

NAME: SABINUS CHIDIMMA. G.

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COURSE:HISTORY AND PHILOSOPY OF SCIENCE

ASSIGNMENT

In not more than 2 pages, do a review of chapter 8 of Temidayo .D. Oladipo and Noah.O. Balogun.

Answer.

PHILOSOPHY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE (AND APPLIED SCIENCE)

In the 18th and 19th century, natural science success record was so enormous on the intellectual and social life of the people of Europe that they sought opinion and answers on matter unrelated to science such as forensic evidence and they started trusting every word of the scientists. There was a positive response to science and this happened as a result of a change In the socio-cultural milieu of the time. This explains why application of science or belief in science to any issue is known as **positivism**.

The socio-cultural milieu in which positivism grew is called the **renaissance and the enlightenment period**. This is so because it marks the when people started a revolution of return to their Greek heritage of using reasons in matter of public concern and not the dictate of religion as it was in the age prior to this time. The aged prior to the renaissance period was called **the dark ages** because it was the tie religious beliefs reigned supreme. This was a time where people were burned because the church found them guilty of one crime or another and the intellectual community saw this as a big threat to human survival, so they infiltrated literature with benefit of using reason to arrive at justified conclusion just as Aristotle did. This era can be known as the classical period of romanticism. Romanticism gave rise to naturalism and humanism. Bertrand Russell said that "the period of history which is commonly known as "modern" has a metal outlook which differs from the medieval period.

The effect in manoeuvring was overwhelming. Scientific approach to things grew out of philosophical approach to issues, but 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. August Comte, a French social philosopher came about and thought otherwise. He was of the opinion that a society behaves similarly and this behaviour can be studied and also make accurate prediction and this was the beginning of social science, especially sociology. Till date, Comte is still regarded as the father of sociology and social science in general.

There are a lot of problems with this conception of ideal knowledge seeking enterprise. Firstly, the problem is observation upon which the basic justification of positivism came is laden with error. These ideas include the fact that:

1. Observations are concept-laden
2. Observations are hypothesis-laden
3. Observations are theory-laden

4. Observation are value-laden
And many more.

What is social science?

Social science is an area of study dedicated to the explanation of human behaviour, interaction and manifestations either to an individual in a society or collectively as a group. Disciplines of social science includes; sociology, political science, archaeology ,economics, psychology and anthropology. The early philosophers include St Augustine, Ibn Khaldun, Karl Max, Thomas Hobbes , John Locke, Emile Durkheim and others. Social science has objectives and they include

1. Understanding human in both historical and cultural development context and factors responsible for such development.
2. Being able to predicta humans behaviour based on interaction pattern
3. Influencing human behaviour
4. Discussing and manipulating

However, philosophy of science arouse out the curiosity thatthe central focus may be impossible to achieve due to methodological mismatch

The Problems of Reasons and Causes

In order to understand the problems of social science, we need to understand that one of the features of science and scientific explanation is to provide a casual or correlational connection between an event and its causes. **Francis Offor** explains that the principle of cause and effect states that for every event, there is a set of condition such that if the condition are all fulfilled, then the event invariably occurs. Offor goes further to assert that, “by employing the scientific method in social investigation, the social sciences seek to explain the cause of the action involving human agents.” A good example is a case of a man who went to the supermarket to buy canned beef. We can say that the reason he left for the

supermarket was to buy canned beef. The motive which is to buy canned beef is the cause and going to the supermarket is the effect.

The Problem of Human Person as Object of Study in Social Science

According to Max Weber, another problem with the project of social science is that, methodology of science becomes inapplicable due to the fact that the object of study in social science is man, a rational being with freewill, desire and other sentient features that come into play in his action or reaction. It has been observed by economists themselves that these laws do not hold all the time since man does not behave rationally all the time. Capitalist have been able to manipulate consumers behaviour to the point it is doubtful if these laws hold any longer. For example, some android and iPhone applications are of necessity to buy if you want to use the phone and some applications even force the user to

update it, causing the user to spend data on the update as data is the currency of the internet. The law of demand and supply does not work that way here as consumers have no choice. Now if a supposed scientific law is neither absolute nor holds quite often, should we continue to call it scientific law of economics