Acceptance of digital technologies in the area of housing

A comparative status quo-analysis of equipment, utilisation and demand in social and council housing

Project Management

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Current sitiuation

Modern Living is inevitably influenced by technology. Digitalisation and networking incorporates technological intelligence and the increased involvement of complexity into home environments. To handle the complexity of modern digital products new user skills are required. Due to the personal disposition of different skills, the growing social diversity leads to different intensity of use.

Objective

The question is, if groups, who are already handicapped by social dispositions and are discriminated because of a possible aggregation of those in similar situations within the common housing estate, are we able to identify a "cumulative discrepancy of use" ("Kumulative Nutzungsdiskepanz")?

Method of approach

The data collection took place in three different housing estates of social housing. The different "cumulative discrepancys of use" of „Brünner Straße 209-211", „Am Schöpfwerk" and „Gasometer D" were compared.

We collected data with questionaires (65), interviews (15) and expert interviews (4). The questionnaire consists of 47 questions and includes quantitative and qualitative elements.

The respondents were contacted in their living environments and at the doors of their apartments or flats. The expert interviews were performed as guided interviews. Two experts were interviewed face-to-face, one by telephone and one answered in written form.

To go further into our question we added technical elements of theory by Karl H. Hörnig to the theory of Pierre Bourdieu. To acquire the "cumulative discrepancy of use" we faced the variables "household income", "household size", "education" (university entrance diploma yes/no) and "number of assistants" and added the socio-demographic variables "age" and "gender".

Main results

- **The researched households in social housing are equipped with a higher-than-average standard of computers and computer equipment.**

- Due to some households not possessing computers or computer equipment at all, opened a new form inequality, a so called digital gap.

- **In relatiion to the whole of Vienna, the researched households use of computers and the internet is higher-than-average.** This finding suggests that offers of online-services will not discriminate these households. Yet, one has to bear in mind, that the skills of use are still different.

- **The main influencing factors for the technical equipment are "household income", "household size", "education", "age" and the companionship of children.**

- **Age affects the use of computers and the internet.**

- **If IC-Technologies are available, they are used frequently, even by the elderly.**

- **Two thirds of the asked persons are interested in technology.** We recognised a difference of deployment in the area of technology between men and women.

- **Three thirds of the researched households have already networking experience.**

- Three thirds of those asked, consult others in case of difficulties.