



E-ISSN: 2708-4469  
P-ISSN: 2708-4450  
IJAMCJ 2021; 2(1): 01-09  
© 2020 IJAMCJ  
www.masscomjournal.com  
Received: 02-10-2020  
Accepted: 03-12-2020

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## Impact of digital divide in the age of social media revolution

**Dr. Neeraj Karan Singh and Dr. Mudasir Sultan Zerger**

### Abstract

The term “digital divide” refers to the disparities between societies and nations. The phrase “digital divide” refers to the unequal and disproportionate pace of development in societies in having access to digital infrastructure and services. As Internet use grows globally, the digital divide has shifted beyond concerns about access and adoption to more subtle questions of skill, usage, and capital, and to new venues such as social networking sites (SNSs). This paper highlights both physical access to technology hardware and, more broadly, skills and resources which allow for the use of digital divide. Some barriers of Digital Divide are discussed as Low Literacy Rate, Education System and languages. Some projects and centers are also discussed in Digital Divide. For example Gyandoot is an intranet in Dhar district connecting rural cybercafés catering to the everyday needs of the masses. This website of Gyandoot is an extension of Gyandoot intranet, for giving global access. Lastly conclusion is drawn with many efforts can be seen in “Digital Divide”. According to the above study we came to know the various positive and negative impacts of Dimensions of Digital Divide-a critical analysis. It is very important to overcome these problems. Paying attention to their academic progress and addressing any issues will go a long way towards keeping the negative aspects of digital divide from influencing others. Social Networking Sites are fast emerging as powerful and unparalleled tools to share information, shape opinions, connect people across domains and cultures, bring participation, and above all to communicate as never before. This is just the beginning. Social Networking Sites are still at a very nascent stage and communities across the world are just beginning to understand the potential of this medium to impact discourse and communication. Digital Divide viewed benefits, positive and negative impacts of social networking sites and how the social networking sites influence in Urban Areas and Rural Areas both. Social Networking Sites enable youth to raise their voice against social issues and share or upload information for the welfare of the society. Although research paper is based on the survey restricted only to 70 respondents, the data obtained provide some insights into how societies are divided under the banner of digitalization in the age of social media revolution. It is hoped that the findings described here will help to build a foundation for future investigations about the rise in digital divide.

**Keywords:** Digital divide, social media, social media network, media revolution, new media

### Introduction

#### Objective of study

- To find out the basic agents of the major crater of Digital Divide in relation of social networking sites.
- To analyze these agents and the reason behind their persistence.
- To extract out the in depth solutions to resolve.
- To find out the catalysts to combat digital divide.

### Research methodology and design

#### Research design

The following research steps were used in this study:

### Target Population

The target population for this research was defined as to all those who are either using internet or not using internet. The population of the study was approximately 6,375 people. Even the understanding of the questionnaire was easy for them as they were familiar with the use of internet or about internet and are quite clear about the reasons they use it for and inconvenience they face either because of using it or not using it. The extent of the survey was limited in such areas of Meerut City.

**Sampling:** Once the sampling frame was decided, simple random sampling method was used to select the respondents. In the person assisted survey, almost everyone in the sampling frame had an equal chance of being selected and we got the responses filled through those people who were readily and willingly accepting to fill it.

**Source of Data Collection:** For the purpose of this study, it was decided to collect the data with the help of questionnaires. Structured random sampling method of questioning was adopted. The questionnaire was prepared on the basis of collected information and reviews about the social networking sites, youth and their lifestyle.

### Data Collection

After secondary data collection through data collection over the internet, a primary research was carried out through a questionnaire. In this study, the questionnaire was well structured and used as a tool. All the questions are structured on the basis of fulfilling the objectives of the study.

The nature of the questions was such that it avoided ambiguous responses from the respondents and it also helped in quick analysis of the data collected. A total of 70 respondents were chosen for the study in this area.

### Survey

The responses were collected by personal questioning. The responses were taken from different areas of Meerut, Sadar bazaar, Abu Lane, Purwa Shaikh Lal, Ghat, Putha, Siwal. The responses are gathered in a standardized way, so questionnaire are more objective.

“A considerable amount of work has been done in this field and several articles are available on the internet and magazines about the impact of social media sites on mainstream media. So first we carried out a literature survey of the available data for collection of secondary information. We followed it by a descriptive research design in order to understand the problem and carry out the research in a lucid manner”.

### Primary Data

For collecting the primary data we can use observation method, questionnaire method, schedules and many more.

### Secondary Data:

Analysis of published material such as, books, magazines and different newspapers were used to examine the rise in Dimensions of Digital Divide – a critical analysis.

### Digital Divide: A Study

The American Library Association’s Office for Information Technology Policy defines the digital divide as the

differences due to geography, race, economic status, gender and physical ability in access to information through the Internet, and other information technologies and services; and in the skills, knowledge, and abilities to use information, the Internet and other technologies (Lor, 2003)<sup>[4]</sup>. The ALA’s definition is appropriate when the emphasis is on disparities between groups and individuals in one country. However, the term “digital divide” also refers to the disparities between societies and nations.

