

# Overcoming The Digital Divide

Posted on September 28, 2018

## Introduction

Undoubtedly, technology is one of the greatest realities and needs of today's world. It immensely impacts the lives of people. The vast majority of individuals cannot imagine their lives without the involvement of technology. It is the reason for connecting people with each other. Proper assimilation of technology makes it possible for many individuals to benefit from the advancements in technology. When it comes to the effective formation of technological developments in the world, it is crucial to identify the figurative gap that exists in the world in the form of a digital divide; this particular form of division can be explained as the difference between the people who have access to the technology to those who do not have the approach of fundamental facets of technology (Norris, 2001). The separation or division of people or societies on the basis of technology appears as the main reason for the different approaches toward the utilization and accessibility of resources. The prospect of a digital divide can be considered a chronic issue in today's world as it has become the reason for the creation of gaps on the basis of economic and social developments.

The specific term "digital divide" can be described as the one crucial form of disparity in the case of some individuals, which appears with the consideration of electronic information and different means of communication, mostly referring to the specific form of consumer technology. It is crucial to understand that the facet of access to technology is mostly described in the proper form of the physical vicinity and the proper availability of the different technological resources. Implementation of technology is not the proper response to this particular issue, as it requires the necessary consideration of an equitable approach to the different features of the technology.

The facet of the division of technology immensely relies on the particular features of information and communication technology (ICT). This particular feature of today's advanced world comes up with many considerations. It is the one infused aspect of society that appears in different forms and dimensions with the consideration of the individual's approach to the utilization of resources. It also depends on the accessibility of necessary advanced resources to the people relating to the specific society. In other words, it can explain that it caters to all the dimensions of society, which appear in different forms. These different facets can identify the prospects of the labor market in terms of the administration of the different pillars of society (Norris, 2000). The specific problem of the digital divide appears when not every individual society remains able to successfully join the different facets of information technology to the structuring and functioning features of society.

It is crucial for the world to understand the intensity of the problem of the digital divide and the necessary measures to effectively eliminate its consequences from the world. It is notable to mention

that different researchers and activists propose different forms of solutions to overcome the problem of the digital divide. The focus is to effectively align people with the changing paradigm of information technology and its accessibility in the different facets of life. It is necessary to formulate the features of collaboration and closeness between people by reducing the existing gap in the form of technological advancements. It is the right time for the world to consider the changing paradigm of societies and take necessary measures to align people with each other with the proper approach to information technology and the advanced features of communications. Here, the focus is to provide rational arguments about the concept of the digital divide, considering the possible solutions of necessary access and the features of skills and education to effectively deal with the issue of the digital divide.

## Background

The idea of the digital divide originally came up with a specific approach to explain the existence of a difference in the accessibility of advanced forms of information and communication technologies. Initially, the prospect of a digital divide was started to explain the features of comparison or difference in the case of geographical segregation of communities in the broader aspects of rural and urban areas; later on, this concept developed with the consideration of defining the prevailing differences in the societies related to the difference of prospects referring to the different paradigms of class, race, and age, etc. Later, the specific concept of division was explored by the researchers as a prospect, which is closely related to the phenomenon of accessibility concerning other crucial features such as competence and motivation. It is also crucial to apprehend the idea of a digital divide in the case of different disciplines and fields of life to properly understand the different implications closely related to the feature of access in the case of information technology and communication (Macleod, 2005). The particular prospect of the digital divide is immensely applied and addressed in the specific fields of healthcare and the biomedical sector concerning the deployment of the different forms of information technology and the features of communication. These particular prospects are clear indications of the specificity of the digital divide related to the different fields and sectors. It is notable to mention that the concept of the digital divide concerning the different disciplines is immensely changing and evolving due to the different changing patterns of societies closely linked to the overall implementation of the broader concept.

It is crucial to understand the issue of the digital divide as a social problem to propose and implement better solutions to address this specific concern. It is becoming the reality of different societies that internet broadband becomes a need that might appear in the forms of consideration of the business or the facet of the consumers. The advanced features of information technology also indicate that this particular facility or service is not available even in some rural regions of the United States of America. There are plenty of communities on the global level that do not have the approach or access to modern forms of information technology and the different growing techniques of communication. It is crucial to mention that access to modern forms of technology is missing for rural communities due to the nonexistence of this particular modern feature, or it might be costly and unaffordable. Although

