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 ASSIGNMENT

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF CHAPTER 8 ( philosophy of social sciences and applied sciences).

 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 have in a regular and predictable way. Not until a French social philosopher called August Comte thought other wise. 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 father of sociology and social sciences in general.

 Social sciences is seen as 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. Disciplines in the social sciences include: sociology, psychology, economics, political science, archaeology and anthropology. Although the history of the disciple dates back to early philosophers who wanted to study how society works such as St Augustine and the 14th century historian Ibn Khaldun; down to Karl Marx, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Emily Durkheim and a host of other social thinkers. However, it was August Comte that is regarded as the father of social sciences. Social sciences seek to employ the method of science in the investigation of social phenomena taking the human person as object of study. However, the philosophy of social science arouse out of the curiosity that the central focus and the propelling motive of social science maybe impossible or unachievable due to methodological mismatch. In other words, there exist an incongruity in using method of scientific inquiry to study human and the society. The incongruity stem from the fact that human beings do not behave in exact way objective of natural sciences behave. A stone is not a conscious being, so it may behave in a regular and thus predictable way when pushed. However, a man as a conscience and rational being may not behave in the same pattern.

 The objective of social science includes, understanding humans in both historical and cultural development context and factors responsible for such development or change, being able to predict human behaviour based on the pattern of interactions, belief system, social norms and other factors Influencing human behaviour, especially in relation to economic and political activities, influencing human behaviour, grooming it towards a socially desirable conduct and channelling collective efforts towards development. The problem of reasons and causes, to understand this problem with social sciences better, we need to understand that one of the essential features of science and scientific explanation is to provide a causal or correlational connection between an event and its cause. The cause *and* effect must: have an invariableor constant relation in the sense that whenever the alleged cause occurs, the effect must occur; be spatially contiguous, that is, the two events must occur in approximately the same location or at least be related by a chain of events that are spatially linked; be temporally related such that the cause precedes the effect in time just as the effect must follow continuously from the cause. Francis Offor explains this point in the following words: The principle of cause and effect states that for every event in the conditions are all fulfilled, then the event invariably occurs. Put differently, the principle states that for every event `B’ in the universe, there is always a cause `A’, such that `B’ can always be explained by reference to the activities of event `A’. This is the principle that underlines the method of explanation in science. Offor also goes further to assert that, by employing the scientific method in social investigations, the social sciences seek to explain the cause of action involving human agents. One way to solve this problem is to accept reasons are not causes but motive or intent. Nevertheless, there are some other scholars who insist that reasons can be treated as causes one of such scholars is Robin Collingwood who argues to the extreme that reasons are not only causes but they are the ultimate causal power to inanimate things and objects in the physical world maybe too naive of us.

 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 freewill, desires, emotions and other sentient features that come into play in his action or reaction. All these factors undermine the notion of predictability of behaviour with which natural science is known to deduce their principles and laws. However, it has been observed even by economists themselves that these laws do not hold all the time since man does not behave rationally all the time. In fact, in recent years, capitalists have been able to manipulate consumer behaviour to the point it is doubtful if these laws hold any longer. Some application will even force the user to update it, causing the user to spend data on the update as data is the currency of the internet of nowadays. The law of demand and supply does not seem to work here as consumers have no choice. Now, if a supposed scientific law is neither absolute nor hold quite often, should we continue to call it laws of economics.