



# Digital Equity 101

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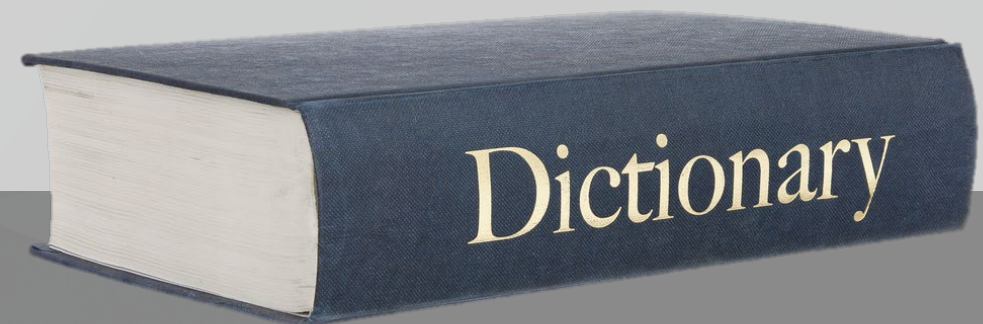


# Community Development

Definition

“Group of *people* in a *locality* initiating a social action process – i.e. *planned* intervention – to *change* their economic, social, cultural, and/or environmental *situation*.”

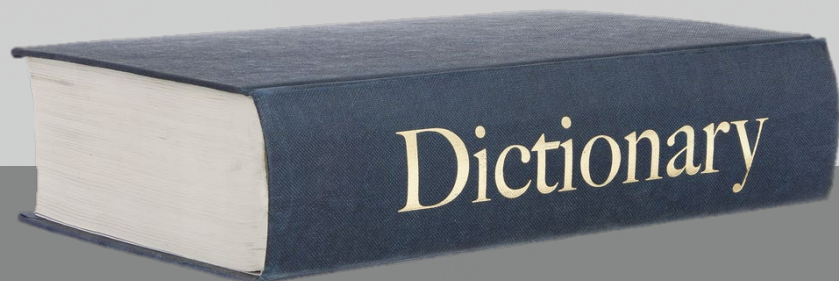
Christenson & Robinson (1989)



# What is Digital Inclusion?

Refers to the *adoption* of broadband technologies and its *meaningful* use for social and economic *benefits*.

Source: [Community Developments Investments Magazine, November 2018](#)



