

# Internet and gender in Myanmar: findings from research

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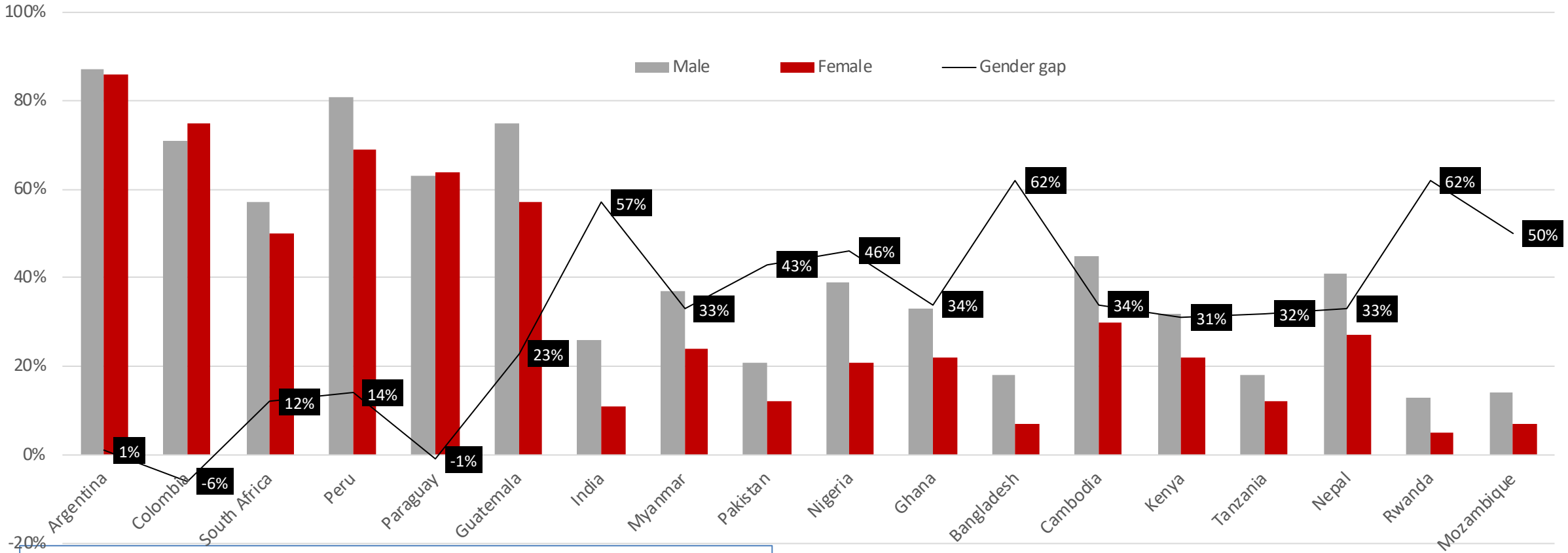
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# Women in Myanmar 33% less likely to use the Internet than men

Gap negatively correlated with the per capita income

Internet use by gender (% of population aged 15-65)



$$\text{Gender gap in Internet use} = \frac{(\text{Male Internet users} - \text{Female Internet users})}{\text{Male Internet users}} \times 100$$

Source: After Access Surveys (2016-2018)

| Base            | Argentina | Colombia | S. Africa | Peru  | Paraguay | Guatemala | India | Nigeria | Pakistan | Ghana | Myanmar | Bangladesh | Cambodia | Kenya | Tanzania | Nepal | Rwanda | Mozambique |
|-----------------|-----------|----------|-----------|-------|----------|-----------|-------|---------|----------|-------|---------|------------|----------|-------|----------|-------|--------|------------|
| All respondents | 1,240     | 1,425    | 1,610     | 1,478 | 1,357    | 1,407     | 5,069 | 1,706   | 2,002    | 1,145 | 7,204   | 2,020      | 2,123    | 1,179 | 1,102    | 2,008 | 1,118  | 1,091      |

## Women are usually family/household financial managers or ‘CFOs’ (Chief Financial Officers)

- Family income is (usually) handed over to the primary female in the house who budgets for the month and ensures money is available for necessities
- They play key role in household decisions, incl. mobile phone adoption
  - Limited product knowledge limits their participation in purchase decision

‘He gives me the salary when he is paid, all of it. But when he needs some he requests from me. When he goes to work he needs to have meal but there was no one he knows so I have to make sure that he has money.’

**Female non-owner, 36, SEC D, Yangon**

“Others hold a touchphone so I wanted one, too. My wife agreed and came along when I bought it.”

**Male owner, Yangon**

“My wife complains if I top up too much.”

**Male owner, 30-45,  
SEC B/C, Yangon**

Women expressed the need to to conserve the limited family budget, even at the expense of their needs

May explain the gender gaps, at least in part...

"I plan to buy a mobile but we don't have enough income. My wife says that I shouldn't buy one. She is about to give birth so we need to save the money."

**Male non-owner, 18-29, SEC D/E Pantanaw**

'Women also have to take care of the family. Instead of spending their money on phone charges, they have to use it for food.'

**- Female non-owner, 36, SEC D, Yangon**

"At times [my husband] gives me money to buy a mobile phone. But I have to use it for school fees for my children. And what I want to get is a smart phone, which I can't afford to buy yet."

**-Female non-owner, Housewife, 28, Yangon**

Source: GSMA/LIRNEasia qualitative study (2016)

## Even when the household already has a mobile, women often tend to get lowest priority...

- Women's role as the home-maker (rather than the bread-winner) has a strong impact on their becoming mobile owners
- Whoever goes outside of the house gets priority

'Males work and have business so they carry the phone. But if the wife has a business she also has one. Today even youngsters and children have a mobile.'

