

Sociology
Discipline Specific Elective (DSE) 17
Digital Sociology

DISCIPLINE SPECIFIC ELECTIVE COURSE -17 (DSE-17) : Digital Sociology

CREDIT DISTRIBUTION, ELIGIBILITY AND PRE-REQUISITES OF THE COURSE

Course title & Code	Credits	Credit distribution of the course			Eligibility criteria	Pre-requisite of the course (if any)
		Lecture	Tutorial	Practical/ Practice		
DSE 17 Digital Sociology	4	3	1	0	12th Class Pass	Nil

Learning Objectives:

1. To highlight the sociological aspects of the interplay between digital technology and society and its implications on sociology as a discipline.
2. To examine the role of digital technology in re-configuring social spaces, networks and relationships.
3. To illustrate the ways in which digital tools, social media platforms, and online interactions influence and mirror cultural dynamics and identities.
4. To critically analyse the relationship between technology and social inequalities.
5. To foster understanding of digital systems required for pursuit of **SDG 9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure** and **SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities**.

Learning outcomes:

By the end of the course, the students will be able to:

1. Explain fundamental concepts pertaining to emerging digital technologies and their role in shaping contemporary society and the discipline of sociology.
2. Apply theoretical frameworks to analyse how the digital mediates modern communication and social interaction.
3. Analyze the social implications of algorithmic systems and explore how technologies intersect and interact with cultural networks and social structures.

4. Evaluate the societal impact of digital transformation across cultural, economic, and social spheres in pursuit of **SDG 9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure**.
5. Examine how digital systems are implicated in pursuit of **SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities**

SYLLABUS OF DSE:

Unit I: Digital Sociology: Nature and Context (9 Hours)

This unit introduces students to the nature and context of digital sociology.

- a. *Digital Society*
- b. *Digital Sociology*

Unit II: Digital and the Everyday (12 Hours)

This unit addresses how the digital society reconfigures and rearticulates the social through the categories of relationships and spaces.

- a. **Digital Natives and Digital Immigrants**
- b. **Relationships in Digital Society**
- c. **Community in Digital Age**

Unit III: Digital Divide and Digital Democracy (15)

This unit discusses the ways in which the digital is not neutral but reproduces and amplifies existing social inequalities

- a. **Digital Divide**
- b. **Digital Democracy**

Unit IV Techno-Social Assemblages: Algorithms and Artificial Intelligence (9 Hours)

This unit explores how algorithms are not just technical tools but active social agents that shape and are shaped by social practices, power structures and human behavior. They are deeply embedded in the everyday.

- a. **Algorithms**
- b. **Artificial Intelligence**

Practical Component: NIL

Essential/Recommended Readings:

Unit I. Digital Sociology: Nature and Context

a. Digital Society

Selwyn Neil. (2019). *What is Digital Sociology?* Cambridge: Polity Press. Chapters 1 & 2, Pp. 13-27.

b. Digital Sociology

Lupton, Deborah. (2015). *Digital Sociology*. New York: Routledge. Chapter 2, Pp. 20-41.

Unit II. Digital and the Everyday

a. Digital Natives and Digital Immigrants

Prensky, Marc. "Digital natives, digital immigrants: Do they really think differently?" *On the Horizon* 9.6 (2001): 1-6.

VanSlyke, Timothy. "Digital natives, digital immigrants: Some thoughts from the generation gap." *The technology source* 7.3 (2003).

b. Relationships in Digital Society

Lee Rainie and Barry Wellman (2012). *Networked: The New Social Operating System*. The MIT Press Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England. Chapters 5 & 6, Pp. 117-170.

c. Community in Digital Age

Evans, Karen. (2013). Re-Thinking Community in the Digital Age? In K. Orton-Johnson and N. Prior (Eds). *Critical Perspectives in Digital Sociology*, Palgrave MacMillan, Basingstoke. Chapter 5, Pp. 79-94.