The phrase “digital divide” refers to the unequal and disproportionate pace of development in societies in having access to digital infrastructure and services (Paul 2002:13)<sup>[8]</sup>. The term digital divide refers to the gap between those with regular, effective access to digital and information technology, and those without this access. It encompasses both physical access to technology hardware and, more broadly, skills and resources which allow for its use. Groups often discussed in the context of a digital divide include socioeconomic (rich/poor), racial (white/minority), or geographical (urban/rural).

The term global digital divide refers to differences in technology access between countries. Essentially, this means the divide between those who have access to digital technology and those who do not. The divide takes into account wealth, ethnicity and the area of those in the divide. The term initially referred to gaps in ownership of computers between groups (Bickner 2001). One area of significant focus was school computer access; in the 1990s, rich schools were much more likely to provide their students with regular computer access.

### Factors that contribute to the digital divide

#### Global Scenario

There are several factors that contribute to the digital divide. Following are some of the factors which contribute to this divide:

**1. Gender:** It is stated that in some countries and organizations, female have less access to the Internet than males. It was found that fewer male (38%) had limited access to the Internet than female (41%). This disparity is partly attributed to perception that IT is a technical subject for men, with many female consequently shying away from it (Mutual 2002; Singh 2004)<sup>[6, 10]</sup>.

**2. Physical disability:** Visually impaired and blind people are fully able to use a computer due to advances in technology such as Jaws, which is one of many screen readers. Screen readers are voice synthesizers that can read the text on a screen. However the Internet is inaccessible to the blind and visually impaired user because the screen reader is unable to read the graphically based web page (Cullen 2001).

#### 3. Physical access:

**4. Lack of ICT skills and support:** People in many disadvantaged groups are often precluded from making use of ICTs the main barriers under this point are lack of telecommunication infrastructure with sufficient reliable bandwidth for Internet connections and cost, the ability to purchase, rent without financial hardship and the necessary equipment. This result in lack of access to technology (Hardware and software) because of low levels of computing and technology skills and also very importantly

literacy skills. This is significant factor in preventing certain people from using the internet technologies (Salinas 2003) <sup>[9]</sup>.

**5. Attitudinal factors:** This derived from cultural and behavioral attitudes towards technology e.g. those computers are for “brainy” people, for male, for young, and are difficult to use or belong to a middle-class “white” culture. Attitudinal factor can also be culturally based. In many cultures which place high value on oral culture, personal communication and strong family and kinship networks, therefore the use of computers for communication purposes will not be of high priority (Cullen 2001). 27% mobile phones are Internet ready (127 million mobile subscribers out of 471 million total subscribers) and out of these 127 million subscribers, only 12 million have used Mobile Internet. And this number further reduces down to 2 million or 17% when it comes to active users (IAMAI 2009) <sup>[2]</sup>. Checking emails and searching for information are the two most popular reasons for accessing net over mobile phones. 2.8% of Urban Indian mobile population used the Internet over their phones to check emails while 2.5% used the net to search for information.

**6. Age:** According to a study done by Singh (2001) as cited in Singh (2004) <sup>[10]</sup> persons aged 15 to 24 (45%) used the internet daily. Older respondents, especially in the 45 to 54 year old category (27%), used the internet once a month. It is clear that a digital divide exists between age groups because the youth are more exposed to technology and are willing to use it, whereas older people are resistant to change and avoid the use of technology.

**7. Racial segregation:** The legacy of some countries’ policy such as apartheid as the case in South Africa has contributed a lot to the digital divide. Whereby white people have more access to technologies than blacks. It is also the case in the United State of America whereby white people have more access to technologies than African American. 2.8 Relevant content: One of the reasons why some people do not use internet technologies is because the content is not relevant and interesting to them. This may apply to specific groups such as elderly or women but more significantly to cultural or ethnic groups (Cullen 2001; Salinas 2003) <sup>[9]</sup>

### Indian Scenario

As far as India is concerned the following factors can be considered barrier to the digital divide:

**1. Low Literacy Rate:** As per 2001 Population Census of India, the Literacy rate of India has shown as improvement at 65.38%. It consists of male literacy rate 75.96% and female literacy rate is 54.28%. Kerala with 90.86% literacy rate is the top state in India (India Online 2011) <sup>[2]</sup>. Even though it seems that the literacy rate is going upwards but when it comes to urban and rural areas there is a difference in the literacy rate which in turn creates a hurdle for digital divide

**2. Education System:** One of the biggest challenges which face Indian education is the number of dropouts at the undergraduate level. Approximately 23 million children per year take up primary education but only about 15 million children per year take up secondary education. This figure

gets drastically reduced at the undergraduate level to only about 2.3 million students per year (Yajnik 2005). In order to overcome the Asia Pacific Journal of Library and Information Science. Vol.1, No.1, January-June 2011 61 digital divide it is necessary that the information technology aspect should be introduced to the students right from their school level and the need for the same is been identified by the Indian government recently. The government has introduced the Information technology in the syllabus right from 1st standard so that the students can have an access to the technology and will come to know various strategies of searching the Internet

**3. Language:** The 1991 Census had 10,400 raw returns and they were rationalized into 1576 mother tongues. They are further rationalized into 216 mother tongues, and grouped under 114 languages (Mallikarjun, B 2004) <sup>[5]</sup>. For Indians who speak no (or little) English, the barriers to the Information Age are almost inseparable. All widely used operating systems require some knowledge of English or one of the 'Northern' languages. Thus, in practice, unless Indians know English, which most Indians do not, no matter how wealthy, brilliant, educated, prosperous or motivated they may be, computer use and Internet access are effectively out of question (Keniston 2002) <sup>[3]</sup>.

