Digital Divide: Trends and Policy Measures in Republic of Korea (ROK)

Center for International Development (CID)

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Introduction

Digital divide and why does it matter

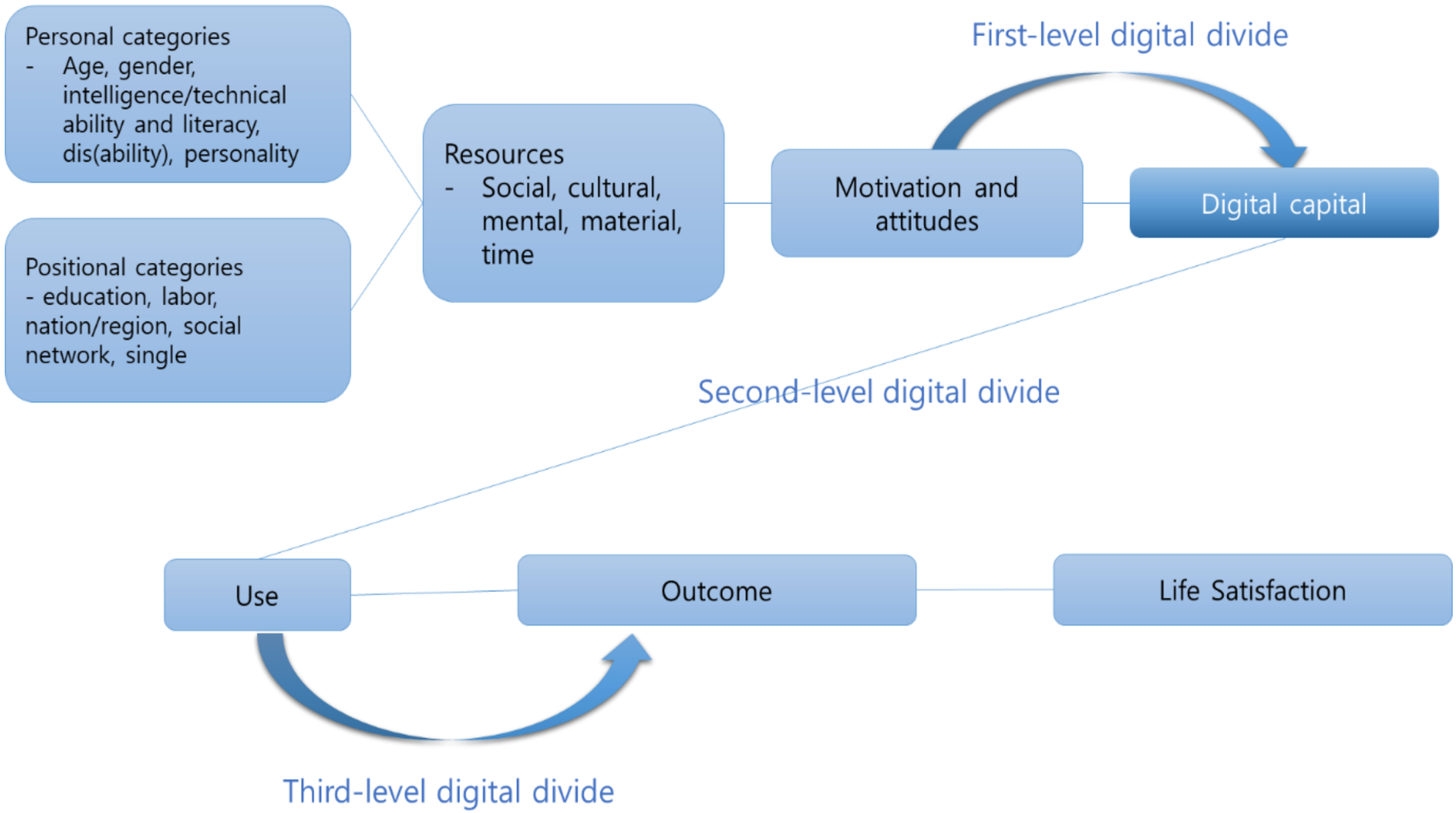
- Digital divide - the inequality between people who have access and use of digital technology and those who do not - has been emerged as a **social issue in the digitalization era**.

- Digital divide is not just technical problem which arose from the lack of infrastructure or connectivity, rather it is **a social issue which is affected by personal and positional environment (age, gender, region (urban/rural), education, etc.).**

- To address the digital divide problem in Asia and Pacific region, it is necessary to **identify the factors** affects to the digital inequality and the necessary policy implications.

