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Editor-in-Chief

**Dr.K.Sasi Kumar**

# Emerging Trends in Liberal Arts and Social Sciences

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## **EMERGING TRENDS IN LIBERAL ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

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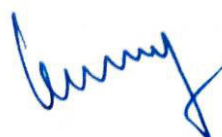
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## **EDITORIAL MESSAGE**

We take great pleasure in welcoming you to our Edited Book. The immediacy of e-based publication makes it possible for us all to be fully connected to each other and to developments in our field and to be directly involved in ongoing knowledge construction.

With innovative concepts in mind, we invited with scholarly discussions to facilitate new ideas for emerging sectors. This book also stands as a platform for Students and research scholars to express their innovative business models and solutions.

We are thankful to all academicians, research scholars and students who have contributed for this edited book. We also acknowledge the valuable suggestions and support offered by our colleagues and students. We are delighted that you are joining us as readers and hope you will also join us as contributors.



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## A NEW ERA FOR LIBERAL ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

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### Abstract

*Social science refers to the science of people or collections of people, such as groups, societies, or economies, firms and their individual as well as collective behavior. Social sciences are traditionally classified into disciplines like psychology – the science of human behavior, economics – the science of firms, markets, and economics, sociology – the science of social groups, political science – pertains to the systems of governance, the analysis of political activities, thoughts, and behavior and History – the study of past events, particularly in human affairs.*

*While this book chapter discuss each of these issues presents challenges, it is possible to regard this period of contestation as providing an opportunity for this classic educational approach to find fresh relevance.*

### Keywords:

*Liberal Arts, Social Science Research, Curricular development, Challenges and Limitation.*

### Introduction

The complex of new century has created new academic trends especially in liberal and social sciences and emerging towards interdisciplinary studies. The history of liberal arts both in Europe and Asia is presented, in which liberal arts will prepare students for a tempestuous future, shaped by a fast change and the COVID-19 pandemic. The aim of scientific research is to discover laws and postulate theories for scientific knowledge meant for explaining natural or social phenomena. Scientific knowledge is based on scientific

methods, which refers to a set of techniques for building scientific knowledge in terms of validity and reliability observations and its generalization. Social sciences are taught in most of the universities since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and the emergence of liberal arts arises since the skills of articulate communication, collaboration and deep reflection across cultures are more important in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, making global liberal arts and its deep cultural roots are ever vital form of education to prepare students for the future.

### **I. History and Evolving ideas of Global Liberal Arts**

The end of the twentieth century and the opening decades of the twenty-first century have seen significant worldwide changes in liberal arts education. As we emerge into an increasingly turbulent and uncertain future shaped by the COVID-19 pandemic, increasing socioeconomic and political tension, and rapid technological change, the need for liberal arts is even more acute and necessary. The liberal arts have an ancient origin in Asian and European academic tradition that dates back for more than 1000 years. In the present age, liberal arts can be defined as a civilizational effort to provide student-centered and holistic education that liberates a student's talents and capacities for creative communicative and collaborative accomplishment. The value of this education is finding greater interest across the world, and as new cultures and technologies shape the liberal arts of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, this form of higher education is certain to receive a renaissance in a more global context.

Over the past 200 years, the United States developed many institutions that included features of the German research university and an English college, resulting in what are commonly described as "liberal arts" institutions. These United States liberal arts institutions can vary in size from Soka University of America (with 500 students), to Yale University (with 12,000 students) to Pomona College (with 1600 students), but all have in common an emphasis on the student's capacity to think freely and to possess the skills needed for knowing what they think and why they think. This in turn empowers them and helps them be "free", the "liberal" in liberal arts.

Some may characterize "liberal arts" as a "distinctively American" form of education, as did Steven Koblik, former President of Reed College, in his book of the same name (Koblik & Graubard, 2000). However, the history of liberal arts includes an even longer

chronology with its own independent development over the centuries in Asia. As Bill Kirby and Marijk van Der Wende state in the opening chapter in their book *Experiences in Liberal Arts and Science Education from America, Europe and Asia*.

