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The efficacy of Digital Innovation and Technology for Gender equality in the lives of women living with disabilities in Southern Africa: The case of Zambia and Zimbabwe.



Presenters Profile



Dubeka Mweendalubi
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Dubeka Mweendalubi is a Zambian, Specialist Teacher and Programme Coordinator for Score Against Poverty. Dubeka holds a Certificate in Primary Teaching with over two decades of experience teaching. She has a Diploma in Special Education, A Bachelor's Degree in Special Education, Masters Degree in Special Education, Post graduate certificates in Monitoring and Evaluation, Research Methodology and Project Management. She is currently pursuing a doctorate of Philosophy (PhD) in Special Education.

Presentation Outline



Introduction and Background of the Study



Problem Statement



Objectives



Methodology



Findings



Conclusion

Introductions and Background of the Study

Gender equity is not only a fundamental right. It is a keystone of a prosperous and modern economy that provides inclusive and sustainable growth.



Introductions and Background of the Study



According to UNICEF (2020) , world over the gender divide is growing as technologies become more sophisticated



Realizing that gender equality is essential for ensuring that men and women can fully participate in the betterment of the economy and societies at large, the G20 leaders first committed to “ women full economic and social participation .(G20 report 2012)



They then set an ambitious goal of target (25 x 25) to reduce the gender inequality gap in labour market participation

Introductions and Background of the Study



The encompassing of digital innovation and technology in the lives of women, provides new avenues for economic empowerment and can contribute to gender equality



Digital innovation and technology offers a leapfrog opportunity for all and can be used as a tool to bridge the gender divide in many ways.



By infusing digital innovation and technology in the day to day lives of women it can fosters greater gender equality and build a more inclusive digital world.

Introductions and Background of the Study



The roadmap in achieving equity in digital innovation and technology is an uphill because there is no clear indication to what extent women living with disabilities are included in these efforts.



This therefore in turn widen the gender divide in digital innovation and technology putting women living with disabilities at a disadvantage.



In promoting the gender equality for women living with disabilities in all spheres of life, Zambia has strengthened the policy and legal framework.

Introductions and Background of the Study



The Zambian **National Gender Policy** was revised in 2019 to ensure the attainment of gender equality in the development process redressing the existing gender imbalances.

Introductions and Background of the Study



The country has observed a positive trend in the gender inequality which has continued to fall from %62.7 in 2011 to %58.7 in 2015 to %52.2 in 2019 and %51 in 2022.

Introductions and Background of the Study



However, the percentage representation of women living with disabilities is not known in the information provided causing a definite inequality in digital innovation and technology as well.

Introductions and Background of the Study

Zimbabwe has a strong **Gender Policy (2013-2017)** that places strong emphasis on **gender equality** and equity and evasions of a just gender society in which men and women enjoy equity and benefit as equal partners in the development of the country

However, there is **Gender Divide in access to Digital Innovation and Technology** which disadvantages women living with disabilities as they are a minority group as compared to the so called normal

It is against this background that this paper sought to Investigate the Efficacy of Digital Innovation and technology in the lives of women living with disabilities in Zambia and Zimbabwe, Southern Africa.

Problem Statement

Studies globally have shown that efforts are made in a bid to bridge the gender divide in digital innovation and technology as recorded in the report “ digital labour platforms and the future of work (ILO 2018). Zambia and Zimbabwe’s national gender policies of 2019 and 2017 respectively are a way of responding to the gap of gender inequality in all spheres of life. Even when global and regional efforts of curbing the gender divide in digital Innovation and technology are evident, there is no traceable record to what extent women living with disabilities are included hence the knowledge gap this study sought to fill.

