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PHILOSOPHY ASSIGNMENT [SUMMARY OF CHAPTER VIII].

PHILOSOPHY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES [AND APPLIED SCIENCES].

 In the eighteenth and nineteenth century, the success recorded in natural science was quite enormous on intellectual and social life of the people, that they started trusting the words of scientists even when matters were not related to science. This happened as a result of change in the socio-cultural milieu, which gives the answer to why belief in science or its application to any issue is called positivism. The socio-cultural milieu was called the renaissance period, because it was a period when people started a revolution of return to their greek heritage of using reason in matters of public and not the dictate of religion. They started infiltrating literature with benefits of using reason to arrive at justified conclusion like some scholars used to do. This period was known as the classical period of romanticism, which gave rise to humanism and naturalism.

Russell holds that “emancipation from the authority of the church led to the growth of individualism”. Scientific approach to things grow out of philosophical approach to issues, but science was restricted to the study of natural phenomena, because it was believed to behave in a regular way. However, Auguste comte, a French philosopher, thought otherwise and that was the beginning of social sciences and today, comte is regarded as the father of social sciences.

There are a lot of problems with the conceptions of ideal knowledge, seeking enterprise and the first is observation, upon which basic justifications of positivism came is laden with errors and these are; Observations are concept-laden, hypothesis-laden, theory-laden, value-laden, interest-laden and laden with culture-specific ontologies.

Social science is an area of study dedicated to the explanation of human behaviour, interaction and manifestations either as an individual, or collectively as a group. Some disciplines in social science are sociology, archaeology, anthropology etc. Although the history of the discipline dates back to early philosophers who wanted to study how society works, it was still Auguste comte that is regarded as the father of social science. The objectives of social science is understanding humans in both historical and cultural development, being able to predict human behaviour, influencing human behaviour, advancing beyond armchair philosophy etc.

Philosophy of social science arouse out of curiosity that the motive of social science may be unachievable. To understand the problem of reason and causes, we need to understand that one of the features of science is to provide a correlational connection between an event and its cause. For anything to be the cause of another, the cause and the effect must; have an invariable relation, be spatially contagious, be temporally related, have an asymmetrical relation. The principle of cause and effect states that for every event in the universe, there is a set of conditions that are fulfilled then the event invariably occurs. Auguste comte and some scholars argued that it is not better to leave the reason as motive ad not cause, while some other scholars insist that reasons can be treated as causes.

Another problem is the problem of human person as object of study in social science. According to Max Weber, science becomes inapplicable because the object of study is man who is a rational being with freewill, desires and emotions and some other sentient features that come into play in his actions or reaction, which undermine the predictability of behaviour in natural science. For instance, economics states that man as a rational being will buy more goods at a lesser price and vice versa. It was also observed by economists that these laws do not hold all the time, because ma does not always behave rationally.