

Use of Network Enabled Mobile Devices in Ugandan Schools: Perspectives of Teachers of ICT

KALEMA Golooba Ayub, Jan 25th 2018

The use of mobile phones in Education is a contentious issue, not only in Uganda but all over the world. This document presents perspectives of Secondary School Teachers of Computer Studies and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) In Ugandan Schools, as expressed in two WhatsApp discussion groups to which they belong. These teachers are the gatekeepers to technology, and their opinions count.

Their opinions may not be representative of the whole population but they raise significant issues that can be useful to practitioners, policy makers, educators and development partners interested in transforming Education

How it Happened?

26th December 2017, I posed the question below and invited members to contribute ideas, and I moderated the discussion.

If students were allowed to carry Network Enabled Mobile Devices (Read mobile phones) to schools, how would you use them to achieve educational objectives? Which activities would you do or do better with mobile devices?

Key Issues that Emerged

- **NOT to Bias the Reader, we leave you to make your own conclusions for now!**

Caution:

To protect the privacy of participants, their names and phone numbers have been removed and instead substituted with Teacher Numbers.

Editing work is still continuing to align responses to the questions. Abbreviations have been expanded in some cases to make the statements understandable. Some submissions have been moved to their relevant positions

Since the discussion was taking place on two separate WhatsApp groups, we are still pasting the responses. There may be some omissions and repetitions to be corrected in time. Please point them out when you see them

What we could have Done Better

- The meeting was not announced. It was spontaneous. Therefore, some members were not able to participate on the first day. We could do better in preparation.

What Worked Really Well?

- The teachers were enthusiastic and respectful to each other, sharing personal stories, opinions and reference materials. Links to the materials have been attached.

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Use of Network Enabled Mobile Devices in Ugandan Schools: Perspectives of Teachers of ICT

26th December 2017: Christmas Eve!

[10:38, 12/26/2017] **Moderator:** “**Position Paper on Use of Mobile Devices in Schools**

Question *If students were allowed to carry Network Enabled Mobile Devices (Read mobile phones) to schools, how would you use them to achieve educational objectives?*

Which activities would you do or do better with mobile devices?

A team of Headteachers and policy makers are preparing a policy paper on the issue of mobile devices in schools and are seeking feedback from teachers. As teachers of ICT, you are best positioned to guide.

Please share your thoughts here”

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[18:51, 12/26/2017] **Teacher01:** This is completely out of our learner's understanding and set of backgrounds. If a mature man of 45 fails to concentrate on office work because he's face booking. Then what do think of a mere student who even fail to concentrate without anything. It will strongly bear a strong negative impact on the learning process

[10:47, 12/26/2017] **Teacher02:** Firstly, teachers are competing with students over shoes and clothes, now how will students compete with teachers on expensive phones? It will not help in education because the thinking capacities of learners will be lost. Will these phones be allowed even in exams? Let us look at these programmable calculators, UNEB is not allowing them, how will they allow phones?

[11:01, 12/26/2017] **Teacher03:** Leave the competition alone but digital divide.

[11:03, 12/26/2017] **Moderator:** *Well, the challenges and fears of bringing these devices are known and well documented. What we are now exploring are the opportunities offered or missed.*

[11:11, 12/26/2017] **Teacher04:** The policy makers have failed to equip computer labs, now they are saying they use mobile devices. One of the time-wasters is mobile devices. They will be like what (Mr.) Fagil Monday was saying. I strongly say no to mobile devices

[11:09, 12/26/2017] **Teacher02:** Imagine you can't teach a class when a student is concentrating on other things, now how will you teach a class when a student is Facebooking? The issue of allowing mobile phones will not help in education. Instead of stabilizing teachers' salaries and allowances, and bring materials to schools they are just thinking of things which are useless

[11:13, 12/26/2017] **Teacher05:** Well, the challenges and fears of bringing these devices are known and well documented. What we are now exploring are the opportunities offered or missed.

[11:17, 12/26/2017] **Teacher06:** [Agree]

[11:26, 12/26/2017] **Teacher07:** If students are allowed to use mobile phones at schools, then they must be connected to internet, meaning students will be exposed to it and its associated immoralities.

[11:26, 12/26/2017] **Teacher03:** Policy makers should think of laptops rather than phones. Phones are not durable.

[11:27, 12/26/2017] **Teacher32:** Having smart phones by students may not a bad idea!! But the challenge how to regulate the use of these phones by school!!!

