

Letter from the Editor

The 60th issue of *Economía Teoría y Práctica* coincides with the 50th anniversary of the Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana. It's a great pleasure for us to continue publishing a journal that was the first inter-unit project of the UAM.

We go back to the eighties, when professors from the three units existing at that time, Azcapotzalco, Iztapalapa and Xochimilco, during the economic crisis faced by Mexico, enthusiastically undertook the creation of an Economics Journal. Among this group of professors, who over the years have been recognized as distinguished professors: Juan Castaingts, Carlos Rozo, Ignacio Llamas, and the recently departed Ortiz. The Rector at the time, the physicist Sergio Reyes Luján, welcomed the initiative taken by the University's economists and agreed to finance its publication. The editorial project aimed to discuss the theoretical approaches that explained the debt crisis, its impact on inflation and the basis for monetary, stabilization, wage and labor market policies. But also, in the analysis of the scenario that was opening up in Mexico with structural and institutional reforms and the orientation of industrialization towards exports, among other issues. Relevant contributions from colleagues, initially from the UAM, made possible the publication of the issues with which *Economía Teoría y Práctica* began. On several occasions, due to the austerity measures in public spending and the reduction of the UAM budget, the effort to edit the journal was confronted with budgetary limitations. However, we acknowledge the decisive support of those academics who, during their time as Rector General, were sensitive to the importance of this economic publication, Dr. Oscar M. González Cuevas, Dr. Gustavo A. Chapela, Dr. Julio Rubio Oca, Dr. José Luis Gázquez Mateos, Dr. Luis Mier y Terán, Dr. José Lema Labadie, Dr. Enrique Fernández Fassnacht, Dr. Salvador Vega y León, Dr. Eduardo Peñaloza Castro, and currently Dr. José Antonio Reyes Heredia.

It is worth acknowledging the substantial efforts of the journal's previous editors, starting with Juan Castaingts, followed by Etelberto Ortiz, Fernando Chávez, Etelberto Ortiz, Constantino Toto and Carlos Rozo. Each one of them, supported by editorial committees with the participation of professors from the three mentioned units, worked hard so that the magazine would maintain its prestige.

During the current directorship, the journal was not limited to having an editorial board with members from UAM but was expanded to include the participation of economist colleagues of national and international prestige. In addition, it has been proposed to expand the indexing of the journal in view of greater accessibility and international visibility. We were pleased to be included in the Index of Mexican Scientific and Technological Research Journals of Conacyt in May 2011. *Economía Teoría y Práctica* responded to Conacyt's call with a serious and responsible commitment to migrate to the Open Journal Systems. This commitment continued until the journal was included in the Thompson Reuters Web of Science-SciELO Citation Index. Likewise, the journal has incorporated into its portal several international criteria that are included in the most prestigious journals. At the same time, it has been included in international repositories that guarantee its dissemination, such as the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), Red de Revistas Científicas de América Latina y el Caribe, España y Portugal (Redalyc), Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO), Regional Online Information System of Scientific Journals of Latin America, the Caribbean, Spain and Portugal (Latinex), and with special interest in those that collect and disseminate the articles of the most prestigious economic journals, American Economic Association (Econlit) and EconPapers. We were delighted to receive the news of our inclusion in a prestigious index of the University of California, the Hispanic American Periodicals Index (HAPI).

Notwithstanding such progress, the journal seeks to incorporate improvements that will allow it to achieve the recognition of the specialized scientific community in this editorial project by increasing the quality of its contributions, visibility, obtaining new international indexes and the impact factor. We are on this path. We are experiencing considerable financial difficulties in carrying out our editorial work.

Dear readers, despite the difficulties we have had to overcome, this is another issue of *Economía Teoría y Práctica* that we present to you. We are grateful to the Rector General, Dr. José Antonio de los Reyes, whose funding has finally allowed this issue to come to light.

Human capital, a concept whose roots go back to classical economists such as Adam Smith, but also to the Nobel laureate in Economics, Gary Becker, who formalized the theory of human capital, enriched by Schultz and, over time, other Nobel laureates in Economics such as Robert Lucas and Paul M. Romer. In addition, several other prominent authors have also contributed to the development of human capital theory. Investments in education and skill development, combined with health care spending, constitute human capital assets that contribute to improved productivity and thus to economic growth and social welfare. Thus, when Mankiew,

Romer and Weil (1992)¹ extend Solow's (1957)² model to include human capital, they find that the fact that some countries are immensely rich and others very poor explains why the former not only invest relatively more in physical capital and high levels of technology, but also spend more time accumulating skills. Since investment in training to develop skills is a decision not only of firms but also of workers and certainly of governments, there is an interesting debate and empirical work to answer the question of who bears the costs of total investment in human capital (Becker, 1962; Hashimoto, 1981; Malcomson *et al.*, 2003).³

