Enhanced participation or just another activity? The social shaping of iPad use for youths with intellectual disabilities

# Details

## Year

2020

## DOI

10.1177/1744629520911311

## Issued

2020

## Language

English

## Issue

174462952091131

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## Type

Journal article

## Journal

Journal of Intellectual Disabilities

## Publisher

SAGE

## Topics

* Internet usage, practices and engagement
* Access, inequalities and vulnerabilities
* Other

## Sample

16 staff members working at short-stay facilities, housing with special services, and daily activity centres in one municipality in Sweden.

## Implications For Stakeholders About

## Other Stakeholder Implication

Social care

# Abstract

The use of smartphones and tablet devices in activities is believed to have great potential for enhancing the participation of people with intellectual disabilities. However, these technologies, in themselves, do not contribute to participation. What matters is how they are used. Employing the concept of domestication and insights gained from interviews with staff, this article examines conditions for the enhanced participation of youths with intellectual disability and how tablet devices are being integrated into social care settings, in particular. The findings reveal two approaches to tablet integration. In one approach, tablet use is an organized practice focused on technology acquisition, skills improvement and entertainment. In the other, it is integrated into existing practices as an aid to interpersonal communication. The organized digital activities create conditions for the youths to participate like non-disabled peers. The greatest potential for enabling participation with each other is when the youths themselves initiate the use of tablets.

# Outcome

"The study’s findings reveal two overarching approaches for integrating iPad use into social care settings: creating a new practice and using iPads in existing practices.... [T]he way the technology is fitted into the ordinary structuring of everyday practices in these settings matters: when iPad use was scheduled and became a practice alongside others (iPad session), it replaced existing activities (reading books, doing crosswords, etc.). When it was used in already existing practices, it became a tool for facilitating communication.... [S]taff members largely planned and created conditions for youths to participate like non-disabled youths.... However, by integrating iPads into the settings, the staff also became aware of the technology’s potential for increasing the youths’ opportunities for participating with each other." (Authors, "Discussion" and "Conclusions")