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Digital Divide: Inequality Access of Sri Lankan Society to Digital Media

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The ʹDigital Divideʹ exists between all countries according to Pippa Noris and Manual Castells. The Digital Divide creates a gap among peoples. The present world has become a global village. Therefore, developing countries tend to face many problems linked to digital media. In this study, my purpose is to identify the issues that arise due to the divide in social empowerment. Development can be defined as physical development and spiritual development. Not all countries in the world have reached their development goals. Developing countries have to compete with developed countries in their efforts to reach the global village. The digital divide is one of the main problems they face in this effort. By 2015, of the worldʹs 7.2 billion people, only 3.366 billion people are connected through the internet, according to internet world statistics. The overall computer literacy in Sri Lanka stood at 25.1% in 2014, and has shown an increase of 5% points from 2009 to 2014 according to the Department of Census and Statistics. It is not a sufficient value to reach the standard of the global village.

The focus of the study are the factors that contribute to the digital divide that exists in Sri Lanka and the challenges of reaching the standards of the global village. My hypothesis is that while the digital divide empowers people, and that its lack in developing countries contributes to a disempowerment of its people. Therefore, The Digital Divide should be overcome in societies by removing limitations to access the digital media in developing countries. The main method of data collection in this survey is questionnaires; data was obtained from university students.

My main conclusion in this study is that developing countries face many issues related to the digital divide in digital media, such as the lack of material access, the lack of skill access, the lack of usage access, and the lack of mental access. The inequality in digital media affects to the disempowerment of people in developing countries.

Key words⠆ Digital Media, Digital Divide, Empowerment, Inequality access

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