In any case, given the role of formal education in shaping the foundations of human capital, countries will have an incentive to promote an educated, healthy, and socially protected older population with the high capacity to learn and develop new skills as technological progress requires, thus generating the highest returns for all stakeholders. In this sense, the Human Capital Index (HCI) quantifies the contribution of health and education to the productivity of the next generation of workers (Our World in Data, 2024).⁴

In this sense, the measurement of education expenditures between countries is a highly relevant task. Among these are the OECD measurements to evaluate comparatively what nations spend in this area. It is interesting to note that Mexico, with US\$3,000 per full-time student at the elementary/secondary level, ranks lowest among OECD countries, with a negative average annual growth rate of -2% between 2010 and 2019. In contrast, the leaders, Luxembourg and Norway, spend \$16,000, closely followed by Austria and the Republic of Korea at \$15,900 each. The United States, on the other hand, reports USD 11,300.

At levels above secondary school, the decline in expenditure per full-time student is even greater in Mexico (-23%) over the same period, while in Chile it increased by 20% (OECD, 2023).⁵ The efficiency of the amount invested in education can be seen in the PISA test. In 2023, Mexico ranked 57th out of 81 countries evaluated. Precisely because of the importance of public investment in education to accumulate knowledge and skills, a source of economic growth and social welfare, it is worth discussing the issue.

¹ N. Gregory Mankiw, David Romer, David N. Weil, "A Contribution to the Empirics of Economic Growth", *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, vol. 107, Issue 2, May 1992, pp. 407-437, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2118477>.

² Robert M. Solow (1957), "Technical Change and the Aggregate Production Function", *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, vol. 39 (3), pp. 312-320, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1926047>.

³ Gary S. Becker (1962), "Investment in Human Capital: A Theoretical Analysis", *Journal of Political Economy*, vol. 70 (5), pp. 9-49, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1086/258724>; Masanori Hashimoto (1981), "Firm-Specific Human Capital as a Shared Investment", *The American Economic Review*, vol. 71 (3), pp. 475-482; James M. Malcomson; James W. Maw y Barry McCormick (2003), "General training by firms, apprentice contracts, and public policy", *European Economic Review*, Elsevier, vol. 47 (2), pp. 197-227, April.

⁴ Our World in Data (2024), "Data Page: Human Capital Index", Data adapted from World Bank, Retrieved from <https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/human-capital-index-in-2018> [online resource].

⁵ Our World in Data (2024), "Data Page: Human Capital Index", Data adapted from World Bank, Retrieved from <https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/human-capital-index-in-2018> [online resource].

Thus, after these reflections, this issue opens with the article “Human Capital in Valenzuela Feijóo: Neoclassical Foundations with Marxist Terms”, by Julio Goicoechea, professor at the Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana Iztapalapa, who undertakes the task of analyzing the theoretical sources used by Valenzuela Feijóo to study human capital. Goicoechea begins his analysis with the equivalence that José Valenzuela assigns to the concepts of labor qualification and complex labor in Marx. But when he examines the conceptual roots of the term, he will find behind it the influence of Mincer, Becker, Schultz, who coin the concept of human capital and the theoretical foundations. To what extent are the communication vessels established between the concepts of the theory of human capital and those used in Marx? Does Valenzuela Feijóo succeed in unifying the theory of human capital with Marxism? In this way, Julio Goicoechea breaks down the determinants of human capital, the wage remuneration associated with human capital and the supposed equivalence to the social work expended, as it is quantified; he examines what similarity could be demonstrated between the complex work in Marx and the qualification of the labor force, analogous to human capital. Finally, it addresses the alleged controversy that Valenzuela Feijóo poses to the theory of human capital. You are welcome to read it.

Next, the article “Fixed Capital and Unemployment in David Ricardo”, by Said Azpeitia Blanco of the Polytechnic University of Huatusco, Mexico, proposes to study how David Ricardo transforms his reasoning about the impact of machinery on workers through an analytical method that considers fixed capital as a product. The author asks how Ricardo changed his initial position, from believing that machinery benefited the working class to claiming that it had a negative effect on employment.

A useful account of David Ricardo’s early contributions on capital and its benefits to the working class, and later his concern about what happens to the level of employment in the presence of technological progress in machinery. After examining the correspondence with Malthus in 1815, the writings of Sraffa, and Ricardo himself, the author concludes by confirming the hypothesis presented.

We are pleased to publish the research product of young PhD economists, when they carry out their postdoctoral fellowships, prior to double-blind refereeing. This is the case of Paty Montiel, fellow at the Instituto de Investigaciones Económicas, UNAM, author of the article “Transnational Corporations in Developing and Developed Countries in Globalization”.