[11:27, 12/26/2017] **Teacher07:** I think what those policy makers should do is to force schools to fully equip their PC (Computer) labs to the maximum other than resorting to mobile phones.

[11:28, 12/26/2017] **Teacher02:** In villages, parents are failing to buy calculators for students, even a CD for burning their own work, how will parents get or afford phones???

[11:28, 12/26/2017] **Moderator:** *That is a possible challenge. How would you use them to attain educational objectives?*

[11:31, 12/26/2017] **Moderator:** That's not the debate. We acknowledge the challenge. The question is what would you use the mobile devices for if they were available in school. That's a challenge. Now, how would you use phones and other mobile devices to achieve educational objectives?

[11:29, 12/26/2017] **Teacher07:** Ehhhhm ...talk about that.

[11:33, 12/26/2017] **Teacher07:** ??????

[11:33, 12/26/2017] **Teacher07:** Anyway.....

[11:34, 12/26/2017] **Teacher03:** Before you ask about what I would use the mobile devices for then start by the disadvantages and advantages then we weigh

[11:35, 12/26/2017] **Moderator:** *I imagine this means you are thinking about the question.*

[11:50, 12/26/2017] **Moderator:** *Friends, thanks for discussing the fears and challenges of Mobile devices. However, these are already known. A review of minutes of meetings with teachers in 1997 when we discussed fears of use of computers and internet in schools shows the same concerns.*

We have also seen policy directives banning these devices in schools, citing fears. And I have made countless presentations on threats of these devices. What is missing is exerting ourselves enough to think about the other side. Position papers consider both sides. We are inviting you to contribute to the missing side.

[11:52, 12/26/2017] **Teacher02:** We are invited where and when??

[11:53, 12/26/2017] **Moderator:** *Here, and right now!*

[11:58, 12/26/2017] **Teacher02:** These phones truly provide opportunities if the resources are available, but will not be able to see the opportunities before looking at the strategies put on table of how to get the resources, like someone cannot see the benefits of using phones at schools when the biggest number to consider can't afford phones

[13:35, 12/26/2017] **Teacher08:** Why do we always think of the threats before we think of the opportunities?

@Kalema Golooba Ayub Put a very pertinent topical issue. I think it can be addressed here as teachers.

I remember way back in the late nineties and early 2000z, having a mobile phone was considered a luxury. Most people concentrated on the cost and negative social implications, rather than the opportunities. The same can be said of FM radio when it started out in Dec 93. When you look back, you wonder why we had too many fears.

So I say, let's think about the opportunities first. The threats are already known.

My take is coming up.

[13:49, 12/26/2017] **Teacher09:** You can configure routers on the LAN and block the sites you don't want them to access, as simple as that. This is a digital era and therefore learners should experience it at school. We shall make a breakthrough on this. Just be hopeful

[14:11, 12/26/2017] **Teacher09:** When use of support files was proposed in 2013, very few people saw sense in that and it was halted up to recently when it was understood. Now everyone is ok with the support files. Mr. Ayub, let's join hands and come up with a solution to this issue of mobile phones in schools. It's already working in some private schools, so we have where to bench mark.

So members, I urge you to think positively to create solutions to these problems. It is possible. We can create a working group, have some workshops from which resolutions will be made for further action. Ayub and others should get us sponsors to keep the struggle moving.

[14:18, 12/26/2017] **Moderator:** *I perfectly understand the fears and doubts of educators regarding use of Network Enabled Mobile Devices in schools. I myself had to confront my fears in early 2013 when I was assigned to teach in Rjukan Upper S.S. Norway.*

In that school, all students have high-end phones, the school provides laptops to students on day One (the way we provide school Uniform here), and there is high-speed internet everywhere. Students don't carry physical books, not even notebooks to school.

The Challenge

Certainly I am computer literate and a geographer, but the challenge was, how do I even begin to teach these kids when they had access to all resources.

I couldn't mesmerize them with some YouTube video or some PowerPoint presentation with some downloaded photos. How do I make attending class worthwhile? How could I justify standing before students? How do I engage them so they don't simply Facebook? How could I harness the power of technology to help them learn geographical concepts and principles?

The Solution

Bottom-line, we had blended methods. Short teacher-led lectures, research assignments, group discussions and presentations, video-conferencing, field research and knowledge creation, sharing using internet based tools, quizzes. I chose to engage with the technology and students rather than fight it.

We formed close bonds. My students are graduating from University this year and despite the distance, they update me on their progress. I taught in a future classroom and it was one the challenging and rewarding experiences.

