

The Theoretical Field of Field Theory

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Abstract

Field concept is attracting new attention in various scientific areas such as sociology, biology, geography and architecture. In the business and economics area also, an increasing number of researchers have become interested in applying this concept.

However, there are such conspicuous differences among the approaches appearing in the different research contexts that the validity of the concept itself is jeopardized.

Field, as a research concept, traces one of its origins to the methodological revolution led by the fin-de-siecle Viennese intellectuals. This movement, most significantly realized as the establishment of Field theory in physics, had great influence in various schools of philosophical thought. Logical empiricism was one of its most crystallized achievements, and it offered a methodological backbone for a number of twentieth century schools, such as structuralism and synergetics.

However, when applying the physics-based research norm to social sciences, one cannot avoid the self-reflectivity problem. This is the point at which the validity of the concept is at stake.

Paradoxically, however, Field concept is likely to be used exactly on the occasion when the self-reflectivity problem does matter. How can Field be both the cause and solution to the problem? This paper attempts to resolve this dilemma by redefining the concept phenomenologically.