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**Philosophy of Social Sciences(AND APPLIED SCIENCES)**

In the 18th and 19th century, the success recorded in natural science was so large on the social and intellectual life of the then people of Europe that they started believing in the words of the scientist and even requested their opinion on matters which were unrelated to science such as law and forensic evidence. This positive response to science happened as a result of a change in the socio-cultural milieu of the time and this explains why belief in science or application of science to any issue is called positivism from then on. The socio-cultural milieu in which the positivism spread is called the Renaissance and the Enlightenment period. It is also called the renaissance period because it marked the time when people started a revolution of return to their to their Greek heritage of using reasons in matters of public concerns and not the dictate of religion as it is was in the age prior to this time.

Scientific approach to things grew out of philosophical approach to issues, but science was restricted to study of natural phenomena because it was only the material that was believed to behave in a regular and predictable way. Not until a French social philosopher by the name Augusta Comte thought otherwise. He was of the opinion that society behaves in a regular pattern much like material things and this behaviour can be studied and some what accurate predictions made. This is the beginning of social sciences, especially sociology and Comte is being regarded till date as the father of sociology and social sciences in general.

Positivism rejects theoretical speculations that are not based on facts of experience as a means of obtaining knowledge. There are lots of problems with the conception of ideal knowledge seeking enterprise. The first problem is observation upon which the basic justification of positivism came is laden with error. These include the facts that

1. Observations are concept-laden
2. Observations are hypothesis-laden
3. Observations are theory-laden
4. Observations are value-laden
5. Observations are interest-laden

Observations are laden with culture-specific ontologies

What is Social Science?

Social Science is an area of study dedicated to the explanation of human behaviour, interaction and manifestations, either as an individual in a society or collectively as a group; including the institutions, norms and mores such interactions created.

Social sciences seek to employ the method of science in the investigation of social phenomena taking the human person as object of study. This objectives of such endeavour include:

1. Understanding the development of humans in both historical or cultural context and factors responsible for it
2. Being able to predict the human behaviour based on the pattern of interaction, belief system, social norms and other factors that influence the human behaviour in relation to the economic and political activities
3. Being able to influence and groom the human behaviour towards a socially desirable conduct and channelling collective towards development
4. Discovering and manipulating if possible, the laws that govern or guide the human behaviour
5. Advancing Beyond armchair philosophy, the knowledge about the characteristic temperament and associated behaviour of a person or group

The philosophy of social science arouse out if the curiosity that the central focus and the propelling motive of social science may be impossible or unattainable due to methodological mismatch

**The Problem of Reasons and Causes**

In order to understand the problem with social sciences we need to understand that one of the important features of science and scientific explanations is to provide a causal or correlating connection between what happened and what caused it. For anything to be the cause of another, the effect and cause must:

1. It must have and invariable or constant relation; meaning that whenever the alleged cause occurs the effect must also occur.
2. The two events must occur in approximately the same location or at least related by a chain of events which are spatially linked.
3. It must be temporarily related such that the cause precedes the effect in time just as the effect must follow continuously from the cause.
4. It must have an asymmetrical relation in that the occurrence of the supposed cause must be the actual event, which brings about the effect, such that the effect must not be part of the original conditions that are necessary and sufficient for it’s own occurrence.

In other words the principles of the cause and effects states that for every event in the universe, there is a set of conditions such that if all the conditions are fulfilled, then every event invariably occurs. In every event **‘B’** in the universe, there is always a cause **‘A'** such that **‘B’** can always be explained by referring to the events that took place in **‘A'.**

**The Problem of Human Person as Object of Study in Social Sciences**

According to Max Weber, methodology of science becomes inapplicable due to the fact that the object of study in social science is man, a rational being with the freewill, emotions, desires and other sentient features that come into play in his action or reaction. All these are factors known to undermine the notion of predictability of behaviourwith which natural science is known to deduce their principles and law. For example the law of demand and supply in economics which predicts that man as a rational being will buy more when the price is low and buy less when the price is high.