The Appeal

In Uganda, I don't think all schools and classes will transform at once or overnight. I think some visionary educators must begin to imagine the future and strategize to make it happen. Being visionary requires imagining what you could do if there were no challenges? And then reason backwards. Let us exert all our mental capacities to imagine a future perfect-situation, to be leaders in our profession.

[14:25, 12/26/2017] **+Teacher35:** Together we can

[14:33, 12/26/2017] **Moderator:** Thank you for the pitch. Actually, this is one of the issues which the international community is discussing today. We recently deliberated on this with the minister of education in Cambodia and Life Academy. It's part of the season why policy makers and head teachers want to hear what educators could use the devices for, given a chance.

[15:01, 12/26/2017] **Teacher11:** If plain sense makes sense try not to look for other sense else it makes no sense

[15:49, 12/26/2017] **Teacher10:** Is this a contribution to the digital migration topic being discussed??

[15:51, 12/26/2017] **Teacher02:** No wonder, even in our classes we have such students, who are always there to confuse and make fun, so it's part of our discussions to have such in our family

[16:01, 12/26/2017] **Teacher10:** This issue of mobile devices inclusion in our institutions will have to involve a number of stakeholders.

-Many parents are reluctant to allow their daughters or sons to access such devices for fear of getting "spoilt"

-Today's schools are result-oriented where students are kept throughout in classes being fed with what the school proprietors think will help them pass [examinations]. If the devices are to waste this time, then there's trouble but if they're to improve on the passing well and good.

-merits of these items should therefore be documented and clearly distributed all over before we embrace it.

-Otherwise I still see the socio-economic gap widening as majority of our people will be left behind.

[18:24, 12/26/2017] **Moderator:** *Thanks for sharing these articles. They shed more light on the issue.*

Did you notice that most articles only stop at indicating how phones can be used for communicating with others like parents and don't go far enough to explain how to use them for learning?

But it's a good start.

[18:29, 12/26/2017] **Teacher02:** Fellow teachers, let us brainstorm together, we may find such a question in UNEB or Mock exams, and learners will ask you how to answer that question

[18:30, 12/26/2017] **Moderator:** You raise a very important point. That the digital divide in Uganda might actually increase with the introduction of the tools, the same way it is increasing between Uganda and the developed world.

We shall need to search deep and decide whether to wait for the whole country or examine how to make the introduction of new technologies more inclusive even for the disadvantaged schools and students

[18:31, 12/26/2017] **Teacher02:** I now agree with you

[19:07, 12/26/2017] **Moderator:** Let me share with you a case of use of **Network Enabled Mobile Devices** this year.

I had an S4 student who has attention challenges, but is very good with devices. When we were going for geography fieldwork, I challenged him to make a digital report for the whole class to support the follow-up stage.

This guy was attentive throughout the study, took geographical photos, and recorded interviews, asked for clarification. He was totally invested in the study. The boy put together his presentation. Amazing stuff it was. And for 70 minutes, taught the class during follow-up.

I felt proud of the student, everyone was attentive. Students were asking for this presentation. He made my work easy. We could discuss concepts with photographic and video evidence instead of just recalling. And I felt this use of technology had given him confidence and respect among peers (This is a student who had repeated two previous classes and not considered bright). It also brought us closer together.

Now he is in Vacation at Mombasa coast but he is taking photos for me to use to teach coastal landforms and vegetation types. Never mind that he is not going to study Geography in A-Level. These isolated cases give us hope that we can use these devices positively.

Imagine if we challenged our students from different schools to make similar studies and to take the next step and share their findings.

[19:24, 12/26/2017] **Moderator:** Allow me now to address some of the concerns of members. I had steered clear of this for fear of turning the discussion into a debate of whether to allow or not allow phones. Now, the incompetence of a 45 year old who fails to concentrate is not grounds enough to deny the benefit.

I am willing to argue that this 45 year guy is unable to concentrate precisely because he never had a chance to use these devices while young. It's like when internet had just been introduced. People were just so excited, surfing aimlessly around, bumping into porn and all. Now, as we get used and more enlightened, we are using these tools to discuss very serious issues. This very discussion is a case in point.

This forum itself has seen teachers asking questions, exchanging past papers, getting support from peers. We've done research on this very platform. For instance, topics for the last ICT Retooling workshop were developed based on discussions here. So, while many other teachers are out there imagining the world as it was yesterday, you are zooming ahead. I believe those who have tasted these benefits have a moral and professional responsibility to chart new pathways to move our nation ahead.

