Gender and digital usage inequality among adolescents: A comparative study of 39 countries

# Details

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More than 400 000 students in 57 countries

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School innovation

## Implications For Policy Makers About

Stepping up awareness and empowerment

# Abstract

The paper investigates how gender exerts its influence on contemporary adolescents with respect to their access to the Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). The focus here is on the socalled usage access. The paper’s empirical basis is that of information on the ICTs usage collected for 39 countries in the framework of the 2006 wave of the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) study. Ordinal regression modelling is used as a method for data investigation. The analysis points to the persistence of gender inequality seemingly in favour of boys. In all countries under investigation, boys report using computers and the Internet for educational purposes more often than girls. Controlling
for the 2006 value of the national GDP per capita, the level of a country’s gender inequality measured by the Gender Gap Index does not have any statistically significant effect on gender gap in educational use of ICTs. A sign of the gender coefficient suggest, however, that the increase in society’s gender-neutrality is associated with the increase in boys’ advantage over girls as regards the frequency of ICT/Internet educational use. The possibility that this advantage of boys is in fact a sign of their educational underperformance is discussed. Another possibility is also discussed, namely, that girls’ decreased (in comparison with boys) frequency of using computers and the Internet for playing computer games might, counterintuitively, be the source of girls’ disadvantage in the future.

# Outcome

In all countries under investigation, boys report using computers and the Internet for educational purposes more often than girls.