Within the theoretical discussion of the reasons that explain the offshoring of transnational corporations to other developed, emerging or developing countries,

the author focuses her study on the internationalization of companies in the electronic-computer and telecommunications sectors. Considering the specificities of globalization and the role of MNEs in global production networks, the author tries to answer the following questions: How do the incentives differ in each of the countries where MNEs decide to relocate? What are the incentives to generate and transfer knowledge in the countries where they relocate? How is this process perceived by the management of transnational corporations? This study leads to final reflections that invite to deepen a problem on the horizon of different latitudes and that takes on other dimensions.

In the knowledge and innovation economy, great interest is given to issues related to the communication vessels that take place between universities and government. Given the role of the state in financing public education, including higher education institutions, in the formation of human capital, to what extent are the social, economic and cultural returns of universities expressed? The link is undoubtedly there. In fact, it is the responsibility of universities, firstly, to prepare their students intellectually and professionally; secondly, based on the development of scientific research, to generate knowledge in the various disciplines aimed at understanding the problems of the environment and the universe, seeking possible solutions; and thirdly, to develop a social projection, contributing to economic, social and cultural development.

Three missions that contribute to the study of knowledge flows that take place between university and government, which is addressed by Rodolfo García Galván and Ricardo Rodríguez Ledesma, both from the Universidad Autónoma de Baja California, in the article “Theoretical-empirical foundations of university-government knowledge collaboration”, in the case of Mexico.

The specialized theoretical review aims to identify the confluence of scientific knowledge between academia and government, which increases as the understanding, interpretation and solving of economic, social, cultural and public policy problems become necessary. With these epistemological foundations, the authors focus their research on proving that the existing collaboration between universities and the government in terms of knowledge flow in Mexico, although characterized by moderation and passivity, could deepen and broaden as its relevance becomes politically internalized. Rodolfo García and Ricardo Rodríguez use a survey of scientific researchers belonging to the National System of Researchers of four national universities to determine the state of university-government relations, their motivations and forms of interaction. Interesting results that lead the authors to realize how essential it is to extend this study using other methodologies for a better understanding of the phenomenon and the design of policies. Undoubtedly, it is inevitable to promote the confluence between these two actors to nourish

the country with innovative solutions to the problems that afflict the country, but with the support of scientific and technological knowledge.

Returning to the topic of human capital, but from the perspective of how higher levels of human capital will cope with technological progress, Reyna Elizabeth Rodríguez Pérez, of the Universidad Autónoma de Coahuila, and Liliana Meza González, of the Universidad Iberoamericana, analyze the phenomenon in their co-authored article “Labour displacement risk index in the face of automation: estimation and analysis”.

A relevant study, not only for its theoretical and historical approach to the phenomenon, but also for the methodology proposed and the results obtained. Interesting is the purely Schumpeterian reflection on how technological change leads to the transformation of the economy; consequently, some sectors grow, and others shrink, and some jobs are destroyed and others created. What is the logic of this creative destruction in the labor market?

In the context of the fourth technological and industrial revolution, characterized by digitalization, the authors wonder: Which types of workers are at higher risk of being displaced from the labor market, and which are at lower risk? In this sense, they propose to evaluate what happens to the population and labor groups in Mexico and regions in the face of automation for different reasons. By estimating an index of the risk of displacement of workers due to automation, using data from the National Survey of Occupation and Employment (ENOE) for the years 2005 and 2019, they seek to test the hypothesis that the most skilled workers in non-routine tasks, as well as those located in the region most exposed to the international economy, are those who face lower risks in the face of automation. These results are very suggestive, and we invite you to learn more about them.

The final article in this issue, “Articulating production and finance through deposits and credit in Bolivia, 2006-2021: experience in productive development for the public good”, by Antonio Mendoza Hernández of the Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana Iztapalapa, situates his analysis before and during the Covid-19 pandemic in the South American country. In particular, he examines the productive practices of credit through microcredit, whose sources of savings also come from low-income community actors. The author is interested in investigating the mechanisms that make it possible to reciprocally articulate productive and financial activities in times of uncertainty, and the consequent economic and social impact on Bolivian communities.

In the light of the analysis of the Bolivian experience, Antonio Mendoza, in his concluding reflections, characterizes the Bolivian community-based socio-economic model, the social role in which the financial system interacts through microcredits in the productive sphere and access to housing.

Finally, Hugo Amador Herrera Torres, from the Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo, comments on the book *For the forgiveness of Latin America's external debt*, published in 2021, whose authors are Franz Hinkelammert, Henry Mora, Jorge Zúñiga, William Hughes and Yamandú Acosta.

In anticipation of the necessary feedback from authors, readers, reviewers, editorial board and journal management, we share a thought of Marie Curie, the first woman to receive a Nobel Prize in 1903 for her contributions to physics and later in 1911 for her contributions to chemistry: *Nothing in life is to be feared, it is only to be understood. Now is the time to understand more, so that we may fear less.*

ALENKA GUZMÁN
JOURNAL EDITOR IN CHIEF