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PHILOSOPY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES (AND APPLIED SCINCES)

 In the 18th and 19th century the scientists were been trusted and asked unrelated questions like law and into place cause of the positive response that happened as a result in change of socio-cultural milieu of the time.

Socio-cultural milieu where positivism grew from is called renaissance and the enlightenment period. In renaissance period people started a revolution of return top their Greek heritage of using reason in matters of public concern and not the dictate of religion. The aeon prior to the renaissance period was called dark ages because this was the time when religious belief reigned supreme. The decision of the pope was final on any matter either political, social, or intellectual. Illness were regarded as sin that individuals committed so the church waged several wars to exterminate the heathens. The intellectuals in the community saw this as a danger to human happiness and survival. So they used literature with the benefit of using reasoning to justify conclusions like Socrates, Plato and Aristotle used to do. Romanticism gave rise to humanism and naturalism and the work of arts and literature were called classic. Bertrand Russell said that “the period of history which is called modern” has a mental outlook which differs from the medieval period in many ways; they are two important things the diminishing authority of the church and the increasing authority of science.

 Science was restricted to study of natural phenomena because it was only material that was believed to behave in a regular and predictable way. August Comte thought otherwise he was of the opinion that society behaves in a regular pattern much like material things and this behavior can be studied and somewhat accurate predictions made. Comte is being regarded today as 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 lot of problems with this conception of ideal knowledge seeking enterprise. First of the problems is observation upon which the basic justification of positivism came in laden with error. These includes facts like,

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
6. Observations are laden with culture- specific ontologies

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 as a group in a community. Disciplines in social science include sociology, psychology, economics, political science, archaeology and anthropology. The history of disciplines dates back to when philosophers who wanted to study society works such as St Augustine and the 14th – century historian Ibn Khaldun; down to Karl Marx etc.

 Social sciences seek to employ the method of science in the investigation of social phenomena taking the human person as object of study. Example

(1)Understanding humans in both historical and cultural development context (2) being able to predict human behaviors based on pattern of interaction (3) influencing human behavior (4) discovering and manipulating if possible (5) advancing beyond armchair philosophy.

The problem of reasons and causes

For anything to be the cause of another, the cause and effect must

1. Have an invariable or constant relation in the sense that whenever the alleged cause occurs, the effect must also occur;
2. be spatially contiguous
3. be temporally
4. have an asymmetrical relation in that the occurrence of the alleged cause must be actual event, which brings about the effect, such that the effect must not be lost of the original conditions that are necessary and sufficient for it’s own occurrence

Francis also explains this points given in his words he also gives example s relating to the issue

The problem of human person as object of study in social sciences was looked at by Max Weber that methodology of science becomes applicable due to the fact he object of study in social science is man, a rational being with free will, desires, emotions and other sentient features that come into play in his action or reaction.

Now if a supposed law is neither absolute nor hold quite often should we continue to call it scientific laws of economics ?