

# ASIA-PACIFIC SOCIAL SCIENCE REVIEW

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The *Asia-Pacific Social Science Review* (APSSR) is an internationally refereed journal published four times in a year—March (online edition), June (online and print editions), September (online), and December (online and print) by De La Salle University, Manila, Philippines. It aims to be a leading venue for authors seeking to share their data and perspectives on compelling and emerging topics in the social sciences with, and to create an impact on, the region's communities of academics, researchers, students, civil society, policymakers, and development specialists, among others. Topics related to or with implications for the region that are pursued employing sound methodologies and comparative, and inter, multi, and transdisciplinary approaches are of particular interest. Overall, the APSSR seeks to glocalize knowledge towards developing a body of regional perspectives on key global issues. The APSSR is listed in the Elsevier's Scopus, the ASEAN Citation Index, and EBSCO and is a Category A journal based on the Philippines' Commission on Higher Education list. The APSSR has both printed and online (<https://apssr.com/>) editions, and a Facebook Page, at <https://www.facebook.com/DLSUAPSSR/>. The journal's online submission platform, ScholarOne, is at <https://mc04.manuscriptcentral.com/apssr>.

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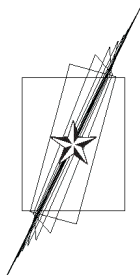
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## From the Editor

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### Strategies for Scaling Up the Impact of Social Sciences Research Findings

In the grand scheme of things at higher educational institutions (HEIs) across the Asia-Pacific, the social sciences are playing second fiddle to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). A cursory look at the Scopus top 10–20 list of research journals in each country throughout the region would reveal that just 1–2 journals are in the social sciences. The supporting role of the social sciences is also palpable across a variety of decisions made at HEIs. For example, when HEI appoint their chancellor, vice chancellor, and other top-tiered administrative officials, they are more likely to select scientists from STEM rather than from the social sciences. Similarly, HEIs are more inclined to strongly publicize the material inventions from STEM rather than the conceptual or ideational, theoretical and methodological, programmatic, or policy contributions from the social sciences (with unreserved leaning, I must say that the latter are equally astounding for their sheer immensity, depth, and potential impact). Also, in incentivizing and grant-giving at HEIs, STEM tends to be awarded more resources compared to that bestowed to the social sciences—for instance, a grant of US\$10,000 would be viewed as too little for STEM but too big a sum for the social sciences. Across the hierarchies at HEIs, the social sciences faculty and students are less valued than their STEM counterparts, anchored on a perception that the former’s knowledge production is non-tangible and thus “soft,” hence appears less useful. From a higher-level standpoint, the social sciences could be the “women” and the social minority in the academe, whereas STEM are the “men” and the social majority.

The social invisibility and the social minority status of the social sciences may be rectified via a pivotal move from the social scientists themselves. In my view, social scientists would have to carry out systematic strategies to earnestly make their research findings more visible, felt, and utilized at HEIs, as well as in the larger society. As they are fully acquainted with their own discipline from inside out, the social scientists can competently speak about their findings at the academe and beyond. Specifically, these scientists can document, write, package, and publicize their significant findings in manifold ways so that these findings get into the consciousness of the HEIs and the general public, are more understood, and then mainstreamed into the general culture—or the people’s general and specific ways of life. For innumerable times, dating way back to the 1980s, the region’s social sciences have been challenged to no end to augment their sharing of their empirical findings with and their utility in the real world. Unfortunately, up to this day, this challenge has yet to be taken to the fullest. Although social scientists are indeed doing pretty well in collecting, analyzing, and writing their data, many are not in the act of letting other non-specialists understand, appreciate, and use their social products.