**Initiatives by government in Bridging the Digital Divide**  
**Kisan Call centre:** The Department of Agriculture & Cooperation (DAC), Ministry of Agriculture, Govt. of India launched Kisan Call Centers on January 21, 2004 across the country to deliver extension services to the farming community. The purpose of these call centers is to respond to issues raised by farmers, instantly, in the local language. There are call centers for every state which are expected to handle traffic from any part of the country. Queries related to agriculture and allied sectors are being addressed through these call centers. Just by making a single call the farmer reaches an agriculture graduate or expert who would be able to respond to his queries and problems instantly. In case the respondent at the Level-I is not able to satisfy the farmer, the call can be taken on a conference to an expert at Level-II sitting in a specified place in the State in an institution for giving advice. In the event where the farmer is not fully satisfied, his problems would be recorded, solved at Level-III at the highest level at the Nodal centre and he will get further advice through post or by visit of extension workers. The services would be available round the clock. The functioning of the Levels I, II & III are mentioned in the forthcoming specific paras. While during the working hours there would be immediate response whereas beyond working hours and in holidays, the call would be recorded and the queries are answered by post. This is a wonderful effort made by the Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India to bridge the gap between the actual information resource and the user by using the phone.

**Life Line India:** BT approached One World – a charitable organization working to promote human rights and sustainable development across the globe – to explore ideas for a telephone based information service to enable farmers to record a question and, soon after, retrieve a recorded reply. BT engaged with Cisco to co-sponsor the initiative. Life Lines India was launched in November 2006. The solution comprises a Cisco Unified Messaging platform

incorporating Interactive Voice Response functionality, integrated with a Customer Relationship Management application and information database provided by BT. Cisco and BT also jointly sponsor One World who manage and operate the service.

**Bhoomi Project:** The Bhoomi Project of Karnataka state covers 6.7 million farmers and holds millions of records of land ownership. The project has earned the goodwill of any people and also international funding agencies. This project has reduced the delays involved in interacting with the bureaucratic hierarchy of the state revenue department. Bhoomi centres are located all over the state. Any land record can be reviewed through a touch screen at these kiosks; the project can also be used as a databank for various projects of public and private sector organizations.

**Gyandoot Project:** Gyandoot is an intranet in Dhar district connecting rural cybercafes catering to the everyday needs of the masses. This web site of GYANDOOT is an extension of Gyandoot intranet, for giving global access. Gyandoot is the first ever project in India for a rural information network in the Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh which has the highest percentage of tribes and dense forest. Every village has a computer centre or “soochnalayas” at prominent market places or major roads. People can easily log in and complain or request information on crops, forest fields, water resources, etc. of the district. Twenty-one village Panchayats in the District have been connected with computers or information centers; several private sector information centres called “Soochnalays” have also been opened. One such popular centre is in “Manwar Agriculture Mandi,” where the latest crop prices are made available to the farmers. The land records of a few tehsils of district Dhar are also available on these computers. Also, Internet connections have been provided to get global information by linking to the World Wide Web. The government of Madhya Pradesh is attempting to make Gyandoot Project a great success by extending it to other districts. The state is in the process of starting 7,800 IT kiosks with the help of the private sector. To train common people to be computer literate, 7,500 “Jan Shiksha” public instruction centres have also been identified, and policy is being formulated to bring IT to the common people’s need and benefit. Efforts are also being made by the government to involve public libraries in this project.

Now, in the particular case study for digital divide in the targeted area (Meerut) is to be conducted by means of asking several questions from people in form of questionnaire to achieve the objectives of this research. We can also to judge all the parallel parameters of the study.

In this era of advanced technology the entire world has shrieked into a mole. Anything is just a click away. Analog is more an alien term in this digitalized world. The binary has more relevance in this tech era. But still there is a section on this land where the digital ambience is nil. This demarcation between these two phases of the society one which is digitalized and one which is not is broadly referred as Digital Divide.

The Digital Divide or the digital split is a social issue referring to the differing amount of information between those who have access to the Internet and those who don’t have access. The term had become popular among concerned parties, such as scholars, policy makers, and

advocacy groups, in the late 1990s.

Broadly speaking, the difference is not necessarily determined by the access to the Internet when it comes to digitalization, but by access to ICT (Information and Communications Technologies) and to Media that the different segments of society can use. With regards to the Internet, the access is only one aspect, other factors such as the quality of connection and related services should be considered. Today the most discussed issue is the availability of the access at an affordable cost and quality.

