

Study on Gender Divide & Empowerment of Women through the use of ICT

K.Jayashree, Asst. Professor,
Dept. of Computer Science, TGASC ,
Puducherry.

INTRODUCTION

- ▶ Education is the most powerful force which can be used to change the world.
- ▶ Women empowerment has been a major agenda by the Govt. of India –
 - “Nari Shakti”
 - Decrease in female feticide rates.
 - Increased female enrollment in schools.
 - Celebration of International Women’s Day across the country.

Gender Divide

- ▶ Gender Divide a major concern in our country
- ▶ Right from birth the preferred gender is male.
- ▶ Priorities of choosing higher studies
- ▶ Choice of marriage
- ▶ Employment
- ▶ In almost every decision making stage of life, the gender divide is still an issue for the female where male gets a better liberty, choice and rights.

Recently Introduced Notable Schemes of the Government

- ▶ **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme**
 - Tackle gender bias,
 - Alarming decline in Child Sex Ratio.
- ▶ **Women Helpline Scheme**
 - Special initiative of Ministry of Women & Child Development.
 - To ensure the safety of women.
 - 24X7 service.

Recently Introduced Notable Schemes of the Government

- ▶ Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana
 - Special initiative of Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas – provide free LPG connections & financial help – BPL
- ▶ One Stop Centre Scheme
 - Full support to fight against injustice faced by women – violence /abuse from family members /work place /society.
- ▶ SWADHAR Greh Initiative
 - Scheme to help women affected by certain crisis by providing basic amenities like food, clothes & shelter, etc.

Recently Introduced Notable Schemes of the Government

▶ Ujjawala Scheme

- Scheme to provide special support for victims of women trafficking & sexual exploitation.
- Rehabilitation initiatives are provided for such victims.

▶ Mahila E-Haat

- Scheme of Ministry of Women and Child Development – Digital Platform for women entrepreneurs.
- Bilingual Website which facilitates to promote or showcase their products or business.

- ▶ All the above schemes give special thrust for the empowerment of women
- ▶ Aiming to mitigate the Gender Divide
- ▶ But in order to effectively bring about a change, the women requires empowerment to fully utilize the welfare schemes.
- ▶ Though the scheme give sufficient power to the women, “EMPOWERMENT” will be achieved when women learn, analyze, decide, move forward on their own
- ▶ Information and Communication Technology will help them to empower

Information & Communication Technology

- ▶ Objective – Using ICT to REACH the UNREACHED
- ▶ Initiative by Govt. with the mandates
 - Pro-poor
 - Pro-women
 - Pro-nature
- ▶ Knowledge Centers **may be** operated by women with minimal qualification.
- ▶ So they will have access to relevant information in a timely manner – will improve their life to a great extent.

ICT an Inner Look

- ▶ The use of ICT will benefit the Rural India in different ways :
 - Education
 - Employment
 - Agriculture & Animal Husbandry & Fisheries
 - Health care.....
- ▶ It will foster a sense of empowerment among women in the community.
- ▶ **Confidence will improve to the extent that they will not** depend on external agencies to get their things done.
- ▶ Though volunteers have minimal qualification they can work with ease in the ICT tools.

- ▶ Impart basic education through ICT.
- ▶ Rural students get an opportunity to expertise in ICT.
- ▶ ICT exposure – springboard for the rural women for their empowerment.
- ▶ FUTURE – ICT used for advancement in all sectors.
- ▶ ICT tools address the language as well as literacy related issues.
- ▶ User interfaces are:
 - Not much text based
 - More object & sign based
 - Mouse or touch screen based.
 - Voice based are equally getting popular.

