

***Accessibility to Moodle
E- Learning Platform by the Students with Visual
Impairments at Malcolm Moffat College of Education***

by

Ndume Muyoma Sarah
sarahndume@gmail.com

UbuntuNet- Connect 2021
10th -12th November, 2021
Chrisma Hotel, Livingstone, Zambia

Background of the Study

- In the recent past the world has experienced the most deadly Covid -19 pandemic which has claimed many lives of people.
- The effects of the pandemic did not only affect the economy but also other social sectors such as health and education

This situation caused most learning institutions to provide virtual learning pedagogies to ensure sustainability in teaching and learning

Most educational institutions are using E-Learning platforms to conduct lessons especially in higher institutions of learning

Background of the Study Cont'

E-learning, emerged to complement the traditional four cornered classroom teaching.

This learning concept allows students to learn when and where they want regardless of their disabilities.

Students only need an Internet connection and a gadget to have access to the learning resources.

It is against this background that this study was carried out

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

- In this period of Covid -19, Students with visual impairments face many challenges in learning effectively using traditional learning environments.
- These challenges can be mitigated by the use of E- learning platforms.
- Without virtual learning pedagogies, people with visual impairments may be unable to access the teaching and learning materials (WHO & UNICEF, 2015).
- Despite, the availability of online teaching and learning pedagogies, students with visual impairments have challenges in accessing E-learning platforms.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

- What was not known in this phenomenon was whether students with visual impairments were able to access Moodle E- learning platforms at Malcolm Moffat College of Education.
- It was in view of the forgoing that this study was conducted to determine the accessibility of Moodle E- learning platform by students with visual impairments at Malcolm Moffat College of Education.

Purpose Of The Study

To determine if Moodle, was accessible to the visually impaired students at Malcolm Moffat College of Education