The problem is often discussed in an international context, indicating certain countries are far more equipped than other developing countries to exploit the benefits from the rapidly expanding Internet. Here is the latest State of the Internet Report from Akamai, showing average and maximum connection speeds, Internet Penetration and Broadband adaption, Mobile usage

The digital divide is not indeed a clear single gap which divides a society into two groups. Researchers report that disadvantage can take such forms as lower-performance computers, lower-quality or high price connections (i.e. narrowband or dialup connection), difficulty of obtaining technical assistance, and lower access to subscription-based contents.

#### Why digital divide exists?

While there is no fixed answer to the question “Why digital divide exists?” answer of why digital divide exists is complex, as it depends on several factors, and many of which cuts across the globe. On the other hand some issues are very specific to individual country, region or state. However, major factors which is major attributes to digital divide includes following issues. The internet is expanding very quickly, and not all countries-especially developing countries are

- Able to keep up with the constant changes. Most of the developing countries have low Internet penetration, leading to denial of access to many web based information and latest technology. Digital divide does not just mean that someone doesn’t have technology; it can also mean that there is simply a difference in technology. Other parts of the world do not have the same high-quality computers, fast internet, technical assistance, or simply the same telephone services. Another reason of digital divide is economic inequality.
- The digital divide comes from slow diffusion of new technologies to selective sections in society or countries. Primarily, wealthier peoples and countries carry out these experiments with new technologies because they have disposable income. When desired results are achieved it benefits these countries or peoples. Initially, such newly adopted technologies remained expensive and beyond the reach of many countries and financially poor. It takes some time before the benefits percolate down the society. Such "divides" have occurred with every major technology including ICT application, information access, product development, industrial development, economic growth, etc. But over time, these divides closes considerably as the technology becomes less expensive and more tested.
- One of the reasons of digital divide is social mobility. Even if there is enough diffusion of technology and access to information and knowledge, not all people can

afford to reach to the knowledge hub. For example, not all kids are getting as much technical education as others because lower socio-economic areas cannot afford to provide schools with bundles of computers. For this reason, kids are being separated and not receiving the same chance as others to be as successful. One of the important criteria of digital divide is language barrier.

- Most of the contents in the web is either written in English or other foreign language, which Indian are not well versed. As a result getting benefit out of these contents is not possible. There are other reasons for evolution of digital divide as well. Some of such issues will be discussed in the types of digital divide section.

### Types of digital divide

Information Age has so far touched only a tiny minority of the world's population. If we define household access to the World Wide Web as a criterion for joining the Information Age, less than 10% of the world's population had gained access by the year 2010. The question is how and whether the Information Age can improve the condition of life for the other 90%. The "digital divide" is widely regarded as a unitary phenomenon. In broader sense digital divide is the separation between the rich and powerful who are part of the Information Age and the poor and powerless those are not.

There are at least three major divides

- A global divide between the developed and undeveloped worlds
- A social divide between the information rich and the information poor
- A democratic divide between those who do and those who do not use the new technologies to further political participation Thus digital divide can be defined as economic, social or cultural deprivation generated by missing ICT access and skills.

### Access Divide

The first divide is that which exists within every nation, industrialized or developing, between those who have access to Internet and who have not. Access to Internet is a primary measure of digital divide as due to economic, social, remoteness or infrastructure issues people can't take benefit of the latest technologies. Countries in North America, Europe and Australia have large penetration of Internet which means these countries are reaping maximum benefits of the latest web based technologies. Whereas countries in Africa and Asia are still lagging behind, thus creating a huge digital divide. Further to this when we come to details of whom all are using Internet in these countries, it is the rich urban population have access to Internet. However, as the time passed, the figure is changing rapidly throughout the globe.

### Physical disability divide

When only a limited % of population is using web related benefits, private, government and philanthropic organizations have come forward to provide access to Internet (eg. India) where people can come and access to Internet, as household connection to Internet in India as well as in other developing countries, are still in their infancy. In such case, people who are disabled and can't move to where connectivity infrastructures are placed are worst sufferer.

### Linguistic and cultural divide

Another type of digital divide is linguistic and cultural divide. In many nations this divide separates those who speak English from others. The disparity is quite clear when data are analyzed from urban, rural and tribal populations in any country. Besides, there are large differences in access to ICTs among different ethnic and cultural groups where they have more access to ICTs. These cultural disparities are far more complex in Indian context, where these issues are compounded by linguistic issues. In India less than 10% of the population speaks fluent English while the rest (more than 900 million Indians and about 1.2 billion South Asians) speak other national languages. Since most of the Web sites in the world are in English and other foreign languages (Figure 2), less than 10% of the Indian population can read and understand such online content. Thus, in practice, no matter how wealthy, brilliant, educated, prosperous or motivated they may be, computer use and Internet access are effectively receive a lower priority in India particularly in rural population. However, the scene is changing. Indian government, academic institutes and some private organizations have already digitized their vernacular language contents and have put them onto the Internet for wider access. Further government policy of providing Hindi language a priority have witnessed lots of contents are recently being uploaded onto Internet

### Economic Divide

The 1999 United Nations Report on Human Development highlighted growing digital gap between the rich and the poor nations. The widening gap between the information-rich nations of the North and the information-poor nations of the South is another digital divide at global level. At one extreme are the United States and the countries like Sweden, Germany, Finland, Japan, where household telephone connectivity is well over 90%, computer saturation is over 70%; at the other extreme lies most of Africa, most of South America, Asia, China, Indonesia, and so on -- the 80% of the world where telephone connectivity is 3% or less (less than 30 million/1 billion in India), home computer ownership is 1 - 2% and Internet connectivity less than half of that. This divide exists within the social groups of same country as well. From the following Figure 3, it is clear from the data for United States that as the income increases, more households have got access to computer and Internet connectivity in due course. Low income population has put basic needs as higher priority, leading to widening of digital divide within the country. The same trend is available from India as well.