Within India, the great Nalanda University was founded over 1500 years ago as a center of Buddhist scholarship, and was the largest university in the world by the year 670, before any of the major universities in Europe existed. Nalanda housed an enormous library, extensive classroom complexes, and provided housing for as many as 10,000 students and 2,000 faculty and visiting scholars, along with meditation halls. The scholars to Nalanda came from all over the world, including China, Japan, Korea, Tibet, Indonesia, and Turkey, during a period several centuries before the first European universities were founded. During the late 20th century much of the discourse on liberal arts, especially in the US, centered on controversies regarding curriculum, and the need for more inclusion and awareness of non-Western cultures, as well as an emerging and urgent need for greater involvement from previously marginalized communities of colour and discussions of more diversity. Patti McGill Peterson, from the American Council on Education, has written about the history and evolution of liberal arts in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, and how the definitions of liberal arts both in the US and abroad evolved to challenge assumptions from past epochs of higher education. By the end of the 20th century, US liberal arts emerged from several decades of activism which resulted in new core curriculum programs that diverged from earlier programs that featured exclusively Western texts. Emerging from both Asian and US universities was an awareness of the increasing globalization of our economy and culture and the need for universities to provide a more “cosmopolitan” approach to liberal arts.

## **Developments in Liberal Arts**

### **1. New prominence of science**

The terminology of “liberal arts and sciences” is beginning to replace the historic “liberal arts” in numerous locations. One of the few places that offers liberal arts in Australia (The University of Sydney) markets a bachelor of “liberal arts and science”. Examples in other parts of the globe where this terminology is now standard are Duke Kunshan University in China, and Amsterdam University College in the Netherlands. While science has always had an important place in the liberal arts, it appears that its place is now becoming more prominent, perhaps partly due to the potential miscommunication of the label “liberal arts”

and partly due to the heightened attention currently given to STEM subjects (Godwin & Pickus 2017).

In an evaluation of liberal arts in Asia, Tachikawa urges that “any future liberal arts college must succeed in integrating at advanced levels, the natural sciences and the humanities in a curriculum that aims at humanizing science”.

## **2. The re-emerging place of religion and theology**

Jung et al note that “there are strong links between Christianity and the liberal arts institutions in East Asia”. Of the six institutions that are the focus of dedicated case studies in that volume, four were founded with explicitly Christian aims. In a recent study of the views of lecturers at a South-East Asian department of liberal arts, it was found that one strong opinion of lecturers was that liberal arts as an educational approach aims to integrate Christian faith and secular vocation.

While religion and theology used to have pride of place in liberal education studies in Europe and the US, this is often no longer the case. However, the emergence of liberal arts education in Asia has frequently involved an emphasis on these subjects. For example, Universitas Pelita Harapan in Indonesia views liberal arts as pursuing “the holistic cultivation of broad-minded, well-rounded citizens, who will flourish in their life and employment”. It pursues this by enabling students to critically evaluate their own worldviews, which, it is said, demands the consideration of religious and theological assumptions. The development of theological literacy therefore has a significant place in the liberal arts curriculum, alongside the development of other relevant literacies.

## **Opportunities of Reinvigoration**

Each of the developments noted above involves contestation. It seems to this author that each provides a distinctive opportunity for the reinvigoration of liberal arts in the future. Taking the classic formational telos of goodness, beauty, and truth, each of the three developments discussed above is here considered in terms of its potential for the future of educational formation. It is at this point of the present article, then, that we move from an analysis of trends identified by recent studies to the proposal of a meta-perspective on the significance of these trends.

### **1. Utilitarianism and a reinvigorated conception of the good**

The utilitarian or economic motivations for liberal arts, which are so often set in opposition to idealistic or ethical motivations for liberal education, may actually find some coherence together. Using the particular liberal educational value of intercultural competence, she points out that all people need intercultural competence, both as citizens and for careers.