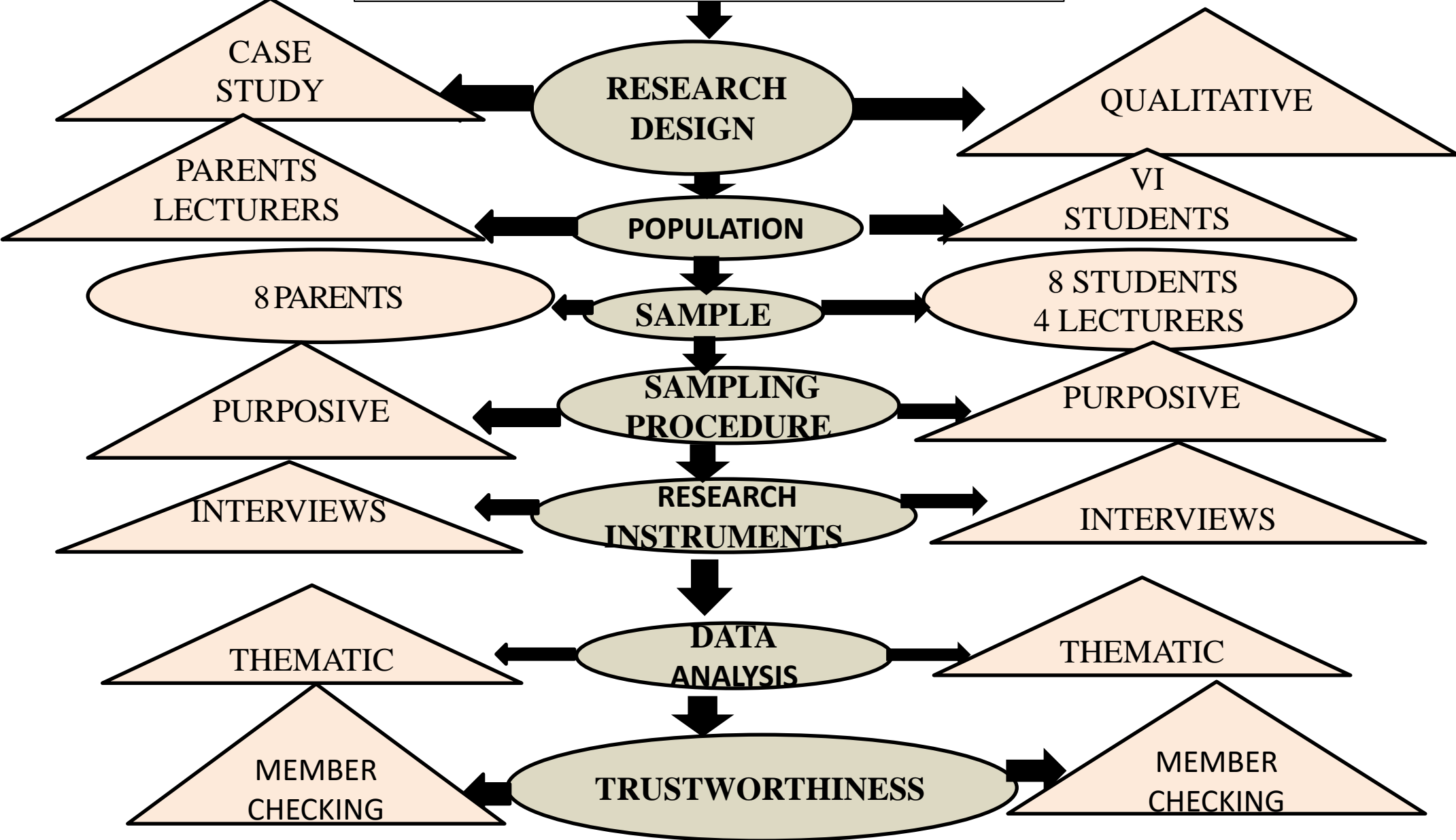
Research Objectives

To determine challenges that students with visual impairments faced in accessing Moodle

To establish strategies that could be employed to enhance accessibility to Moodle online learning platform

AUTHOR	FINDINGS	GAP
Wolters (2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The role of e- learning platform has become indispensable in this era of Covid-19 pandemic▪ Found that Moodle has changed the traditional way of teaching and learning of students with visual impairments.▪ Highlighted that institutions should constantly adopt appropriate technologies and it is in this area that the issue of accessibility lies.	Accessibility to Moodle E- Learning Platform by the Students with Visual Impairments at Malcolm Moffat College of Education

METHODOLOGY



FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Challenges that students with visual impairments faced in accessing Moodle

- The study revealed that some visually impaired students were not able to access Moodle online learning platform due to unavailability of gadgets such as computers and I- phones with speech software to assist them.
- Hence; the visually impaired students relied on friends to assist them.
- Calvo, *et al.*, (2011) numerous different assistive technologies are unavailable to respond to different user needs of the visually impaired especially in developing countries.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Challenges that students with visual impairments face in accessing Moodle

- Moreover, it was also revealed that a few who had knowledge on how to use computers came from rural areas with challenges in internet connectivity.
- Nantanoot, S. (2013) students with VI face difficulties when using internet and are not able to access the majority of the functionality of Moodle.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION CONT'

Challenges that students with visual impairments face in accessing Moodle

- It was also revealed that it was quite challenging for some lecturers to prepare virtual lessons that would suit the needs of the visually impaired students to its full potential due to functional illiteracy
- In addition, parents complained that it was expensive for them to buy data for six to eight courses on a daily basis.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION CONT'

Strategies that can be employed to enhance accessibility to Moodle online learning platform

- It was therefore, suggested that to mitigate the challenges visually impaired students and lecturers should be thoroughly oriented on how to handle Moodle.
- Alnahdi (2014) technology should be included in preparation programs for teachers
- And cover technical applications at the classroom level to enhance the learning of the visually impaired students.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION CONT'

Strategies that can be employed to enhance accessibility to Moodle online learning platform

- VAT and customs duty when importing gadgets such as I-phones and computers should be reduced so that the visually impaired students can easily access them.
- The strength of internet connectivity should be improved especially in the rural areas and the prices of data should reduce to encourage students to access Moodle.

CONCLUSION

- It was therefore concluded that only a few students with visual impairments access Moodle E. learning platform and;
- To arrest the situation the following should be done:

RECOMMENDATIONS

- They should be a program for staff development with regards to pedagogy use in ICT so that lecturers can improve the delivery of virtual lessons.
- Need to change the inner workings of Moodle system in order to facilitate creating content accessible to the visually impaired students.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere gratitude goes to Dr. Maxwell Sikwela, Gift B. Lungu and Chisala Moses for their tireless support

Thank you

For

Your Time