### Education Divide

Education helps a person to enhance one's knowledge. As people become knowledgeable, it is possible for them to venture into other innovative activities leading to social and economic growth of individual as well as for the country. Access to education therefore, takes a priority among human basic needs. However, literacy rate in India like developing countries are still abysmal. Distinctly, educated and non-educated people create a divide in the society where majority of the power is enjoyed by the educated lot. Education based digital divide is created in India due to lack of access to education, lack of financial power, remote location, transportation, safety issues of women and many more. The above figure 2 also depicted the same as educated have more Internet access in United States. The trend is

being followed everywhere. Further to this socio economic status and financial power also play a key role in education digital divide. For examples, in most of the urban (city school) students are taught on how to use computers and frequently use Internet. Also they use Internet at home due to better connectivity and economic privileges. On the other hand rural students hardly have any access to computers and Internet. Hence a divide is being created at the beginning of the study. These students when take up higher studies are likely to access more relevant and useful web contents more easily, resulting into better results and good prospects in life. As we go up in the ladder in the education process, education based digital divide plays havoc among the students, professionals and other parts of the society. Access to new technologies for advanced study, training etc requires certain level of knowledge and digital accessibility. Besides, classroom based teaching modern education system has adopted several other technological means for teaching. With the emergence of broadband networks, videoconferencing, blackboard, educational television etc. are exploring the delivery of interactive contents and courseware over the Web. This poses the challenge of adopting a new paradigm for learning without abandoning the wealth of rich educational resources previously developed.

**Electricity Divide**

In many developing countries including India, a substantial percentage of population do not have access to electricity as they were not connected to grid and depends largely on decentralized power generation. This means people can't have access to computers, Internet, telecommunication facilities and many more. For example, many of Indian villages don't have electricity till date, leaving student little chance of study during evening. In this case, more one use energy (electricity), it is more chance that s/he will study more using computers and other latest technologies. In recent years, the per capita electricity consumption in India remains around 363 kW, far below 4959 kW in Hong Kong (one of the region's technology powerhouses), 5421 kW in Britain and 11,822 kW in the USA. It shows why India has huge digital divide compare to other developed nations.

**Implications of Digital Divide**

The digital divide has severe and far reaching adverse implications on the society, if not addressed properly. Several types of divide have been mentioned in the previous section highlights that digital divide can create a line of differentiation between the digitally connected and non-digital people. Some of the adverse implications on the people and on the society are listed below:

1. Economic development of the country at various levels
2. Income disparity among the society
3. Access to knowledge through Internet is severely impacted as most of the web contents are not written in vernacular languages which people understand
4. Negative impact on basic literacy rate
5. Advanced literacy level is severely affected
6. Advanced medical treatment
7. Job insecurity among people who are not digitally compliant
8. Personality development issues among younger generation and subsequent humiliation and among all class of people in the society

In essence, several factors that have long lasting implications due to digital divide in every aspect of our modern society operations include:

**Computer literacy:** Those who can operate computers stand a better chance than those who cannot, though literate and otherwise competent, to get even a secretarial job let alone an administrative one.

**Use of electronic data interchange (EDI):** Business houses may lose orders in absence of competency in e-commerce. For example, an export company from a country that cannot use e-commerce over the Internet may lose a large export order to another company from a different country that has collected more information through the Internet and submitted quotations through EDI.

**Tech savvy operations:** Those who know how to operate automated teller machine can draw money faster and those who cannot operate need to spend more time at manual counters.

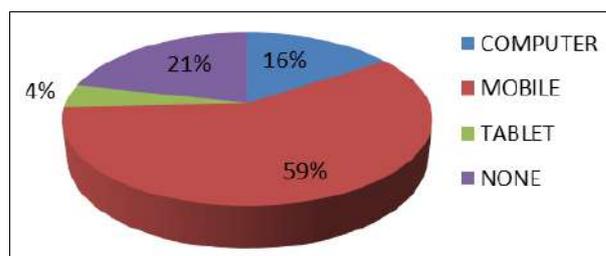
**Use of information:** The cruelest blow is inflicted because of urban-rural digital divide. As an example, advanced medical treatment is still a deterrent to many of the rural population.

