Understanding Digital Equity And Its Aspects

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Abstract:

This paper focuses on the conceptual meaning of digital equity, the various dimensions of digital equity along with their interconnections. The present state of digital equity can be analysed for the further improvement in order to regenerate social justice, equality and digital inclusion for all.

Keywords: Digital Equity, Digital Divide, Information Access

Introduction:

The concept of digital equity is rooted in the broader idea of fairness and equal access to opportunities and resources. The term 'Digital Equity'(DE) has gained prominence in modern societies as technology becomes more widespread. It is used to address inequalities in access to and proficiency with digital technologies, representing a significant objective of social justice.

Digital Equity (DE) has gained a major focus in academic circles, particularly examining its evolution, collaborative networks, popular topics, and education research centres, and forecasting the future of digital equity research. It serves as a valuable resource for future researchers.

Literature Review:

Digital Equity is defined as a situation where everybody at an individual level as well as society at large including all its groups possess all capabilities required to participate fully through using information technology. It's very important for taking part in community activities, over all development, continuing to learn, and getting necessary help and services.

Aguilar, S. J. (2020) discussed the period of covid-19 pandemic when certain communities have not well equipped with technology access. There is need to the technology access for the students to achieve educational goals.

Pittman et al., (2008) studies have shown that basic access to information technologies has to enter or to inculcate in educational systems and communities

within poorer societies for the realisation of digital equity.

Resta, P. et.al., (2018) discussed the digital equity for social and educational aspects. Digital hardware and software access are beneficial to knowledge society.

Frank, J., et.al., (2021) discussed the how digital entree is still the origin of approachability as well as digital equity and digital inclusion. The digital divide affects certain groups more than others, even in higher education.

Togam, M., et.al., (2022) author suggested that law librarians acquire ICT literacy skills, emphasizing the need for organized workshops to enhance their proficiency. This initiative aims to facilitate seamless access to technology, ultimately overcoming challenges in ICT adoption and utilization.

Conceptual Framework:

1. **Digital Equity:**

Digital equity is a condition in which all individuals and communities have the information technology capacity needed for full participation in our society, democracy and economy. (NDIA, Definitions)

2. **Digital Inclusion (DI):**

According to the National Digital Inclusion Alliance, "digital inclusion refers to the activities necessary to ensure that all individuals and communities…have access to and use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)" (NDIA, Definitions)

3. **Digital Equity for Social Inclusion:**

The push for digital equity is driven by the anticipated rise in the social and economic marginalization of individuals and entire populations, which emphasizes the need for basic literacy to participate in the global knowledge-based society. (NDIA, Definitions)

4. **Digital Divide:**

The difference in access to technology in the context of the digital divide among different demographic groups includes how and when it is accessed.

The concept *digital divide* is usually defined as the gap between people who do and do not have access to forms of information and communication technology. These forms are primarily computers and the Internet. (Van Dijk, J. a. G. M. 2017)

Dimensions of Digital Equity:

1. **Access:**

It focuses on providing access to digital tools via the internet and ensuring the availability of physical infrastructure like computers, internet connectivity, and software to everyone regardless of the barriers like geographical location

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and socioeconomic status of people living in remote areas. (Resta, P. et.al., 2018)

2. **Use:**

The focus of digital equity is not only on the availability or accession of digital tools but also on the effective use of the available ICT resources. Apart from the digital access digital equity focuses on the empowerment of individuals through imbibing essential skills and providing knowledge about handling the digital tools effectively.

3. **Quality:**

The quality of digital accession and availability of physical resources to individuals and communities has been the major concern of digital equity.

4. **Relevance:**

The applicability of digital technologies varies from region to region hence its benefits also vary from individual to individual.

Conclusion:

All individuals and communities have the capacity for Digital equity. They have required resources for entire participation in present education system, economy and society. Institutions of higher education must develop plans to ensure that everyone has equal access to technology and online learning, thereby achieving digital equity.

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