

Original Article

A Critical Review on Educational Implications of Feyerabend's Philosophy of Science

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Introduction

Education is in a deep relationship with our perception of science and philosophy of science is a knowledge which shapes our perception of the nature of science. Different points of views in philosophy of science like positivistic views, critical rationalism, and after them the historical – sociological views of Thomas Kuhn and Paul Feyerabend, lead to different requirements and consequences in education. This paper studies Feyerabends views in philosophy of science and education and the consequences of his ideas.

Method

The method in this paper is philosophical-analytical based on Feyerabend writings.

Results

Although Feyerabend points of views are not weak, but he does not present any mechanism in order to make his suggestion practical. Until the time of introducing the methods to make his ideas practical, if assuming it possible ,the most important factor in realization of educating critical thinking and nurturing the modern and free thinker human being, which is considered by Feyerabend, is the characteristics and personal capabilities of teachers.

Discussion

Paul Feyrabend is famous for his controversial views on philosophy of science. Two of his points of views are believed to be the most important ones: One is the incommensurability of scientific alternative theories and the

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other one is the negation of exact method in science production. There is another important aspect in Feyrabend's views which is as important as the mentioned views. This important aspect is desacralizing of science and the denying of exclusive authority about new science. Denying of exact methods for new science, the incommensurability of theories, and the acceptance of knowledge relativity set the ground for all scientific claims. But Feyrabend thinks that the domination of science does not let the other epistemological traditions to express themselves. Almost all of the science philosophers, except positivists such as Francis Bacon, believe that creation of scientific theories is not methodical, but for evaluating the theories both the positivistic inductive and Popperian non-inductive approaches see the science methodical. Feyrabend sees both the inductivism and Popperian non-inductivism unsuccessful in explaining the ups and downs of science and his famous quotation that "Anything goes" is a representative for his notion. He thinks that science is affected by the non-scientific factors. The hegemony of science, which has made the science as a sacred ideology, does not allow the other traditions to be seen. He looks at the nowadays educational institutions as the guards of the sanctity of science and the barriers of expressing other traditions. By elaborating on the aforementioned points, this paper aims at studying Feyrabend's critiques about the educational system and his suggestions to improve the system and leads to a comprehensive philosophic evaluation of his suggestions. He imagines a free society in which, all of the traditions have equal rights and people choose based on critical thinking and arguing rather than propaganda and under the authority of science and scientists. It can be said that he desires an utopian society than a realistic one. This paper illustrates that although his ideas are logically strong, there are lots of barriers to implement them in the society.

Keywords: Feyrabend; Education; Science; Epistemological anarchism

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