

Karl poppers key
points conjectures
and refutations
philosophy essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The paper by Karl Popper ' Conjectures and Refutations' dealt with his understanding of philosophical theories and thoughts in reflections. This paper will look at his main points of his paper, that mainly concentrates on there being a problem with at least two possibilities, but neither of which are practically agreeable and have been accepted; he concentrated this on the science and non science.

In his presentation of the paper,[1]he described the basic criteria for any theory to be considered as being scientific. Karl Popper criticised a number of theories to prove his point, and based his arguments on this. He challenged work by theorist such as;

1. Carl Max's Socialism
2. Freudian Psychoanalysis
3. Astrology
4. Adler's social engineering that were mainly based on observations past experience
5. David Hume ' Problems of Induction'

Just to name a few.

Karl Popper's centre of arguments was primarily based on this question;

2"When should a theory be treated as true or when should it be acceptable?"

His paper presents his analysis and goes beyond the study of philosophy and the scientific boundaries to how the attempt is made to convert and adapt every theory as that of being scientific proof.

KEY POINTS

Karl Popper analysed and criticised a number of theorists to form the basis of his arguments. His main points were around the following:

Albert Einstein: Karl Popper quoted quite a number of examples of Albert's Einstein's theory on gravitation and relativity and his thoughts progressed on the critical analysis of this theory.

Einstein's theory had been tested and falsified, and according to Karl Popper, he felt it came out with an upper hand compared to other theories. Karl Popper viewed Einstein's theory as being "risky" as it's still being subjected to proof by empirical methods.

Carl Max and Adler: Karl Popper tried to establish facts in theories made by Carl Max and Adler, and concluding that the theories were not critically analysed enough. He proved that Adler's social theories on individual psychology had non scientific basis.

This with other theories such as that of Astrology he believed were practised with ancient and rather primitive tools: and he termed them as "beliefs" or "metaphysics" or "pseudo-sciences", and was not able to hold up to the testability measures. He considered these theories as "alleged scientific theories".

Sigmund Freud: He also criticised S. Freud theories for the lack of critical analysis, especially the work and theory established on Psychoanalysis. Karl Popper analysed this theory with doubt and found it to be unscientific.

Karl Popper relied on the understanding and acumen of the time, and concluded that followers and believers would accept the truthability of a theory as they did not allow themselves to criticise and denied themselves to subject these beliefs to a scientific “ testability” or “ falsifiability”.

Induction Analysis

The induction analysis was on of the basis that Karl Popper used as an emphasis and insistence on the proof and evidence and “ testability”. This theory of induction is ‘ simply banked on previous experiences and interpolation of the same for a new situations’.

This developed his conclusion on the confirmation that a theory should only be accepted if it was as a[4]‘ result of risky prediction’ meaning it was refuted through a thorough and carefully conducted test.

Refutability

Irrefutability is mandatory in a scientifically proven theory. Karl Popper believed that for every organised and truthful test applied on a theory, it should really be proved either wrong or be falsified.

He also stated the aspect of ‘ corroboration’ of a theory via tests. The explanation of demarcation – that is between “ science and “ non science” or “ pseudo – science” was all based on the criteria of falsifiability or testability

and of refutability. It was with this line of thought and analysis that he criticised Ludwig Wittengenstein's theory of refutability.

Karl Popper used the idea of demarcation and of testability and was readily acceptable to verifiability or any meaningfulness as evidence of scientific criterion.

Problem of Induction

Karl Popper's paper looked at David Hume's 'Problem of Induction' at length. David Hume separated perceptions between "impressions" or "sensations" and "ideas". This led to his theory of mental behaviour by controlled and governed by customs and beliefs.

An individual's use of induction may be only asserted by the concept of "constant conjunction" of effects and reasons for causing this.

Popper used this example: "given that the sun has risen every day for as long as anyone can remember, what is the rational proof that it will rise tomorrow? How can one rationally prove that past events will continue to repeat in the future, just because they have repeated in the past?"

Using his criterion of falsifiability; he explained that whilst there isn't any proof that the sun will rise, it may be possible to interpolate that they will be rising of the sun on a daily basis; if this was not the case on a particular day, then that theory would be falsified and will be replaced by another theory. Till then, there is no need to reject this theory as being true.

Karl Popper's explanation was that all observations that were used to verify or as proof " falsify" of a theory, were in fact conjectural.

In saying this, the decision or choice to grow and build our knowledge base via induction; by past experience or the alternative way of placing a conjecture, and then refuting it with the intention to reject or confirm it.

In his paper, Karl Popper defines " induction" as illogical and irrational.

[6]According to Popper, David Hume's' Psychology was a build up of repetitive reinforcements, which changed the actions into habits and those habits into beliefs.

Karl Popper's argument was that they were just mere repetitions; that ended up in our sub conscious, but are not necessarily theories or laws. And on a similar argument, he explained that habits and customs were not rules, but just mere habits.

Karl Popper heavily criticised Hume's basis of " Problems of Induction" as it was based on repetition of similar activities, and therefore can never be accurate as activities can not always have the same circumstances.

Karl's conclusion on this was that it's meant to be a product response that involved explanations and translations that were not adequate; and in the case of Hume; the first repetition was based on similarity.

Karl Popper came up with two options that he based on David Hume's theory - that is acquisition of knowledge can either be:

By a non-inductive process, thereby rational

By repetition and induction – a kind of belief of begetting belief.

3. 0 CONCLUSION

The explanation of the paper tried to unite several disciplines and theories, Karl Popper referred to them as beliefs, or even myths or practise into question.

He urged all disciplines not to accept any theory as complete truth per say. He further went to explain how even[7]scientifically proven experiments may at some point in the future fail to live up to new evidence, which may not have been present at the time.

The entire paper was a mere relation of the objectivity and the emphasis needed to obtain a critical analysis, as opposed to having a dictatorial approach to thinking and reasoning.

He believed that many theories by the mere fact that they were backed by experience and observations were taken for granted. His line of thought was to subject every idea or theory to a test with the main point of proving it wrong, or as he referred to it as falsify.