**Ganiyu Omotolani Zainab**

**19/law01/102**

**GST118 history and philosophy of science**

Social science is an area of study dedicated to the explanation of human behavior, interaction and manifestations either as an individual in a society or collectively as a group which includes the institutions, norms and mores such interactions created. Social science is the branch of science devoted to the study of human societies and the relationships among individuals within those societies. Disciplines in the social science include: sociology, psychology, economics, political science, archaeology, and anthropology.

The study of science was restricted to the study of natural phenomena because it was the only material that was believed to behave in a regular and predictable way. However, a French philosopher called August Comte was of the believe that the society behaves in a regular pattern much like material things and that those behaviors can be studied and somewhat accurate predictions made. This believe by this philosopher was the beginning of social science.

Social science as a discipline seeks to employ the method of science in the investigation of social phenomena taking the human person as object of study. The objectives of such endeavor include:

* Understanding humans in both historical and cultural development context and factors responsible for such development or change
* Ability to predict human behavior based on the pattern of interaction, belief system, social norms and other factors influencing human behavior, especially in relation to economic and political activities.
* Ability to influence human behavior by grooming it towards a socially desirable conduct and channeling collective effort towards development.
* Discovering and manipulating the laws governing most of human behavior
* Advancing beyond armchair philosophy, the knowledge about the characteristic temperament associated behavior of a person or group, or that exhibited by those engaged in an activity

Philosophy is a rational enquiry into the fundamental assumptions of any field of inquiry. Philosophy as a second order discipline is interested other areas of knowledge in order to criticize the grounds of the knowledge claims made in other disciplines such as social science. The philosophy of social science arouses out of the curiosity that the central focus and the propelling motive of social science may be impossible or unachievable due to methodological mismatch. This simply means that it is unsuitable to use the method used in scientific enquiry to study human and his society. This is simply because humans do not behave in the exact way objects of natural sciences behave. Objects of natural sciences behave in a regular and predictable way, while man as a conscious and rational being may not behave in the same way.

The principle of cause and effect states that for every event in the universe, there is a set of conditions such that if the conditions are all fulfilled, then the event invariably occurs. 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’. by employing the scientific method in social investigation, the social sciences seek to explain the cause of action involving human agents.

The problem of human person as object of study in social sciences is another problem with the project of social science. 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 behavior with which natural science is known to deduce their principles and laws. For example, the law of demand and supply which tries to predict how man purchases what he wants I being somewhat defied because man’s actions are unpredictable.