

Societal Dilemmas with Neuroscience and Technology Research

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Abstract

In this research study, we aimed to determine if there are any societal barriers currently being faced by neuroscience and technology (neuro S/T) research. As it is hypothesized that the attitudes and values of the general public seem to be ambivalent on neuro S/T research. Their views are based on their personal ethical values (religious background), scientific understanding (educational level), and need (factor of age) for neuro S/T research. The PEW research center (2014), conducted a survey to see how the society feels about the inventions made by science and their impact on our future. The survey yielded data that suggested that people's views on brain research are not so positive. In this study, we analyze the data collected through this survey to understand how society feels about neuro S/T. Our hypothesis was validated based on the results of the survey that religious background, education level and age does affect an individual's view of neuro S/T. If we want to ensure that the public's apprehension towards use of these technologies decreases, then the government should put effort into establishment of a policy that specifically addresses the ethical, scientific, and legal regulations governing neuro S/T research. The policy should be a starting point of an outreach program that explains the basics of this research and its effects to the general public in layman terms. We will only feel comfortable with the novelties of these techniques, if we understand the intended effects and the positive impact of these technologies.

Keywords: ethics, neuroscience, research and development, society, public administration, policy

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