

Focus Group Discussion in Developing Tanzania Secondary Schools e-Learning (TanSSe-L) System

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ABSTRACT

The knowledge on how ICT and its application can improve the social and economic lives of people generally is very limited in many communities of developing countries, Tanzania being among them. Although many people may have and be in contact with computers, does not mean that they really understand the impact that ICT if used effectively could have on improving performance. Developing computer systems for people to use, if lack of knowledge is not carefully considered, the motivation to use the system may be very minimal or completely absent. The emphasis on participatory action research methodology is that the introduction of technology into organizations accompanies learning and generates a specific form of knowledge. Finding appropriate system requirements depends on how close the developer is to the system users or stakeholders. Focus group discussion as inspired by the qualitative and participatory action research methodologies is the key to being close to users. This paper presents how focus group discussion was employed during developing Tanzania Secondary Schools e-Learning (TanSSe-L) system, specifically during requirement specification and analysis phase. It shows the importance of involving users while developing contextual information systems for a specific purpose. It also shows how secondary school stakeholders were made closer to the process of TanSSe-L System development, together with users' response to reveal real problems in Tanzania education system.

Keywords—Participatory Action Research Methodology, Focus Group Discussion, Requirement Specifications, TanSSe-L, ICT, e-Learning, Tanzania Secondary Schools, Triple Helix Model, Mode 2.