

Values in Science

These days, we (as a society) face challenges such as a spread of disinformation, climate change, threats to cybersecurity, unequal opportunities, increasing obesity, discrimination, extremism and many more. Is science the solution to everything? Where should humankind invest its resources and why? Is it in search for answers to fundamental questions about the Universe or rather in an attempt to save our civilisation from soon becoming extinct?

There are certain things which cannot be explained by science. To be convinced by my claim, at first let's take a closer look at what Science is. Strictly speaking, since there is not to be found any demarcation criterion of science, the functioning definition will remain the one advocating falsifiability as a demarcation criterion proposed by Karl Popper, with the respect to its nuances and imperfections. 2) In addition, scientific facts can change and are not value-neutral, therefore to apply rigorously scientific knowledge to every decision would unnecessarily limit its outcome.

It is clear that science is a powerful tool helping us understand and explain certain phenomena such as the direct link between smoking & tobacco use and cancer, heart disease, stroke, etc.¹, however, people, even those who know this fact, still continue doing it. Science is only a mean to an end, and whether the scientific knowledge will be accepted by the society depends on its wants which are closely tied to its (those of the society) values. For instance, if the society valued health above quick, intense relaxation in the form of tobacco use, smoking would not be that popular.

We as a society should rely on grouping people together to make them cooperate.

¹https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/health_effects/index.htm#:~:text=Smoking%20causes%20cancer%2C%20heart%20disease,immune%20system%2C%20including%20rheumatoid%20arthritis.