**Working knowledge of English:** Internet hosts more than 80% of the Web pages in English though only 54% of the Internet users are amongst English-speaking people. In India and other developing countries, the disparity is much wider, resulting in a language divid

**Analysis And Interpretation Of Data**

**A survey among 70 people from various locations of Meerut was conducted on digital divide and following results were inferred**

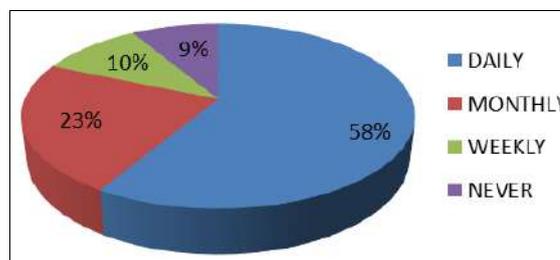
1. When people were asked about owning any digital device. Following results were observed.



**Fig 1: Devices Used**

**Conclusion:** Majority of people use mobile phones to stay connected digitally whereas few opt for using computers and tablets for the same. But on the other hand around 21% of the people stay without owning or having access to any digital device.

2. When people were asked about the frequency of use of internet then the following results were observed.



**Fig 2: Frequency of Use**

**Conclusion:** A majority of people were engaged with

internet on daily basis whereas there are a significant number of people who use internet once a month. And around 10% people use or have access to internet weekly and still 8% of mass remain untouched with internet.

3. When people who didn't have access to internet about the reason for not using the same then the reasons found were –

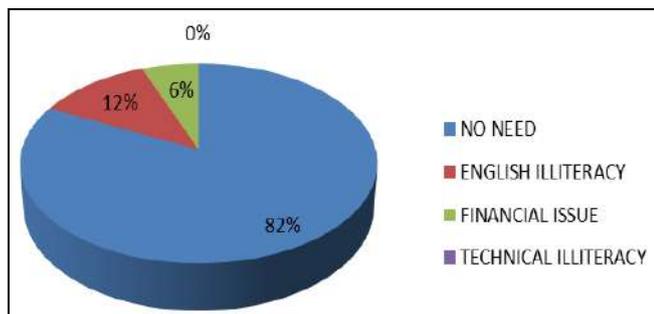


Fig 3: Reason for no internet access

**Conclusion:** A majority of people who don't need internet said that they don't need internet for any purpose hence they don't have access to it. Whereas few people are unable to use internet because of English illiteracy or linguistic barrier in between.

4. When people were asked about the main motive or purpose of use of internet then people answers their respective reasons as follows-

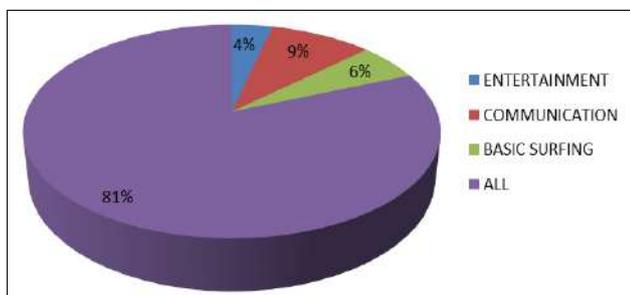


Fig 4: Purpose of Use of Internet

**Conclusion:** Most of the people use internet for all basic uses including entertainment, communication and surfing whereas few people are restricted with narrow use of internet.

5. When people were asked about the types of problems they usually face while working with internet. Then the result observed was-

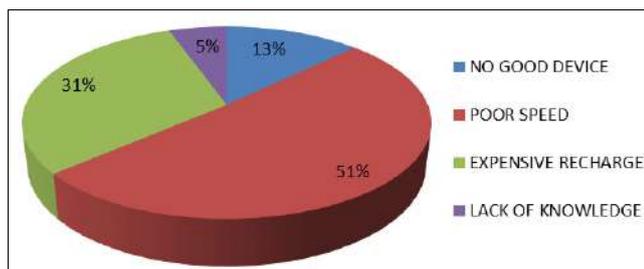


Fig 5: Problems

**Conclusion:** The most severe problem which people face is the issue of internet speed. Apart from that a major part feels that the internet tariffs are too expensive to use. Also, people lack good device to access internet as a result their

internet connectivity session or experience is poor. There are also few people who lack deep knowledge about internet so, they are unable to use internet properly.

6. When people were asked about the place or site where they find access to internet they said –

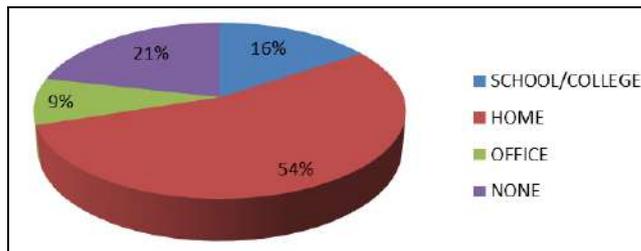


Fig 6: Place of Use Internet

**Conclusion:** Majority of people use internet at their home whereas 18% of people use internet in their school/colleges. Around 10% of people use internet in their office and still 21% of the people remain untouched with internet.

