



SOCIO-PHILOSOPHICAL MECHANISMS FOR DEVELOPING THE ECONOMIC CULTURE OF YOUTH

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Abstract: *This article explores the epistemological and philosophical foundations of acquiring economic knowledge. It emphasizes the dialectical unity of theory and practice, highlighting the importance of critical thinking, rational decision-making, and methodological pluralism. The study draws connections between economic education and the development of intellectual, moral, and analytical competencies among youth. It argues that economic understanding is not only a scientific process but also a means of fostering social responsibility and sustainable development.*

Key words: *Epistemology, critical thinking, dialectics, praxis, rationality, intuition, teleology, economic education, methodology, pluralism*

The process of acquiring economic knowledge is not merely about memorizing numbers or statistical data; it also involves a deep understanding of the gnoseological foundations of human thought. Gnoseology examines the process of human cognition, the nature and sources of knowledge, and the methods by which it is obtained. From this perspective, the assimilation of economic knowledge is epistemologically complex, as it is based on the dialectical unity of theory and practice. Theory serves to generalize human thought, while practice tests these generalizations in real-life experience. This idea aligns with Karl Popper's "principle of falsification," which asserts that any scientific knowledge must be subject to empirical testing and potential refutation. Therefore, economic knowledge should always be viewed as a dynamic and evolving system.

The primary methods of mastering economic knowledge are the inductive and deductive approaches. Induction is the process of deriving general theoretical conclusions from specific facts. For instance, by observing fluctuations in market prices, one can discover general economic principles such as the law of supply and demand. Deduction, on the other hand, proceeds from general theoretical assumptions to the analysis of particular situations. For example, based on an economic model, the inflation rate of a specific country can be predicted. These two methods are inseparable, as theory and practice in economics constantly complement one another. This interconnection reflects the concept of synergetics: the harmony between inductive and deductive reasoning enhances the overall structure and precision of knowledge.

The formation of economic knowledge cannot exist without its sources, which are conventionally divided into theoretical and practical ones. Theoretical sources include scientific works on economics, theoretical models, research studies, and conceptual



frameworks. For instance, Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* provided the philosophical foundation for the principles of a free market economy, while Karl Marx's *Capital* revealed the role of economic relations in social stratification. Neoclassical economists made significant contributions to the development of microeconomic models by attempting to explain human behavior through the concept of rational choice. Later, John Maynard Keynes's macroeconomic concepts became crucial in shaping economic policy. Thus, theoretical sources serve as the gnoseological foundation for the development of economic thought.

Practical sources, on the other hand, rely on the experience of real economic life. Statistical data, financial reports, economic indicators from international organizations, and everyday market processes allow for the verification and advancement of theoretical knowledge. For example, statistical reports published by the United Nations, the World Bank, or the International Monetary Fund enable comparisons between theoretical models and real-world data. At the same time, practical sources are also epistemologically significant, as they encourage human reasoning to be grounded in concrete facts, elevating knowledge from abstraction to practical meaning.

Methodological approaches also play a crucial role in mastering economic knowledge. The dialectical method allows phenomena to be studied through the unity of opposites. The teleological approach analyzes the goal-oriented nature of economic activity, as every economic decision is driven by a specific purpose—profit, stability, or social welfare. Furthermore, within the framework of social contract theory, economic knowledge is formed on the basis of mutual agreement and responsibility within society. This makes it possible to interpret economic knowledge not merely as a personal pursuit but as a phenomenon of social significance.

In conclusion, the acquisition of economic knowledge is a complex and multifaceted process from a gnoseological perspective. It is based on the dialectical unity of theory and practice, the synthesis of inductive and deductive methods, and the harmony between theoretical and practical sources. This process broadens human cognition, enriching it with critical thinking, analytical skills, and the ability to make conscious decisions. Therefore, mastering economic knowledge possesses not only scientific and intellectual value but also moral and social significance.

One of the main objectives of acquiring economic knowledge is to develop young people's critical thinking skills. Critical thinking does not merely mean criticism it is the ability to logically evaluate any economic information or theory, analyze it based on evidence, and draw independent conclusions. This process is closely linked to the philosophical tradition of skepticism, as a skeptical approach questions all forms of knowledge and prevents them from turning into unfounded dogmas. For example, economic policy decisions—such as tax reforms, exchange rate adjustments, or subsidy systems—can be evaluated from various interest-based perspectives. However, critical thinking encourages young people to deeply analyze the potential consequences of such decisions.



The ability to conduct economic analysis is rooted in dialectical reasoning. Dialectics requires studying phenomena in the context of constant change, development, and the unity of internal contradictions. For instance, the tension between economic growth and inflation, or the balance between market freedom and state regulation, can only be fully understood through dialectical thought. Developed in the philosophies of Hegel and Marx, this approach reveals the dynamic and contradictory nature of economic processes, showing that they are not static but evolving. Thus, dialectics enables economic analysis to move beyond surface-level observation and uncover the inner cause-and-effect relationships of phenomena.

Decision-making ability, in turn, relies on the philosophical interplay between rationality and intuition. Rationality involves making economic decisions based on mathematical calculations, statistical models, and theoretical forecasts. Intuition, however, represents a person's inner sense, experience, and subconscious mechanisms that enable quick decision-making. For example, an experienced entrepreneur, when deciding on an investment, relies not only on financial indicators but also on intuitive judgment. Modern economic philosophy views these two aspects not as opposites, but as complementary dimensions of human cognition and behavior.

The philosophical foundation of this entire process is embodied in the concept of *praxis* (practice). Praxis refers to the testing of theoretical knowledge through lived experience, leading to the creation of new insights. In Marx's philosophy, praxis is defined as human activity that transforms reality, where theoretical knowledge is either confirmed or redefined through practical engagement. For instance, studying economic models in a classroom represents theoretical knowledge, while applying them in a business project constitutes praxis. As a result, practice serves not only as a means of applying knowledge but also as a source for enriching and reshaping it

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