**First-Level Divide:**  
Access (yes/no)

**Second-Level Divide:**  
Differences in internet use

**Third-Level Divide:**  
Economic, cultural, social, & personal outcomes

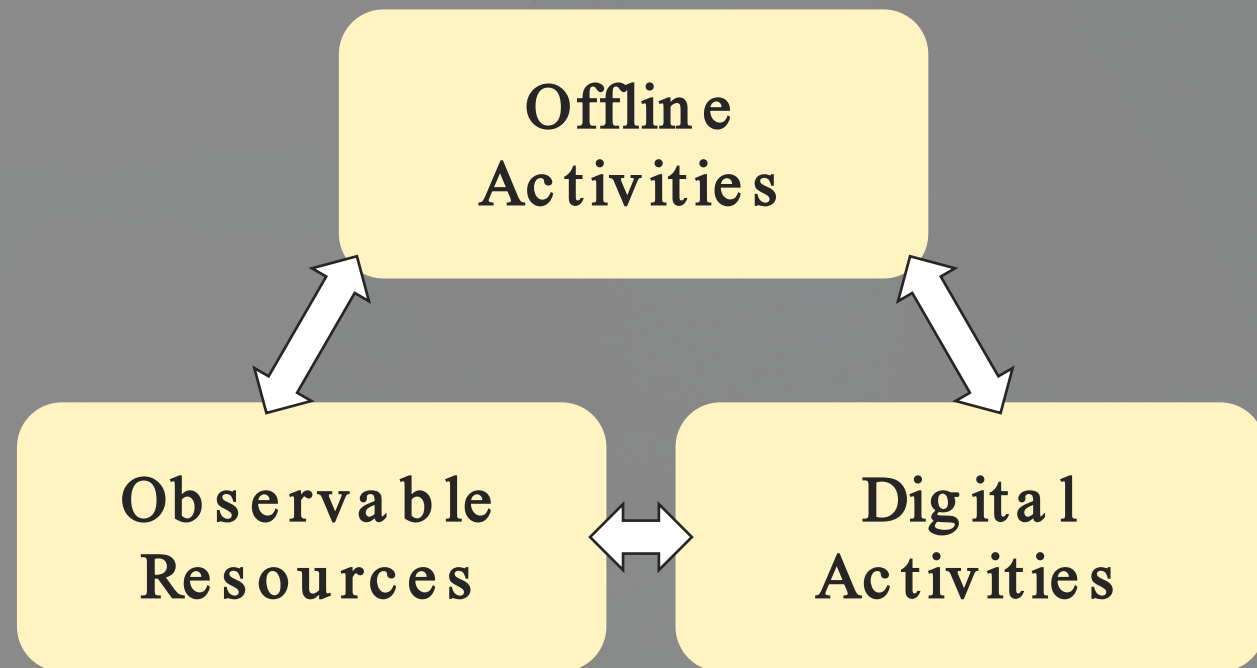


# Digital Capital

The accumulation of **digital competencies** (information, communication, safety, problem-solving) and **digital technology** (devices, connectivity, support, etc.)

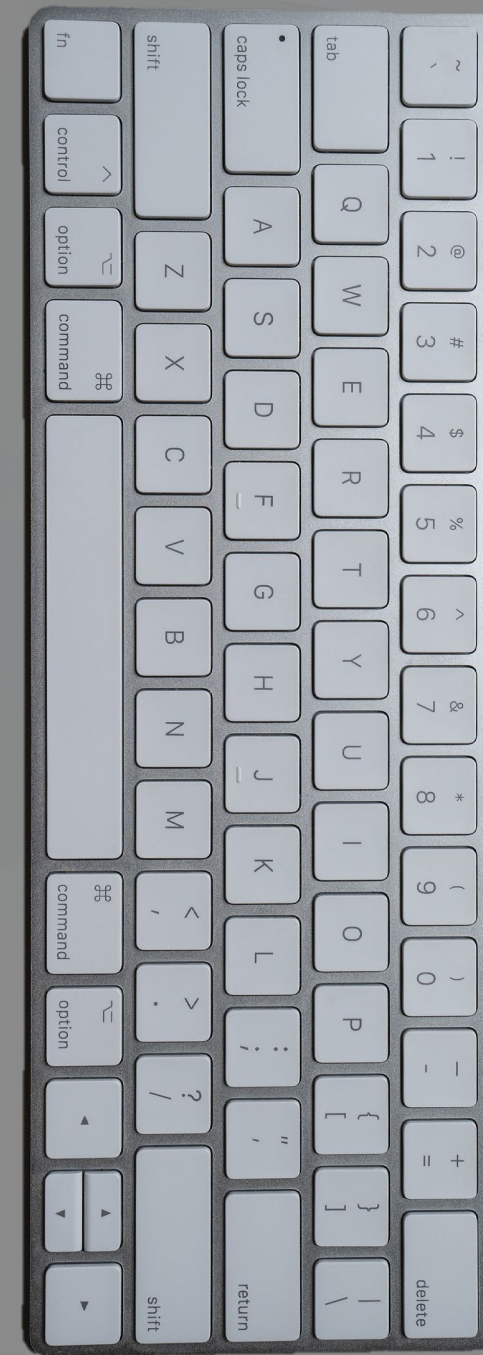
Different levels influence digital experience quality which in turn affects other capitals (financial, social, etc.)

Source: Ragnedda (2018)



# Digital Inclusion Dimensions

1. Affordable & robust broadband
2. Internet-enabled devices that meet needs of user
3. Digital Literacy training
4. Quality technical support
5. Applications & online content that encourage self-sufficiency, participation, & collaboration



# Community Capitals



Jane Q. wants a walking trail in her community...

Description	Capitals Involved
Takes leadership development class, learns new skills →	Human
Partners with local hospital that wants to implement wellness campaign →	Social
Works with local parks & recreation to identify land →	Natural
State senator informs of grant that can be used →	Political & Financial
Local tourism board likes the idea and provides additional funding →	Financial
City and county build trail infrastructure →	Built
Local historical society adds historic markers →	Cultural
Promoted online and adds augmented reality markers and virtual tours →	Digital

## DIGITAL PARITY, DIGITAL INCLUSION AND INEQUALITY

**Digital parity** refers to a scenario with equal levels of internet connectivity, digital skills and digital mindset between groups (e.g., rural versus urban).



