Your Name

Instructor Name

Course Number

Date

**Theory of Knowledge**

In order to deeply understand Theory of Knowledge (TOK) into this title, we need to unpack information in sub-questions: define what are personal circumstances? What is the influence of personal circumstances on our knowledge gain? Discuss this matter.

Personal circumstances play a vital role in our knowledge, so it is needed to know what is meant by it. Normally a set of personal circumstance are attached with every person. It plays a significant role in the image of ourselves, in how we feel, think and view the world (Personal circumstances). Every person has some elements that are associated with personal circumstances, and many questions are about it such as:

Do you have wealth security like rich or poor? Do you belong to a country with strong economic conditions or poverty-stricken? Do you belong to minority group suffering from discrimination on the basis of skin color? Are you male or female? What is your religion? What are your talents, abilities, strength and weaknesses? What is your health condition? Which profession you have chosen for your living? What is your education level i.e. college degree, a high school diploma or illiterate? What is your marital status? How many children do u have? Do you have constructive or bad habits? What is extent of your knowledge? Is it broad, extensive or limited, superficial and conservative?

Personal circumstances have a great impact on our knowledge gain and capabilities (Kalsi). Knowledge depends significantly on the experience of a particular individual. It is gained through practice and personal involvement associated with the circumstances such as interests, biography, values, culture, ethnicity and so on (Ebner, Freund and Baltes). Knowledge based on personal circumstances is a sum of skills and technical knowledge that I have developed by practice, habituation and experience of my life beyond academic circles. There are many Way of Knowing (WOK) by which knowledge becomes apparent to us. Some ways of knowing are through language, imagination, faith, emotion, reason, intuition, memory, and sense perception.

* Language: Language plays an important role in transmitting knowledge in society and it determines the way we think. In a practical community, people speak in a particular way and their way of thinking is organized accordingly. For example, people who go to some eastern country for studies may feel hurdles in understanding because of language differences. Here we can argue that speaking in a specific language may limit our thinking ability. Moreover, someone else may argue that the way we understand and think about matters are not restricted to a particular culture, but are worldwide.
* Imagination: Imagination is the capacity to create a mental representation of an intellect skill without the usual stimulus. For your ToK essays your imagination must be connected to real life. For example, medical conditions like autism that might affect the imagination. Schizophrenia can give some understanding of what misbeliefs and dangerous examples of imagination can lead to big losses. Imagination is often appreciated as a part of inspiration, problem solving and innovation.
* Faith: Some people perceive faith as a religious aspect, like faith in God. But some people do not believe in God, so meaning of faith is lost here. Someone’s commitment with a philosophy that leads to their knowledge, can be their faith. It is a way of understanding the world that we have chosen to interpret things. Some people may think that there is a relationship between faith and reason and vice versa. However, in many religions’ faith and reason are considered as interdependent.
* Emotion: In TOK there are two views of emotion i.e**. naturalistic view and social constructionists** (Lagemaat)**. Naturalistic view of emotion** says that, emotion is an outcome of our physical build, with physical effects and causes. Naturalistic view has practical implication universallyand can be experienced across cultures. **Social constructionists** claim that emotions are [socially constructed](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GVVWmZAStn8) and ultimately comes from our social environment. A question may rise in our mind that whether emotion is a support or intrusion when it comes in TOK. Someone might claim that emotions can create problem while gaining information. For example, if you have a family member ill, and you love him a lot; you have emotions for him and it would be difficult in such circumstances to gain knowledge. However, someone might contradict with you. People with autism often try to recognize social conditions, to know what other people feel.
* Reason: In WOK reason is very prominent way of knowledge. For a clear understanding about it we must understand it step wise. Fi**rst step is the capability to use logical deduction.**This allows us to go through from starting premises to **reach valid conclusions.** For example: Premises 1: Timmy is a cat. Premises 2: All cats have fur. Question: Does Timmy have fur on body? Valid Conclusion: Yes, Timmy has fur on body. Working from premises to conclusions like this is called logical **deduction**. **Second step is the capability to do rational induction.** We have used deductive logic and concluded a general statement about cats. However, it is not necessary that all cats have fur on their bodies. Logical induction: it is what we call **inferential**. It makes a declaration which is not severely provable. This idea of inference benefits to separate inductive and deductive reasoning.
* Intuition: Intuition is consuming an instant sense of knowledge, without any previous thinking. Psychologists believe that in a given circumstance, an intuitive mind is able to make more observations than a conscious mind. This is commonly defined as, having a natural feeling about what is going to happen, or what is the solution of the problem. It is a influential way of knowing which is defined as instantaneous consciousness. A claim comes in our mind that how much this Way of Knowing is reliable and how we can use it to justify our actions?
* Memory: Memory is a Way of Knowing that gives you the opportunity to say something unique for discussion of your TOK essays and presentations. One way of defining memory is the ability which allows us torecall information and recreate previous experiences*.* There is a significant importance of memory in acquiring new knowledge. Our past experiences impart on our new experiences and can be interpreted because of memory which is a vast part of how we gain knowledge at any moment of life.
* Sense perception: Sense is the WOK that relates to the way a personunderstands and uses their senses. Conventionally we have only five senses: smell, sight, taste, touch, and hearing. With the passage of time more senses become part of life such as sense of movement, sense of pain, sense of heat, sense of balance, hunger and thirst has also been suggested. Moreover, it is generally thought that our[expectations help us to shape our sense of experience](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sxwn1w7MJvk). These senses are mostly invoked by our personal circumstances in which we live. Moreover, in TOK essays and presentation is a fascinating topic about deciding[how beliefs and perceptions influence each other](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n46umYA_4dM) (O'Brien).

To answer this question of TOK one must know biased perceptions and biased knowledge. Biases are personal circumstances that form the way in which we understand and perceive knowledge (Balloo, Pauli and Worrell). We normally take knowledge from well-known biased sources like individuals, organizations or media sources. But we perceive knowledge from where we believe information is truly biased. This justifies our claim that personal circumstances effect on how seriously knowledge is acquired. Furthermore, many other questions may arise in our mind regarding personal circumstances when associated with knowledge. Do we rapidly accept specific knowledge as reality if personal circumstances of this source line up with your personal circumstances? Shall we terminate other knowledge, which may hold the same strength, simply because an individual’s personal circumstances cover our judgement of the knowledge formed by that individual? What consequences does this conveys in society? Can we relate this to alternative area of knowledge? Does this is makes us more ignorant as known persons?

# **Works Cited**

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