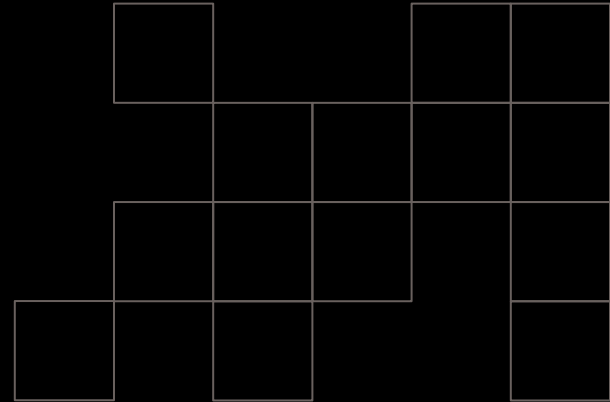


Rethinking Inclusion: An Intersectional Analysis of Digital Access and Participation in India

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India's Growing Digital Landscape

- ~850+ million internet users (2nd largest globally after China)
- 55–60% internet penetration; rapid rural growth
- 750+ million smartphone users
- One of the lowest mobile data costs globally
- Digital economy contributes ~11–13% of GDP (projected ~20% by 2026–27)



But Being online does not mean being heard. Technical governance spaces require:

Knowing digital rights and accountability mechanisms

- **Participating in policy-making processes**
- **Understanding institutional procedures**
- **Technical literacy**
- **Language and documentation comprehension**
- **Structural power shapes participation**

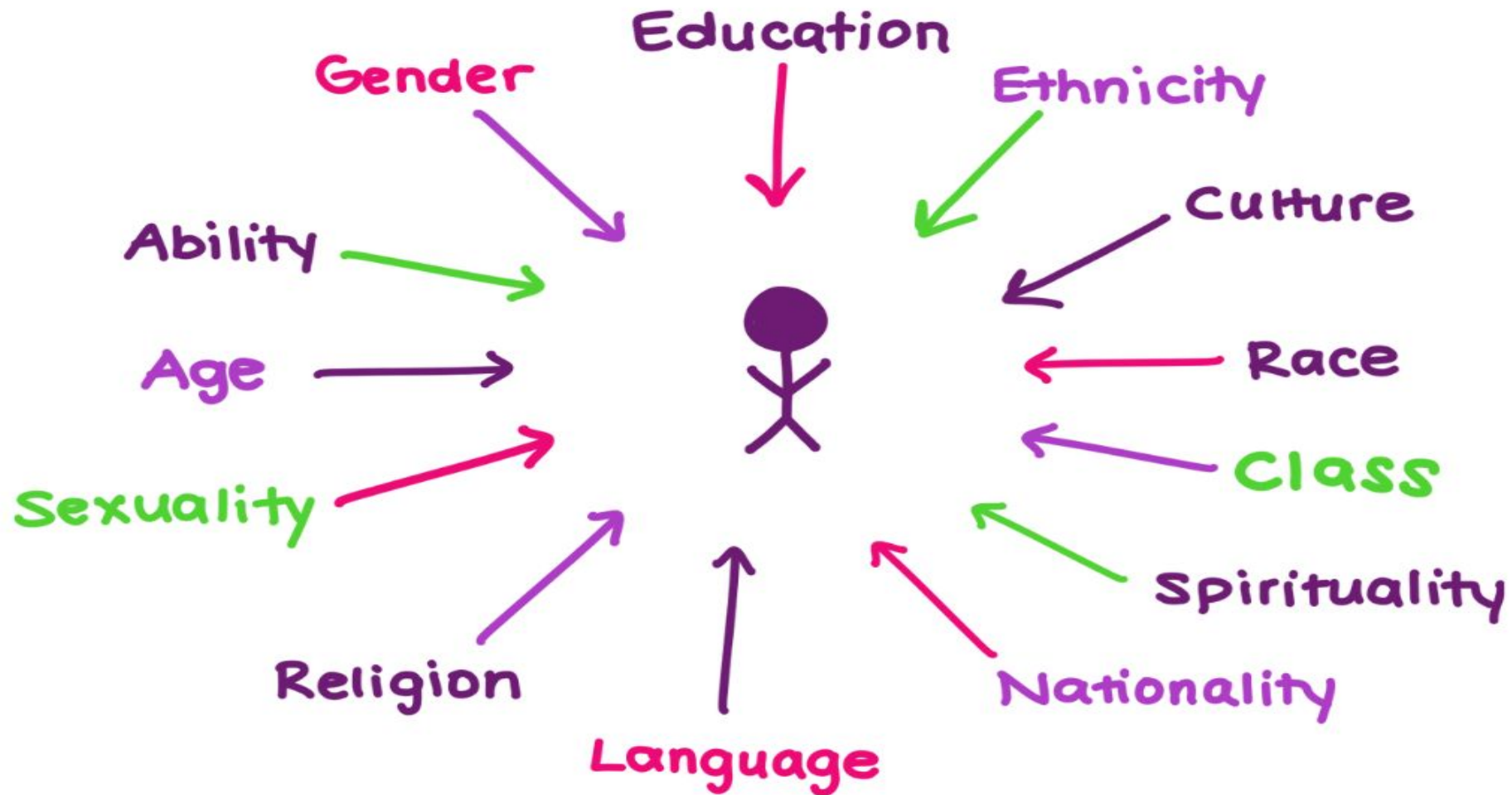
Digital connectivity does not automatically create digital democracy.



Understanding Intersectionality

- Term coined by Kimberle Crenshaw in 1989
- Intersectionality means understanding how multiple identities combine to shape unique experiences of privilege and discrimination.
- It helps us understand how identities like gender, caste, class, religion, disability, and location interact.
- Not all marginalized communities face the same barriers.
- Understanding intersectionality is important in shaping the accessibility and inclusion in the internet governance space





Intersectional Barriers to Digital Access



Gender

Women's internet use trails men by 20–30%—driven by social norms, safety concerns, device affordability, and digital literacy gaps.



Socioeconomic Background

Device ownership and data budgets vary by income and caste, limiting who can participate meaningfully in digital markets and services.



Language Literacy

Platforms skew toward English and major languages; many interfaces and content fail to serve India's linguistic diversity and low-literacy users.

ICANN and its commitment to Inclusion

Core values: transparency, participation, global representation



Recommendations

Inclusion requires more than access, it requires equitable participation in decision-making.



1
ICANN
outreach in
regional
languages.

2
Partner with
state
universities.

3
Rural digital
governance
fellowships.

4
Train
marginalized
communities
in: Domain
registration,
DNS basics
Internet rights

5
Intersectional
Data Collection

6
Strengthen the
Global
Academic
Program (GAP)



Thankyou!

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