
Social & Human Sciences

Definition & Origin

At the end of this lecture, you are going to know the following:

- What is meant by SHS?
- What is the importance of them in our lives?
- Are human and social sciences new or they are deep-rooted in past?
- What is the difference between them?
- What is the difference between social and natural sciences?

Definition of SHS :

It is a French abbreviation of ' social and human sciences.'

HS: (Humanities) Academic disciplines that study aspects of human society and culture, using primarily analytical or critical methods, with significant historical elements.

- It includes:** Language (Ancient and modern languages), History, Literature, Philosophy, Religion, Visual arts (Media types, Drawing, Painting, Film) and Performing arts such as music, dancing and theatre, etc.
- Humanist:** He/she is the one who works in the field of humanities

SS (Social Sciences): A branch of science that deals with the institutions and functioning of human society and with the interpersonal relationships of individuals as members of society.

- It includes Sociology, anthropology, economics, human geography, linguistics, communication, political sciences, psychology, law and education, etc.
- Social Scientist:** He/ she is the one who works in the field of social sciences.

The importance of SHS :

The main aims of SHS studies are:

- To promote civic competence.
- To understand society, and to define science in its social sense.
- To deeper analyze social problems and issues.
- To help people develop their ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good.
- It provides the necessary background knowledge in order to develop values and reasoned opinions.
- It helps people develop a knowledge base and the right attitude for their behaviour in society and the real world.

- It helps create perceptions of the future.
- It bridges the gap between people and society and provides insight into the essence of a problem so that there are no barriers to communication.

The History of SHS:

1- History of Social Sciences: It begins in the **Age of Enlightenment** after 1650, which saw a revolution within **natural philosophy**, changing the basic framework by which individuals understood what was "scientific". Social sciences came forth from the **moral philosophy** of the time and was influenced by the **Age of Revolutions**, such as the **Industrial Revolutions** and **French Revolution**. The term "social science" may refer either to the specific sciences of society established by thinkers such as Kante, Durkheim, Marx, and Webber.

2- The History of Human Sciences: In the West, the study of the humanities can be traced to ancient Greece, as the basis of a broad education for citizens. A major shift occurred with the Renaissance Humanism of the fifteenth century, when the humanities began to be regarded as subjects to study rather than practice, with a corresponding shift away from traditional fields into areas such as literature and history. In the 20th century, this view was in turn challenged by the postmodernist movement, which sought to redefine the humanities in more egalitarian¹ terms suitable for a democratic society.

The Differences Between Humanities and Social Sciences:

- Humanities and social sciences deal with human aspects like politics, law, linguistics, and psychology.
- One major difference between the two is that Humanities involve more critical and analytical approaches whereas social sciences deal with more of a scientific approach.
- Humanities are considered more philosophical than social sciences.
- Humanities is a branch of science that deal with the heritage and the question of what makes us human, but social sciences deal with the interpersonal relationships of individuals as members of society
- The study of humanities can be traced back to ancient Greece, but social sciences were influenced by the French revolution and the industrial revolution.

Comparison between Natural Sciences and SHS:

- Natural science is a branch of science that deals with the natural world whereas social science is a branch of science that deals with human society and social relationships.
- Natural science studies natural events whereas social science studies human society.
- Natural Sciences are objective, but SHS are subjective and objective.
- Natural Sciences are exact whereas SHS are not exact.
- Natural Sciences have a specific language but SHS haven't.
- Natural Sciences are communicative whereas SHS is communicative and non-communicative.
- Both of them two are effective and important for human life,

¹ **Egalitarian** refers to Egalitarianism which is a school of thought within political philosophy that builds from the concept of social equality, prioritizing it for all people.