

# Social Sciences Research in Select Four South Asia Countries: A Quantitative Analysis of Publications, 2008–12

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## Abstract

The overall research output in social sciences consisting of 2681 papers in Pakistan, 993 papers in Bangladesh, 521 papers in Sri Lanka and 331 papers in Nepal during 2008–12 has been analyzed with a view to study the publication growth rate and citation impact, share of international collaborative papers and leading collaborators, broad subject-wise scatter of publications, geographical distribution of publications, contribution and impact of leading institutions and identification of most productive journals contributing to social science research. The data for the study has been derived from Scopus international multidisciplinary bibliographical database.

**Keywords:** Social Science, Research Output, Quantitative Analysis

## 1. Introduction

The social sciences cover a range of disciplines and a wide array of complex issues. Social policy that stems out of applications of knowledge generated from research in social sciences is concerned with a range of human needs and with the social institutions created to meet these needs. Study of the social sciences enhances our fundamental understanding of governance and institutions in economy, polity and society. Social science research is mainly driven by two forces: interest in knowledge about the functioning of society in its diverse social, cultural, political and economic aspects and in understanding the factors that shape them, and the practical needs of the policy-makers and managers in government, civil society and the private sector for reliable data and professional analysis<sup>1</sup>.

The post-war period has witnessed a moderate growth in the number of universities, specialized research institutions, private bodies, governmental and non-governmental organizations conducting social science research in South

Asia. However social sciences' expansion has followed a different trajectory in the various countries in the region. There are sharp differences in both the nature of the social science institutional structures and the pace at which they have grown. This variation can be explained by a number of factors, ranging from the size of the country, the historical context of both the colonial and post-colonial eras shaping the emergence and development of these countries, the nature of their political regimes and difference in their other socio-economic-religious and cultural factors<sup>2</sup>.

### 1.1 Literature Review

A few scientometric studies have been carried out on South Asia. Gupta and Mahesh<sup>3</sup> analyzed the overall social science research output in four South Asia countries (Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal) during 1996–2011, looking at similarities in their research profile, besides looking at the priorities assigned and citation impact of publication outputs under different sub-fields,

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