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QUESTION:

Summarise the chapter 8 of History and philosophy of science textbook

Success has been recorded in natural science in the eighteenth and nineteenth century which was so enormous on the social and intellectual life of the Europeans which made them start trusting the word of the scientist and they even asked for their knowledge on matters that were not related to science

The positivism grew on a socio-cultural milieu called the Renaissance and enlightenment period. It was called the renaissance period because this was the period in which people started to turn to their Greek heritage. Pope’s words were the final authority and it was a time when people were burned because of witchcraft and sorcery. Diseases were the consequences of sin and idolatry

When the community at that time began to see It as a treat to human happiness, they started infiltrating literature with the belief of using reason to arrive at a justified conclusion, just as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle used to do and it’s result was overwhelming

The use of scientific approach sprout out of from philosophical approach to issues but science was made to deal with only the natural phenomena because it was believed to behave in a predictable way. August Comte believed that society has a regular pattern in which it behaves and this behaviour can be studied for some predictions this is how social science came along

Positivism doesn’t deal with the theoretical speculations that are not based on experience as a means of getting knowledge there are lots of problems with this concept of ideal knowledge seeking enterprise. The first is that of observation in which the basic justification of positivism is about.

Social science is an area of study that is dedicated to the explaining of human behaviours, interaction and manifestations either as individuals or as a group, early philosophers who wanted to study how the society works seek to employ giving methods in investigating social phenomena which has its own objectives. The philosophy of social sciences came about due to the curiosity that focus and science maybe unachievable due to the methodological mismatch.

To understand social science better we must understand science as a feature to prove a causal connection between event and its cause. “But first what is cause and effect” in order to clarify what it is cause and effect must: a) have an invariable or constant relationship b) it must be specially contiguous c) it must be temporarily related d) it must have an argumentrical relationship.

Francis Offor says that for every event in the universe there must be a set of conditions such that if they are fulfilled then the event occurs invariably in which for every event B there must be a cause A, he goes further to say that “ by employing the scientific method in investigation, social sciences seek to explain the cause of action of human agencies" according to his words reason and cause can be used interchangeably. One way to solve is to accept that reasons are not causes but motives and intent, some scholars have argued on whether it is better to leave reason as motive , drive or intents and not cause whereas some scholars insist that reason can be treated as cause.

Another problem with social science is that, according to Maxs Weber, social science became in applicable due to its object of study been man, a being with free will and desires and other features that can play a role in its action or behaviours. All this factors present a predictability of behaviour, its on this basic assumption of rational behaviour that the law of demand and supply was formulated in economics where the higher the demand the higher the price and vice versa, but economists themselves know that it is not in all cases that this law applies because man does not behave rationally if a supposed scientific law is not absolute or cannot hold mist we continue calling it a scientific law?