governments initiate different steps in the form of funding to help this particular prospect in societies and countries, unfortunately, these measures are not enough. There is a need for much more to do to eliminate the existing gap related to effective access to modern technologies and new ways of communication. The issue of the digital divide is closely concerned with the paradigms of social and economic features of any society. It is argued that the particular issue of the digital divide prevails and increases due to the element of low population density (Borgida et al., 2002). This particular feature makes it economically difficult for the different companies of information technologies to successfully initiate their broadband features of networks in the particular areas characterized as the rural regions. In other words, it can be explored that it is immensely difficult to maintain the necessary balance in the case of demand and supply concerning the accessibility of the advancement of information technology. Socioeconomic facets related to the aspect of new ways of technology and communication indicate that it is one of the risky aspects when it comes to the development of the business model to overcome the problem of the digital divide. It is crucial to consider the digital divide as a social issue that can only be addressed with the proper and effective consideration of all the stakeholders. It is evident that only the federal government can propose solutions to this particular issue. The necessary alignment of the rural and urban concerns is crucial to deeply understanding the features of the difference in terms of access to the different forms of information technology and the new ways of communication. It is crucial for countries to consider the issue of the digital divide seriously and take necessary measures to address this particular concern. This societal problem can only be effectively addressed with the consideration of access to broadband and the different forms of technology as the priority concern. The issue of the digital divide can be resolved with the effective collaboration of different entities concerned with this problem. Different providers of information technology and communication, groups of economic development, governments, and the citizens of different communities can play a major role in effectively addressing the issue of the digital divide and propose possible solutions to deal with this particular societal concern. The cooperation of all the stakeholders can be helpful in creating a successful model to eliminate the gap between the individuals who have an approach to the different forms of information technology and the ones who do not have the privilege of getting effective assistance from the information technology and the modern ways of communication.

It is crucial to identify that the facet of the digital divide or digital split is addressed differently by different societies or countries. Every society comes with its own considerations and attempts to propose the solution to the issue of accessibility of information technology and the adaptability of the different ways of communication. The socioeconomic features of society play a vital role in understanding the true need for access to information technology and how to attain the target of a cost-effective approach with the availability of broadband. It is crucial to understand that the country of the United of America needs to do more and take necessary actions to make it the greatest country when it comes to a facet of information technology. The utilization of advanced forms of information technology, such as the Internet and smartphones, needs to be effectively addressed to maintain the quantitative structure of the information technology. It is necessary to understand that the facet of the communication structure in society ultimately influences the economic and developmental growth

of the country. The availability of information technology and the adaptability of new forms of communication also influence the overall well-being of the country's population. Today, larger economies have to deal with the expansion of the facet of information technology. Proper utilization and accessibility of the technology is the one crucial objective of the economies to align the different forms of urban and rural communities into the overall paradigm of the country's development.

## Construction Of An Argument

It is necessary to critically assess the different aspects that can be the reason for the prevailing issue of the digital divide. The particular causes of the issue can lead to possible solutions to the digital divide or digital split in the case of different populations of the world. It is observed that the specific group of individuals does not have the necessary access to the different tools of information technology because they have not come up with the feature of affordability. Different paradigms of technology and the features of communication are immensely expensive in some parts of the world. It can be mostly observed in the case of the rural setup of the communities. African countries can be considered as examples of those going through the issue of the digital divide due to inadequate resources. Another possible reason for this particular issue is that some people do not have enough knowledge to properly use the different advanced forms of technology. Another crucial aspect or reason that is closely related to the element of necessary knowledge is that people in different societies or communities do not have the proper and efficient understanding of the different benefits associated with the facet of growing technology in the globe. Rural communities are mostly affected by the improper form of knowledge to use the different forms of information technology and effectively utilize different communication features to make their lives simpler and advance according to the needs of the changing paradigm of the world. It is observed that most individuals belonging to underdeveloped or developing countries do not have enough knowledge to use technology due to the lack of education and necessary skills. It is crucial to mention that only 30% of the population of the world is effectively aligned with the changing paradigm of technological advancement. This particular information indicates that almost 5 billion individuals in the world do not have active access to the internet or do not have enough ideas to use different technological gadgets. This particular facet expands the gap in the form of a digital divide or digital split. In other words, it can be explored that there is a huge form of the world population that does not have any role in economic growth and development. This particular type of disparity in knowledge sharing and access to technological advancement creates gaps between the different communities and societies in terms of their functioning.

