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### History and Philosophy of Science (GST118)

Read chapter eight from the text “History and Philosophy of Science) and do a two pages review.

The success recorded in the eighteenth and nineteenth century on the natural science was enormous on the social and intellectual life of the European people that they trusted and believed in any thing the scientist says, even matter that weren't science related, they still came to the scientist to sought answers even in law. This positive change is as a result of the sociocultural milieu of that time and this explains why the belief and application of science to any issues which is also known as positivism from then on.

This milieu which positivism grew is called *Renaissance period* because or enlightenment period for this was when people started to return to their Greek heritage of using reason in matters of public concern and not the dictate of religion to judge public matters. The aeon prior to this period was called the dark age where religion was believed supreme as the word of the pope was final and this was not in the favour of heathens as they were charged for witchcraft and soxery and then, people were burnt at stake because the church believed that sin and idolatory causes bad predicaments on the people. This was a threath to peoples freedom, happiness and survival as people in a community is filled with people with different view and ideologies so they started infiltrating literature with the benefits of using reason to arrive at justified conclusion just as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle used to do. In arts and music were hidden Greek worldwide views too. This became known as the classical period of romanticism which gave rise to humanism and naturalism, and works of art and literature produced at he same time were also regarded as classic as Russell said that the modern that is commonly known has a mental outlook which is diffrsmt from that of the medical period in; the diminishing authority of the church and the increasing authority of the church led to the growth of individualism, even to the point of anarchy.

The effect of this manoeuvring was overwhelming as scientific approach to thing grew out of philosophical approach to issues but science was restricted to the study of natural phenomenon because it was the only material that is believed to behave in a regular and predictable wy. Not until a French social philosopher called August Comte who is regarded as the father of sociology even till date. He was of the opinion that society behaves in a regular pattern much like material things and this behaviour could be studied and somewhat accurate prediction made, this was the beginning of social science This milieu positivism did not accept theoretical speculation that are devoid of facta of experience as a means of obtaining knowledge due go high degree of abstract nature. There a lot of problems in the concepts of ideal knowledge

seeking enterprise. First of these problems is observation upon which the basic justification of positivism came is laden with errors which includes fact like; observations are concept, hypothesis, theory, value, interest and culture specific ontologically laden.

Social science has been considered as 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. Discipline in the social science includes sociology, psychology, economics, political science, archaeology and anthropology. Although the history of the discipline dates back to early philosophers who wanted to study how the society works such as St Augustine and the fourteenth century historian Ibn Khaldun; down to Karl Max, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Emile Durkheim and a host of other social thinkers. Social sciences seek to employ the method of science in the investigation of social phenomena taking the human person as a study object of endeavour which includes: understanding humans, being able to predict their behaviour, influencing their behaviour, discovering and manipulation if possible and advancing beyond arm chair philosophy. The philosophy of social science arose out of curiosity that the central focus and the propelling motive of social science may be impossible due to methodological mismatch.

In order to understand the problem of cause and reason with social sciences better, we need to understand the feature is that a causal connection between an event and its cause so for anything to be the cause of another, the cause and effect must; have an invariable relation i.e whenever the alleged cause occurs, the effect must also occur, be specifically contiguous i.e the both event must occur approximately the same place or linked, be temporally related such that the cause precedes the effect in time just as the effect follows continuously from the cause and lastly, it must have an asymmetrical relation in that occurrence. Oppenheimer asserts that by employing this scientific method in social investigation, the social sciences seek to explain the cause of action involving human agents. An example of a man punching another in a gym was given and his reason being that he was angry but the thing is that anger is the reason or cause for him to punch his friend but those two concepts can be substituted for each other without loss of meaning. If the reason for something can be many but the cause of something cannot be, to what extent can we take reason for cause, can't the man punching his friend out of laughter, teasing or in jubilation. This can be solved by accepting reasons are not causes but motive or intent. A good example is if a man goes to buy canned beef and comes back with a soda drink because there wasn't canned beef so in other words, his motive which is to buy canned beef, if we go with the substitution thesis we will say the cause of him going to the market is the effect. However, what if he got there and didn't see canned beef and he bought a drink, would we say the cause changed after the effect has already taken place.

Another problem with the project of social science is that according to Max Weber, methodology of science becomes inapplicable due to the object of study is rational and free willed, desire, emotions and other sentiment. Take for instance, the law of demand and supply in economics which predicts that humans are rational and will buy more if the price is reduced

and buy less if the price increased. This has been observed by economists that these laws hold no time as human behave rationally all the time. Now if a supposed scientific law is neither absolute nor hold quite often, should we continue to call it scientific laws of economics?