful work outcomes, so it is worth finding the time to have these discussions with consumers. In order to fill the transportation service gap, VR and O&M service providers should collaborate and capitalize on the strengths of each profession to ensure that consumers receive the transportation support they need.
- **Provide consumers with information and support to arrange their own transportation.** In order to build transportation self-efficacy, service providers should refrain from making transportation arrangements directly for consumers. Instead, point them in the direction of helpful resources. Our list of transportation-related resources is a good place to start. Encourage the consumers you work with to practice using and arranging transportation, because successful experiences are the most powerful way to build self-efficacy. Additionally, experienced individuals with BVI who have been successful in arranging their own transportation can serve as role models and mentors for more novice transportation users.

How Was This Project Carried Out?

This study focused on adults with BVI who were non-drivers. Data from 327 people who participated in an online national transportation survey were included. The survey asked respondents about their transportation experiences; the impact of transportation on their activities, including employment; and their confidence in their ability to find and arrange transportation.

Learn More

Findings were taken from the following article:

Cmar, J. L., McDonnall, M. C., & Crudden, A. (2018). Transportation self-efficacy and employment among individuals with visual impairments. *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 48(2), 257-268.

For more information about this project, including links to a transportation guide, an online short course, and a customizable transportation plan, visit the project overview page: [A Customized Transportation Intervention](#).

Contact Us

Email: nrtc@colled.msstate.edu

Webpage: blind.msstate.edu or ntac.blind.msstate.edu

Facebook: www.facebook.com/msu.nrtc/

Twitter: [@MSU_NRTC](https://twitter.com/MSU_NRTC)



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