

The Science of Politics: Relevance to African Social Systems

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ABSTRACT The paper examines the debate on science of politics and its relevance to African social formations. The scientific approach as applied in the natural science experiments is not replicable in the study of social phenomena. A scientific study of social phenomenon is limited and not generalizable like the pure sciences such as mathematics or engineering. This work examines the theoretical debate around the possibility or otherwise of a universally valid social science, the tyranny of Western social sciences and African social reality, and the imperative of developing independent African scholarship responsive to local social realities. Historical and explorative qualitative research design is used. Findings show statistical approach and comparative methods have made significant contribution to the scientific study of social reality. Nevertheless, the nature of what is studied is rooted in cultural peculiarities, and cannot be universal. Western social science theories are Eurocentric and teleological. African scholarship needs socially relevant theories for advancing precepts, theories with cultural imprint relevant to local social realities.