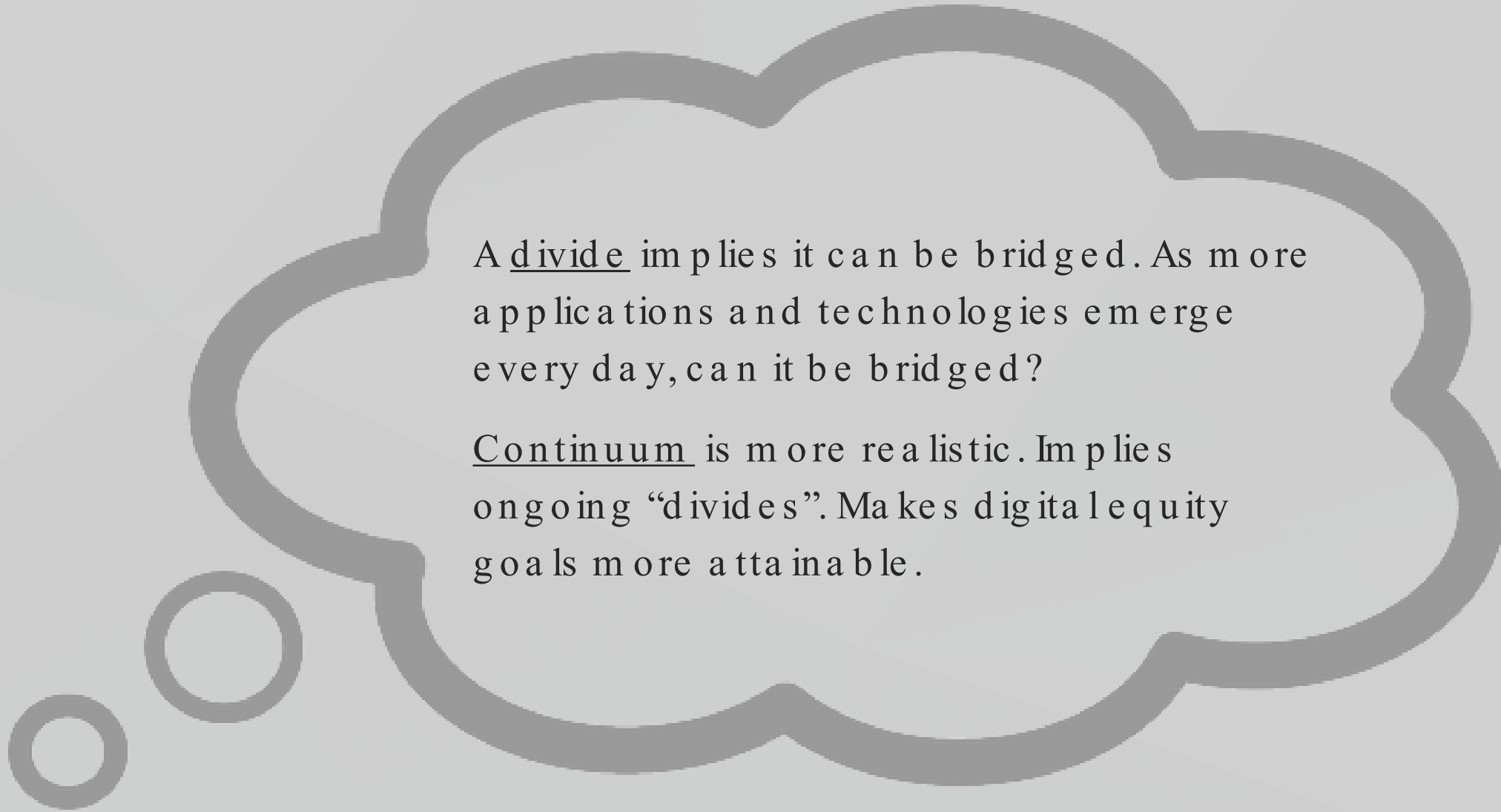
**Digital inclusion** refers to the meaningful use of digital technology by all groups for social and economic benefits.



Digital inclusion can help address rising **inequality** in today's increasingly digitized society.

- Some groups benefit more than others
- Poorer, older, and less educated continue to trail richer, younger, more educated
- Digital parity – similar device & internet access and resourcefulness and utilization – eliminated urban-rural differences
- Age & income differences persisted
- Internet benefits – low overall

# Digital Divide or Continuum ?



A divide implies it can be bridged. As more applications and technologies emerge every day, can it be bridged?

Continuum is more realistic. Implies ongoing “divides”. Makes digital equity goals more attainable.