

# PSYCHOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE

Erica Macwan

Research Scholar, Gujarat University; Assistant Professor, St. Xavier's College (Autonomous)

## Abstract

*This is an era of knowledge where it is available everywhere, but the way in which it is acquired is neglected. This paper talks about the ways in which knowledge can be acquired. It merges two branches i.e.; cognitive psychology and knowledge epistemology and this multidisciplinary paper gives suggestions to inculcate these ways into curriculum and pedagogy.*

**Keywords:** psychology, knowledge, epistemology, pedagogy

## INTRODUCTION

The earliest cited instance in the English language of the word knowledge was from the 13th century in northern England as knaulage.

The term was coined in the 13th century, but the prevalence of knowledge has been much before that. But as time passes, humans have begun to understand and recognize the importance of knowledge.

Knowledge has been prevailing since the very beginning, but the way in which humans acquire knowledge has been evolving. The sources of knowledge acquisition have been changing from generation to generation.

If we can understand the sources of knowledge in the current era, then acquisition tools and techniques can be made extremely effective. Knowledge has been expanding day by day, but its sources have not been identified in the current times. It can be identified by understanding the psychology of knowledge acquisition in the present generation.

This study tries to fill this gap and deals with four primary sources of knowledge i.e., Idealism, Empiricism, Rationalism, and Spiritualism. This paper describes the evolution of these sources, and their relevance in the present generation, and suggests their applicability in various fields.

### Psychology

Psychology is the study of the mind and behaviour, according to the American Psychological Association. It is the study of the mind, how it works, and how it affects behaviour.

There are different types of psychology, such as cognitive, forensic, social, and developmental psychology.

### Cognitive Psychology

Cognitive psychology investigates internal mental processes, such as problem-solving, memory, learning, and language. It looks at how people think, perceive, communicate, remember, learn and how they acquire, process, and store information.

Practical applications include how to improve memory, increase the accuracy of decision-making, or how to set up educational programs to boost learning.

### Knowledge

Knowledge is a highly valued state in which a person is in cognitive contact with reality (Zagzebski, L., 2017).

Knowledge is a familiarity, awareness, or understanding of someone or something, such as facts, information, descriptions, or skills, which is acquired through experience or education by perceiving, discovering, or learning.

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Knowledge acquisition involves complex cognitive processes: perception, communication, and reasoning; while knowledge is also said to be related to the capacity of acknowledgment in human beings.

### Epistemology

Epistemology is the philosophy of knowledge, or the study of knowledge itself, what it is and how it is possible

Epistemology is the theory of knowledge. It is concerned with the mind's relation to reality. What is it for this relation to be one of knowledge? Do we know things? And if we do, how and when do we know things?

## RESEARCH GAP

In this era, knowledge is endless and the sources of knowledge are numerous, but the exact way an individual acquires it is still unknown. These two separate branches can be combined to get a clear understanding of how

people acquire knowledge. By joining the two disciplines, cognitive psychology, and knowledge we can gain an understanding in this direction.

This multidisciplinary study has not been conducted previously. Both branches have been studied separately, but how cognitive psychology works in knowledge acquisition has not been studied.

## RATIONALE OF STUDY

If we can understand the ways of knowledge acquisition, then it can be very useful to design the process of giving knowledge. Especially if we can understand the way students acquire knowledge, then the curriculum can be designed keeping that in mind and education can be made extremely effective.

## OBJECTIVES

- To understand the ways of knowledge acquisition
- To understand the relationship between cognitive psychology and knowledge
- To use the multidisciplinary study in framing an effective curriculum
- To use this correlation in framing models of knowledge acquisitions
- To create models of epistemology and pedagogy

### Psychology of Knowledge

There are multiple ways in which knowledge can be acquired and it differs from person to person. This study has tried to explain four major ways in which knowledge can be acquired i.e., Idealism, Empiricism, Rationalism, and Spiritualism.

#### Idealism

In philosophy, the term idealism identifies and describes metaphysical perspectives which assert that reality is indistinguishable and inseparable from perception and understanding; that reality is a mental construct closely connected to ideas. Epistemological idealism is a subjectivist position in epistemology that holds that what one knows about an object exists only in one's mind

#### Empiricism

The term empiricism comes from the Greek word for experience: empeiria. Empiricism is the idea that all learning comes from only experience and observations. In, empiricism, knowledge is spoken of as a posteriori, or "from the latter," meaning gained from experience.

#### Rationalism

Rationalism means reliance on reason. A psychological characterization of rationalism would describe it as an overly deductive way of thinking and to the moulding of reality to fit one's theoretical understanding. More specifically, rationalism is the epistemological theory that significant knowledge of the world can best be achieved by a priori means; it therefore stands in contrast to empiricism.

#### Spiritualism

Spiritualism, in philosophy, a characteristic of any system of thought that affirms the existence of immaterial reality imperceptible to the senses. So defined, it's a higher level of knowledge obtained through a higher source.

#### Observation

These are the four basic ways of knowledge acquisition. But our education system seems to touch upon rationalism and idealism which has slipped into it. The other two very essential forms i.e., empiricism and spiritualism are neglected upon.

#### Application

The curriculum and pedagogy can be made extremely effective if all four sources are given equal justice. Empiricism can be brought in by adding experiential learning tools where students experience and learn from that.

For spiritualism, meditation, yoga, prayers, etc could be made as a main subject wherein they can discover themselves as well as many other things above human understanding.

To frame self-development and skill based educational models

## CONCLUSION

If all four sources are taken into consideration, students would be able to develop a better and deeper knowledge base which would create a huge impact. Each source would result into a different pattern of knowledge and the students would be able to gain a deeper insight. Looking at the education system in the present era versus the need of the present generation, there is evidently a huge gap between the two. The system teaches what is and not why it is or what should be. Including the other two sources i.e., Empiricism and spiritualism will make them think beyond the normal and create a generation that analyses, searches, questions and makes a difference. If we look at our ancient Indian education system wherein students lived in Gurukuls learned by experiencing things and also pondered upon deeper questions. This type of knowledge stayed with them forever and created a huge impact.

In the current scenario, if we take the example of faulty of management, then the curriculum is designed to gain knowledge through rationalism in the form of theory. To include other forms, the curriculum should include actual project management where students can learn from experience i.e., empiricism, they can be asked to form their new perspectives on various management areas i.e. idealism and they should be given time to ponder and think about deeper questions as well. Such knowledge gained from all four sources will stay with students forever and be useful in the real way.

## FUTURE SCOPE

This is a qualitative exploratory study conducted to introduce the idea of the amalgamation of two separate branches. A quantitative study could be conducted on the same and the exact numbers could be obtained. These studies could suggest various models of curriculum designing, pedagogy and also parental tools.

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