Differences in access to information and communication technologies

# Details

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## Topics

* Internet usage, practices and engagement
* Access, inequalities and vulnerabilities
* Social mediation

## Sample

45 British Muslim teenage girls (aged 14-19 years) from three British Islamic faith schools

## Implications For Parents About

Parental practices / parental mediation

## Implications For Educators About

Digital citizenship

## Implications For Policy Makers About

Stepping up awareness and empowerment

# Abstract

Purpose
Most research on information and communication technologies (ICT) differences has been related to gender and ethnicity, and to a lesser extent religious affiliation. The purpose of this paper is to contribute to this field of research by situating the discussion in the context of British Muslims and extending current research into ICT differences beyond gender and ethnicity.
Design/methodology/approach
This paper explores the ICT differences in access and use by British Muslim teenage girls at Islamic faith schools, and ICTs’ perceived influence on learning. The qualitative research was undertaken by conducting 45 semi-structured interviews with British Muslim teenage girls in Islamic faith schools.
Findings
The study provides tentative findings that Islamic faith schools are not only framed by the wider diverse Muslim community, but also by the supplementary schooling of madrasahs. The findings suggest that the home use of ICTs was reinforced rather than compensated for by the Islamic faith schools. This seemed to inhibit many pupils’ access to online educational resources. The authors found that didactic instruction was prevalent and this provided tentative insights into the types of digital inequity experienced by many pupils.
Originality/value
The research into ICT differences in the UK adopted the premise that the unity in Muslim identity increasingly transcends ethnicity and gender in the Muslim community.

# Outcome

"It was evident from ICT classes that some access was provided to communication
applications such as e-mail and the internet, but most access was limited and restricted to the school’s subject-specific software applications. Similar to Selwyn (2009), there was
limited research evidence for the use of ICT transforming or empowering pupils to learn.
The interviews showed some indications that ICTs provided more autonomy for
self-directed learning activities. Our research study also suggests that pupils saw
no ethnic differences in their ICT access and use, which confirms the research of
Parker-Jenkins (1995), who saw that the faith dimension provides the unifying
characteristics of daily life. This was found to be the situation for the British Muslims
pupils, where the Quran continued to provide an educational compass underpinning
cultural differences. Our research study did identify significant digital inequity in the
schools, even though this may be viewed as unintentional. The pupils highlighted the
limited provision of ICT at all schools, a lack of support for social media and interactive
learning applications, and the limited availability of teachers who could facilitate ICT
participation. Such challenges are experienced in Islamic faith schools because of the
Islamic traditions towards teaching and learning practices and the personalized nature of
the teacher-student relationship." (Hardaker et al., 2017: 361-2).