What contemporary evidence have the social sciences systematically collected and analyzed that the whole region ought to know more of? The list would be very long, but some are worth a mention—for instance, the discipline has empirical findings on:

- Parenting style that fosters healthy development in adolescent children
- Factors influencing governance in the public sector

- Role of physical activity in mental health
- Organizational culture that promotes collaborative behavior
- Health effects of fast food consumption among school children and university students
- Individual and personality determinants of innovative behavior
- Effective strategies for resolving conflict
- Non-physical indicators of domestic abuse
- Factors associated with risky sexual behavior and condom use
- Social capital among children left-behind by parents working overseas
- Effects of intact and non-intact familial structure on children's lifestyle
- Work ethical behavior and its effects on work productivity
- Reading behavior and parental and sibling influence
- Role of religiosity and spirituality on lifestyle behaviors
- Role of academic performance in the development of global citizenship
- Effective community-based interventions for environmental protection
- Roles of senior citizens in child care and development
- Level of human and national development and level of preservation and maintenance of historical sites
- Predictors of healthy lifestyle among senior citizens
- Health-seeking practices among health care providers of patients with infectious disease
- Role of gender in quality provision of hotel services
- Sleeping patterns and their effects on alcohol drinking, smoking, and sexual behavior
- Coping behavior among community residents of disaster-hit areas
- Inter-generational impact of income and wealth
- Travel and its effects on quality of life and happiness

Much of the foregoing, like other uncited sets of findings, is not within the realm of public knowledge. This calls for the social sciences to work extra hard so that their data get adopted and practiced by many. Besides conducting the usual research dissemination forums and submitting the obligatory research reports, the social sciences need to collaborate with, for example, the performing arts, film and television industries and social media, and subsequently, to work towards integrating the research findings into popular and mass-based programs, including entertainment shows, songs, comics, news, features, and telenovelas. They can also collaborate with government and non-government agencies to effectively reach out to population sub-groups. Moreover, engaging key influencers in the process will help facilitate the evidence-to-practice transition, but the engagement of these influencers has to be for the long haul as continuity and stability are vital for successfully transforming ideas into norms.

The broadening and the deepening of the real-world application of the social sciences research findings would be hastened if additional systematic strategies were to be carried out. For instance, tracer and impact studies would be important to determine the numbers of individuals, groups, approaches, programs, and policies that are already integrating, utilizing, or manifesting the behaviors suggested by research findings. How many parents in a given locale or a country are employing a parenting style identified in studies as key to fostering healthy development in adolescent children? What specific government and school-based policies have been formed or revised on account of the research recommendations? How many local government units are practicing servant leadership as a governance style? The social sciences have to get into the habit of quantifying and documenting their impact to know if they are making a great deal of difference, or lack thereof, in the real world. Depending on the numerical findings on these matters, the discipline can respond accordingly. For instance, in the absence of any appreciable impact in these areas, providing more effective communications of research findings to target individuals and groups; and conducting further tracer, impact, and follow-up studies—to gather more nuanced research findings and attendant recommendations—may be in order. These mentioned strategies would call for innovative research methods. (A book that I edited in 2019 entitled “Revving Up Research Innovations



for Social Development: Methods and Perspectives,” would be informative in this instance. The volume has chapters on research collaboration, nativist standpoint, an inquiry into the politics of everyday lives, local health system research, rules of engagement in research with indigenous people’s communities, and good practices in the conduct of research involving children). As the foregoing strategies and the entire goal of scaling up the impact of research findings are likely to demand more devotion, time, and resources, HEI and key government and non-government organizations should provide the social sciences with systematic institutional support that is generous and sustained.

This March 2020 edition of the Asia-Pacific Social Science Review (Scopus, now Q1) showcases another set of research findings from the social sciences—specifically on, among others, behavioral finance, family support, food, hotel accommodation, mobile phone store franchise, and health information system. At a glance, these findings have enormous sociocultural, economic, and life-changing ramifications for many people. For example, the findings on behavioral finance would be useful for those seeking sound investment decisions, that family support could benefit families with drug-dependent members, that food and accommodation could inform the tourism industry, that mobile phone store franchises are central to investors, whereas health information system could enlighten one technological aspect of health service provision, and so on and so forth. Following the proposed moves spelled out here, the findings would have to be shared with practitioners (e.g., tourism authorities, tourism associations, and travel agencies) so that the recommended evidence-based practices are then integrated into the latter’s norms (e.g., tourism operational guidelines). Furthermore, the integration process, including its attendant challenges, would need to be tracked—and more data to be fed into the iterative loop if needed—until the practices become fully embedded and operational in the system (STEM follow the same steps in their efforts to commodify their material or product inventions with industries). The process of scaling up would be enormously challenging to the social sciences, but the challenge cannot be ignored any longer if the discipline were to be as impactful as STEM at HEIs and the larger world. It is the way to go for the social sciences in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond.

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