The formation of critically-minded ethical citizens might be expected to be so good that it inevitably bursts the bounds of individual virtue (though of course, companies and economies might not instantly recognize or experience this good). We may call it as “virtuous utilitarianism”. If liberal arts institutions are becoming more highly attuned to this particular dimension, or application, of the good, we can see this as providing the potential for a forward step, rather than being only a problem. It may be that such institutions could reconfigure their appeals to utilitarian motivations by situating them in relation to broader conceptions of virtue.

### **2. The place of science and a reinvigorated conception of beauty**

Although science has a great historic place in the liberal arts tradition, the renewed prominence of science and technology in some liberal arts curricula might be seen as appealing to the desire of certain stakeholders for liberal arts to be vocationally directed. Especially in Asian cultures, science and mathematics are overwhelmingly viewed as more professionally useful, especially among the many with lower cultural capital than arts or humanities. But the renewed prominence of science in titles for liberal arts programs provides an opportunity to reiterate that science is as basic as the humanities for developing ethical citizens, just as the arts may be just as vocationally useful as the sciences. Arts and sciences both contribute to utilitarian ends, and both contribute to the beauty of what it means to be human.

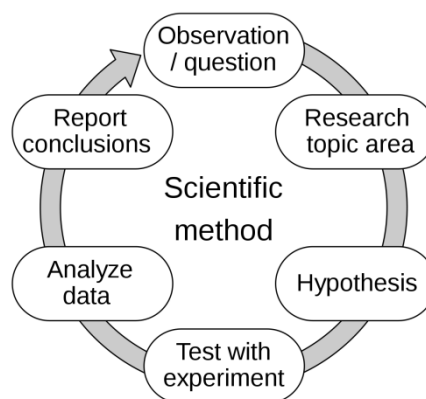
If those liberal arts institutions that publicize their emphasis on science are able to present this as a restatement of the historic commitment of liberal arts to a truly beautiful holistic education, this present development may be another forward step. It may become clearer to cultures in which “liberal arts” is an unfamiliar enterprise that it is not an “artsy” avoidance of science, but rather a historically tested well-rounded education.

### **3. The place of theology and reinvigorated examination of truth**

The values of goodness and beauty in the well-rounded formation of humans, it must be recognized that these are inescapably theological concepts, as is the concept of truth. This is not to claim that only a religious perspective has a means of grounding the concepts of truth, beauty, and goodness, but rather to say that any pursuit of these liberal educational goals unavoidably employs assumptions that are theological in character: assumptions such as “to be human is good” “humans should act wisely”, “humans owe a debt to God”, “humans owe no debt to anyone”. It is possible to conduct liberal arts education without examining the theological character of such assumptions and truth claims, but the recent vibrant interest in theological literacy in Asia may be seen as a welcome return to one historically important feature of this mode of education.

## II. Social Science Research in India

India is one of the oldest Civilization of the world and has one of the longest traditions of research and writings. Dharmashastra by Manu dating back to third century is considered as a comprehensive study of Indian society as it existed at the time, even though it emphasized more on the normative aspects of moral and normative aspects of social and economic action.



Social sciences are taught in most of the universities since the beginning of the 21st century. The social science researchers, professors and policymakers have increased rapidly besides the huge production of a huge number of books and articles in different languages across the world. Consequentially, a large number of social scientists are working not only as scholars and researchers but also as experts in national administrations and are advising their governments for the development of their economies. At the same time, advancements in information technology allows them to communicate among themselves as well as with civil society more quickly.

The social science research then and after the early years of independence was based on studies influenced by Western thoughts. Later there was a demand to have studies based on local issues due to the fact that planned socio-economic development provided tremendous scope of inquiry and research.

### **Social Science Research-Current Status**

It is very difficult to obtain Information on the number of institutions engaged in social scienceresearch, the topics of their work, and source of funding and research output. However, the FourthReview committee set by ICSSR in the year 2007 has made an attempt to gather and compile datafrom such institutions directly funded by the government and those that receive substantial andregular financial support from it.

