



# Digital Divide Across Caste and Class-2025

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A new MOSPI study (MIS 79th round) highlights deep digital divide patterns across caste, class, gender, and rural-urban lines in India.

## Trends & Data on Digital Divide:

- **Caste Divide:** Individuals without ICT skills — STs (89.49%), SCs (86.62%), OBCs (81.73%), Others (73.71%) - showing persistent caste-linked deprivation.
- **Gender Divide:** ICT skills nationally — Men (22.78%) vs Women (13.91%); in UP — Men (14.62%) vs Women (6.93%).
- **Class/Income Divide:** Access to a computer with internet — Poorest 20% (6.8%) vs Richest 20% (66.3%), a ten-fold gap.
- **Rural-Urban Divide:** ICT skills highly concentrated among urban households; rural areas face low device availability, poor infrastructure, and low digital exposure.
- **Schooling Divide:** Private ICSE/CBSE schools teach coding from Class 3; government schools often lack electricity or computers even in Class 8.

## Implications of the Digital Divide:

**Unequal access to jobs**—ICT skills strongly correlate with regular salaried employment; marginalised groups remain trapped in low-wage work.

**Weak participation in digital economy** despite smartphone ownership; “ownership ? capability” leads to under-utilisation of digital tools.

**Widening caste and class inequality** as better-off groups move ahead in digital skilling, compounding historical disadvantages.

**Low productivity and poor competitiveness** due to limited availability of digitally skilled workers in rural and low-income regions.

**Gender exclusion from future-ready jobs**, restricting women’s mobility, income, and professional participation.

Intergenerational disadvantage as children from marginalised groups remain several steps behind even when they enter higher education.