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Peculiarities of the digital divide in sub-Saharan Africa

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Author(s): Mutula SM**Source:** PROGRAM-ELECTRONIC LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS **Volume:** 39 **Issue:** 2 **Pages:** 122-138 **Published:** 2005**Times Cited:** 3 **References:** 54

Abstract: Purpose - Seeks to argue that the peculiarities of sub-Saharan Africa, in terms of its socio-cultural diversity, low economic development, linguistic factors, HIV/AIDS pandemic, gender discrimination, low ICT awareness and so on, demand a new model of addressing the digital divide.

Design/methodology/approach - Paper largely based on literature survey and an assessment of the existing models of addressing global digital divide.

Findings - Sub-Saharan Africa has certain peculiarities in high levels of poverty, high prevalence of HIV/AIDS, repressive regimes, civil wars, diversity of cultural and linguistic factors, gender discrimination, etc. that require new models for bridging the digital divide and that recognise the uniqueness of the sub-continent.

Research limitations/implications - More research is needed to determine new models of bridging the digital divide that can help sub-Saharan Africa to leapfrog into the information age.



Practical implications - More attention is needed to alleviate poverty and meet people's basic needs for livelihood if attempts to integrate ICT into their lives are to be effective.

Originality/value - Sub-Saharan Africa has largely relied on models of the developed countries to bridge the digital divide without paying close attention to how various technologies can effectively be integrated in the lives of the people to alleviate poverty, and consequently stimulate ICT uptake. This paper provides some solutions.

Document Type: Article**Language:** English**Author Keywords:** sub-Saharan Africa; communication technologies

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