



THE HUMAN FACTOR IN THE COMMODITY ECONOMY: FROM INNOVATION TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

O fator humano na economia mercantil: da inovação ao desenvolvimento sustentável

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ABSTRACT

The article analyzes the role of human beings in the commodity economy, from innovation to sustainable development. The research focuses on exploiting human potential, finding an economic institution that balances growth and social welfare, and pointing out the process of distributing and regulating human resources in the commodity economy. The article uses the approach of humanistic philosophy and social philosophy combined with qualitative analysis. Applying the principles of "causality", "necessity and freedom", "subject and product" to clarify the transition between humans and the economy. At the same time, the article uses the method of synthesizing socio-economic documents to present scientific and practical arguments. Results: The article affirms that humans are the center of the commodity economy, not only a productive force but also a driving force for social development; the balance between economic growth and human development helps maintain a sustainable economy. The paper also clarifies the relationship between people, knowledge, wealth and money in a market economy. It emphasizes the role of family, religion, state and business institutions in shaping human capabilities and needs. Conclusion: Sustainable development requires human development, investment in education, science and technology, human resource management, together with management policies to reduce inequality and ensure balanced economic, social and environmental development.

Keywords: Human, Goods, Economy, Sustainable development

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O FATOR HUMANO NA ECONOMIA MERCANTIL: DA INOVAÇÃO AO DESENVOLVIMENTO SUSTENTÁVEL

The human factor in the mercantile economy: from innovation to sustainable development

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ABSTRACT

O artigo analisa o papel do ser humano na economia mercantil, da inovação ao desenvolvimento sustentável. A pesquisa se concentra na exploração do potencial humano, na busca de uma instituição econômica que equilibre crescimento e bem-estar social e no apontamento do processo de distribuição e regulação de recursos humanos na economia mercantil. O artigo utiliza a abordagem da filosofia humanística e da filosofia social aliada à análise qualitativa. Aplicando os princípios de "causalidade", "necessidade e liberdade", "sujeito e produto" para esclarecer a transição entre os seres humanos e a economia. Ao mesmo tempo, o artigo utiliza o método de síntese de documentos socioeconômicos para apresentar argumentos científicos e práticos. Resultados: O artigo afirma que o ser humano é o centro da economia mercantil, não apenas uma força produtiva, mas também uma força motriz para o desenvolvimento social; O equilíbrio entre crescimento econômico e desenvolvimento humano ajuda a manter uma economia sustentável. O documento também esclarece a relação entre pessoas, conhecimento, riqueza e dinheiro em uma economia de mercado. Ele enfatiza o papel da família, religião, estado e instituições empresariais na formação das capacidades e necessidades humanas. Conclusão: O desenvolvimento sustentável requer desenvolvimento humano, investimento em educação, ciência e tecnologia, gestão de recursos humanos, juntamente com políticas de gestão para reduzir a desigualdade e garantir o desenvolvimento econômico, social e ambiental equilibrado.

Palavras-chave: Humanos, Bens, Economia, Desenvolvimento sustentável

INTRODUCTION

In a commodity economy, people are not only the subject of production but also the decisive factor for sustainable development, that is, the creator of material wealth and spiritual values. People are the central factor in the entire process of production, distribution and consumption of goods, but exploiting and promoting human potential is becoming an important challenge in the context of globalization and technological transformation. One of the core issues is how to balance economic growth and human development. As the market economy expands, businesses often focus on profits, leading to overexploitation of labor and quality of life. In addition, the development of science and technology is changing the nature of labor, creating many new opportunities and posing many challenges. Workers must constantly learn, innovate and improve their skills to adapt to market changes. The process of producing goods also needs to aim at sustainable values, connecting people with the natural environment and ensuring harmonious development between economy, society and ecology. This article will analyze the role of people in the commodity economy from the perspective of creativity and sustainable development, and at the same time point out the process of distributing and regulating labor to exploit and effectively promote human potential in the modern economy.

