

Review of: "Digital Skills and Learning in Tanzania Secondary Schools: Students and Teachers' Influence"

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This is a stylistically well-written article on a relevant topic – particularly since the topic is being addressed by local voices. But, the article is unfortunately also suffering from gaps in its theory base and methodology. It's not necessarily to say that the rigor isn't there in design, but it needs to be presented here. For one, the contextual background is built on certain conceits that aren't necessarily established. For example, claims that fast-paced working environments are intrinsically digitally informed are not qualified or further explained. "Digitally informed" discussion of these environments does not acknowledge or address the further problematization of how access to these environments also need to include power and skills towards digital inclusion and digital safeguarding. Much of the conversation only grapples with access, assuming a decidedly techno-deterministic perspective. The fleeting discussion of tech integration and use of digital skills in learning is fixed mostly on infrastructure – when there is so much more to successful uptake. Evidence and theory shows that techno-determinism alone is not enough to foster digital skills and learning in schools. The authors make note of "digital natives," but do not take the opportunity to further expand on the evidence of how and why this is a false concept, debunked since it first fell into popular culture. The term does still get misguidedly thrown around, but the article here would be a good vehicle for adding to the challenging of that. Authors reference literature involving "digital skills," such as outlined by Bhasin (2020), but the actual given article does not take the time to clearly identify and define those skills for its own readers, which would be helpful and warranted. Similarly, the introduction does acknowledge "new literacies" but pivots away from further discussion and does not make any use of the new literacies literature base. Granted, a literature review need not be systematic, and references used here do include more recent publications, but there is very little literature – either empirical or critical theory -- used, especially for the robust base that exists. For example, the article overlooks both tech integration and pedagogical models. It also overlooks discussion of teacher development – in favor of hard resources. I also feel that connectivism without constructivism will not lead to a meaningful learning environment, veering more on the side of having "bells and whistles" but not transformative classroom usage of tech. Perhaps, there needs to be further discussion (or investigation) here on how connections are formed through technology in the classroom. I believe that there is a mismatch between the theoretical framing and the nature of the research questions explored. The methods section has too many significant gaps to then engage with the results of the study. It is not clear what the surveys contained and how they were quantitative over qualitative. How were respondents identified, selected, and recruited? Was there any formal IRB or ethics committee oversight – under which regulations? Describe the actual process for how instruments were triangulated. Provide examples of questions asked. How were materials translated and verified – and by whom? Was consent repeatedly sought? How was data stored and for how

long? What were the authors' coding techniques and how were they established? Were there any codebooks used? Describe what is meant by the manual process. Describe the process of how themes were formed. Without addressing methodology, the quality and rigor of findings and discussion remains unclear. I wish you the very best in the case of any future revisions.