

Bridging the Digital Divide: Understanding Public Library Users' Technology Needs and Purposes Through Critical Race Theory

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation-in-progress research seeks to address the impact of the digital divide on ethnic communities living in Fresno County, California. This qualitative research study seeks to address the following questions: what are potential barriers in using public library's technology resources experienced by ethnic communities in Fresno County, and what are ethnic communities' perspectives, purposes and beliefs in using technologies in the public library? The study frames critical race theory to understand the social relationships and structures of inequities of the digital divide in Fresno by exploring the human stories and narratives from people of color experiencing the issue deeply and how they use the public library's technology resources purposefully and personally. This research contributes to existing studies of how a global issue such as the digital divide impacts local communities from various ethnic groups including migrant and immigrant ones, and their information seeking behaviors and needs.

TOPICS

critical librarianship; social justice; information policy; public libraries