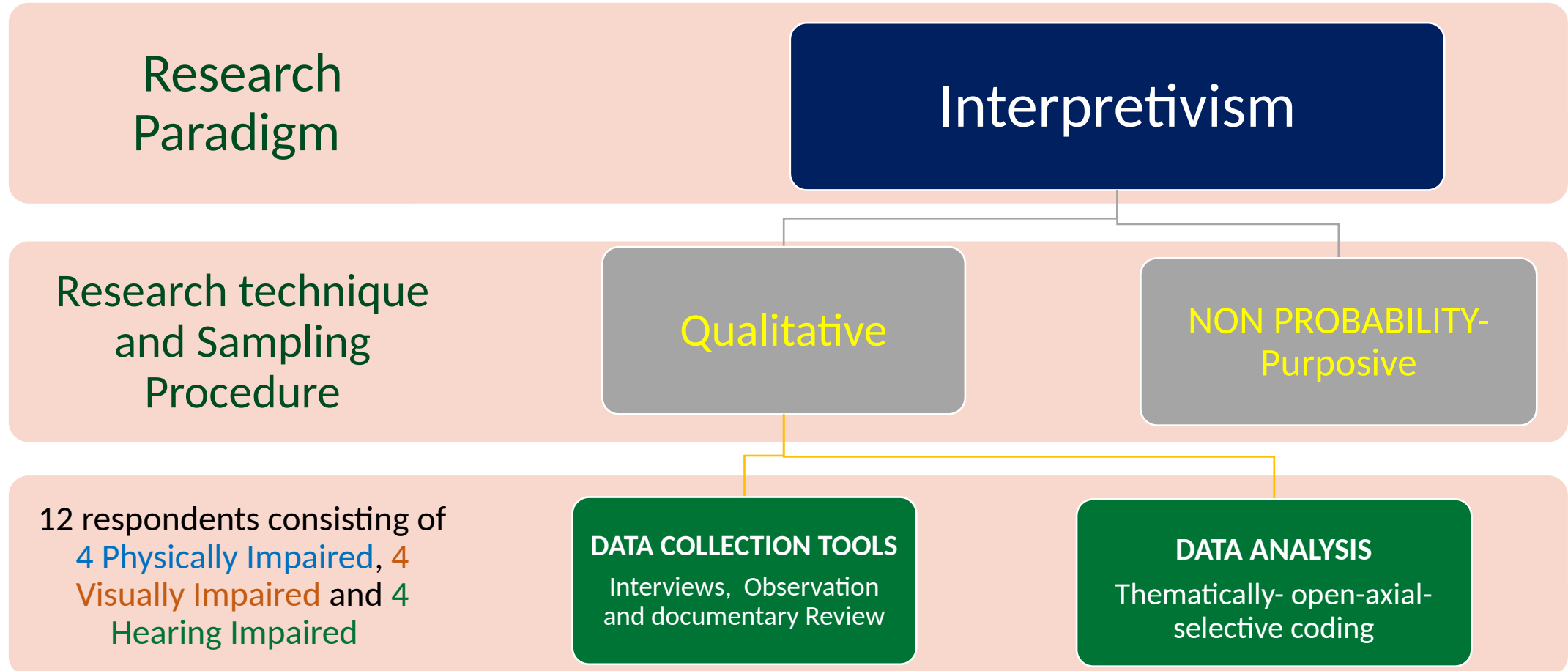
Objectives

1. To establish constraints that women living with disabilities face in accessing digital innovation and technology services.

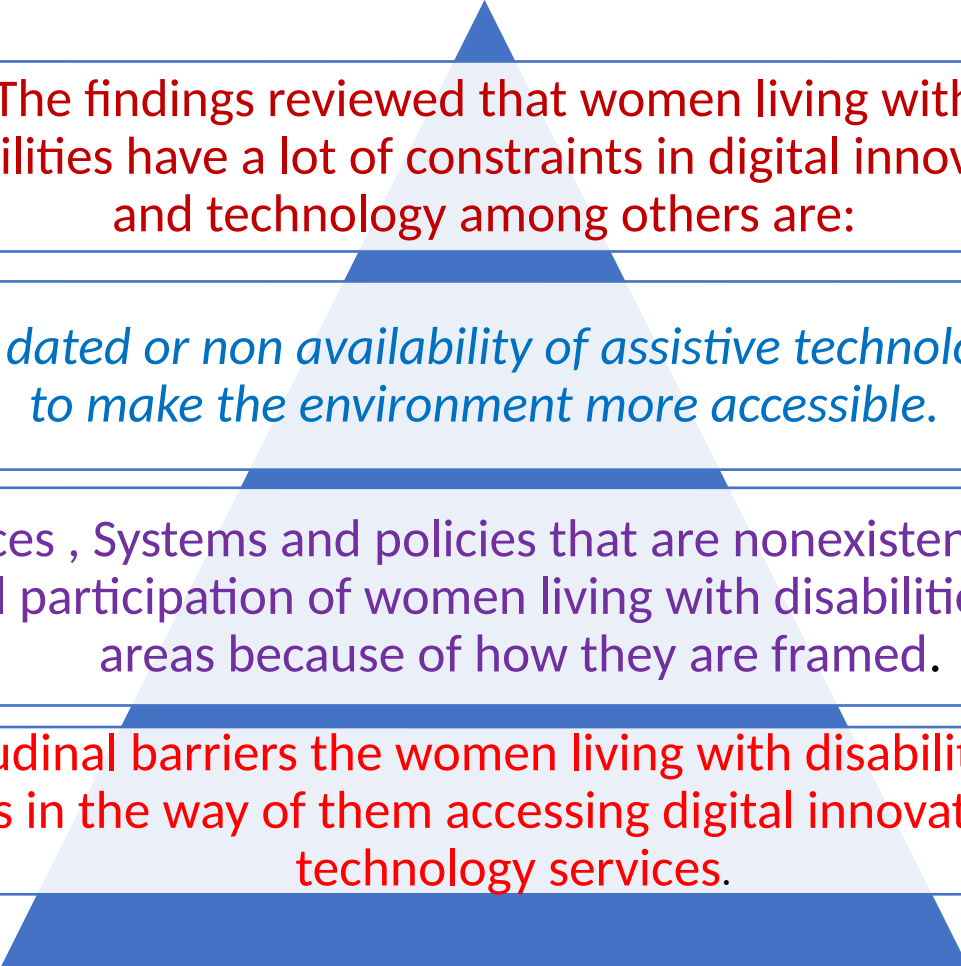
2. To explore the opportunities that women living with disabilities would gain when equity and equality is implored on them in accessing digital innovation and technology services.

