# The Impact of Digital Divide in Education

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**ABSTRACT**

This commentary censoriously examines the accessibility of digital learning. It explores the crucial factors contributing to the "digital divide" such as availability of devices or resources, internet connectivity, and digital literacy to ensure equal access to education. The commentary also analyzes the digital gap to promote digital literacy and develop inclusive online learning. Suggestions are offered for investing in technology, promoting digital literacy, conducting teacher training, and developing online learning platforms that are available to everyone. Tackling these challenges is crucial for creating an inclusive learning atmosphere and ensuring fair access to education.

## INTRODUCTION

Technology sets high standards in the field of education. Learning tools online are accessible and give us thousands of information in just one click. Lucky to those who can have it all, but there were also a lot of students who suffered during the rise of this "Digital World". It's like having a giant library filled with all the world's knowledge, but only some people have the key to get in. This digital gap, it's a real problem. It means some learners have the best online classes, personalized learning, and all the latest gadgets, while others are struggling to even get online. Imagine, that not all students in the whole world are given a chance to access online learning. We must find a way to bridge this gap so everyone has a fair chance of learning and succeeding. We need to ensure that everybody gets equal access to education.

**Exploring Discrepancies in Digital Education Access:**

Disparities in utilizing and enjoying Information and Communications Technology (ICT) are central to the digital gap (Lythreatis, Singh, & El-Kassar, 2022), covering various critical elements:

- *Device Access*: Wealthier households possess better internet accessibility due to their ability to buy devices and internet subscriptions (Bachtiar et al., 2020). Connectivity to the Internet: Students face different barriers to learning, such as unreliable Internet connections and poorly designed online courses. Some students opt to move to places with better internet access or ask classmates who are skilled at online courses for assistance (Lapada, 2023).
- *Digital Literacy*: The difference in digital skills and abilities is a significant factor in the digital divide. The digital gap can limit students' interaction with digital tools and impede their academic growth (Wiley, Carter, & Davis, 2020).

**The Influence of Digital Divide on Student Results:**

The digital divide significantly affects students' educational experiences and future prospects in various ways:

- *Limited Entry to Educational Materials***:** Varied student requirements, a scarcity of educational resources in accessible formats, and inadequate institutional resources to bridge the policy-practice divide constrain students' learning opportunities and academic advancement (Beyene, Brown, & Lee, 2023).
- *The academic achievement gap* has become increasingly associated with parental income rather than their level of education in recent times. This emphasizes the impact of socioeconomic factors on academic performance and offers opportunities for policy measures to be implemented (SandsØr, Johnson, & Kim, 2023).
- *The lack of digital skills* has started to show more, especially affecting minority workers and smaller companies in a tough economy. There is a growing demand for digital skills in the job market (Shilcock, Patel, & Gomez, 2023).

**Approaching for Dealing with Inequalities in Digital Access Guaranteeing Fair Opportunities:**

To reduce the digital gap, it's crucial to create a comprehensive plan:

- *Improving Access to Technology:* The presence of technology and staff in schools significantly impacts students' educational and professional advancement. Schools equipped with resources like

computer labs, laptops, and tablets can help bridge the digital gap since many students depend on schools for technology and internet access (Madathil, 2019; Kormos, Thompson, & Harris, 2023).

- *Advocating for Digital Literacy*: Limited digital literacy is closely associated with the lack of internet access. To improve access, particularly in underserved areas, it is important to give priority to the promotion of digital literacy. Educational initiatives should focus on promoting responsible and ethical use of technology and the proficient navigation of digital materials (Azzahra & Amanta, 2021).

- *Offering Training and Assistance for Teachers*: It is crucial to incorporate digital literacy materials into teacher training to provide essential support to educators. Improving the ICT skills of teachers and advocating for critical thinking approaches can effectively boost the digital literacy of students, as suggested by Azzahra & Amanta in 2021.

Creating an inclusive online learning environment involves tackling the challenges faced by students with disabilities. A suggested web platform gives importance to accessibility, user flexibility, and adaptive resources for better communication and equal access to online learning for all students, as per Perez-Enriquez, Lopez-Cuadrado, & Gonzales-Carrasco, 2024.

## CONCLUSION

Let us break this wall (Digital Divide) for easy and equal access to education. Technology is rampant nowadays, and a lot of us depend on it. But we must consider the low-income families who cannot afford to buy devices and connectivity. In this digital age, the future of our education lies in our hands, on how are we going to face and give some time to solve relevant problems. This entails making technological investments, promoting digital literacy, educating teachers, and developing universally accessible online learning environments. These solutions have a big possibility to attain progressive and equal education.

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