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In chapter 8 of Temidayo D. Oladipo and Noah O. Balogun, History and Philosophy of science began that the people of Europe stated trusting the words of scientists and even sought their opinion on matters unrelated to science due to the success recorded in natural science in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. The socio-cultural milieu in which positivism grew is called the renaissance and the enlightenment period. The renaissance period marked a period when people started a revolution of return to their Greek heritage of using reason in matters of public concern and not the dictate of religion as it was in the age prior to this time. However, the intellectual community at the same time saw this as a big threat to human happiness and survival. S0 they started infiltrating literature with the benefits of using reason to arrive at justified conclusion just as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle used to do. This became known as the classical period of romanticism.

The effect of that maneuvering was overwhelming 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 behave in a regular and predictable way. But a French social philosopher called August Comte thought otherwise. 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. What is social science? Social science is an area of study dedicated to the explanation of human behavior, interactions and manifestations, either as an individual in a society or collectively as a group including the institutions, norms and mores such interactions created, Disciplines in the social science include: sociology, psychology, economics, political science, archaeology and anthropology. Social sciences seek to employ the method of science in the investigation of social phenomena taking the human person as object of study. They include:

1. Understanding humans in both historical and cultural development context and factors responsible for such development or change
2. Being able 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
3. Influencing human behavior; grooming it towards a socially desirable conduct and channeling collective effort towards development
4. Discovering and manipulating if possible, the laws governing most of human behavior; and
5. Advancing beyond armchair philosophy, the knowledge about the characteristics temperature and associated behavior of a person or group, or that exhibited by those engaged in an activity

NOTE: Philosophy of social science arouse out of the curiosity that the central focus and the propelling motive of social science may be impossible or unachievable due to methodological mismatch.

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 casual or correlational connection between an event and it cause.

1. Have an invariable or constant relation in the sense that whenever the alleged cause occurs, the effect must also occur;
2. Be spatially contagious, 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;
3. Be temporally related such that the cause precedes the effect in time just as the effect must follow continuously from the cause; and
4. Have an asymmetrical relation in that the cause must be the actual event, which brings about the effect, such that the effect must not be part of the original conditions that are necessary and sufficient for its own occurrences

This is further explained by Francis Offor that 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. 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 underlies the method of explanation in science.

THE PROBLEM OF HUMAN PERSON AS OBJECT OF STUDY IN SOCIAL SCIENCES

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 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. Take for instance the law of demand and supply in economics which predicts that human as a rational being will buy less when the price is high and buy more when the price is low. 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. For example, some android phones or iPhones applications are of necessity to buy if you want to use the phone. 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 scientific laws of economics?