3. To provide recommendations on improving the accessibility of the digital innovation and technology services to women living with disabilities

Methodology



Presentation of Findings



The findings reviewed that women living with disabilities have a lot of constraints in digital innovation and technology among others are:

Out dated or non availability of assistive technologies to make the environment more accessible.

Services , Systems and policies that are nonexistent limiting the full participation of women living with disabilities in many areas because of how they are framed.

Attitudinal barriers the women living with disabilities face stands in the way of them accessing digital innovations and technology services.

Presentation of Findings

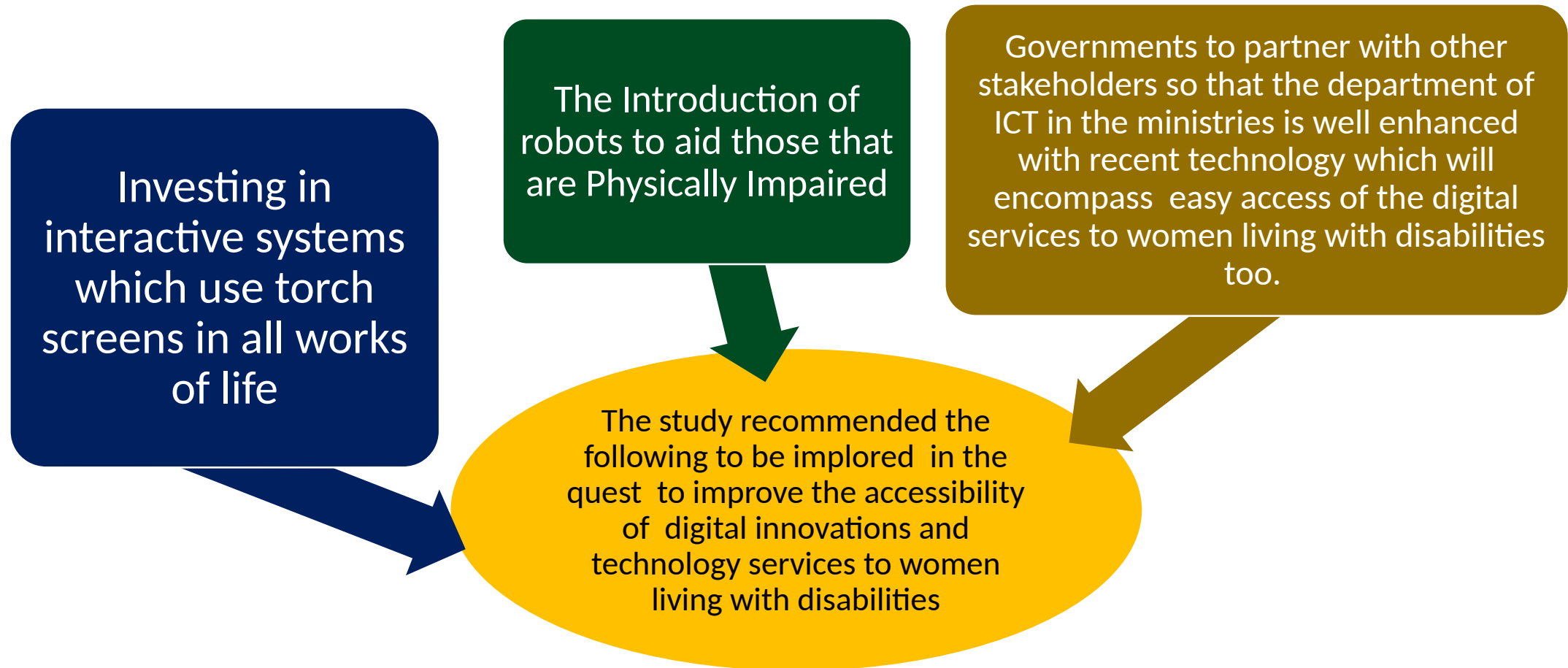
As regards to the opportunities for women living with disabilities stands to gain when gender equity and equality is implored on them in digital innovation and technology services, the study reviewed that:

Potential to
increase the
independency,
safety and control
over their
environment

**Increase their
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introduce them
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Presentation of Findings



Conclusion



Gender equality is not an isolated goal: it is critical to securing a sustainable future for the planet, addressing the root causes of poverty and upholding human rights, to leave no-one behind.



Our call to adopt a **feminist approach to the Global Digital Compact is much more than considering women living with**



disabilities in all their diversity. It is the most effective path to securing a sustainable digitalization and building a digital society which works for everyone.



THANK
YOU