



DIGITAL INEQUALITY

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Abstract: *The article examines the problem of digital inequality as one of the key challenges of modern society. The author analyzes the causes and forms of the digital divide among various social groups, as well as possible ways to overcome it. Special attention is paid to the accessibility of digital technologies in education and their impact on the quality of learning.*

Keywords: *digitalization, education, technology, access, Internet, social inequality.*

Main Part

Modern society is rapidly developing under the influence of digital transformation. Digital technologies have penetrated all areas of life — from the economy to education — changing the ways people communicate, access information, and work. However, along with these new opportunities comes a new form of social inequality — digital inequality, which manifests itself in the differences in access to information and communication technologies.

The Concept of Digital Inequality

Digital inequality refers to the disparity between those who have access to modern digital technologies and possess the skills to use them effectively, and those who are deprived of such access. It includes not only the physical availability of devices and the Internet, but also the level of digital literacy and the ability to use online resources for learning and professional development.

Causes of Digital Inequality

The main causes of digital inequality include:

1. Economic factors. Income level directly affects the ability to purchase digital devices and pay for Internet services.
2. Geographical differences. Rural and remote areas often lack adequate communication infrastructure.
3. Age and educational barriers. Elderly people and individuals with low levels of education often face difficulties mastering new technologies.
4. Social and linguistic barriers. A lack of content in native languages and complex interfaces may limit user participation.

Digital Inequality in Education

The problem is especially evident in the education system. During the COVID-19 pandemic, millions of students faced the challenges of distance learning, which revealed deep differences in technical access and digital competence.

Students from well-off families had access to laptops, stable Internet, and online courses, while those from low-income families often could not fully participate in the learning process.



Thus, digital inequality contributes to the deepening of the social divide, influencing both the quality of education and future employment opportunities.

Ways to Overcome Digital Inequality

To reduce digital inequality, it is necessary to:

- develop digital infrastructure in all regions;
- equip schools and universities with modern technical resources;
- improve digital literacy through national programs and public courses;
- support low-income families in acquiring digital devices;
- create accessible online content in various languages.

Digital equality should become a priority of public policy since only equal access to technologies can ensure a fair and sustainable society.

Conclusion

Digital inequality is one of the most significant challenges of the modern era. It affects the economy, education, and social relations, forming new boundaries of exclusion. Overcoming this phenomenon requires a comprehensive approach that includes governmental, educational, and social measures. Only through such efforts can equal opportunities be provided for all citizens in the digital future.

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