[19:40, 12/26/2017] **Teacher12:** There truly is WATER in this bro. I pick a LEAF.

[20:01, 12/26/2017] +256 706 620421: Thank you for the argument, however we must note that not all old traditions are outdated and NOT all the New Traditions are perfect. Thanks.

[20:59, 12/26/2017] **Moderator**: That is a very correct observation. We need to be discerning, and critical in what we choose implement or drop.

[20:07, 12/26/2017] **Teacher16**: It's better they organize a dialogue to get information from you guys legitimately and diplomatically and at the end your profile, CV and legacy for your name

[20:24, 12/26/2017] **Admin01**: Phone usage in schools by students is possible. Many schools (e.g. international schools) allow their students to use phones at school. It's just about giving guidelines to be followed.

A similar situation is usage of radios in boarding schools. Some schools allow and others don't. But some students in schools which prohibit the gadgets in many cases sneak in gadgets and use them stealthily. On the other hand students in schools which allow gadgets normally get used to them and nothing is too special, they use them just like at university campuses.

The ICT revolution is here and the fears and restrictions of the past century will be overcome with time. As for now, the rigidities are still with us, and many traditional school administrators will strongly oppose the move to allow phones in schools. But some more modern schools will lead the way and others will follow.

[20:27, 12/26/2017] **Teacher18**: You're very right. That's a very good submission.

[20:27, 12/26/2017] **Teacher04**: They are all the time destroying the country because they have power in their hands. Let them do what they want. Didn't they touch it? Whom did they ask? Uganda is decaying". I rest my case"

[20:31, 12/26/2017] **Teacher10**: But currently we have no law in Uganda that restricts use of phones at school. I think the issue will be handled at school level, there are schools that won't allow and we have a group that will prefer such.

[20:44, 12/26/2017] **Teacher16**: Me I use tablets, iPads but with no Simcard Slots where I installed educational softwares for the girls but internet connected full time. It will be good if you join me in ICT integration in the Education process

[20:44, 12/26/2017] **Teacher16**: #Munyangwa Nicholas can testify

[20:55, 12/26/2017] **Teacher17**: That is a super perfect school. Keep it up

[21:05, 12/26/2017] **Teacher14**: Members go through this link

[19:40, 12/26/2017] **Teacher12**: There truly is WATER in this bro. I pick a LEAF.

[21:05, 12/26/2017] **Teacher14**: Members go through this link

[21:09, 12/26/2017] **Moderator**: Gratitude

Thank you all for your submissions to this dialogue on use of Network Enabled Devices in schools. You have demonstrated maturity, candor and respect to each other. I believe each one of us has learnt

something important. Am honoured to be a member of this group. Those in Kamooli, thank you too for following. I will summarize the issues and points raised and share.

Thank you again.

=== Ayub

[21:10, 12/26/2017] **Teacher15**: Watch from far Ayub

[21:21, 12/26/2017] **Admin01**: Thank you too for initiating the discussion

[23:37, 12/26/2017] **Teacher08**: [Claps] Well said Mukulu. Is there any one here that comes from a school where personal laptops are allowed? Can they share with us what fears (if any) there were and how they are mitigated? We might find some overlapping issues, seeing as many schools still view laptops as expensive for parents at most, destructive to the students at least.

[23:39, 12/26/2017] **Teacher09**: Digital divide is mentioned. The procedure is that when you start an intervention, usually a divide is created. Then next is to narrow down the divide by extending the services (the way diffusion works). As I said earlier, don't fear to think. Remember solution development goes through various stages. Simply handle the right stage at the right time.

[06:28, 12/27/2017] **Moderator**: Very refreshing explanation.

Thank you for connecting Diffusion Theory with Digital Divide. I had never really given it much thought as the logical explanation.

I think all educators need to acquaint ourselves with Innovation diffusion theory as we explain innovations to stakeholders.

[23:42, 12/26/2017] **Teacher19**: The laptops are registered in the office and kept in the computer Lab. Students normally use them from there for practice and during lesson time. No student is allowed to take the laptop to the dormitory. That's how we do it at my school.

[23:43, 12/26/2017] **Teacher09**: Thanks for sharing. Which school is this?

[23:44, 12/26/2017] **Teacher08**: So can a similar thing be done for phones in the interim? Some kind of restricted use of the phones?

