
Systemic Epistemology

Epistemology involves the study of the criteria by which individuals know or do not know what constitutes or warrants scientific knowledge. Epistemology is the basis on what scholars imagine could be the contents of knowledge and its shape in the real world. Additionally, epistemology can be stated as a way of understanding what informs accepted interpretations, descriptions and mental models of the world. The paper in this stance seeks to explain systemic epistemology and how it differs with individualistic human behavior perspective.

Systemic epistemology

Systemic epistemology entails the search of knowledge from a particular point of view and draws sense of causality from diverse perhaps opposing perspectives. A systems study should involve different points of view and competing explanations of the contents of reality. However, there are models of systems thinking which are engaged with simple causality and which is linear and unstructured (Roth & Bourguine 2005). Nonetheless, employment of systems view when looking at something implies embracing the possibility of bringing together opinions which may not be related to the overall context which is under investigation, but may lead to the same subject under evaluation. The systemic epistemology was developed from various philosophical beliefs and because of that, it is presumed an epistemological setup in itself (Roth & Bourguine 2005).

Elements of systemic epistemology

Synthesis

There is a sharp difference between analysis, founded on cause and effect, and systems thinking informed by synthesis. The systems view happens in an open systems context where there is an interaction of realities, and it is difficult to understand them if broken into small parts. Synthesis is a creative concept which puts multiple inputs together making and then comparisons in a complicated way (Toomela, 2011). Moreover, synthesis entails the dialectical conflict of ideas perceived concurrently and how the understanding of problematic perspectives can eventually be made better. As the integration of concepts develops, new systemic knowledge comes forth. Additionally, analysis takes into account splitting things into smaller parts, instead of looking at things as a whole. The synthesis concept creates room for different perspectives to merge and holds that previously opposing ideas have some relationship (Toomela, 2011).

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The synthesis concept holds that compatibility of ideas is not possible because of the opinion that anything can be created spontaneously and become valuable. It is the opposing views held by conceptual frameworks which leads to a new solution or a new approach of doing things. Analytical thinking leads a scholar to make analyses based on cause and effect, whereas systemic thinking creates room for several perspectives to take the center-stage (Schommer-Aikins, 2004). In systemic epistemology, synthesis is not a linear concept; anything is subject to integration. According to Toomela (2011), fragmentations come forth when various parties and stakeholders hold that their points of view are correct and others are left out. Nevertheless, when synthesized though not considered divergent, there is an evolution of a bigger picture which conflicts initial concerns and solutions. When the synthetic model of causality is perceived through the epistemological view, it permits a vantage point where versions of reality arise and are subject to concurrent scrutiny.

The variegation concept

The variegation ideology involves the ability to transform the appearance of something by looking at it through different approaches. Systemic epistemology depends on variegation to shape how the real world phenomena are perceived because it is based on comprehending different dialectical realities. Schommer-Aikins (2004) holds that social reality involves the cooperation of analytic procedures whereby conflicting versions of events revolve around the continuous preservation and maintenance and building of social functions. To embrace systemic epistemology is to appreciate that the conflicting realities are pluralist, interlinked and socially constructed. Thus, this makes the study of systemic epistemology as one which looks forth to understand these interconnections. It does not only look at the interlocking features of events, but also a consideration of disconnected views of social construction procedures which takes place in a complicated and open systemic context (Schommer-Aikins, 2004).

These open perspectives rarely make sense, thus the best way of understanding them is to utilize different thought processes simultaneously. The process of involving the world through multiple approaches evolves from an interpretive point of view. When systemic epistemology is employed, it unearths political differences or can be used to study research projects from independent and contradictory perspectives (Morelli & Tollestrup, 2009). When systemic epistemology is employed, then people are interested in not only the bigger picture and connectedness, but the ensuing conflicts, social and political which develop into contemporary social challenges. To look at a problem from a systemic perspective is to create a blueprint which uses various concepts concurrently and capture issues of strategic importance (Morelli & Tollestrup, 2009). Besides, a correct systemic model must not ignore concerns of power, politics or coercion which forms part of its matter. Therefore, this provides the reason that systemic epistemology highlights continuous opposing realities, diverse thought processes, and overarching devotion to the multiple facets of dialectical facts (Morelli & Tollestrup, 2009).

