



Study Material
VIVEKANANDA COLLEGE
THAKURPUKUR
Subject: Philosophy
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What is knowledge?



western point of view

Epistemological meaning :



Greek origin : 'Philos' + 'Sophia'
(Love) (Wisdom)

Philosophy = love for wisdom.

Sanskrit origin : 'Drish' = 'to see'

Darshan = knowledge of reality.



The word 'know' is slippery. it is not always used in the same way. we use this word in different ways in different situations.



Different sense/ meaning of the word “know”

- Knowledge by acquaintance.
- Knowing How.
- Knowing that / propositional sense.



Sometimes when we talk about knowing , we are referring to acquaintance of some kind. For example, I know Ram means may be I know him or I might know him in the sense of acquaintance, without knowing much about him .

Sometimes we speak of knowing how. For example, I know how to ride horse. In one word we say that knowing how is an ability.

But by far the most frequent use of the word ‘know’- and one with which we shall be primarily concerned – is the propositional sense : ‘I know that’ where the word ‘that’ is followed by a proposition : ‘ I know that I am an Indian’

Necessary Conditions of propositional knowledge :



- Truthfulness
- Believe
- Justification

Sufficient Conditions of propositional knowledge :



JTB

I have knowledge about p,

If,

- p must be true
- Not only p must be true : we must believe that p is true.
- we must have evidence for p or reason to believe p.

Plato's theory of knowledge :



What is not knowledge ?

- Knowledge is not perception.
- Knowledge is not true belief.
- True propositions are not knowledge.



What is knowledge ?

- Knowledge is always infallible or true.
- Real.
- Object of knowledge is Concept/Idea/Forms which is real and infallible.

Smile of the line / Degree of knowledge :



	Concept/Idea/Forms
<i>Rational knowledge</i>	Mathematical or Geometrical knowledge
<i>Empirical opinion or belief</i>	Opinion or belief
	Imagination



Lower level of knowledge is imagination it is based on all knowledge. Object of this level is image or shadow. This is copy of opinion or belief. It is not infallible or real, so Plato says that this level can't be knowledge.

Higher level of imagination level is opinion or belief. Which is copy of mathematical knowledge . It also depends on our sense experience . so, according to Plato this level also can't be knowledge.

Higher level of opinion or belief level is mathematical knowledge. Which is copy of concept . It is not pure knowledge , because it depends on number or symbol which we get our sense data or experience.

Highest level of knowledge is concept or idea. Which is acquired by pure reason. And all things are copied by this level of knowledge.



Concept/Idea/Forms
(Real)

Mathematical or
Geometrical knowledge
(Copy)

Opinion or belief
(Copy of copy)

Imagination
(Copy of copy of copy)

Rational
knowledge

Empirical opinion or belief



So, we conclude that pure knowledge is concept.

Only concept is real ,and other three is copy of this reality.