Digital participation among children in rural areas

# Details

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## Editors

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Book chapter

## Book title

Digital childhoods : Technologies in children’s everyday lives

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New York

## Topics

## Sample

Qualified educators and other staff and their students aged 1–12 (45 children in primary school and 20 in preschool, their parents and 15 adults working in the institutions) in a school (preschool to grade 6) in a rural area in Sweden.

## Implications For Parents About

## Implications For Educators About

Other

## Implications For Policy Makers About

Other

## Other PolicyMaker Implication

Rural-urban divide in digitalization; psychological and sociocultural factors influencing adoption

## Implications For Stakeholders About

Researchers

# Abstract

With focus on digital participation, this chapter describes and problematizes the experience of growing up in rural areas. Today children and young people often are described as digital natives, a concept used more than 10 years ago by Prensky (2001) to mean that digitality is a mother tongue and that children are online con- stantly. In Sweden, the Swedish Media Council annually publishes reports on young peoples’ usage of digital media (cf. Swedish Media Council 2015). Figures in this report show that there is a big increase in usage by the very young children. The figures also indicate that children aged 9–14 use the Internet very frequently and that almost every 16-year-old teenager in Sweden uses the Internet on a daily basis. However, no regional perspectives are taken into account in the Swedish Media Council report, and consequently there is a lack of knowledge of the digitalization among young people living in urban and rural areas.
(First paragraph of the chapter)

# Outcome

"...the barriers against digital participation (van Dijk and Hacker 2003) were connected to aspects relating to a number of societal factors where the school and the families together formed the terms of digitalization. The children and the families had material access and partial skills access to digital devices. Their usage habits, overall, showed low uptake and value of digital practices. Only a few ways of interacting and communicating via digital devices are apparent, and there is a lack of basic digital experience because of indifference or aversion to digital tech- niques. Psychological access is therefore a great obstacle, which in turn contributes to creating additional barriers.... inclusion and exclusion among the children were closely associated with digital usage patterns and out-of-school practices.... Since psychological access also contributes to creating other barriers, these children were not only socially excluded, but additionally not given the opportunity to developdigital skills and usage patterns either in school or at home. By extension, this mayjeopardize their ability to participate as citizens in an increasingly digital society." (Authors, 60-62)