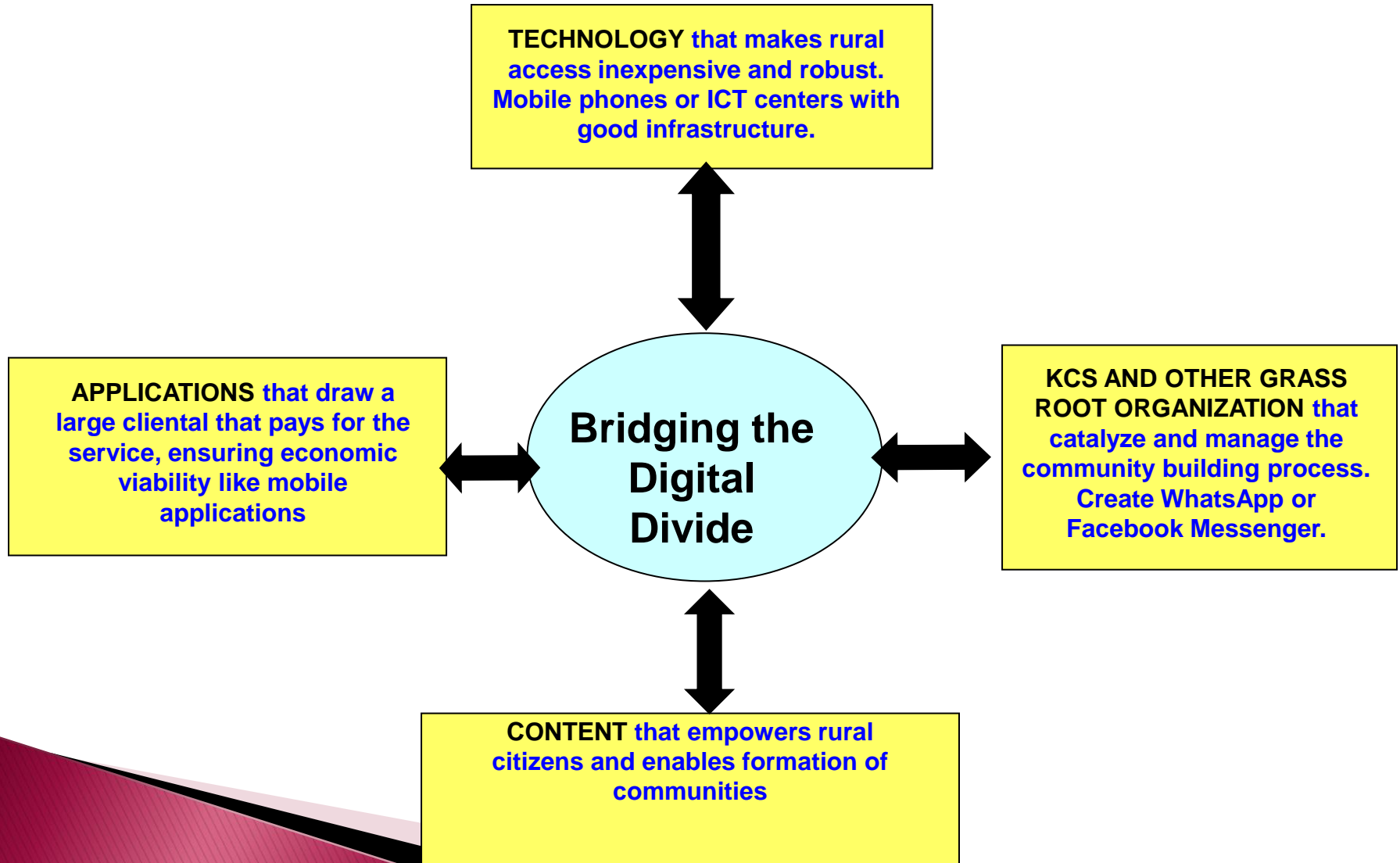
Suggestions for Future Plan

- ▶ Similar to National Literacy Mission around 1988 by the MHRD we can take the new initiative National Digital Literacy Mission in a full-fledged manner.
- ▶ Introduce ICT in adult education curriculum.
- ▶ So the concept of ICT will penetrate in small towns and villages under the rural development programs.

Suggestions for Future Plan

- ▶ Hindrances for acquiring knowledge through ICT:
 - Poor infrastructure in few area.
 - High deployment and maintenance costs of the ICT infrastructure
 - Inadequate content for e-Governance.
 - Lack of availability of individual systems and inadequate access for all.
- ▶ All the above can be addressed by govt. by implementing a suitable IT policy.

Suggestions



CONCLUSION

- ▶ Our requirement – provide a holistic approach to gender divide & women empowerment.
- ▶ Lacuna in the education system aggravates this scenario.
- ▶ Govt. should give serious thought–Insist the adaption of ICT at the grass root level.
- ▶ Access to technology is the main issue whether it is ICT or Mobile Technology.
- ▶ Mobile Technology has penetrated every nook and corner of the country, thanks to the mobile service providers.
- ▶ People quickly adapt Mobile Technology rather than computers Example: WhatsApp, SMS,.....
- ▶ Introducing Mobile Technology as a tool in the women empowerment schemes will surely be a good move.

CONCLUSION

- ▶ A paradigm shift from e-governance to m-governance.
- ▶ Lot of self help groups nowadays are expanding their operations in various farm related businesses.
- ▶ Latest trends in business operations – Online Banking, E-commerce, Online Trading.
- ▶ Integration of the ICT enabled services & awareness of these trends among the members of the rural women will benefit them to a great extent.

CONCLUSION

- ▶ Compare – Rural women Vs Urban counterpart – language used is technology is the main hindrance.
- ▶ Quickly adaption of new trends of technology for Rural Women – Local Language Interface.
- ▶ Examples of Simple Interfaces to overcome language barrier & adapt new technologies – “WhatsApp” and “Facebook Messenger”
- ▶ Task of Government – To address issues of Gender Divide & Women Empowerment – should intensify the plans on m-Governance.

By educating a man you educate
an individual , but by educating
a women you educate the
family.



THANK YOU