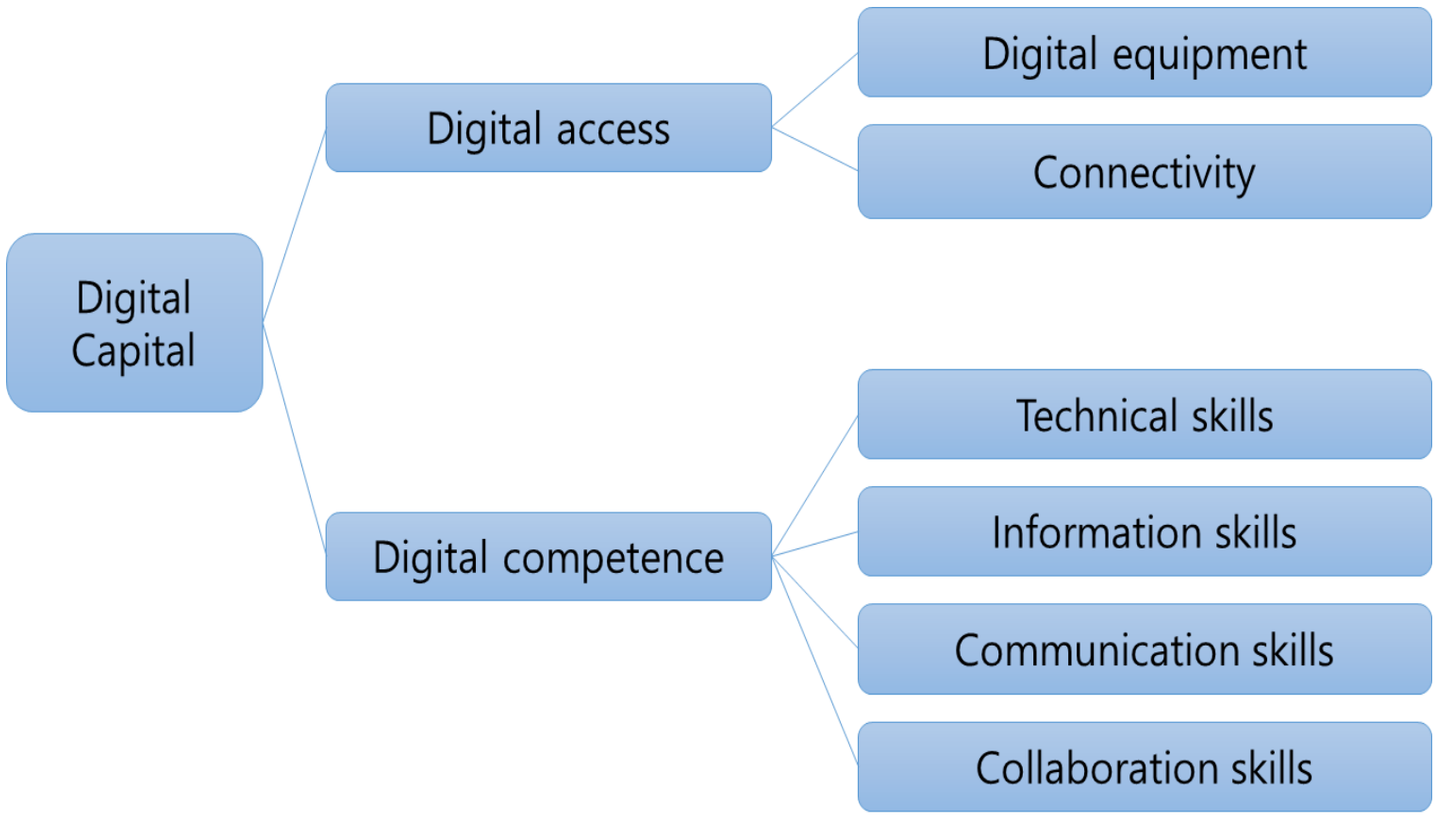
Understanding the Digital Divide

Digital divide framework



Understanding the Digital Divide

Digital capital framework – cross sectional study (year 2021)



Data and Descriptive Statistics from ROK case

#	Categories	Survey item
1	Technical skills	I can install/uninstall/upgrade programs on a PC and copy/delete/move/change files and folders
		I can install/uninstall/update apps on smart devices.
		I can use utility apps such as a calculator, scheduler (calendar), and address book on a smartphone.
		I can utilize smart devices that are synchronized with a smartphone, such as smartwatches (Galaxy Watch, Apple Watch), smart refrigerators, and Internet of Things (IoT) devices.
		I can use online payment systems (Naver Pay, Kakao Pay, etc.) to purchase items..
2	Information skills	I can distinguish reliable information from search results by comparing it with other sources.
		I can use reference materials or websites to discern misinformation (fake news).
		I can modify settings (such as filtering features) to block harmful information.
		I can find directions using navigation, online map services (Kakao Maps, Naver Maps, Google Maps, etc.) and access traffic information.
3	Communication skills	I can find and participate in online communities that align with my interests on the internet.
		I can engage in discussions about political and social issues or participate in activities such as signing petitions and making appeals.
		I can set the privacy settings when writing posts on social media or forums, determining the audience or visibility of the content.
		I know how to take temporary measures when there are instances of defamation or derogatory posts about me online.
		I know how to report when someone infringes upon my rights (such as defamation or copyright infringement) on portals or social media platforms.
4	Collaboration skills	I can collaborate with others on tasks or projects using online collaboration tools (such as Google Docs).
		I can create and share documents using smart office suites (such as Evernote, Google Docs, Naver Office, MS Office 365, etc.).
		I can host/participate in meetings using remote conferencing apps (such as Google Meet, Zoom, etc.) for virtual meetings.

