



Humanities Stream: The Malison or Being Jinxed

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Abstract: In the era of domination of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) the discipline of humanities remains essential for fostering all-rounded individuals capable of addressing complex social challenges. The paper explores the significance of the humanities stream, analyzing the contributions to critical thinking, cultural awareness, ethical reasoning and democratic citizenship. It also draws on academic literature and real-world examples advocating a balanced approach that values the stream alongside technical fields. It is further argued that the stream is not only complementary to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) but also essential for societal progress yet still remains neglected at large. It is also considered a blot rather being regarded as progressive and professionally oriented.

Keywords: Fostering, Humanities, Literature, Professional, Technology.

1. Introduction

As witnessed in the recent decades, educational priorities have largely shifted towards science and technology, mostly at the expense of the humanities.

Meaning of Humanities

It is derived from the Latin term "humanitas," meaning "powers or capacities generally found in human beings," which is being the root of the English word "humanities," which in simple words means "humane." Thus, it mostly connected to people. It provides information about the lives of people, archives, cultures furthermore their prevalence. The field that inspects "the human experience" is referred to as "humanities." It mainly focuses on questions that we as humans historically and currently deal with. Some of the crucial concerns include who we are, what matters to us the most, what constitutes a better existence, the best methods to structure our communities, our obligations towards others, the differences and similarities between individuals (Soni, Malaiya, Mahana, & Ladha, 2023).

Subjects of Humanities

It comprises of the subjects namely literature, history, philosophy, languages, arts, political science, sociology, fine arts, education, home science, psychology, public administration and many more. Music and theatre (often shared with social sciences) that play a foundational role in shaping ethical, informed and empathetic citizens. It also include academic disciplines that studies human culture, behavior, values and experiences through critical, historical and analytical methods. These prioritize interpretive analysis over empirical experimentation providing insights into human impulses and cultural development (Humanities stream: A complete guide for parents on the future of their child, n.d.).

Contribution of Humanities

The contributions of humanities stream include critical thinking and communication that is it cultivates dissecting ability thus, encouraging students to question assumptions, evaluate arguments and vividly articulate ideas, for instance, studying literature assists in interpretive reading and persuasive writing; secondly, ethical and moral reasoning which includes history and philosophy and that helps individuals in learning from the past mistakes, grappling with moral dilemmas and developing a nuanced understanding of justice and human rights; thirdly, cultural awareness and empathy involving languages and literature fostering appreciation for diverse cultures and perspectives hence, nurturing empathy in the contemporary globalized world; fourthly, the subjects like political science and public administration provide information to the students about governmental structures, civic duties and social justice. The community engagement and democracy prepares individuals for active citizenship. (Humanities stream: A complete guide for parents on the future of their child, n.d.).

Skills of Humanities

The most crucial thing before moving onto the application part is the development of skills in which include communication skills i.e. writing, speaking, presenting ideas clearly and persuasively; research and analytical skills imply the ability of inspecting and interpreting information critically; problem-solving skills embracing creative thinking for solving complex issues; leadership and social awareness meaning sensitive to social problems and leadership qualities for change; last but not the least, cultural sensitivity skills which involving knowledge about diverse cultures, ideologies and perspectives (Humanities stream: A complete guide for parents on the future of their child, n.d.).

Application of Humanities

The real-world applications involve public policy and law as understanding historical context and ethical theory which is crucial in crafting fair laws and policies; secondly, journalism and media which implies that graduates possessing expertise in humanities stream are trained to think critically about the narratives, making them effective communicators; lastly, corporate sector which encompasses companies that increasingly value competencies like emotional, ethical and cultural developed through training.

The **challenges and misconceptions** as explicated further is that despite the importance, humanities often face budgeted cuts and declining enrolment (Humanities stream: A complete guide for parents on the future of their child, n.d.).

Misconceptions of Humanities

The common misconceptions are this stream doesn't lead to well-paying jobs, it less rigorous than STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) and lacks practical applications. As far as the integration of humanities and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) implying the future of education lies in interdisciplinary learning. The STEAM movement (adding "Arts" to STEM) reflects this trend. One of the instances being, ethical Artificial Intelligence development requires both technical knowledge and philosophical insight (Humanities stream: A complete guide for parents on the future of their child, n.d.).

Careers in Humanities

After completing their higher secondary, humanities stream students have access to a variety of undergraduate and postgraduate courses. There are certain options that incorporates academically bachelor/master/doctorate in various subjects like history, political science, sociology, psychology, languages, philosophy, social work, public administration, fine arts, visual arts and many more including business administration for careers in diplomacy and international business; legal which leads to a career in law; journalism and mass communication; hotel management; event management; designing courses like fashion, graphic and interior designing etc. (Humanities stream: A complete guide for parents on the future of their child, n.d.).

2. Emergence

Being a student of humanities while opting for it in the higher secondary I was being often questioned "why humanities?"; "are you confident enough to take up the humanities stream?"; "is there any job option if you choose the humanities stream subjects?" alongwith this, came across many stereotypical notions i.e. there is no future in humanities stream; alas! gone with humanities stream; if nothing works take up this stream at least you will pass or clear your graduation etc (JPS, 2023). No wonder I would at time become anxious and apprehensive thereby questioning my decision for opting this stream by then and it continues even till now. However, no regrets but some of the sneering related to stream stands true as there is lack of acceptance, constant neglect, minuscule efforts for upgradation, lack of well defined jobs and many more justifications to follow. For many it might be a bain but for me it turned out to be a boon as it provided a preview to the social world. While dealing with animate objects, I got to probe how each and every thing is distinct from the other which otherwise might not have been possible. It propelled to develop the keen eye for observation but I feel disheartened as to why society doesn't consider it worthy enough and it is still swayed by the cliché image. All these deliberations further coercively pushed me to further pen down in this work of mine putting forth by emphasizing on the idea that nothing is either trivial or futile rather it has own uniqueness which uncovers sooner or later (Blog, 2024).

