BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT: The Study of Internet Access and Digital Literacy in Nigeria Rural Area.

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BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT: The Study of Internet Access and Digital Literacy in Nigeria Rural Area.

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Al-mighty Allah, my parent, and my Children

ABSTRACT

Internet access and digital literacy is still lagging in the rural communities of Garun-Malam local government and there are needs to investigate the reasons behind this unfortunate situation in order to overcome this digital handicap. Of course, good access to information technology (IT) is the fundamental element of any rural development activities. Therefore, this study focuses in depth the Internet access and digital literacy (in terms of Internet technology applications skills) in the rural areas of Garun-Malam local government in Kano State, Nigeria. The purpose of the study is to investigate accessibility level of the Internet (the technological infrastructures being used), and the level of Internet technology applications skills among the rural communities.Therefore, the study employs quantitative data analysis method, 150 questionnaires were distributed, collected and analyzed for the selected rural areas. From the results, it shows that many respondents have access to Internet, despite the fact that there are poor IT infrastructures used in all the rural communities. The study also reveals that majority of the respondents does not have basic skills of Internet technology applications.Furthermore, this study will usher a new era for its internal values and the results can be used by both State and local government. However, the outcome from this study may empower policy makers to makes decision/suggestions in bridging the digital divide that exist in the rural area of Garun-Malam local government. Bridging the digital divide is such a need that requires immediate attention for any concerned government.

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"It always seems to be impossible until it's done"-Nelson Mandela

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

1.1   Overview

The origin of the term digital divide can be refer back to an unknown American source in the middle of the year 1990s and was first used in an official publication by the United State, Department of commerce's National Telecommunication and Information Administration (NTIA, 1999). However, the term digital divide commonly refer to the gap between those who do and those do not have access to new forms of IT. These forms refers to the computers and their networks, but still other digital equipment such as mobile telephony and digital television are not ruled out by some users of the term (Jan, 2006). On the basis of the above, technological infrastructure and the internet facilities are the fundamental tools that can be used to bridge the divide not only in the rural communities but also the underserve areas within urban communities. However, it is through the effective utilizations of those tools, the socio-economic, political, education and social development can be measuredwith greater satisfaction.

Furthermore, internet access refers to the ability to access the internet without having restrictions placed on your door where you go while you are online. On the other hand, Internet access is the services that provide access to the global system of interconnected computer networks known as the internet (US National Broadband plan, 2009). Lack of access to the Internet is a major element of the digital divide. Research consistently identifies ethnicity, income, age and education as significant predictors of access to technology, (France and Lemuria, 2006). Therefore, the issue here is that by given total access of internet to the

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