[23:44, 12/26/2017] **Teacher19**: Light College Katikamu on Hoima road

[23:54, 12/26/2017] **Teacher09**: Ok fine. Those are benchmarks we are looking for.

[06:52, 12/27/2017] **Teacher20**: Thank y so much

[17:14, 12/26/2017] **Teacher14**: Please read this article. Banning and unbanning phones in schools | Edutech <http://blogs.worldbank.org/edutech/banning-and-unbanning-phones-schools>

==== Part 2 : Day#2 of the Discussion=====

The Discussion continued for the following 3 Days. The moderator was not able to follow up on this to moderate the discussion. Below are some of the posts from members who had not been able to participate the previous day

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[10:00, 12/27/2017] **Teacher21:** In our debate on whether Mobile Phones should officially enter schools OR NOT, we all need to consider this below:

It's a comment to the Article on the World Bank Edutech Blog in the same issue

[10:00, 12/27/2017] **Teacher21:** 017 - 17:49

IT READS...

"I'm teaching media literacy in my college, and sometimes I shared my insight on this matter to other group such as parents association on school. This question, about ban or unbanning mobile phones devices is regularly asked from both parties: parents and school administration. In a situation where the level of media literacy among school policymaker is relatively low, I suggest them to put the regulation first in certain period, and reviewed it after a short while. Meanwhile, media literacy should become part of the curriculum. It's not the technology that became the main problem. For me, it's the lack of capability in using the technology in much more clever way..."

[10:03, 12/27/2017] **Teacher21:** "level of Media Literacy among policy Makers"

I want to add even among us ICT EDUCATORS who should offer technical counsel in this process

[10:12, 12/27/2017] **Teacher21:** By equipping ourselves with such knowledge we can argue and contribute to this pending innovation more objectively.

[10:16, 12/27/2017] **Teacher22:** I've been closely following the discussion. Thanks for the deliberations. In our school, we've been allowing students to carry smart phones but I've noticed much of what students do on the phones isn't benefiting them academically. Very many parents have raised concerns about this. While a smart phone can be a great teaching - learning aid, it can be a great distraction as well.

Before you implement use of smart phones in school, It's better you put up a mobile phone use policy and ensure that you stick to it. The biggest challenge is in monitoring what students do on these phones.

However, there are a number of other options to using smart phones, like someone suggested use of iPads. These can be provided by the school or BYOD [Bring Your Own Device]

[10:16, 12/27/2017] **Teacher22:** But if you have an effective mobile use policy in place, trust me, you'll deliver great lessons with phones.

[10:19, 12/27/2017] **Teacher23:** To a large extent I support the use of phones because sometimes when I am teaching some topics I refer them to smart phones, whereby if they had their phones in class, then the point could reach easily

[10:20, 12/27/2017] **Teacher22:** The question is, do students always need to carry their smart phones to class!

Do we refer to them always!!

[10:29, 12/27/2017] **Teacher21:** WHAT YOU DO ON THE SMART PHONE

That is where I emphasize incorporation of MEDIA LITERACY lessons in the already existing curriculum.

Let's preach to our learners, colleagues (through staff meetings), Parents (at Parents' meetings) how these devices can be used for better learner- centered instruction methods, for advocacy, to foster 21st Century skills (creativity, innovativeness and critical thinking) among our learners etc.

[10:29, 12/27/2017] **Teacher02:** Members, let us try to support the use phone in schools, let us look at the benefits in case it becomes a policy? We already have the negatives, but no one is considering the benefits, let us now look for what will be the benefits in case it becomes a policy?

[10:30, 12/27/2017] **Teacher22:** When we carried out a survey amongst students, we got four major responses;

1. We use them for research
2. For entertainment while in the bus to and from school.
3. Communicate with our drivers n parents.
4. Mobile banking.

Though most international schools allow students to carry them, they don't allow them to use phones on school premises.

Some schools require students to hand the phones in at the reception in the morning. Others advise students to keep them in their lockers.

If a school can provide gadgets like iPads, laptops, or smart phones, better. Otherwise, the biggest challenge lies in monitoring their usage.

[10:30, 12/27/2017] **Teacher24:** Actually me I go with the iPads to reduce the negative effect

[10:32, 12/27/2017] **Teacher25:** I would support the use of smart phones only if they are smart phones. Regulation can be harder though but I think each phone must be registered with the administration.

[10:33, 12/27/2017] **Teacher22:** True. And students should only carry phones if needed. Otherwise, if a teacher isn't going to use them, I don't advise students to have them. I am talking Out of experience.