1 RESEARCH METHOD AND THEORETICAL BASIS

1.1 Research methods

To conduct research on the topic "*Human factor in commodity economy: From innovation to sustainable development*", we synchronously used the following research methods:

The method of analysis and synthesis is used to clarify the theoretical and practical basis of the role of humans in the commodity economy. Through the collection and analysis of related documents and research works, this method helps to systematize the views on innovation and sustainable development, thereby identifying important factors affecting this process. The method is used to analyze and synthesize scientific views to help affirm the central role of humans not only in production and consumption but also in promoting innovation and sustainable economic development. Synthesizing opinions from many different perspectives also allows for assessing the appropriateness of views in a practical context, thereby drawing conclusions and proposing solutions to maximize the role of humans in the modern commodity economy.

Historical and logical methods are used to clarify the development process of the commodity economy through the periods, thereby identifying the role of humans in each stage. By examining the history of the formation and movement of the commodity economy, the study can draw important lessons about how humans adapt, innovate and impact economic development. This method helps us analyze current trends of the commodity economy, thereby forecasting the requirements and challenges posed to humans in the modern context. The combination of historical analysis and practical assessment helps the study not only reflect a comprehensive picture of the role of humans in the economy but also propose appropriate solutions to promote creativity and sustainable development in the future.

The content of this scientific article is approached from the methodology of humanistic philosophy and social philosophy. Humans are the subjects who live by their products. Society is a product of human cognition, creation and production. Society is a means to an end, when society exists in all possible forms. Humans create and establish institutions to become institutions such as family, religion, state, corporation to develop, exploit and use, making individuals different means. Human life is forgotten, human creativity becomes survival instincts according to "species" with different institutions. Human life is differentiated into different species in the division of labor, living standards and enjoyment, it is expressed in living habits, repeated, that is daily work and occupation. Work and occupation have an instinctive nature that is not as perfect as robots and AI. Individuals become different means used by society for the things that society desires. In addition, the article also analyzes, presents and approaches the text using qualitative methods to clarify the transition between "cause and effect", "necessity and freedom", "ability and need", "means and purpose", "subject and product", especially using the inversion method to clarify the subject and product in the relationship between humans and society. In which, humans are both the subject and the purpose of survival in the creative process, which is the creative process to achieve sustainability.

1.2 Theoretical basis

The human factor in the commodity economy has always been a central topic in economic, social and management research. Scientists have approached this issue from many different angles, including the role of humans in production and innovation and the impact of the market economy on sustainable development. This review will examine representative studies to clarify the theoretical and practical basis of this topic.

Firstly, the role of humans in the commodity economy. As early as the classical economic period, Adam Smith emphasized the importance of human labor in creating wealth for society (Smith, A. 1776). In his work "*The Wealth of Nations*", he argued that the division of labor helps improve productivity and increase economic value (Smith, A. 2024). Karl Marx approached the issue critically, arguing that labor is the source of surplus value (Marx, K. 2022). However, workers are exploited and alienated from the product of their labor in the capitalist economy (Roberts, W. C. et al. 2024; Brasília, H. J. P., et al. 2024). Modern studies continue to develop theories about the role of humans in the commodity economy. Theodore Schultz 1961 and Gary Becker 1964 (Becker, G. S. 1964; Deming, D. J. 2022), with their theory of human capital (Gerhart, B., & Feng, J. 2021; Lundahl, M. 2021; Fernandes, I. O., et al. 2021; Burnett, P. 2023), asserted that education, training, and labor skills are the determinants of productivity and economic development (Barrera, C. A., et al. 2022; Michaelides, P. G., & Papageorgiou, T. 2022) (Schultz, 1961; Becker, 1964). These studies laid the foundation for governments and businesses to focus on investing in people to improve competitiveness in a market economy.

