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**CHAPTER 8 (GST 114)**

**PHILOSOPHY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND APPLIED SCIENCES**

This positive response to science happened as a result of a change in the socio-cultural milieu of the time and this explains why belief in science or application of science to any issue is called positivism from then on. The socio-cultural milieu in which positivism grew is called the renaissance and the enlightenment period. It was a time men and women were burned at stake because the church has found them guilty of witchcraft or sorcery. Diseases were said to be direct consequence of sin and idolatry, so the church waged several wars to exterminate the heathens. However, the intellectual community at the time saw this as a big threat to human happiness and survival.

The effect of that manoeuvring was overwhelming. Scientific approach to things grew out of philosophical approach 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.

There are lots of problems with this conception of ideal knowledge seeking enterprise. First of these problems is observation upon which the basic justification of positivism came is laden with error. These include the facts that: Observations are concept-laden, observations are hypothesis-laden, observations are theory-laden, observations are value-laden, observations are interest-laden, observations are laden with culture-specific ontologies. However, irrespective of the shortcomings of positivism, let us explicate on the idea of social science it birthed.

**WHAT IS SOCIAL SCIENCE?**

Social science is an area of study dedicated to the explanation of human behaviour, interaction 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 sciences include; sociology, psychology, economics, political science, archaeology.

Social sciences seek to employ the method of science in the investigation of social phenomena taking the human person as object of study. The objectives of such endeavour include; Understanding humans in all development context, Being able to predict human behaviour based on the factors influencing human behaviour, Influencing human behaviour, Discovering and manipulating the laws governing human behaviour, Advancing beyond armchair philosophy.

**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 its cause. According to this account, for anything to be the cause of another, the cause and effect must; Have an invariable relation, Be spatially contiguous, Be temporally related, Have an asymmetrical relation.

**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 freewill, desires, emotions and other sentient features that come into play in his action or reaction. For example, some androids 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 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?