There is one good piece of news related to the issue of the digital divide, which is that different initiatives can be considered possible solutions. The outcomes related to these particular features can be different in different societies as each one comes up with its own considerations. Different initiatives taken in the form of business approaches to educating people about the growing demand for technological advancement can be one significant and feasible approach to closing the gap that prevails in the form of the digital divide. It is crucial for governments and economic stakeholders to

effectively adopt the different features of transitions to provide assistance to the overall paradigm of the economy and align individuals with the changing features of technology. It is evident that the issue of the digital divide can be reduced or eliminated by providing the necessary skills and education to individuals in the changing and growing form of technology and communication (Natriello, 2001). Another aspect that is considered as the possible effective solution to the issue of the digital divide is to make it more accessible for people to utilize different forms of technology for their benefit. The cost-effective form of technology can be helpful in eradicating the problem of the digital divide.

## Interpretation

The digital divide is one vast concept that is immensely considered by many researchers to determine and analyze the different features associated with this particular issue and its consequences in societies. Eszter Hargittai explores one dimension of the digital divide in his research work. The main focus of the researcher is to assess the impact of the individuals' online skills, referring to the particular approach of the second-level digital divide (Hargittai, 2001). The effectiveness of this particular research can be explored as it formulates the association between the personal characteristics of the individuals, which appear in the form of skills of using the internet or computer, and the features of digital. The possible limitation that can be identified in the case of this research is that it only considers one dimension related to the issue of the digital divide. It can further explain the inclusion of other paradigms.

Neil Selwyn considers the political features related to the digital divide to explore their connection in the form of theoretical research (Selwyn, 2004). The author provides the necessary indications about the societal examinations, which are closely related to the dimension of the digital divide. The particular aim of this research work is to provide enough knowledge about the origin of the issue. The author successfully explains different conceptual stages related to the issue, referring to the prospect of individuals' engagement with the various features of information technology and different forms of communication. This particular article can be considered a good example of exploring the theoretical idea of the concept of the digital divide. Different facets of the concept of the digital divide are successfully explored by Van Dijk and Hacker in their research study. The main focus of this particular research work is to provide the necessary conceptual approach to the digital divide and its influential prospect concerning to the social paradigm (Van Dijk & Hacker, 2003). It successfully provides the analytical framework that addresses the features of the digital divide on the basis of its nature and the accessibility of technology.

## Ethical Outcomes

Ethics is the one crucial feature that is closely related to the broader concept of the digital divide. It provides the necessary guidelines about the adaptability of the different solutions referring to the

problem of digital divide or split. Concerning the possible solution of effective accessibility in the case of technology, it is also closely linked to the paradigm of ethics. It comes with the ethical consideration that access to the technology should be provided on the basis of ethical consideration. It is crucial to understand that there might be a possibility that it comes with negative ethics as not all individuals have the same level of access to technology and different forms of communication. A positive outcome in the case of ethics can be explored with the consideration of the particular skills of access to the feature of technology. It is positively related to the aspect of education, which can be the reason for the enhancement of knowledge in people's ability to use technology effectively and efficiently.

## Conclusion

To conclude the argument about the features of the digital divide, it is crucial to overview the effects of possible solutions to this issue. These issues can be explored in the form of effective accessibility of individuals to technological advancement and provide a necessary form of education or skills to the people. These facets can be explored with the proper involvement of all the stakeholders, which can play a positive role in decreasing or eliminating the gap that appears in the form of access to the features of technological advancements and different forms of communication.

## References

- Borgida, E., Sullivan, J. L., Oxendine, A., Jackson, M. S., Riedel, E., & Gangl, A. (2002). Civic culture meets the digital divide: The role of community electronic networks. *Journal of Social Issues*, 58(1), 125-141.
- Hargittai, E. (2001). Second-level digital divide: Mapping differences in people's online skills. *ArXiv Preprint Cs/0109068*.
- Macleod, H. (2005). What role can educational multimedia play in narrowing the digital divide? *International Journal of Education and Development Using ICT*, 1(4).
- Natriello, G. (2001). Comment: Bridging the Second Digital Divide: What Can Sociologists of Education Contribute? *Sociology of Education*, 74(3), 260-265.
- Norris, P. (2000). The worldwide digital divide. In *Paper for the Annual Meeting of the Political Studies Association of the UK, London School of Economics and Political Science*.
- Norris, P. (2001). *Digital divide: Civic engagement, information poverty, and the Internet worldwide*. Cambridge University Press.
- Selwyn, N. (2004). Reconsidering political and popular understandings of the digital divide. *New Media & Society*, 6(3), 341-362.
- Van Dijk, J., & Hacker, K. (2003). The digital divide as a complex and dynamic phenomenon. *The Information Society*, 19(4), 315-326.