

The Difference Between Physicalism And Functionalism

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Explain the difference between the identity theory and functionalism.

Identity Theory or Physicalism

Identity Theory states that the minds and the bodies are made up of the same things. The Identity theory places more importance on the physical nature of the mind. According to identity theory, psychological states are identical to physical states. Two identical organisms with the same amount of hormones and the same molecular structure will have the same psychological structure. This theory is also deliberated as a reductionist view of reducing psychological thoughts to physical thoughts.

Functionalism

The functionalist approach acts as a rebellion against the narrow structural approach of Physicalism. The prime focus of functionalism is the mental processes of the mind.

The prime claim of Functionalism is that our conscious mind (mental processes) helps human beings to adapt to different situations. The Functionalists reject the view that our subconscious and conscious mind have a permanent physical structure or a blueprint. Functionalism is not based on a single functional psychology. Therefore, this approach lacks a formalized set of ideas or a theorist (Schweizer).

Explain how the identity theorists and functionalists respond to Descartes' argument for dualism.

Descartes Argument of Dualism

According to the philosophy of mind, the theory of Dualism suggests that the mind-body, mental-physical, or mind-brain are prominently different kinds of things. French philosopher René Descartes (1596-1650) is one of the renowned figures who worked on the philosophy of Dualism. The foundation

of Descartes's work in Dualism is based upon these basic principles. Mind and body are fundamentally two different kinds of elements. The essence of the mind is to engage in mental processes. On the other hand, the essence of a body is to be extended in the physical world. A human body is a ("union", according to Descartes) a composite being of a mind and a body. Minds are different from the physical body. However, bodies and minds have a causal relation with each other. This phenomenon is known as Cartesian Dualism. Descartes stated that the human mind and the body interact through the pineal gland of the brain. The pineal gland is located in the most inward parts of our brain (the middle of the right and left halves), making it a potential connection between mind and body (Descartes).

Criticism on Cartesian Dualism

One argument that arises from causal interaction is that Dualism lacks an explanation of how consciousness affects physical reality. The main objection against dualism is the interaction between material and immaterial interaction. Critics of dualism have often asked how something immaterial can affect something material.

Paul Churchland has stated his argument of brain damage against Descartes's dualism. Dualist lacks to confront how all of this can be explained if the mind is separated from the brain, then how come the brain damage significantly affects the mental state of a person. The argument states that if the brain suffers any damage or if the mind is distinctive from the brain, then why are minds also compromised when the brain gets damaged?

Explain how physicalists attempt to solve the epistemological and metaphysical problems that result from dualism.

The key arguments for dualism are the Knowledge Argument, the Zombie Argument, and the Modal Argument. These arguments for dualism have epistemic premises in securing the metaphysical thesis of dualism. However, these arguments have some shortcomings.

The Physicalism school of thought deliberates that these thought experiments are unreliable and impractical. There is no proper equipment for competently evaluating these scenarios. Physicalists address all these arguments as baseless and lacking practical application. One cannot assume a physical duplication of a human being or a person who knows all types of colours but experiences the colour for the first time.

The Physicalist view avoids this problem by saying that conscious practices are just physical events. The physical events and the conscious experiences are alike. According to Papineau's argument:

1. Several conscious experiences can have physical effects. (Rejection of epiphenomenalism.)
2. All of the physical effects are caused by the morally physical prior histories.
3. The physical effects of conscious experiences are not always over-determined by distinct causes (Papineau).

Conclusion: The conscious experiences mentioned in (a) must be similar to several parts of the physical causes that are mentioned in (b). (2002).

Explain the way in which Eliminative Materialism is distinct from both the identity theory and functionalism.

The **eliminative Materialism school of thought** despises folk psychology, believing that mental states such as beliefs and desires do not exist at all. This school of thought detests folk psychology and eliminates the importance of mental state at all.

However, the identity theory/physicalism argues that the state of mind and body are alike. Functionalism suggests that the mental processes of the mind help our body to adapt. Identity theory views mental states and brain states alike. Eliminativism, on the other hand, states that mental states don't exist at all.

Explain Churchland's arguments for Eliminative Materialism.

Eliminative Materialism

Eliminative materialism claims that some types of mental or psychological states that people believe in have no room in reality. They despise common sense or folk psychology. These mental or psychological states such as desires or beliefs (propositional attitudes) have no considerable research done. The main premise of eliminative materialism is that the conceptualization of psychological states according to our common sense/everyday understanding is illegitimate and obsolete. The main claim of eliminative materialism is against the common sense psychology of folk psychology.

Churchland's Argument for Eliminative Materialism

Patricia and Paul Churchland have given numerous arguments in favour of Eliminative Materialism. They state that any prominent theory should be based on a fertile research program and evidence. Common sense or folk psychology does not offer such research and explanatory power other than just

speculations. Churchland further views that common-sense psychology is stagnant because there is not much explanation or research done on some phenomena, like characteristics of consciousness, mental illness, and reasons to dream, which are entirely overlooked by folk psychology. According to Churchland, common-sense psychology or folk psychology is in much worse condition than we have realized (Churchland).

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