7. When a very basic question – “What is Google?” was asked as apart to review the general awareness of the people then the result which was found was –

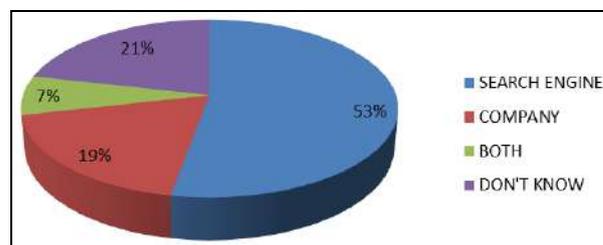


Fig 7: About-Google

**Conclusion:** A majority of people have a clear idea about what is the main purpose of Google and are actively aware about the internet. But still there are about 21% people who either don't know or are in dilemma that what Google actually is.

8. When people were asked about the impact which internet leaves on us then there were mixed reactions to be seen-?

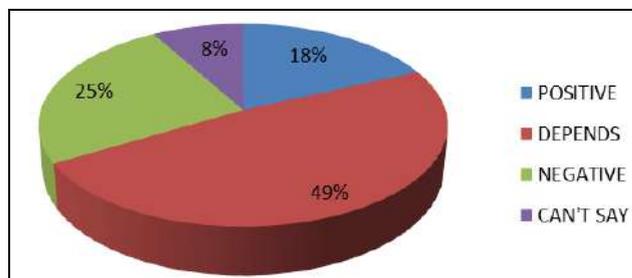


Fig 8: Impact of Internet

**Conclusion:** Almost half (49%) of people feel that the impact of internet is solely determined by the way you use it whereas 25% of people feel that internet leaves a negative impact on people and is addictive. Whereas there are also around 18% of the people who admit that it leaves a positive impact. While rest of the people feel that nothing can determined.

9. When the secondary use of internet was asked. Following observations were seen-

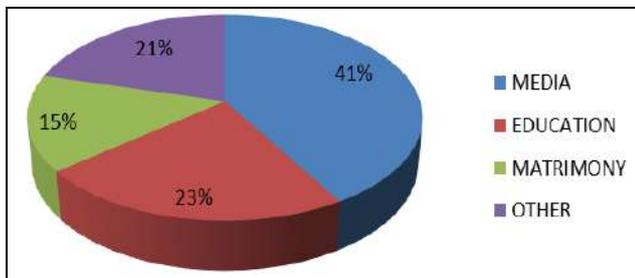


Fig 9: Secondary Use of Internet

**Conclusion:** The most extensive secondary use of the internet is for downloading media followed by access to educational content. Whereas around 15% of the people use internet for matrimonial purposes. And rest 21% for miscellaneous use.

10. When people were asked about their trust and use of internet for monetary transactions following results were inferred-

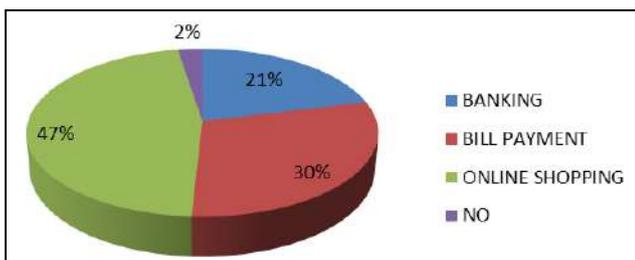


Fig 10: Monetary Use

**Conclusion:** Maximum people use internet for online shopping followed by online bill payment. Rest 21% use it for Net banking and remaining 2% people don't find it credible for monetary use.

11. When people were asked about their primary use of internet then their responses were as follows-

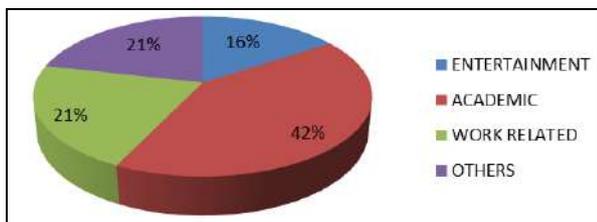


Fig 11: Primary Use

**Conclusion:** Most of the people use internet for academic purpose or for attaining any kind of knowledge or information. Whereas almost equal number of people use internet for the very purpose of entertainment and for work. While 16% of people use internet for several other reasons.

12. For the availability of communal internet access centers there are internet café. So, to know about their frequency of visit in such centers –

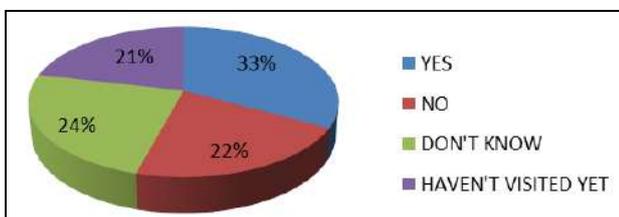


Fig 12: Visit to internet cafe

**Conclusion:** Majority of people have either not visited the internet café or they don't have idea of their existence or location. But around 33% of people have visited such centers for availing the facility of internet. availing the facility of internet.

