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Handbook of Research on Global Diffusion of Broadband Data Transmission

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Chapter XXVII

Precisions about the Broadband Divide in Chile

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ABSTRACT

This chapter aims to quantify more exactly the adoption of broadband at the household level in Chile by assessing its impact on three types of digital divide: between users and nonusers of the Internet, between usage at home and elsewhere, and between home broadband users and modem home users. This was done by a statistical analysis of WIP-Chile surveys of 2003 and 2006. At least in Chile, the main digital gap is still between users and non users of the Internet, both in terms of age and education level. Income mainly affects the probability of having broadband access at home. Since broadband has rapidly expanded among all socioeconomic segments, it is becoming less relevant as a predictor of access and Web usage. Other factors are also weak predictors of both residential use of the Internet and broadband connections at home. New data and surveys are required to clarify the point.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines different aspects affecting three levels or types of digital divide in Chile: between users and nonusers of the Internet in the first place; between home users and users elsewhere in the second place, and between home users with broadband vis-à-vis those who have a modem connection. The evidence examined is taken from surveys made by the local team of the World Internet Project (WIP).¹ WIP is a longitudinal,

internationally comparable study about Internet usage in everyday life.²

According to the Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the digital divide refers to the gap in terms of both access and usage of information technologies (IT) among persons, households, firms, and geographical areas of different socioeconomic levels (OECD, 2001). That inequality exists even among individuals who have Internet access. Indeed, countries attached to WIP, such as Chile, have found that the place of access and speed of connection are increasingly