Secondly, human in economic innovation. Joseph Schumpeter 1934 emphasized the role of human in innovation (De Liso, N. 2022; Chandra, R. 2024; Amaro, A. 2024), considering entrepreneurs as the driving force of economic development through the process of "*creative destruction*" (Pénin, J., & Guichardaz, R. 2023). According to him, innovation in production and business helps the economy grow continuously. This view continues to be expanded in the context of knowledge economy and digital transformation. Richard Florida (2002) introduced the concept of the "*creative class*" (Florida, R. 2002), emphasizing the role of knowledge workers (Mellander, C., & Florida, R. 2021), technicians and artists in the modern economy (Belitski, M., Korosteleva, J., & Piscitello, L. 2023; Florida, R. 2021). These individuals create tangible products and contribute to intangible values such as ideas, technology, art and culture, shaping the global economy.

Thirdly, people and sustainable development in a market economy. The Brundtland Report (1987) introduced the concept of "*sustainable development*" (Hajian, M., & Kashani, S. J. 2021; Brundtland, G. H. 1987), emphasizing that economic development must go hand in hand with environmental protection and ensuring social equity (Borowy, I. 2021; Mageste, A. E. S. 2023; Kono, N. 2024; Espinosa Garcés, M. F. 2024). Amartya Sen, in "*Development as Freedom*" (Kjosavik, D. J. 2021; GYÖRGY, M. 2021)., asserting that development is not only measured by economic growth but also based on whether people have freedom, choice and opportunity to develop (Leuehaq, T. A., & Fatlolon, C. 2024; Dalto, K. K. S., et al. 2021). This perspective has laid the foundation for many human-centered development policies, aiming for a more equitable and sustainable economy.

Fourthly, research gaps and development orientations. Although there are many studies on the role of people in the commodity economy, there are still some issues that need to be further explored. One of the biggest challenges today is the impact of Industry 4.0 technologies, artificial intelligence, and automation on the role of humans in production and services (KULOĞLU, A. 2024; Cho, J., et al. 2023; Capello, R., Lenzi, C., & Perucca, G. 2022). In addition, income inequality and access to education and health care among population groups remain issues of concern (Kulkarni, V. S., & Gaiha, R. 2021; Polacko, M. 2021). In addition, the pressure from resource extraction and commodity production on the environment requires research on circular economy models and green economy to balance economic development and ecosystem protection. Researchers emphasize the central role of the human element in a market economy, from innovation to sustainable development, but the context of digital transformation, AI and rising inequality requires further research to find suitable economic models to optimize the role of humans towards a sustainable society.

2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To study the topic "*Human Factors in the Commodity Economy: From Innovation to Sustainable Development*" we set out the following three research questions:

- Why is it said that human factors are important in the commodity economy?

- How has the role of human factors in the commodity economy changed over time?
- How can we maximize the role of human factors in promoting sustainable economic development?

3 RESEARCH CONTENT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Research Content

The Relationship Between Humans, Life, Knowledge, and Wealth

Nature is the material foundation of humanity, connecting individuals with life and forming a unified whole. Although there are differences in function in the creative process, every final product is the result of perception, design, and production. The relationship between humans and life is reflected through these products. Individuals use life to create wealth, while life, in a sense, also uses human intelligence to create products, "*stimulating entrepreneurs' insights and practical wisdom*" (He, F. ., & Puttawong, D., 2024, p. 556). Wealth exists outside of humans but plays an essential role for them. Through action, life reflects individuals expressing their abilities and needs. Each individual is constantly confronted with his or her existence, which is reflected in the way they live and perceive themselves. The relationship between the individual and life is governed by biological needs such as food and drink and spiritual and social factors. Unlike animals that focus solely on survival, humans can perceive themselves and the world, thereby developing new needs and adjusting or abandoning needs that are no longer relevant. The interaction between needs and capabilities creates a balance in life. It promotes creativity and flexible development, but paradoxes arise when people are dominated by virtual needs, pursuing aspirations that are far from reality. This leads to the risk of becoming slaves to aspirations created by the imagination, causing ambiguity in values.

