

SOS POLITICAL SCIENCE AND PUBLIC  
ADMINISTRATION

M.A.PUB.ADMN.-203

SUBJECT NAME:COMPARATIVE AND  
DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

UNIT-IV

TOPIC NAME:SOCIAL SCIENTIST

## ◉ **WHAT IS A SOCIAL SCIENTIST**

The term social sciences' refers to a vast group of academic disciplines that use scientific method to study various aspects of human behavior. These disciplines include anthropology, psychology, social work, economics, and linguistics, just to name a few.

## ○ SOCIAL SCIENTISTS - WHAT THEY DO

Social scientists study all aspects of society—from past events and achievements to human behavior and relationships among groups. Their research provides insights into the different ways individuals, groups, and institutions make decisions, exercise power, and respond to change. They look at data in detail, such as studying the data they've collected, reanalyzing already existing data, analyzing historical records and documents, and interpreting the effect of location on culture and other aspects of society. Through their studies and analyses, social scientists offer insight into the physical, social, and cultural development of humans, as well as the links between human activity and the environment. Following are brief discussions of several major types of social scientists. Specialists in one field may find that their research overlaps work being conducted in another discipline.

## ○ THE MANY HATS A SOCIAL SCIENTIST MIGHT WEAR

As we have said, the term social scientist' covers a wide range of academic disciplines. In Europe, a Bachelor of Science degree in the social sciences is a common academic track. In the United States, universities tend to offer various specializations within the social sciences college. Here are just a few of the academic disciplines to choose from in the wide world of SS.

- **Anthropology**
- **Political Science**
- **History**
- **Psychology**
- **Archaeology**
- **Geography**

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## ○ **METHODS**

- **QUANTITATIVE METHOD-** The quantitative method is interested in studying human phenomena through statistical analysis and data evaluation. The quantitative method draws its conclusions from verifiable experiments. One who studies the spending trends of a population in an attempt to influence the market, for instance, would rely heavily on the quantitative method.
- **QUALITATIVE METHOD** - The qualitative method favors direct observation, the analysis of text, interviews, anecdotes and communication with its subjects in order to understand social phenomena. An anthropologist sent to study the family structure of a particular tribe by living with and interviewing the members of that community would rely primarily on the qualitative method.

## ○ **WORK ENVIRONMENT**

- Most social scientists have regular hours. Although they work most often as an integral part of a research team, they sometimes work alone, writing reports of their findings. Travel may be necessary to collect information or attend meetings, and those on foreign assignment must adjust to unfamiliar cultures, climates, and languages.
- Some social scientists do fieldwork.
- Social scientists employed by colleges and universities.

## o **EDUCATION & TRAINING REQUIRED**

Graduates with master's degrees in applied specialties usually are qualified for positions outside of colleges and universities, although requirements vary by field. A Ph.D. degree may be required for higher level teaching positions. Bachelor's degree holders have limited opportunities; however, a bachelor's degree does provide a suitable background for many different kinds of entry-level jobs in related occupations, such as research assistant, writer, management trainee, and market analyst. In addition, bachelor's degree holders in history often qualify for elementary, middle, and high school teaching positions.



- Training in statistics and mathematics is essential for many social scientists, most of whom increasingly are using mathematical and quantitative research methods. The ability to use computers for research purposes is mandatory in most disciplines. Social scientists also must keep up to date on the latest technological advances that affect their discipline and research. For example, most geographers use GIS technology extensively, and a growing number of archaeologists are beginning to incorporate the technology into their work.

## ● OTHER SKILLS REQUIRED

Social scientists need excellent written and oral communication skills to report research findings and to collaborate on research. The ability to think logically and methodically also is essential in analyzing complicated issues. Objectivity, an open mind, and systematic work habits are important in all kinds of social science research. Perseverance, too, often is necessary, as when an anthropologist spends years studying artifacts from an ancient civilization before making a final analysis and interpretation.

## ○ CAREER OUTLOOK

The good news is that jobs are growing faster than the national average for many of the social science disciplines. However, with a growing need comes an influx of qualified graduates and the competition for jobs is fierce.



- **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

If you considered all the factors the long thankless hours in the library, stiff competition for jobs, and the idea of sand in your shoes on hot anthropological digs and you still know deep in your bones that a career as a social scientist is for you, then you're the perfect candidate for this line of work. Check out the following links for more information on careers in social science, a look at trends in the industry, and a general overview on just what in the heck a social scientist does.