

# **E-Learning, Is it tool for Social Inclusion?**

**Cheung-Moon Cho**  
**International Cooperation Planning Division,**  
**Korea Agency for Digital Opportunity and Promotion**  
**cmcho@kado.or.kr**

## **Abstract**

Purposes of this paper are to show the status and policies for the digital divide, and to review the potential of e-learning as a efficient tool to improve capacity of socially marginalized persons. Despite a rapid expansion of informatization in Korea, internet usage rates for elderly and people with disabilities are far below the national average. One of main reason not to use the Internet in Korea is still the lack of abilities despite massive efforts of Government to improve people's digital literacy. E-learning is widely recognized as a convenient and effective tool to close the digital divide. In Korea,17 cyber universities are functioning and more than 30,000 students are enrolled in cyber universities. BaeUm Nara project(e-learning based IT training program) is also offering special training programs for the deaf and blind. As such, e-learning has a great potential as a tool to improve knowledge of socially marginalized groups. However, if e-learning project does not fully consider the physical and social situation of socially marginalized groups, it will deepen the existing knowledge gap between digital haves and digital have-nots rather than narrow the gap.

**Key Words: the digital divide, e-learning, people with disabilities**

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