Wealth sustains life, just as knowledge allows individuals to achieve fulfillment. Wealth meets material needs, while knowledge helps people navigate and perform social roles. Whether in economic or social exchange, the distribution of wealth and knowledge requires rational consideration. Ultimately, individuals, wealth, knowledge, and life do not exist independently but form a unified whole, which is both a means and an end for each other. Humans perceive the transformations of life and the changes in the natural world. "*There is a strong correlation between general cognitive perceptions rooted in natural motives and a sound mind*" (Al-Hadlaq, A. M., 2024, p. 334). Nature contains mysteries, and so do humans. Honesty to oneself extends to honesty to nature. Human nature is not an inherent or abstract entity but is expressed through life and the products it creates. Animals live on the peaceful natural world outside; humans live on their own products. Humans are separated from other species by the products they create. When the individual's abilities and needs for wealth and knowledge are satisfied, the individual's true nature is revealed. Conversely, when these needs are not met, the individual exists as an abstract social entity. Life is where the individual expresses his abilities and satisfies his needs through material objects. Without life, nature is just an abstract concept to humans. Without interaction with the outside world, the individual is likely to fall into a state of stagnation and helplessness, and his development potential remains untapped. That is "*the potential to create economic opportunities, protect cultural heritage and preserve natural resources*" (Tola et al., 2024, p. 287).

Creativity often comes from changes in cognitive or sensory abilities. Without individual products, there would be no individual abilities and needs, and the product would have no meaning. However, the value of a product lies not only in satisfying sensory needs, but also in expressing the individual's unique creativity and knowledge. People give their fellow human beings a living by their own products, so giving and receiving are equally satisfying. Human communication becomes an exchange of products in social life. In society, when certain abilities and needs are widely satisfied, they may gradually lose their practical value. When priests become popular, burial ceremonies may become simplified. When officials become popular, poverty may become legal. When many businessmen become popular, money may lose its meaning. When teaching becomes a common profession, practical knowledge may be ignored, and the rest is dogmatic theory. The product of the individual no longer reflects the needs of society but simply becomes a personal standard, exchanged as a specific commodity.

Each individual reflects humanity in his own way. If an individual does not originate from human society, humanity does not need to connect with them. However, each person is not only a product of society but also the result of the process of self-shaping. The life of each individual is a continuous creative process, similar to the way

they create their products. Every product created reflects the personal stamp of the creator. Albert Einstein developed the theory of relativity, Isaac Newton discovered the law of universal gravitation, and inventions such as the steam engine, trains, cars and airplanes are all the results of specific individuals. No product is the product of an abstract human being, so all products are the result of tangible and creative individuals. In a market economy, people do not consume knowledge to sustain life, but they need understanding to exploit resources, develop products and adapt to the environment. Knowledge is not a material commodity that can be consumed directly, but it is a tool to help people master their lives and improve the quality of their existence. Thanks to knowledge, individuals can be creative, meet practical needs and contribute to the common development of humanity. Creativity is the process of transforming nature to regain human rights to life. *"Survival is the human right to carry out the mission of maintaining the species. Reclaiming human rights is humanity's mission"* (Van Y et al., 2024, p. 1879).