Most Students will be much interested in using their phones than listening to what you preach

[10:34, 12/27/2017] **Teacher26:** There's also BYOD and when you try to dig deep, its their hand very important

[10:36, 12/27/2017] **Admin01:** BYOD practice is effective in Rwanda. It's time for Uganda to borrow a leaf

[10:38, 12/27/2017] **Teacher22:** The other thing that we need to discuss is the use of what they like most on the smart phones to deliver lessons.

- How can we use social media to deliver lessons?
- How can we use games like mine craft to achieve our learning objectives!!
- I saw an English teacher who uses tweets to teach English. She posts and students in comment with the right responses.
- I also saw a math teacher who has a WhatsApp group. He posts questions, students do them on paper, take a pic and post. It can be fun.

But if you just tell students to carry smart phones without any objective, trust me you'll ban them the second day

[11:04, 12/27/2017] **Teacher21:** This is all embedded in the "Media Literacy" animal which I am crying out for.

The moment we sensitize learners and stakeholders what else these gadgets can do outside viewing Instagram & Snap chat media of our friends, viewing illicit material and holding aimless Chats on social platforms, then we shall be ready for phones and/or iPads in school.

Maybe if it's not too demanding on our levels of patience, I request Ayub to share with us a presentation he made to various local and International audiences on Media Literacy. Once this clicks in the minds of users, we shall have accomplished STEP 1 of this phone-in-school innovation

[11:12, 12/27/2017] **Teacher21:** The other steps like Phone Use Policy, Censored Internet for Schools, e.t.c can follow

[11:12, 12/27/2017] **Teacher22:** True

[11:12, 12/27/2017] **Teacher02:** If these smart phones are introduced but not personalised and kept in one place or one basket, it will work, because no one will have full control over that phone, a student may use this phone today and tomorrow uses another phone, so the student's false communications will be minimized. How do you see that?

[11:13, 12/27/2017] **Teacher22:** That calls for a phone use policy.

[11:15, 12/27/2017] **Teacher27:** Then you are like suggesting schools to buy and own these phones.

[11:15, 12/27/2017] **Teacher27:** The policy should clearly spell out who is to buy. School or parents.

[11:16, 12/27/2017] **Teacher28:** Great

AdminX: Do you mean schools should buy phones for students

[11:16, 12/27/2017] **Teacher02:** No, not schools to buy phones, parents pay the same amount of money for the school to buy the same type of phones, and give to students. And the simcards can be blocked from making calls by the school giving order to the service providers.

[11:19, 12/27/2017] **Teacher21:** True

Who brings the phone?

When do you use the phone?

Where do you keep the phone?

What do you use the phone for? Etc.

[11:20, 12/27/2017] **Teacher29**: I first cautioned him about the would be negative outcomes but later I discovered I was missing a lot of its advantages. You guys are ICT teachers and we have seen how other teachers struggle to use new communication technologies. In my school, I help them even update WhatsApp! Someone can't even handle the error message: Internal memory running low!. According to the way things are changing, I support the use of Communication tools in schools though strict guidelines should be put in place. The fact is even now, students have them. I personally have a WhatsApp group where students download my Audio lessons. How do they get them??

[11:21, 12/27/2017] **Teacher27**: True

[11:22, 12/27/2017] **Teacher02**: I think the school can give the service providers a programme according to the school's timetable, when to give these network, even if students spend the whole day with phones but without network

[11:23, 12/27/2017] **Teacher27**: But the way I see. We need a cost effective policy which all schools can handle.

[11:24, 12/27/2017] **Teacher02**: Like????

[11:24, 12/27/2017] **Teacher29**: Censoring and restrictions are not practical. They can just spell the rules but with Google trust me kids can bypass all. This new generation kids are so curios!.

[11:25, 12/27/2017] **Teacher27**: Right from an urban, semi and rural

[11:26, 12/27/2017] **Teacher02**: Can't service providers give us a LAN at school to help us regulate the use of phones at schools??

[11:26, 12/27/2017] **+Teacher30**: That's great

[11:49, 12/27/2017] **Teacher22**: For the divide,

1. Not all students will be able to afford smart phones. This is a serious issue which might call for the school or government intervention.
2. Not all parents will want their children to own phones. This calls for digital literacy.
3. Also many non ICT teachers are technophobic.

