



Use · Nutzung

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Effects of Educational Background on Internet Use of Young People in Germany

Issues of education (Bildung) and equality of educational opportunities accompanied by concerns about equal opportunities are intensively discussed in German public, in particular with respect to the formal educational system. For a long time the discussion of these questions with respect to the informal realm of the internet was shortened on the availability of technical access while different modes in using the internet were neglected.

With a focus on the notion of Digital Inequalities empirical differences in using the internet as well as their educational implications are currently centring the discussion. This paper illustrates the importance of educational background with respect to the internet use of young people in Germany. The referred data is based on several empirical studies of the Centre of Competence for Informal Education (CCIE) at the Faculty for Educational Sciences (University of Bielefeld). It is shown that educational background is a central factor for analyzing differences in internet use. This raises questions which are predominantly social rather than merely technical. Moreover it becomes apparent that the phenomenon of Digital Inequalities is about social inequalities. In order to deal with these phenomena technology may contribute in way that is necessary, but not sufficient.