Scientific Knowledge and Human Connection in the Market Economy

Transforming nature becomes mutual education among people. Life exists thanks to the ability to select and absorb the necessary elements for maintenance and development. People can perceive what is necessary for a meaningful and sustainable life, and this perception helps them realize their existence, which is *"the cognitive, motivational and relational factors"* (Arora, P., & Banerji, R., 2024, p. 727). Humanity is the subject of life, while knowledge of abilities and needs becomes part of science. Since each individual has a separate life, their accumulated knowledge is also personalized. The diversity of knowledge reflects the richness of life experience. Communication and connection between individuals is the process of exchanging knowledge in many fields, thereby clarifying the laws of nature. People not only live by the natural world outside instinctively, but people are also objects of people. The need to possess people with different abilities. The ability of one person is the need of another. Transforming nature becomes mutual creation between people, which is the process of educating and nurturing each other. When acquiring knowledge, people recognize each other as important entities. Knowledge helps connect people and become part of them, shaping a scientific lifestyle in a market economy. Individuals seek comprehensive understanding from others, creating voluntary, free, and responsible connections. Mutual satisfaction between people contributes to the balance between unity and diversity. Interaction between people reflects the objective laws of nature. People exist in an abstract form if their need for knowledge is not met. Each individual not only creates his own knowledge but also benefits from the knowledge of others, thereby perfecting himself. No one can act without knowledge, but only those who have not yet fully developed their awareness can do so. Society has a responsibility to support individuals who have potential but have not yet exploited their abilities and cannot expect those who do not have knowledge to contribute immediately to society. Therefore, *"institutions that have no social duties, not to mention that they are scientifically and practically primitive, in addition to the spread of routine and administrative and financial corruption"* (Kazar, Y. N. ., & Hassan, K. O. . (2024, p. 410).

Humanity can be considered a universal concept, but each individual still has its own characteristics. The more unique and valuable an individual is, the more they are appreciated. Different individuals make their products different, the need for each other's products becomes the need for each other between people. Human life is the satisfaction of people with each other. Satisfaction without people is satisfaction with goods, it is satisfaction with objects, it is satisfaction in solitude. When society admires each other, their abilities and needs can become common standards. When an unmet ability or need becomes familiar in the market economy, it promotes the development of society. Standards Positive social norms are always the result of outstanding individuals. Hunger, illness and death are universal experiences, often considered misfortunes. If these are not recognized as objective realities, there will be no compassion for the hungry, no sympathy for the sick and no pain of loss. When society recognizes these misfortunes, love between people becomes a universal need and capacity. Therefore, *"enhancing human resource capacity through technical training and increasing the number of experts is essential for a more responsive service"* (Riau et al., 2025, p. 680). Mutual human satisfaction becomes satisfaction with norms, causing uninhabited norms to be created and perfected. A part lives by norms, another part becomes a victim of norms in the commodity economy. People outside of life can watch the whirlwind of normative life of those who love nobility, status and wealth.

A product that satisfies a universal need is socialized in a market economy. When a capacity or need becomes familiar, the product is no longer private but becomes common property, that is, public property.

Inventions such as the airplane and the telephone were not originally common needs but became part of the human heritage when they were socialized. Knowledge and wealth, when widely shared, lose their individuality because everyone can access them, it enables everyone to have a common starting point. Possessing knowledge without applying it is like possessing oxygen without using it. Just as life cannot exist without oxygen, humanity cannot develop without practical knowledge. When a product becomes common and accessible, it is no longer private so everyone can benefit from the common property. Knowledge makes people more equal when it becomes as common as oxygen in the air. The value of knowledge lies in its application to real life, reflecting those who use it and demonstrating the inevitability of nature through the correct practice of science in a market economy. In an economic environment, differences between individuals are obvious because their conditions affect each person's life. Genetic characteristics can create similarities between individuals, but each person still possesses his or her own uniqueness. However, if similarities become too familiar, they may lose their identity. Uniformity can exist in diversity, but it can also limit the expression of individual personality. In a market economy, stereotypical standards should not be used as a measure of human values. However, standards should only be a reference system to guide individuals to think creatively and act differently because diversity in thinking, ability and need promotes the development of society. The purpose of norms is to make people more human and unite them in a common nature, but if a norm no longer serves the interests of everyone, it loses its meaning. Norms are the products of exceptional individuals; these talents make scientific discoveries, shape and develop norms. But "norms are rules of conduct that humans set to regulate behavior to protect their fellow humans" (Quoc, N.A., Van Y., N., 2024, p. 4079). When a norm is widely recognized by society, it gradually becomes a common instinct. In a market economy, norms such as tradition, church law and law used to be universal values. However, they gradually lose their scientific basis when they no longer reflect reality. Norm-based connections can inadvertently promote deception, while money-based trade can increase inequality. Discrimination becomes inevitable when standards and assets measure human worth, leading to injustice. The more injustice there is, the more urgent the need for justice becomes. Monopolies in production, currency speculation, and control of standards can increase scarcity and widen social gaps.

