



THE PSYCHOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF DOUBT, PERCEPTION, AND BELIEF IN EPISTEMIC THINKING

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Annotation.

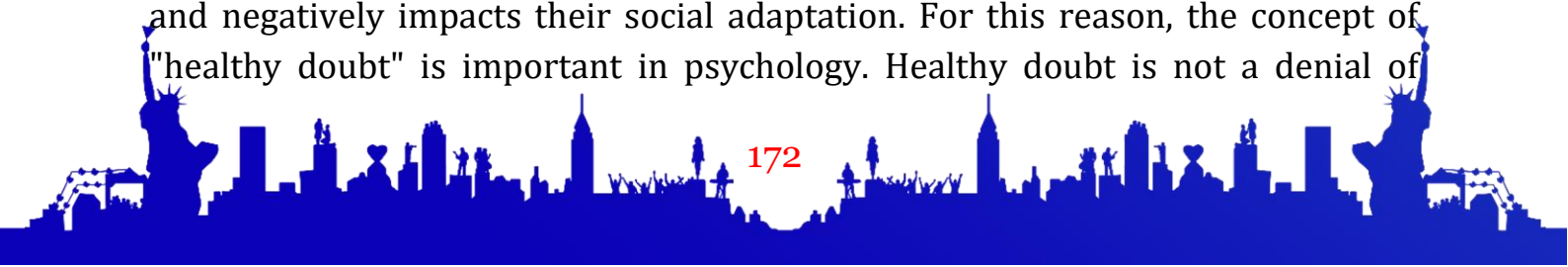
This article analyzes the psychological foundations of epistemic thinking, specifically the role of doubt, perception, and belief in the cognitive process. Epistemic thinking defines the mechanisms for perceiving knowledge in the human mind, processing it, and evaluating it as truth. The article examines the formation of epistemic processes from the perspective of cognitive psychology and their impact on the development of critical thinking. The function of doubt in the process of healthy cognition and the role of trust in strengthening knowledge are also discussed on a scientific basis.

Keywords: epistemic thinking, psychology, cognitive processes, doubt, perception, trust, critical thinking, knowledge, consciousness, cognitive process.

Introduction.

Epistemic thinking is a complex psychological process that determines an individual's attitude toward knowledge, formed through the interaction of cognitive components such as doubt, perception, and trust. A person not only perceives the world through their senses but also analyzes, compares, and evaluates the information received. This process forms the psychological basis of epistemic thinking. Modern cognitive psychology interprets epistemic thinking as an internal mental mechanism that depends on the degree to which an individual perceives knowledge as reliable and how they justify it. Doubt prevents a person from blindly accepting information and encourages them to verify it. From a psychological perspective, doubt is not a negative state, but rather a mechanism that activates the cognitive process. For example, when a person hears news, they do not immediately believe it to be true, but internal questions arise: "Where did this information come from?", "Is there evidence for it?" These are the questions that drive epistemic thinking. Skepticism is the starting point for critical thinking, which leads to a deeper study of knowledge.

However, even excessive skepticism can cause psychological problems. If an individual tends to deny any information, it slows down their learning process and negatively impacts their social adaptation. For this reason, the concept of "healthy doubt" is important in psychology. Healthy doubt is not a denial of



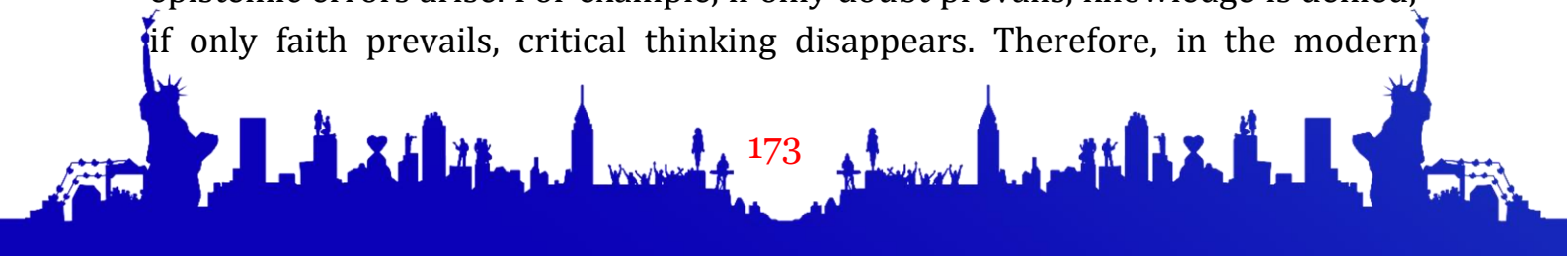


information, but rather a desire to verify and accept it based on evidence. The second important component of epistemic thinking is perception. Perception is the process by which a person perceives information from the external world through their senses and transforms it into a meaningful representation. In cognitive psychology, perception is viewed not merely as passive perception, but as a process of active interpretation. That is, a person interprets what they see or hear based on their own experience, knowledge, and beliefs. In the process of cognition, epistemic thinking establishes a connection between an individual's previous knowledge and new information. For example, a person studying a scientific fact compares it with their previous knowledge and makes an internal decision to accept or reject it.

Therefore, perception is the main "entrance gate" of epistemic thinking. Disturbance or misformation of perception can lead to epistemic errors. This condition is called a "cognitive error" in cognitive psychology. For example, stereotypes or preconceived notions can lead to the misinterpretation of new information. Therefore, a person with developed epistemic thinking should be open-minded in the process of perception, maintain a flexible approach to new information. The third main element of epistemic thinking is trust. Belief is the state of accepting a specific knowledge, idea, or information as true. Psychologically, trust is linked to an individual's sense of internal stability, which is formed depending on how well-founded the knowledge is. Trust serves as an important balance in epistemic thinking. If a person has no faith at all, they cannot accept any knowledge and remain in a state of constant doubt. Conversely, excessive confidence weakens critical thinking and makes a person susceptible to manipulation.

Therefore, the balance between doubt and belief is very important in epistemic thinking. From the perspective of cognitive psychology, trust is formed based on experience, the social environment, and individual knowledge. For example, a person expresses more trust in scientifically proven information because their level of validity is high. At the same time, social trust also plays a major role; that is, if a person trusts a specific source of information, they will also accept the information provided more readily.

In epistemic thinking, doubt, perception, and trust form an inseparable system. The combination of these three components determines the quality of a person's acquisition of knowledge. If the equilibrium in this system is disturbed, epistemic errors arise. For example, if only doubt prevails, knowledge is denied; if only faith prevails, critical thinking disappears. Therefore, in the modern





education system, great attention is paid to the development of epistemic thinking. It is important for students not only to impart knowledge but also to develop skills in its analysis, verification, and justification. This contributes to their cognitive development and the formation of independent thinking skills. In conclusion, epistemic thinking is a complex and important part of the human psyche that operates through the interaction of doubt, perception, and belief. The balance of these three components directly affects how a person perceives knowledge and how deeply they understand it.

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