[11:57, 12/27/2017] **Teacher16**: When Baryamureeba was our dean @CoCIS MUK (College of Computing and Information Science of Makerere University) we had what we called incubation lab where in the case of simulating any project we would use those android and window phones and for mobile application development. No SIMcards but had a slot though Connected on Wi-Fi!

[12:01, 12/27/2017] **Teacher16**: Yes please

[12:02, 12/27/2017] **Teacher22**: I think that's a nice idea. As the they can be monitored.

[12:07, 12/27/2017] **Teacher16:** Think so I think through booking as for the different classes

[12:07, 12/27/2017] **Moderator:** This is very good stuff. Congs!

[15:31, 12/27/2017] **Teacher26:** True that @Rogers

[15:33, 12/27/2017] **Teacher26:** There's also another program called kahoot. It's like a game that an educator creates for his/her learners

[15:40, 12/27/2017] **Teacher22:** The truth is that there's a lot that we can do with technology. We don't have to deny our children a chance to explore tech to maximum. Technology is the way to go in the 21st century. As educators, we need to keep reinventing ourselves.

[15:42, 12/27/2017] **Teacher26:** Very true, but it starts with us, ICT teachers then even to other teachers coz some take it as a luxury

[19:09, 12/27/2017] **Teacher08:** I'm proud of this group more than any other day this year. You guys, inadvertently or advertently, are doing the ground work for the proposal to make phones viable in schools.

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Admin02

Phone usage in schools by students is possible.

Many schools (e.g. international schools) allow their students to use phones at school.

It's just about giving guidelines to be followed.

A similar situation is usage of radio's in boarding schools. Some schools allow and others don't. But some students in schools which prohibit the gadgets in many cases sneek in gadgets and use them stealthily. On the other hand students in schools which allow gadgets normally get used to them and nothing is too special, they use them just like at university campuses.

The ICT revolution is here and the fears and restrictions of the past century will be overcome with time.

As for now, the rigidities are still with us, and many traditional school administrators will strongly oppose the move to allow phones in schools. But some more modern schools will lead the way and others will follow.

=====**Discussions from Uganda ICT Teachers Annex (Yet to be fully Integrated)**=====

[11:16, 12/26/2017] **Teacher03:** Some teachers don't even have phones

Leaving that aside the government alone has failed to fix prices for Internet. No one is monitoring the safety of Ugandans on use of Internet

Ability to find an original phone or even know which is the best and finding only fake things in our country and ur talking about phones

Power is not stable at all even on the day we do UNEB [Uganda National Examinations Board] ICT [Information and Communications Technology] and computer power is turned off. We still have clones in Uganda and fake electronics

Now fix those and tell me about students owning phones.

[10:45, 12/26/2017] **Teacher03:** Parents are failing to pay fees of Shs. 350, 000. Cost of the phone, Airtime, Charging etc. Then the fees is likely to go high. But best recommendation is laptop for students than phones. Its handy if stolen who is affected?

[11:16, 12/26/2017] **Teacher31:** Mobile devices can help students to share educational information and materials.

They are useful tools for research when they are internet enabled.

They help easy communication among students and teachers.

[11:18, 12/26/2017] **Teacher03:** Boss to be honest this is going to be a hard debate think of internet and it's disadvantages

[11:20, 12/26/2017] **Teacher32:** I think allowing students to have phones!!! May not be a bad idea if they are properly regulated by the school!!!. If they are allowed and the set rules and regulations by school on use of these phones are emphasized and properly followed by students!! Then we can benefit a lot from it!! Coz it also contributes to the learning process

[11:21, 12/26/2017] **Teacher02:** The government has even failed to stabilise the ICT and computer studies syllabus and the better use of computer or cyber use , how will the government control the use of phones at schools?

[11:24, 12/26/2017] **Moderator:** Actually, it's not even a debate. It's a question of thinking of the opportunities. All the fears have been raised before. What we have failed to articulate are the opportunities.

[11:25, 12/26/2017] **Teacher14:** Right for sure mobiles phones shouldn't be allowed in schools to be owned by students because a lot of challenges are to encountered, theft, escapism, moral decay with it's implications on discipline, academic decline among others

[11:26, 12/26/2017] **Moderator:** Granted. Those problems exist. What are the possibilities? That's the question on the floor

[11:26, 12/26/2017] **Teacher05:** Only ICT students should be allowed to carry mobile devices for practical purposes for example during android development programming course unit , web app development students need to test their apps that means some apps like WhatsApp and Facebook should be uninstalled from the student mobile devices

[11:31, 12/26/2017] **Teacher05:** Allowing mobile phones in schools has disadvantages but it also has its Advantages. The ease to communicate.