Then, money and standards are no longer common property but tools controlled by a few entities. Although people have many different capacities and needs, universal capacities and needs such as love, knowledge, standards, money, justice, and truth are the foundation of humanity. Thus, "the corresponding amount of money depends on different standards, species, occupations, statuses, and living standards" (Quoc, N. A. , & Van Y, N., 2024, p. 976). Creativity is not only about winning the right to live but also about mutual satisfaction between people becoming the satisfaction of standards. Standards are the object of satisfaction, life is a slave to standards, people become the means of standards and become their victims. Then, society is not human life but because of the life of standards, society has many hypocrites.

Interaction between People, Knowledge, Wealth, and Money in the Market Economy

Life depends on standards, so investing in standards is investing in life. Different standards define different jobs and professions, which are measured by living standards, income, and the amount of salary received. Money becomes human capacity and needs that are realized through the real life of each individual - people who always want to return to their nature by fully participating in money life. When essential needs are met, human products in the market economy will reflect themselves. Each individual carries within themselves universal capacities and needs, making them the manifestation of these factors. Although individual capacities and needs serve personal interests, humans still maintain the universal nature of humans. Therefore, human life is creative, while money life is instinctive. Awareness of humanity is a universal need, while the satisfaction of survival instinct is a specific need. Animals only satisfy basic needs, while humans can go beyond survival to express human nature. Human existence is not simply a biological fact but also the expression of universal capacities and needs, reflecting the natural development of life.

In a market economy, individuals can choose between knowledge or wealth as their focus, and their efforts are expressed through different forms of labor. But it is necessary to see that "*salary and remuneration as the most important external factors in job selection*" (Woo, K. H. ., & Jin, S. Y. (2024, p. 56). However, the way they shape their lifestyle is also affected by whether they focus on standards or money. Human happiness is the ultimate goal, in which wealth and money only play the role of supporting means. Since people and life are a unity, the focus must be on people, while wealth, knowledge, money and standards maintain a reciprocal relationship. Any aspect

of life that is emphasized in an exchange relationship requires corresponding adjustments in capabilities and needs. The only constant factor is people because people measure all capabilities and needs. These factors determine the movement of the market for knowledge, wealth, money and standards. The purpose of the economy is to satisfy the basic needs and capabilities of people, thereby promoting the development of life. Money becomes the main means of exchange, while people, knowledge, standards and wealth function as commodities in the market economy.

Individuals are the subjects of life, not only in the knowledge they create and the understanding they possess but also in the wealth they accumulate. Each individual has unique creative abilities and society values them based on their ability to meet social needs and skills in a system where life is both a natural ability and a natural need, which can be developed but also has the potential to obscure individual identity. Human nature is always revealed without being threatened but "*essential for addressing current challenges and preparing for future threats*" (Bašić et al., 2025, p. 400). Powerlessness and suffering can arise from needs that have not been considered from capabilities. It should be seen that having ability without need is unhappiness, but having need without ability is impotence. Impotence and unhappiness make life fake, fake and poor quality goods appear in the commodity economy.

Loneliness, impotence and falsehood are the factors that make poor quality goods appear in the market economy. Just like in nature, where all living things must interact to survive, people must also satisfy each other. This satisfaction includes sharing knowledge, where one person possesses what another needs. Thanks to that, people bring joy to each other and become a source of learning, developing the common nature of human beings through positive influence and transformation. This process includes both active coercion - when individuals adapt to society and contribute to the development of society - and passive coercion - when individuals become separate social entities. Individuals are both creative forces and social assets, but society can also eliminate individuals who are no longer suitable, when society is the goal and individuals are the means. Both forms of coercion are products of the social circumstances in which honest people are positioned in the market economy. In the market economy, ownership is expressed through the individual's acquisition of knowledge and wealth through labor.

