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Difference between Rationalism and Empiricism

Although there are some minute similarities, there is a lot of difference discovered between the points of empiricism and rationalism. When it comes to rationalism, it is considered to be the belief in deduction, reason, and ideas. On the other hand, when it comes to empiricism, it is considered to be the belief in sense perception and induction. It must be considered that as per empiricism, there are no innate ideas (Quarles et al., 2018). According to rationalism, the belief to innate ideas means to have the ideas before birth. The perfect example in such a scenario would be of through reincarnation. There is no doubt that Plato has explained in the best way by the theory of the forms. As per Plato, this is the place in which each person go and attain knowledge before he/she is taken back to the “visible world.” The matter of fact is that innate ideas tend to explain the reason behind some people is better than others while performing certain tasks naturally.

There is no doubt that the considering reason as the main source of knowledge is undoubtedly another clear distinction in terms of rationalism. Studies and research show that the belief of rationalists is that when it comes to five senses, they only tend to provide opinions, and there is no reason along with it. A perfect example in such a scenario would be in the argument of Descartes. He explained the way in which candle each candle has, to begin with, but after the candle is lit, it is seen to be melting along with losing its fragrance. The aftermath of this scenario results in the candle taking on an entirely different shape as compared to the shape it had in the beginning. The argument of Descartes undoubtedly tends to prove that the senses of an individual can be misleading, and they must not be trustworthy.

When it comes to the third characteristic of rationalism, it is simply the deduction which is for proving something with faith instead of reason. The beliefs of empiricist are different than the beliefs of a rationalist (Vanzo et al., 2016).. They consider sensory perception as the main source of knowledge. The ideas are divided into two parts. One is the complex and the other is simple. The matter of fact is that simple ideas are based solely on perception. Such ideas can vary from shape, size, to color, etc. Meanwhile, when it comes to complex ideas, they are formed with the combination of simple ideas. Apart from this, empiricists believe that the only to acquire ideas is by having experience. According to them, ideas cannot be acquitted through innate ideas.

The innate knowledge concept is rejected by empiricists (Quarles et al., 2018). The reason for that lies in the fact that for instance in a child had this knowledge then what would be the reason behind him/her not showing it? The question arises here to the reason why a child is required to learn to talk or walk. The last characteristic of empiricists is the induction which is considered to be the belief due to which only a few things can be proven conclusively. An example here would be of individuals who know of things with the help of their sense perception (Vanzo et al., 2016).. They identify that the color of dry erase board is white and the color of the chalkboard is green. However, it must be taken into consideration that without they cannot conclude that such perceptions tend to agree with the objects themselves.

The matter of fact is that there is undoubtedly no way for conclusively proving that the color of chalkboard will remain green once everyone has either stopped perceiving it or left the room. Another thing that must be taken into consideration is that with the help of medication and wax theory, it has been clearly illustrated by Descartes that he is a rationalist. As per the wax theory, it has been explained the ways in which someone is not able to rely on one's sense perception with the help of a candle as an example. The matter of fact is that when the candle is seen to be in its original state, there is no doubt that it tends to have a unique shape. After the candle is melted and burned down, it then has a clear complete different shape along with different characteristics.

The dispute between the empiricism and rationalism is seen to be taken place within the epistemology. There is a clear difference between the two of them. Rationalism has one more entity in, unlike empiricism (Vanzo et al., 2016). Rationalism is undoubtedly a viewpoint that in certain circumstances knowledge comes from intellectual reasoning (Zhang et al., 2017). On the other hand, when it comes to empiricism, it is simply the viewpoint that tends to describe that knowledge comes by using senses in order to observe the world. The major difference between the two of them is that rationalism is the knowledge which is derived from logic and reason unlike empiricism which is divided for either an experiment or experience.

There is no doubt that both experimental science and mathematics are the direction to knowledge. One thing that must be taken into consideration is that experimental science can never be seen producing certainty. On the other hand, genuine knowledge is undoubtedly certain. The reason for that is quite simple as it rational instead of empirical.

Work Cited

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