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Pluralism and Systemic epistemology

Social science label pluralism approaches as ones which depend on the congregation of methodologies in unique situations or aggregation of social constructions. Meaning is not drawn by only the accompanying systems approach of a study, but through ways in which different streams of thinking acknowledge the problem at hand (Morelli & Tollestrup, 2009).

Perspectivism and perspective shifting

Perspectivism emanates from outcome postmodernism which considers different types of realities. The aspect states that people cannot understand reality as one point of reference, but it needs consideration of continuity of subjective meaning and relative interpretation points. According to Morelli & Tollestrup, (2009), perspectivism forms one of the positive results of the postmodernist school of thought because it acknowledges various aspects of concern. Morelli & Tollestrup (2009), posits that an efficient systems perspective is that position which recognizes the existence of other viewpoints. This implies a vantage point identical to a systems interplay strategy which acknowledges the contradictions and similarities between various aspects of reference (Morelli & Tollestrup, 2009).

Systemic epistemology calls for recognition and understanding of available models of a strategic position to appreciate the conflicting and contradictory voices of reference. It is not a selected methodology, but a comprehensive epistemological source of reference (Ison, 2008). The significance of perfectivalism is not identical to synthesis, but understanding how to shift approaches in a problem or research situation. From a pragmatic view, it goes beyond the understanding of how to manage changes (Ison, 2008).

Generalization from systemic epistemology

A systemic definition takes into account complexity and advances from the non-reducible description which embraces definitions of variegation, pluralism, and perspectivism. For instance, an individual is required to work backwards from specifics to general truths(Ison, 2008). In systemic epistemology, knowledge which can explain various events is sought from different standpoints. Systemic epistemology adjusts itself to all types of philosophies depending on the situation (Ison, 2008).

Systemic epistemology vs. individualistic societal view

Systemic epistemology: it entails a collection of instruments employed by scholars/researchers to unearth and organize coherent, derived results and linking of ideas to develop inner

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mappings and orientation for themselves. Also, systemic epistemology deals with several perspectives, conflicting viewpoints and several other situations because it operates in a pluralistic nature (Yilmaz?Tuzun & Topcu, 2008). Thus, it is about generalizations in research which takes place in multiple nonlinear conceptual frameworks which are conflicting, nonlinear and dialectical. Moreover, it can be described as research on misunderstanding systems with the objective of searching for non-conflicting, linear and singular version of contexts as in a manner as if there is a significant concept meant to explain world events (Yilmaz?Tuzun & Topcu, 2008).

Individualistic societal view: people from an individualistic society tend to hold independent views about themselves. These people perceive themselves as separate entities from the rest of the community, and they describe themselves depending on personal characteristics. This is different from what the systemic epistemology (pluralistic) views postulate. The collectivists often view things from interdependent standpoints. These people see themselves as linked to others, their view of the self is defined regarding relationships with other people and project that their characteristics are prone to change depending on different situations (Yilmaz?Tuzun & Topcu, 2008).

The individualistic communities see relationships as voluntary and its typical for individuals to terminate the relations which they perceive as not relevant. According to psychologists, people from East Asia have a lesser likelihood of taking about stressful situations because such information can prove challenging in collectivist societies (Yilmaz, 2013). On the contrary, people from East Asia have a higher chance of seeking social help, which may involve spending time with close friends, family, and relatives without talking about an issue which is challenging them. Additionally, people from individualistic cultures are less concerned about the welfare of others (Yilmaz, 2013). They always tend to mind about personal affairs. As search they rarely manage to step in to assist some others individuals who may be in need of their aid something which does not happen in collectivism communities where friends, relatives and family and even the community at large may mobilize one another in solidarity with one of their own who may be in problems (Yilmaz, 2013).

Conclusion

The paper in this stance sought to offer a description of systemic epistemology and its distinction from views held by people in the individualistic communities. Systemic epistemology has been highlighted as one which employs diverse ideas in making sense of the problems which people face. Additionally, pluralism is a reflection of systemic epistemology which uses multiple constructs, where conflicts lead to broader insights about realities of life. Everything with systems epistemology is about looking at things from all angles even by embracing and considering negative views because they are projected to offer better outcomes when taken into

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consideration. On the contrary, people from individualistic communities tend to look at the self as different from the broader community. They are solely more interested in the welfare of the self and not the rest of the people who surround them. They have little attachment with other people, and they care less about relations and can break down the associations they perceive as not necessary.

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