

Causes of Blindness and Low Vision among Visually Impaired Population Supported by Welfare Organization in Ardabil Province in Iran

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Abstract : Purpose: Considering the fact that visual impairment is still one of the countries health problem, this study was conducted to determine the causes of blindness and low vision in visually impaired membership of Ardabil Province welfare organization. Methods: The present study which was based on descriptive and national-census, that carried out in visually impaired population supported by welfare organization in all urban and rural areas of Ardabil Province in 2013 and Collection of samples lasted for 7 months. The subjects were inspected by optometrist to determine their visual status (blindness or low vision) and then referred to ophthalmologist in order to discover the main causes of visual impairment based on the international classification of diseases version 10. Statistical analysis of collected data was performed using SPSS software version 18. Results: Overall, 403 subjects with mean age of years participated in this study. 73.2% were blind, 26.8 % were low vision and according gender grouping 60.50 % of them were male, 39.50 % were female that divided into three groups with the age level of lower than 15 (11.2%) 15 to 49 (76.7%), and 50 and higher (12.1%). The age range was 1 to 78 years. The causes of blindness and low vision were in descending order: optic atrophy (18.4%), retinitis pigmentosa (16.8%), corneal diseases (12.4%), chorioretinal diseases (9.4%), cataract (8.9%), glaucoma (8.2%), phthisis bulbi (7.2%), degenerative myopia (6.9%), microphthalmos (4%), amblyopia (3.2%), albinism (2.5%) and nistagmus (2%). Conclusion: in this study the main causes of visual impairments were optic atrophy and retinitis pigmentosa, thus specific prevention plans can be effective in reducing the incidence of visual disabilities.

Keywords : blindness, low vision, welfare, ardabil

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