3. Review of literature

Reiter (2017) in its work was of the view the global shift towards innovation and technological development, the rapid changes in the global economy and the United States Department of Education's attempted to find a one-size-fits-all solution for America's education woes, as the focus shifted towards the STEM subjects—science, technology, engineering and mathematics. It challenged the role of the humanities in American education, introducing concerns that the greater emphasis on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) disciplines has pushed arts, humanities and human sciences off to the side or even completely out of the picture in American classrooms. In this, ever changing technology-focused world, the need for humanities was felt for there to be in classrooms in the present context greater than ever for providing balance and perspective. These strengthen global view, broaden intellectual foundation, preparing individuals for vivid communication, assist in developing creativity, critical thinking skills and problem solving, formulating engaged citizens and thinkers, reinforcing cultural and ethical responsibilities as well as values, facilitating in comprehending the impact that science, technology and medicine had on society as well as developing well-rounded academics, students and

thinkers. It was further pointed in the study for Americans to realize that humanities was not just an aesthetic luxury to be served only as a side dish in the halls of higher education, but an essential part of a versatile education that must be initiated in the elementary school years and continue throughout an individual's life.

Dorot and Davidovitch (2020) focused on a case study in Israel that illuminated the status of the humanities in institutions of higher education around the world. It was explored through learning products approach and ways of coping with the challenges of the twenty-first century that existed and highlighted the significance of humanities studies in the technological world into which contemporary academic institutions had been drawn. Further the research focused on paradigmatic change in higher education from content centered to learning-centered academic programs and from "STEM" to "STEAM".

Edwards and Ritchie (2022) in their work mentioned that the discourse of humanities forms part of many Australian academic enabling programs which have been either embedded within the broader curriculum or as part of a standalone unit. In Edith Cowan University's UniPrep course, an introductory unit to humanities was offered to students as one of two electives alongwith three other core units. The unit introduces students to key concepts in Humanities exploring different disciplines alongwith studying it within the context of an academic enabling program that can provide students with many other benefits. The feedback from students enrolled in this unit indicates that students experienced an increased level of cultural competency, an evolution of world view and an enhanced level of critical thinking on completion of the unit. It was further suggested that the inclusion of Humanities in an academic enabling program could enhance students' preparedness for undergraduate study and life beyond university on different levels.

Soni, Malaiya, Mahana and Ladha (2023) in their work projected that the humanities and the arts are vital to contemporary life. These provided the opportunity to learn largely about the civilizations and experiences of others. It streamlined interaction, which in itself was essential for establishing relationships with others. The research addressed the significance of extensive studying of the art, literature and cultural studies in university education. As per the study, these disciplines inevitably include the analysis which has been essential to the growth of rational reflection. While deciding, giving judgment or taking any action, one must establish the limits of the discussion, discover the context of the problem including considering their fundamental assumptions. These have been prerequisites for a constructive discussion and traits of an exceptional intensive thinker. The way in which arts, humanities and cultural studies fostered critical thinking the study exhibited that creativity was not a distinct process from rational reflection. Furthermore, it was opinionated that the entire curriculum in university education ought to include studies in these sectors as it would likely to foster circumstances that could encourage the development of meaning and perceptivity.

Sutriwala, Kushwaha and Majagaonkar (2023) in their work highlighted about transformation of life and society under the influence of humanities and social science. The data collected was through secondary data analysis following a series of various research papers, books, articles and literature review for the same. It was concluded that humanities assisted in understanding others through their languages, chronicles and cultures. Humanities and social science make it easy to understand whether a new technology or pattern of life would either prove beneficial, fruitful and healthy or unfit, barren and impotent for the people. Societal transformations often include social changes, cultural, technological, political, economical and environmental changes. Social science helps people to comprehend the consequences and applications of newly emerging technologies. They are largely concerned with the social and economic advancement of humanity.

Zylstra, Belli, Cabo, MacDonald, Michals, Sowder and Swift (2024) in their work depicted that humanities have the potential to enhance STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) curriculum in the career-oriented professional degree programs. Further the relationship between the humanities and career-focused degree programs in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) departments was being explored. The research further describes the design and implementation of coursework which bridges the curricular divides between humanities disciplines and technical or career-focused disciplines by bringing in humanities concerning science and technology-oriented courses. It was particularly observed that the humanities served to improve technical skills for students in STEM-oriented professional degree programs.

4. Conclusion

The stream of humanities has been indispensable for a holistic education system. It develops critical citizens, thoughtful leaders and empathetic individuals. The need for humanistic thinking has never been greater as societies grapple with complex ethical, social and political issues

This stream is being an excellent choice for students who have been engrossed in human behaviour, society, culture and history. With the apt support and guidance, students can build successful careers in diverse fields that go on from law and politics to media, design, social work and international relations alongwith making meaningful contributions to society.

The stream might be balancing to maintain its importance, yet its subjects are the most popular and preferred ones to be taken up for clearing job related exams.

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