Relax, You've Got M-PESA: Leisure as Empowerment.
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  Color Photographs, 1 Black and White Photograph, 2 Charts.

M-PESA is a cellphone-based money transfer system which has been storied globally as a success in the Kenyan context. Our goal in this article is not to confirm or deny its success, nor is it to provide factual evidence of everyday actualities of M-PESA use in Kenya or elsewhere. Instead, our study focuses on how the marketing platforms provide discursive entry points for particular marginalized user-subject positions in the global staging of labor and consumption while contributing to a paradigm shift in information communication and technology for development (ICT4D) programs. Upon examination of much of the marketing material online for the Kenyan M-PESA model, we note that a key feature of promotional strategy is to highlight leisure and empowerment through the convenient use of mobile money tools. In this article, we examine leisurely exchange as part of the overall marketing of M-PESA in global ICT4D 2.0 (Heeks, 2009) cultures. We show how this happens by examining the online communication practices of social media participation on M-PESA-related YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter sites. We examine the role of marketing strategies using digital social space to build leisure networks by encouraging consumer participation. To this end we draw on select social media and visual texts to provide evidence for our analysis. [ABSTRACT FROM AUTHOR]

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Marketing Technological Innovation to LDCs: LESSONS FROM ONE LAPTOP PER CHILD.

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A technological innovation designed for a cause that is popular worldwide, the education of children in less developed countries, offers a cautionary tale relevant to marketers and to those hoping to employ information and communication technologies as development tools. One Laptop Per Child (OLPC) had financial support and sophisticated designers, but its priorities were misaligned with those of the governments to which it was marketed. Specifically, it failed to meet the purchasing criteria of governments in developing nations. Innovators need to downplay innovation in design, reduce cultural mismatches, and market not to governments but to the users themselves. They need to use their value net of customers, suppliers, complementary organizations, and even competitors to assist in both product development and distribution. [ABSTRACT FROM AUTHOR]
TACKLING THE PROBLEMS OF QUALITY AND DISPARITY IN NEPAL’S SCHOOL EDUCATION: THE OLPC MODEL
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Abstract
Poor quality of public education and the disparity in access to quality education are the two main problems facing Nepal’s school education sector today. One approach to addressing these problems involves integrating Information and Communication Technology (ICT)-based teaching learning approaches in mainstream pedagogy so that students, teachers and families in different geographic and economic locations can access the same high quality educational resources. The ICT-based teaching learning approach discussed in this commentary is the One Laptop per Child (OLPC) model. The paper argues that utilizing the full potential of the OLPC concept requires simultaneous work in four areas: digital content development, teacher preparation, network and power infrastructure development, and government capacity development. And it also emphasizes the need for a systematic approach to implementation where the implementers start by learning to solve implementation challenges in a test phase. They can then properly evaluate the model in a scaled up pilot phase before proceeding to nationwide expansion. The paper also addresses some of the major misconceptions related to the OLPC model and briefly discusses the issue of affordability in the Nepali context.