Boellstorff, Tom. *Coming of Age in Second Life: An Anthropologist Explores the Virtually Human*. United States: Princeton University Press, 2015. Ch. 5&7. Pp. 118-150, 179-201

Unit III: Digital Divide and Digital Democracy

a. Digital Divide

Massimo, Ragnedda and Ruiiu, Maria Laura (2018). Social Capital and the Three Levels of Digital Divide. In Massimo Ragnedda and Glenn W. Muschert.(ed). *Theorizing Digital Divides*. Routledge. Chapter 2. Pp. 21-34.

Kelly Joyce and Taylor M. Cruz. (2024). A Sociology of Artificial Intelligence: Inequalities, Power, and Data Justice. *American Sociological Association*. Volume 10. Pp. 1–6.

Laskar, M.H. (2023). Examining the Emergence of Digital Society and the Digital Divide in India: A Comparative Evaluation Between Urban and Rural Areas. *Front. Sociology*. 8 Pp. 1-10.

b. Digital Democracy

Hindman, Matthew. *The Myth of Digital Democracy*. Italy: Princeton University Press, 2008. Ch. 1 &3. Pp. 1- 19, 38-57

Papacharissi, Zizi A. *A Private Sphere: Democracy in a Digital Age*. Germany: Polity Press, 2013. Ch 3. Pp. 51-79.

Unit IV. Techno-Social Assemblages: Algorithms and Artificial Intelligence

a. Algorithms

Massimo, Airoldi. M. (2022). Why Not a Sociology of Algorithms? In *Machine Habitus: Toward a Sociology of Algorithms*. Polity Press. Chapter 1, Pp. 1-31.

Burrell, Jenna and Fourcade, Marion (2021). The Society of Algorithms. *Annual Review of Sociology*. Vol. 47, Pp. 213–237.

b. Artificial Intelligence

Clough, Patricia Ticineto, Gregory, Karen, Haber, Benjamin and Scannell, R. Joshua. (2015). The Datalogical Turn. In Phillip Vannini (ed). *Non-Representational Methodologies Re-Envisioning Research*. Routledge: New York . Chapter 9, Pp. 146-164.

Suggested Readings:

Bakardjieva, Maria. (2012). *Internet Society: The Internet in Everyday Life*. London: Sage Publications.

Boyd, D. (2014). *It's Complicated: The Social Lives of Networked Teens*. Yale University Press.

Joyce, Kelly (Et al.) (2021). Toward a Sociology of Artificial Intelligence: A Call for Research on Inequalities and Structural Change. *Socius: Sociological Research for a Dynamic World*. 7.

Lee Rainie and Barry Wellman (2012). *Networked The New Social Operating System*. The MIT Press Cambridge, Massachusetts London, England.

Lupton, Deborah (2015). *Digital sociology*. New York: Routledge.

Massimo Ragnedda and Glenn W. Muschert. (ed). (2018). *Theorizing Digital Divides*. Routledge.

Marres, Noortje. (2017). *Digital Sociology: The Reinvention of Social Research*. Cambridge: Polity.

Narayanan, K and N. Dayasindhu. (2024). *Digital Society in India: A Study of An Urban City, Bengaluru*.

Orton-Johnson, K. and N. Prior (Eds) (2013). *Critical Perspectives in Digital Sociology*. Palgrave MacMillan, Basingstoke.

S. Kris Gopalakrishnan, N. Dayasindhu, Krishnan Narayanan. (2022). *Against All Odds: The IT Story of India*. New Delhi: Penguin.

Selwyn Neil. (2019). *What is Digital Sociology?* Cambridge: Polity Press

Woolgar, S. (1985). Why not a Sociology of Machines? The Case of Sociology and Artificial intelligence. *Sociology*, 19(4), 557–572.

Zheng Liu. (2021). Sociological perspectives on artificial intelligence: A typological reading. *Sociology Compass*. Vol. 15 Issue 3. Pp. 1-13.

Note: Examination scheme and mode shall be as prescribed by the Examination Branch, University of Delhi, from time to time.