

# Women and Digital Skills: The Hidden Face of the Digital Gender Divide in Turkey

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## Abstract

Digital transformation directly affects economic and social life, while inequality in access to and use of digital skills reproduces gender inequality. In Turkey, the digital gender divide is mostly addressed in a limited way through indicators such as internet access or ownership of technological devices; however, the nature of digital skills, the purpose of use, the level of technological competence, and the capacity for digital productivity reflect different forms of inequality. This study aims to reveal the invisible dimensions of digital inequality by examining the structural barriers women face in acquiring digital skills, participating in digital environments, and achieving technological competence. From this point of view, the question of whether women in Turkey have equal opportunities with men in accessing digital technologies and using digital skills constitutes the main problem of the research. Using the 2024 microdata of the Turkish Statistical Institute's Household Information and Communication Technology Usage Survey, relational analyses were applied to reveal the differences and relationships between gender and digital skills. The digital skill levels of women and men were measured through indicators such as internet use, e-government and e-commerce activities, participation in online education, social media interaction, and frequency of using digital services. The findings of the study show that the digital gender divide in Turkey continues to exist in a multidimensional way. Analyses revealed that women's digital skill levels are significantly lower compared to men. The results indicate that digital inequality is nourished not only by technological differences but also by social, economic, cultural, and cognitive factors, and point to the necessity of strengthening gender-sensitive approaches in digital policy design and implementing inclusive training, awareness, and digital literacy programs that support women's empowerment in digital environments.

**Keywords:** Digital Literacy; Digital Inequality; Digital Participation; Gender; Technological Competence