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Correspondence analysis of adolescents in two societies

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Social Theory of Internet Use: Corroboration or Rejection among the Digital Natives?

Correspondence Analysis of Adolescents in Two Societies

Abstract: This paper tests a theory of social uses of the Internet (López-Sintas, Filimon & Gracia-Álvarez 2012), inspired by the work of Bourdieu (1984, 1986, 1989), outside the Spanish national context in which it was initially formulated. Using the OECD's PISA 2012 data for Germany and Norway, it specifically seeks to uncover differences in patterns of Information and Communication Technologies usage among fifteen-year olds and the factors structuring those differences. Simple Correspondence Analysis has been used as the method of investigation. The results of the analysis show similarities between usage spaces in Germany and Norway; where the first, dominant dimension represents the frequency of digital use and the secondary dimension represents the type of frequent digital use. Furthermore, in both countries gender, migration background, family structure, the parents' level of education, material access to the Internet at home, and the number of books at home explain no more than 8.6 percent of the variance in digital usage. At face value, these results suggest that the theory of social uses of the Internet should be rejected when applied to the adolescents in the countries under investigation. The paper argues, however, that the results should rather be interpreted as an indirect corroboration of the theory, with age being one of the most significant aspects of an individual's social standing affecting digital use.

Keywords: digital inequality; digital natives; informational capital; Correspondence Analysis; PISA.

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