

NAME : *ifeanyi Jennifer ogochukwu*

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QUESTION

In not more than two (2) pages, do a review of chapter eight (8) of Temidayo D. Oladipo and Noah O. Balogun, History and Philosophy of science. A brief survey. Ibadan: Hope publication. Page 86-95.

INTRODUCTION

The success recorded in natural science in the natural science in the eighteenth and nineteenth century was so enormous on the social and intellectual life of the then people Europe that they started trusting the words of scientist and even sought their opinions on matters unrelated to science such as law and forensic evidence.

The socio-cultural milieu in which positivism grew is called the renaissance and the enlightenment period. It is called a renaissance period because it marked the period when people started a revolution of return to their Greek heritage of using reasons in matters of public concern and not the dictate of religion as it was in the age prior to this time. The aeon prior to the renaissance period was called the dark ages because it was the time religious belief reigned supreme.

Bertrand Russell puts this more succinctly when he said that, "the period of history which is commonly called "modern" has a mental outlook which differs from that of the medieval period in many ways. The diminishing authority of the church, and the increasing authority of science are the most important. Russell holds that "emancipation from the authority of the church led to the growth of Individualism, even to the point of anarchy. Modeled on empirical sciences which provides it with a methodology, positivism declares false, all propositions that could not be solved or verified by experience such as metaphysical statements due to a high degree of abstract nature.

What is social 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; including the institutions, norms, and more of such interactions created. Disciplines in the social science are political science, economics, sociology, anthropology amongst others. The history of the discipline 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, Emile Durkheim and

a host of other social thinkers. Auguste Comte is regarded as the father of social science. It seeks to employ the method of science in the investigation of social phenomena taking the human person as object of study. The objectives of the endeavor are to understand human in both historical and cultural development context and the factors responsible for their development; influencing human behavior; being able to predict human behavior based on the interaction, social norms and factors influencing human behavior.

Francis Offor explains the problem of Reasons and Causes in the following words: “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”. He also went ahead to assert that “by employing the scientific method in social investigation, the social science seeks to explain the cause of action involving human agents. The way to solve these problems is to accept reasons and not causes by motive or intent.

Another problem with the project of social science is that, according to Max Weber, methodology of science becomes inapplicable due to the fact that the 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. An instance is seen in the law of demand and supply in economics which predict that human as a rational being will buy less when the price is higher and will buy more when the price is low. It is on this basic assumption of rational behavior that the law of demand and supply was formulated :the higher the demand, the higher the price ,but the higher the supply the lower the price.

With these few points I hope that u have understood all that is need to be known about this chapter.