Our students are now part of the digital era. They should learn to constructively use the mobile phones.

"when St. Mary's Lugazi was trying out students coming with laptops we had the same points as above where students would come with I5s which are not even in the headteachers place but slowly and carefully they learnt how to manage them and as of now any student can carry his/her laptop even a S.1 student. Let's give the phones a chance too.

[11:55, 12/26/2017] **Moderator:** Do you see any way a teacher can use phones for example to enhance learning?

[12:06, 12/26/2017] **Teacher33:** Yes my brother, I do.

[13:01, 12/26/2017] **Teacher05:** Show us

[11:57, 12/26/2017] **Teacher32:** Accessing internet which helps them to expand their knowledge on other subjects like science, MTC (Mathematics) etc. but they are used in upper primary

[11:59, 12/26/2017] **Teacher02:** These phones truly provide opportunities if the resources are available, but will not be able to see the opportunities before looking at the strategies put on table of how to get the resources, like someone cannot see the benefits of using phones at schools when the biggest number to consider can't afford phones

[12:06, 12/26/2017] **Teacher33:** Yes my bro I do.

[13:01, 12/26/2017] **Teacher05:** Show us

[13:09, 12/26/2017] **Teacher33:** Depending on the capabilities a phone has. For example, I use my phone connected to the projector minus using a computer.

[13:10, 12/26/2017] **Teacher03:** But when you are fixing your phone apps what do you use?

[13:20, 12/26/2017] **Teacher33:** Actually I have a friend of mine from Germany who gave me that cable but I don't know its name.

[13:22, 12/26/2017] **Teacher05:** Send a picture and we see

[13:22, 12/26/2017] **Teacher34:** Don't students own phones? Don't they communicate? Has it changed their ways? Will it help to allow them in school but deny them during exams?! Uganda really is in trouble!

[11:33, 12/26/2017] **Teacher32:** Exactly because here in neighbouring country Rwanda!! Primary school pupils study with laptops at school!!

[11:35, 12/26/2017] **Teacher33:** It may seem impossible for students to possess phones at school but it's the way to go. But also keeping in mind the level of schools. Not in village schools but in most of the town schools phones are like mandatory though illegal. It's all about regulating on how and when to use them. Otherwise today phones are becoming like a necessary evil.

[11:36, 12/26/2017] **Moderator:** How exactly do they use them?

[11:39, 12/26/2017] **Teacher05:** They should only use the gadgets in the computer lab and those gadgets should be wiped clean. No contacts, Not internet setting, No social media apps, And those mobile should be left in the lab only for learning purposes


[13:09, 12/26/2017] **Teacher33:** Depending on the capabilities a phone has. For example I use my phone connected to the projector minus using a computer.

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Articles cited and shared by teachers as they participated in the WhatsApp Discussion
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AL-MAHDI Ssenkibirwa, **Students free to use phones at school – government** (2013); in *Daily Monitor*. Mon Sept 9, 2013 Retrieved from

<http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/Students-free-to-use-phones-at-school--government/688334-1984396-dnsosp/index.html> on 24th Jan 2018

Summary: The Director of Basic and Secondary Education in the Ministry of Education is quoted to have encouraged schools to accept use of mobile phones. The article cites opinions of Headteachers, some for and others against use of mobile phones in schools

[Michael Trucano](#) , **Banning and unbanning phones in schools** (2015), on EduTech: The World Bank Blog on ICT Use in Education. Published on Fri, 07/24/2015 Retrieved from

URL: <http://blogs.worldbank.org/edutech/banning-and-unbanning-phones-schools> on 24th Jan 2018

Summary: This article discusses the reasons for and against banning phones in schools, outline several case studies and suggests policy considerations in mobile phone use in education. It is followed by rich commentary from a diverse group of readers.

Tumwebaze, R.M, **Mobile Phone Use in Uganda’s Secondary Schools, a Case study of Bushenyi district**, in *MIER Journal of Educational Studies, Trends and Practices*. May 2015 Vol. 5, No.1 pp. 28 – 38;

Retrieved: Jan 25, 2018 from

<http://www.mierjs.in/ojs/index.php/mjestp/article/viewFile/84/84> on Jan 25, 2017

Summary: The article presents findings of study done in the Western District of Uganda regarding opinions and practice of parents, teachers and students about mobile phone use in selected boarding secondary schools.