

Bridging the Digital Divide through NGOs

A Study of Information Software Personnel Vocational Training Program

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Abstract

The issue of the digital divide has become a critical aspect of inequality and social injustice in our world particular after the first report “Falling Through the Net” issued by NTIA in 1995. The focus of recent studies on the digital divide, however, seems to shift from the issue of physical access to information technology (IT) and the Internet to that of content and training. This paper has studied the effectiveness of the vocational training programs offered by for-profit non-government organizations (NGOs) and subsidized by Taiwan Government in an attempt to narrowing the information gap. The exploratory case study has found that by providing convenient locations and better employment opportunities, NGOs offered the information “have-nots” an alternative to bridge the information gap. However, NGOs and government should pay more attention on the problems associated with the subsidy scheme and the course design to improve the effectiveness of the vocational training programs.

Key Words: digital divide, NGOs, training, policy.

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