

VISION SCIENCE AND EYE

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How can we really bring vision correction to two to three billion people?

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In any population with good access to vision correction, it is found that about two thirds of people either wear glasses or contact lenses - or some other form of correction of refractive error. In the developing world, the fraction of the population with vision correction is very much less, and this is partly because there are simply not enough eye care professionals to meet the needs of the people, and partly because of a lack of infrastructure. One way to deal with this problem is to train more professionals and build up the necessary infrastructure, but it will be a lengthy process, and in the interim, billions of people will not be able to see clearly. An alternative approach to the problem is to make eyeglasses whose lenses may be easily adjusted by the wearer so as to correct their own refractive error. This is an old concept which has now evolved considerably, and clinical trials in China and the USA have shown that it can work remarkably well. I will talk about how this technology has evolved so far, and how it is likely to evolve in the future.

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