

A Post-Growth Education: An immanent critique of the relationship between education and economic growth.

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This paper presents an interdisciplinary, post-qualitative analysis of the relationship between education and economic growth. Orientated by German philosopher's Rahel Jaeggi's concept of immanent critique, I use theory to bring together different disciplinary perspectives on education and economic growth. By bringing these alternative perspectives into dialogue with each other, I create new connections, problematisations, and questions about the topic of research, which may unsettle the standard assumptions within f these different thought collectives and epistemic cultures, and thereby open up new possibilities for change in thought and practice.

I proceed by outlining the concept and history of the idea of economic growth. Discussing how and why the relationship between education and economic growth became a defined topic of study in the field of economics in the post-war era. Specifically, I note that a key motive for this was a growing political interest in a puzzle in the literature on economic growth. I describe how education provided one possible explanation of this puzzle, and through early empirical support and wider political endorsement, education was suddenly reframed as critical to the economic fortunes of both individuals and societies.

I describe how this reframing contributed to the economic colonisation of educational policy. I argue that this continues to have a number of troubling consequences for both the practice of teaching and the student experience within schools.

Then, I discuss how the idea of ecological limits to the pursuit of economic suggests that a post-growth economic era is rapidly approaching. Therefore, I suggest that this potential transformation, offers an opportunity to realise a form of education that is freed from the imperatives of economic growth, and that might better equip students with the capabilities and attributes required to thrive in a sustainable, post-growth future.