- **Female mobile owner, 19, SEC C, Yangon**

'If we could buy another phone, it would be for my husband. The next one will be my brother's. This is because they are working. Only after that will I get my own phone'

-**Female, non-owner, 47, Pantanaw**

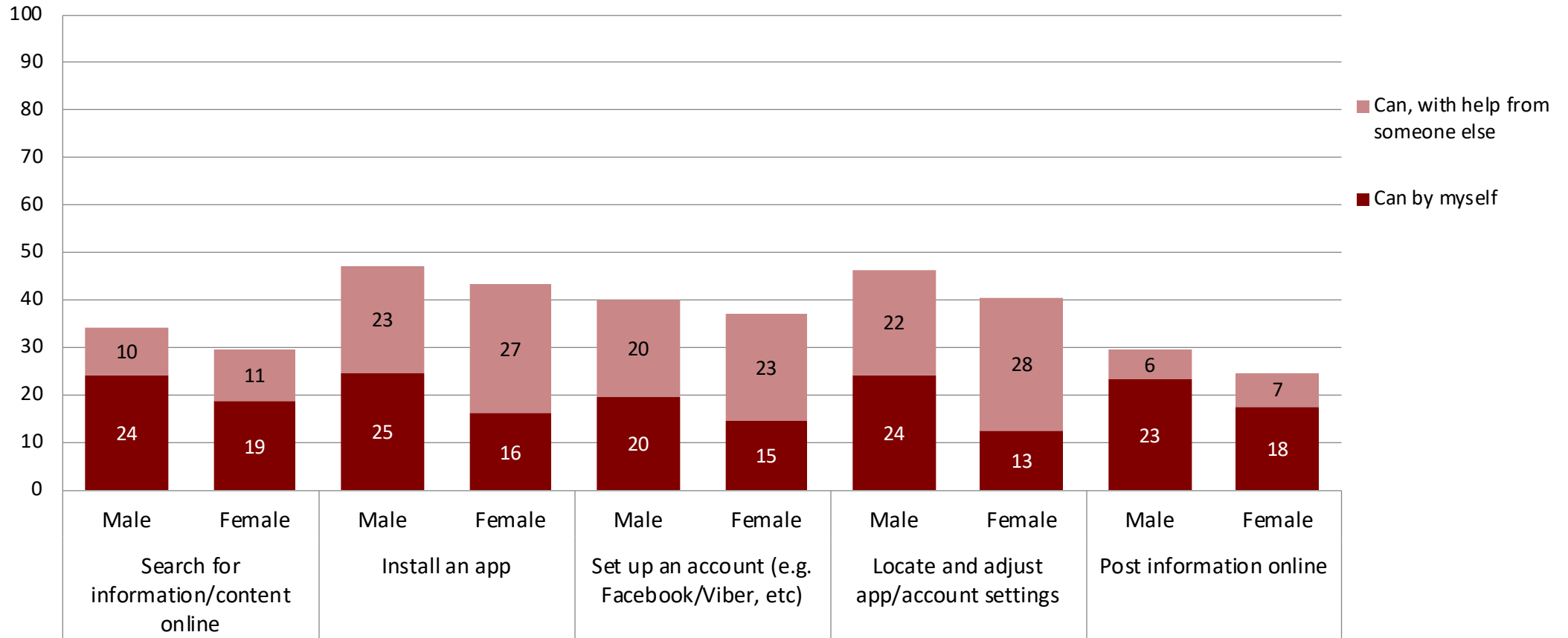
'Males are the head of the household. You have to favor and respect them. He has to lead the family. Whatever we do, we have to discuss with him.'

- **Female mobile owner, 18-28, SEC C/D, Pantanaw**

Source: GSMA/LIRNEasia qualitative study (2016)

# Digital skills were lower among females

Digital skills (% of mobile handset owners who can perform the tasks by themselves or with the help of others)



Source: After Access Survey, Myanmar (2016)  
Base: Mobile phone owners aged 15-65

# Many women who *were* online reported getting harassed by men

*There was one guy who sent annoying messages through Viber. When I blocked his number, he sent messages again with different number of his. It went on for like 4 or 5 numbers from the same person. I guess he has plenty of phones. That's why I decided to stop using that number of mine and took the sim card out.*

Female, 25, SEC B, Yangon

*A friend of mine likes to wear trendy revealing clothing, and her pictures are used by people with bad intentions. Through the messenger, they threaten her by using pictures of her. They said they will change it into pornographic picture, unless to pay the phone bills and stuffs. She got that a couple of times.*

Male, 28, SEC A, Yangon

*A local gynecologist from a Facebook group on pregnancy and maternity wrote on my wall: "This person wants to become pregnant. If anyone would like to volunteer in making her pregnant, please let us know" and he tagged my name on that post. I cried the whole day after I saw that... I couldn't believe he is a gynecologist.*

Female, 35, SEC C, Yangon

*While I was reading news online, this guy came and said, "Hi" so I "Hi" back at him since I saw he's a Buddhist, too. He asked if we could be friends. I was like, of course, everyone can make friends. I like to keep the reply short and straightforward. I asked him where he was from and I told him guys from that area are cunning. And he said, "Anyways, could you send me a picture of you?" and I was like, "Why should I send you my picture?" Then he said, "Alright then," and uploaded my picture on his wall to show that he has my picture. I was like, "It's not surprising that you have my picture, of cause, you can get it from my wall, then he said, "That's not the picture that I want." I asked him, "Then what picture do you want?" and he was like, "You know what I want. You are a married person". He said he wanted a picture of my lower body. Then I said, "Well, that's pretty easy. You can just go home and open up your mom's longyi to see it. It's the same thing. All women have the same stuff and really there's no difference." Then he became speechless and went offline.*

Female, 38, SEC D, Yangon

Thank you!

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