13. When people were asked about the methods to make internet access much more hand and easy if its available in the language of choice then following results and suggestions were observed-

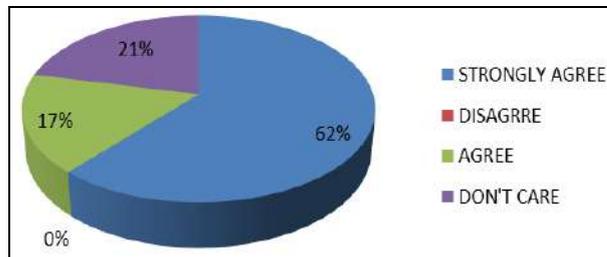


Fig 13: Ease on Access in Own Language

**Conclusion:** Majority of people believe that language plays a very important role in having access to internet hence, they strongly feel that language of choice would increase the ease of internet access still those people who don't avail internet facilitates seem to be intolerant towards this.

14. When people were asked to comment on possible ways to enhance the possibilities of mass adoption of internet by the people. Then following results were observed-

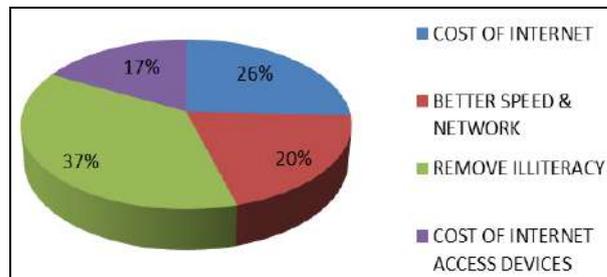


Fig 14: Mass Adoption of Internet

**Conclusion:** People who aren't using internet are basically all those people who don't have a clear idea about the way to have access to it. So, with around 37% opinion people feel that removing illiteracy can enhance the possibilities of mass adoption of internet access. Whereas a significant number of people feel that enhancing the speed and network along with decrease in internet tariff and access device4s price can assist the mass adoption of internet.

15. When people were asked about digitalization and is actually uniting people or increasing the gap(digital divide), then following results were seen-

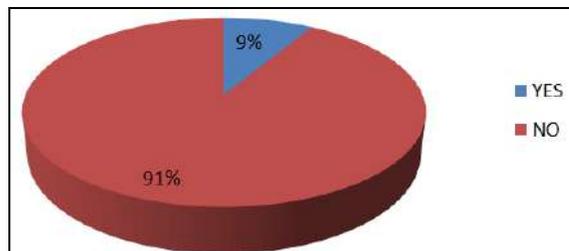


Fig 15: Digitalization Creating A Gap Or Irradicating Gap  
**Conclusion:** Majority of people feel that digitalization has

helped in filling up the gap and increased the number of people who have access to internet. Whereas only 6% of the people feel that it has created a gap among the mass.

### Conclusion

According to the above study we came to know the various positive and negative impacts of Dimensions of Digital Divide – a critical analysis. Despite the promises of a digital public sphere divides persist across the Internet, SNSs, and digital activities. Yet, it was promising to see that once on either SNS, users generally engaged in similar activities. However, they did not engage in these activities with those not part of their own socio demographic profile, reducing opportunities for bridging social capital. Nonetheless, our more inclusive conceptualization of CE allows for broader thinking about the potential of digital spaces as opportunity providers. Finally, despite trust in institutions only having a minor role in distinguishing non-users from users and for some activities, extending consideration for the broader political environment in which individuals exists is an important step in understanding more subtle digital divides. It is very important to overcome these problems. Paying attention to their academic progress and addressing any issues will go a long way towards keeping the negative aspects of digital divide from influencing others. Social Networking Sites are fast emerging as powerful and unparalleled tools to share information, shape opinions, connect people across domains and cultures, bring participation, and above all to communicate as never before. This is just the beginning. Social Networking Sites are still at a very nascent stage and communities across the world are just beginning to understand the potential of this medium to impact discourse and communication. Digital Divide viewed benefits, positive and negative impacts of social networking sites and how the social networking sites influence in Urban Areas and Rural Areas both. Social Networking Sites enable youth to raise their voice against social issues and share or upload information for the welfare of the society.

Although this survey is restricted only to 70 respondents from such areas in Meerut City, the data obtained provide some insights into how people in survey area have been using the social media for both formal and informal types of learning and communication. It is hoped that the findings described here will help to build a foundation for future investigations about the rise in digital divide.

Since Social Networking Sites can provide all the ways and means to develop personal and social aspects, the young people have to explore the potentialities of these sites. Even though it creates a few negative impacts on youth, we cannot think of a world without these sites today. So, corrective and preventive measures should be taken towards these negative effects and the young people should be well educated and must have proper awareness regarding such problems of Social Networking Sites. As the technology is growing the social media has become the routine for each and every person, peoples are seen addicted with these technology every day and theses technology also useless for illiterate person because they don't even know how to use these technologies. The new media come with glaring benefits in today's information age albeit with a negative consequence of polarizing inhabitants of the universe into two unequal groups namely, the digital privileged and the digital underprivileged classes. In the era of mass media and

society, scholars were seriously concerned about the gap in the knowledge between the information rich and the information poor. What they did not realize at the time was that knowledge gap is a precursor to digital divide which is a deeper and wider gulf between individuals and nations who can acquire and use the internet or new media and those who cannot. Though the gap seems difficult if not impossible to close or level, it can albeit be bridged if those at the disadvantaged end of the divide take pragmatic steps to do so.

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