



Impact Of Digital Divide Oncollege Libraries

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Abstract-

“Digital Divide” describes the uneven distribution of Information Communication Technology in society.

The barriers to using computers, the Internet, and Online Information create a gap between students this gap is the Digital divide; which can lead to uneven knowledge distribution which impacts on college libraries. Now a day Libraries are providing E-resources to their users to eradicate Digital Divide among the students. Government is trying to reduce this gap by implementing and promoting various schemes in the education field. After COVID-19 colleges are trying to remove the gap which is creating Digital Divide like language, gender, geographical reasons with the help of government schemes.

Keywords-Digital Divide, Communication, Internet, Online Resources.

Introduction: -

India is a developing country. We are economically and socially growing very fast. Information Technology surrounds our lives. Fast economic growth supports us to use new technology but sometimes due to some reasons, this technology is not used by everyone. This situation creates gap between people. This gap between those who ‘have’ easy access to the internet and who ‘do not’ is called as Digital Divide. This term describes the uneven distribution of Information and Communication Technology in society. In last decade India has witnessed extreme growth of using mobile phones. Approximately 81% of internet users in India access it using smart phones due to the increased use of internet the number of internet provider companies are also increased.

The government of India is always supportive for new technologies. In recent years government of India has been trying to improve the access to government services Online. By using ICT people are using these services by their smart phones or from their personal computers. In 2015 government of India has started “Digital India” campaign.

From the COVID period, this technology is widely accepted in education field. During the lockdown period Indian education system become used to this technology in teaching learning process. From school student to research student everyone become habitual for e learning. But talking about other side of this topic this facility was easily available for financially strong or stable class but not for all. We can see a gap between those classes. Poor people or people from rural area were not benefited equally. And that time digital divide, was seen prominently.

Digital Divide Meaning: -

- “Digital Divide Council- The digital divide is the gap that exists between individuals who have access to modern information and communication technology and those who lack access.”
- Wikipedia- “The digital divide is the unequal access to digital technology, including smartphones, tablets, laptops, and the internet. The digital divide worsens inequality around access to information and resources.”
- Investopedia- “The gap between people who have access to modern information and communications technology and those who don’t.”

Types and Reasons of Digital Divide: -

- **Gender Digital Divide:**
Unequal access to e-resources among males and females, or gender bias, is widely seen in society.
- **Socioeconomic Digital Divide:**
Unequal access based on country, other social factors, economic difference, Or gender.
- **Geographic Digital Divide:**
Rural area or isolate areas that have not connectivity with urban area have problems for accessing resources is Geographic Digital Divide.
- **Digital Language Divide:**
India is a versatile country with different languages. While talking about information technology, the English language is widely used in every technology. Now a day, local languages are integrated into technology, but still, we can see the communication or language barrier in this field.
- **Age Digital Divide:**
It is observed that new technologies are easily accepted by young generations but older people are not eager to accept the technology or they feel it is hard to learn at this age. So, this gap can be seen in society.
- **Access Digital Divide:**
This access can be seen throughout the entire world. Internet or Technology access problems can be due to poverty, digital literacy, a lack of infrastructure, or ignorance of the government. Performance of computers, limited broadband speeds and limited access to subscription-based content widen the gap.
- **Use Digital Divide:**
“The Digital Use Divide stands between those students who are asked to use technology for creation, exploration, and critical analysis and those who are not.”

Role of Indian Government to eradicate Digital Divide: -

Indian Government has taken initiatives for E-learning and reducing the digital divide by introducing a digital knowledge ecosystem. For PhD students or Researchers

“Shodhganga”, for PG students’ e-PG Pathshala, Vidya-Mitra, e-ShodhSindhu and many more facilities are available for students without any discrimination or barriers.

Impact of Digital Divide on College Libraries: -

OCLC has conducted a survey on use of Library in “COVID 19” period. In this survey they found that a drastic change in use of digital resources in college libraries. Also a study conducted in University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign found that Digital Library can be a good tool to reduce Digital Divide.

While talking about college libraries in India, from last few decades Indian universities have started digitization of their library collection. Various colleges are taking benefit of N-List, DELNET, Indian Digital Library of India or Open Educational Resources available freely on internet or many more. In India Inlibnet is providing “N-List” services to academic colleges at affordable prices. The "N-List" package includes E-books, E-journals, and Database. Those services can be accessed through PCs, Tablets, or mobile phones.

Digital Libraries are trying to narrowing the digital divide among the urban and rural students. They try to provide equal opportunity despite their different economic or socioeconomic backgrounds.

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