Note: survey items are answered in five scales from very negative(1) to very positive(5)

Digital inequalities and digital capital: evidences from South Korea

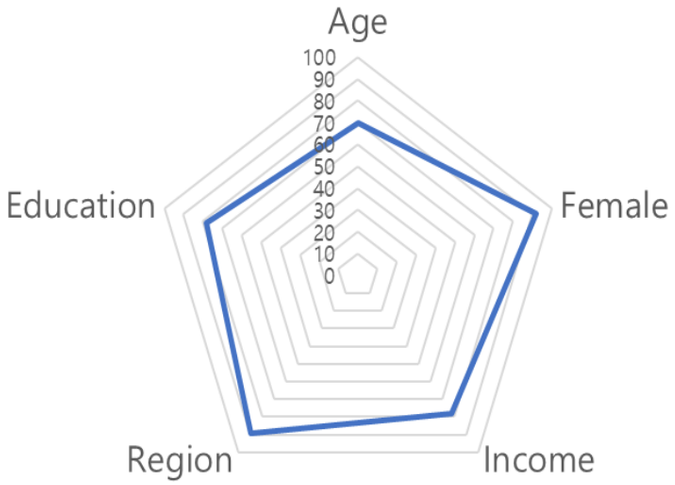
Data: Digital divide survey conducted by Korean government, National Information Society Agency (NIA) from year 2016 to 2021.

- For the 2021 survey, the number of observations are 7K for general public, around 2.2K for the disabled, the elderly, lower-income group, farmers and fishermen, and 0.7K for North Korea defectors and married immigrants.

Type	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
1. General	7,000	40.46	40.46
2. Farmers and Fishermen	2,200	12.72	53.18
3. Disabled	2,200	12.72	65.90
4. Low income	2,200	12.72	78.61
5. North Korea refugee	700	4.05	82.66
6. Married immigrant	700	4.05	86.71
7. Senior citizen	2,300	13.29	100.00
Total	17,300	100.00	

Data and Descriptive Statistics from ROK case

<Digital capital>



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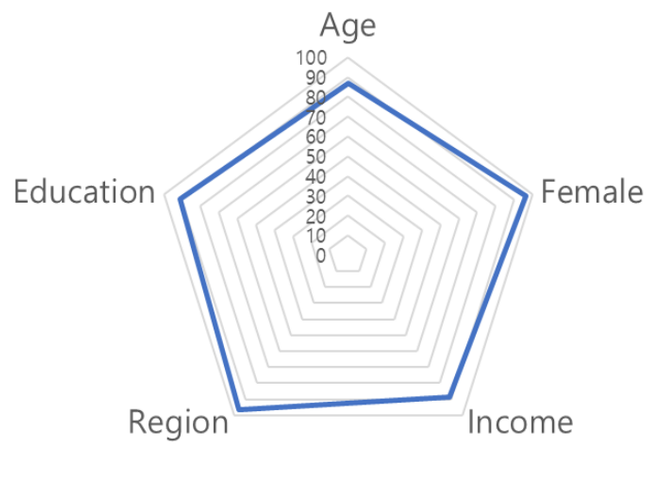
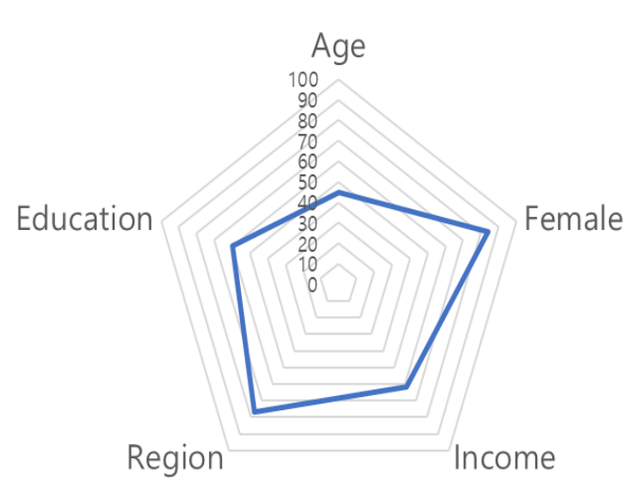


<Digital competence>



Summary

1. The ROK government's effort to prove national access to information and technology (IT) services increase digital access of senior citizens but there are still digital competence gap, and it is not converging with general population.

2. Personal and positional characteristics are correlated with the digital capital of senior citizens

- More focused and targeted approach to narrow Digital Divide considering aging population is needed.

Thank you