

# Communication Technology as a Predictor of Future Attainments for Deaf Young Adults

**RS**  
Research  
Summarized

Summary of Garberoglio et al., "Leveling the Playing Field? Communication Technology as a Predictor of Future Attainments for Deaf Young Adults"<sup>1</sup>

## Why was this work done?

- It is often assumed that technology "levels the playing field" for marginalized individuals.
- We know that deaf people are high users of computer-mediated communication (CMC), such as email, instant messaging, and video chat.
- This study tests the claim that the use of communication technology enables successful outcomes in adult life for deaf people.

## How was this work done?

- Researchers conducted a secondary analysis of data from a large-scale dataset, The National Longitudinal Transition Study–2 (NLTS2).
- Statistical analyses assessed how adolescents' use of CMC at home may predict their future outcomes in three domains: life, employment, and education.

The benefits of communication technology only go so far. Achieving greater equitable outcomes for deaf individuals requires larger, systemic change.

## What did researchers find?

- The use of CMC in adolescence did not have a significant impact on outcomes for these deaf youth later in life.
- Although CMC does not have a direct effect on life attainment for deaf young adults, CMC use may affect other processes that contribute to successful outcomes, such as English literacy skills.
- The benefits of CMC only go so far, and greater systematic change is required to achieve equitable outcomes for deaf individuals.
- This study is limited by the fact that the data on CMC use was collected in 2001, and CMC use has changed significantly over the years with increased access to video chat.
- Future research would benefit from a closer look at how deaf individuals use CMC across settings.

<sup>1</sup>Garberoglio, C. L., Dickson, D., Cawthon, S., & Bond, M. (2015). Leveling the playing field? Communication technology as a predictor of future attainments for deaf young adults. *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 34(4).



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