The institutions conducting social science research can be classified into the below mentioned sixcategories:

- Social science departments in universities and post graduate colleges under UGC
- Specialized Universities - Agricultural universities and institutes of technology, management, etc.
- ICSSR supported research institutes
- Autonomous research institutes specialized in social science research
- Government supported research units;
- Private Consultancy Firms.

The first four categories are the most active players in the field.

The creation of ICSSR was based on the realization that social science research in India lacked anational organization that could actively work its expansion and promotion apart from securingsupport and reorganization from the government without being under its control. Therefore, ICSSRwas conceived as an autonomous body to expand social science research and to improve its quality,while attempting to develop strong linkages between of the findings of the social science research and policy formulation.

### **Social Science-Methodological perspectives**

Methodological issues in Social Science Researchfor promoting quality social research.The use of statistical testing based on null hypothesis willdiminish in social science research and termed as “paradigm shift,” and the social sciences willbecome more like the natural sciences.

The paper by Dr. V. Rengarajan argues that interview is a prudential way of enquiry for data collection and asserts that it is more than that in building a conducive rapport with the respondents. Its robustness in the data collection process would certainly support adequately for making evidence which is based on policy matters and academic research in social science.

The paper by Arti Sharma identifies lack of “vibrancy” in the country’s social science research arena. In the recent times because of the multidisciplinary nature of humanities and social science, we have lot of new emerging areas in research. The paper relates ethics with research, followed by challenges and constraints in Social Science research and at last suggests solution for its revival.

### **Social Science-Gender Perspectives**

Gender Perspective highlights that Gender plays a vital role in entrepreneurship, key mode of production and instrumental in improving the wellbeing of society despite gender discrimination. This part has shown that education is being transformed by small actions in different parts of the world and one gets the impression that teaching as usual may no longer be the norm. Gender plays an important role in economic development as well as in entrepreneurial activities.

The research paper by Anisha Satsangi, Ritika and Mayank Goel highlights the issue of women hygiene products that are becoming a serious environmental issue due to the non-biodegradable raw materials. In the manufacturing of most sanitary pads raw materials like woodpulp, polyethylene etc., are used consisting high carbon footprints poisoning habitat. Some firms use alternative absorbent fibers like bamboo, jute, banana fiber having lower level of carbon footprints. The findings of the paper have been based on a secondary comparative study which produces eco-friendly sanitary napkins with those that use non-biodegradable raw materials. According to primary data, it has been analysed that, 61 per cent of women’s population is aware of negative impact of synthetic sanitary napkins on environment. There is lack of awareness and availability of organic sanitary napkins, only 32 per cent of women are aware of organic sanitary napkins and 28 per cent of women find it easy to purchase them. Moreover, sanitary napkins are dumped unhygienically, 99 per cent of women throws sanitary pads in open by wrapping it and dumping in household garbage.



Sometimes even when our voice and words are under control, our body language can tell something different, including the tiniest facial expressions and movements which show our real thoughts and feelings at the moment. The silent signals of non-verbal communication tend to reveal underlying motives and emotions like fear, honesty, joy, indecision, frustration – and much more.

## Conclusion

Among the developments that are happening at this time are heavy pressures towards utilitarianism, a fresh prominence for science in curricular content and program labels, and a strong interest in the theological dimension of liberal education and Social Science in Asia. As liberal arts programs across the world are further refined through dialog with each other, the global community of liberal arts institutions in the Europe, Americas, Asia and Africa together can provide new types of intellectual life and discovery that is both timeless and set within the context of our complex world that features exponentially accelerating technological and environmental change.

Social sciences are entering upon a new era in our country. Its activity and interest, in research has increased tenfold during the decade. The compilation of various facts and figures on social science research reveal that, India is world's one of the oldest Civilization and has one of the longest traditions of research and writings.

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