

In two paragraphs,
compare and contrast
rationalism and
empiricism

[Philosophy](#)



Rationalism and Empiricism Rationalism adopts the position that knowledge is innate and a priori. According to this position, the mind can generate knowledge on its own without any external support. The underlying assumption in the rationalist position is that people are born with the natural capacity to generate knowledge. The rationalist's method is the appeal to reason (Maritain 14). This means that the mind could rely on deductive reason in the process of generating knowledge. The belief is that it is possible to access the inner recesses of knowledge only if the individuals rely on consistent and logical search for solutions. Reason is the rationalist's tool for determining the nature of knowledge about the objective world. The application of the tools, methods, and processes of logic, according to rationalists, should guide an individual to the kind of knowledge that conforms to the laws of logic. These usually begin from concepts that form in the mind.

On the other hand, empiricism is the epistemological school of thought that argues that all knowledge comes from the senses. According to this school, all people are born with their minds representing a blank sheet of paper so that all subsequent experiences generate knowledge for the individual. Empiricism argues in favor of sense experience as the fundamental basis of all knowledge (Maritain 26). We acquire knowledge by interacting with the subjective world before we form ideas and knowledge about the shape of reality. In this manner, all knowledge becomes a posteriori. It must necessarily proceed from sense experience. Empiricists argue that all knowledge is based on precepts, which form after some form of experiences. These are then ordered in the mind before they are synthesized into

workable knowledge.

Works Cited

Maritain, Jacques. *An EPZ Introduction to Philosophy*. New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2005