



The Value of the Social Sciences

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Technology is what drives an economy. It brings new ideas and ways of doing business and producing goods and services. Therefore, it is essential to keep that flow of progress going, yet those within society must know how to live within these technological settings. Social Sciences have a significant role in overseeing by providing their disciplines' understanding of the entry of new technologies. It behooves us always to uphold social sciences worth as those who push the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) disciplines might overlook. The value of the social sciences in the presence of STEM education was tested by Maguth [1], who found that a social science curriculum was essential for a successful STEM education and career. The social sciences bring the interpersonal skills and disposition essential to compete globally. Even Alvin Weinberg [2], one of America's great nuclear physicists, reflected that since a single intellectual discipline does not generate conflicts within society, the resolutions need social sciences and STEM disciplines to bring solutions.

To illustrate this tension between the social sciences and STEM, the National Science Foundation points out that many social sciences do contribute to the sciences in the United States of America. Their broader impact does not, however, promote the fact that all the new technologies exist within society or at least managed by societies, and within societies, behaviors, politics, economics, and cultures exist. These actions from the research community may cause the floundering of artificial intelligence (AI) in its capabilities to technologize many aspects of our economies. What are the rules of engagement when multiple cultures come together to promote the growth of technologies within universities and manufacturers of AI? The answer lies within social science studies.

It is time to investigate why Liberal Arts colleges recently suffered from attracting large numbers of new students into the social sciences or why some liberal arts programs are shutting down specific disciplines. It may be because there is no "national" push for these majors compared to the STEM majors. What, then, is the role of the social sciences, and how do they help foster the growing technologies that come from artificial intelligence (AI) to new chemicals or biological discoveries that improve life? The role is to help "guide" our new technologies to create a society that equitably serves all.

The core disciplines of the social sciences are political science,

sociology, anthropology, economics, and geography, with psychology falling into the natural sciences and history being a large part of the humanities. These disciplines are concerned with the relationship between individuals and society.

Political Science as a social science involves the study of political and government systems and how people behave with these systems in society. Political Science can bring questions and answers to the right and wrong ways governments handle the ever-changing technologies coming forth. Is there a need for regulation, or should the courts act as a mediator for harm reduction? These become questions that Political Scientists can articulate for the good of society as new technologies are discovered.

Sociology focuses on society and the institutions that humans create. This method of study lends a hand to help answer questions on how new technologies are affected by social changes, disruptions, and social stratification. Also, this discipline can examine how organizations interact with one another, including the organizations developing STEM products.

Historically known as the management of households, economics has evolved into a social science emphasizing the economy and the processes for distributing goods and services within systems of scarce resources. It brings into focus the role of government as economic activities take place. Economists realize the value of technology pushing the production of an entity or system to more efficient and significant frontiers. They will present models and mathematical formulas to show how and why decisions on production work or not.

Anthropology studies cultures with society and, as such, lends insight into how different cultures will accept new technologies as they come into existence. For example, not everyone embraced the Internet as it first appeared. Specific belief systems within different cultures can help or hinder new technologies and inventions. Understanding these diverse cultural beliefs can help mitigate acceptance rates or push for the understanding of cultures around new technologies.

Psychology, or social psychology, is helpful to study as the race for emerging technologies becomes the norm. Using social media as an example helps us to understand if there are ramifications of the upsurge of social media on young minds or even radical minds that interact with it. Using methods of investigation in this discipline can help society recognize how and if technology helps to promote mental illnesses and what actions need to be taken if necessary.

The study of Geography is also critical as it brings to light the lands and their inhabitants on earth as it relates to the needs of technology, the where, and why. If the ongoing releases of technology inversely affect specific locations on earth, geography in its study can highlight the need for a retrospective plan and direction of the new scientific discovery. Hurting the planet would never be the aim of STEM research and production, and geography can study any adverse effects on the planet. The location of rare earth metals and their cultivation for technological advancement in cell phones, for instance, is helpful so that the possibility of depletion is taken seriously.

As we can see, the advancement of STEM disciplines resides within society, and at this location, there must be an understanding of how

it is undertaken. These new technologies must be studied through the lens of social sciences to genuinely provide the correct framework for applying these technologies. To overlook the social sciences for advancing STEM would be short-sighted and non-productive in the long run in the society where the advances of STEM would reside.

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