In contrast, individuals who tend to think abstractly possess standards and money in different ways. If wealth and knowledge are both ends and means of individual life, then money and standards play similar roles. When money becomes the goal, wealthy individuals are considered noble; however, their status will decline if money loses value. When standards become the means to create money, they also become tradable commodities. Conversely, when standards represent intrinsic value, those who uphold them will be respected by society. Both standards and money can be bought and sold like other commodities. The expansion of knowledge and the production of wealth increase human satisfaction, but the scarcity of standards and money makes them universal values, leading to constant fluctuations in the market economy, thus, "*can develop business models and expand their competitive position*" (Schulz et al., 2025, p. 38). People produce goods to meet standards to eliminate poor quality goods, but improving the quality of goods makes science and technology constantly innovate. The need for science and technology becomes the need for innovative and creative people. Innovation and creativity are calculated in terms of productivity, quality, design, price, and economic efficiency is measured by the amount of money in return. Science is money and money is science.

Science is creative, and creativity requires people, which requires people with the ability to create products that meet social needs. However, a scarce product that meets basic standards and needs will have high value, reflecting how people become commodities in a market economy. Humans become "*supply chains by leveraging advanced machine learning techniques to identify key drivers of demand*" (Hasan et al., (2025, p. 1067). The satisfaction of human capacities and normative needs is directly related to the formation of real individuals. Without real people, the production of goods becomes meaningless. When goods do not meet real needs, there will be a surplus. To optimize the efficiency of transactions and production, it is necessary to have monopoly or speculative strategies to create scarcity, thereby meeting the broader needs of the market economy.

Each individual tends to create his or her own identity through talent, action and work to develop knowledge and accumulate wealth and money. The rarer the individual, the higher the value of the products they create, the better their income life. Knowledge and money are exchanged, bought and sold and become commodities in the market. Thanks to machines, science and technology, individuals who create wealth for exchange in the market can achieve higher economic efficiency than mass-produced products. Mass-produced products are made by machines, robots, AI, but individual creativity is a unique, individual subject, not confusing success between individuals.

However, to be successful, each individual needs to use his or her unique qualities - talent, labor or knowledge - to meet the diverse needs of society. The uniqueness and individuality of the individual is expressed through circus, magic, dance, singing, gymnastics, sports and martial arts as professions to earn a living. Emotional states such as joy, anger, love and desire can also be performed and exchanged, contributing to enriching life. Therefore, *"the identification and analysis of individuals' opinions, attitudes, and emotions with regards to the topic of environmental sustainability"* (Kularbphetong et al., 2024, p. 153). In addition, other human factors - body parts, cosmetic surgery, deformities, knowledge, reputation, honor, conscience and standards - can all become tradable assets in a market economy.

In a market economy, love, happiness, justice, truth, standards and money are considered basic needs and, at the same time, ultimate goals, creating pairs of opposing categories such as love and hate, life and death, truth and lies, fairness and injustice, standards and money become values that can be bought, sold and exchanged. Creating wealth without specialization is less efficient than applying science and technology. Knowledge is used to satisfy basic human needs, and individuals are the true embodiment of those values. When people become objects of exchange, they can satisfy many social needs at low cost in a market economy. In modern society, people seek connection in times of hardship, such as illness, hunger, and loss. They also seek truth, justice, and scientific knowledge through media such as television, the Internet, and technology. Even though basic needs are met, people still feel lonely, helpless, and unhappy. A lifestyle that focuses on happiness, longevity, and mutual respect becomes the goal of individual and social life. People need each other to survive, share knowledge, and improve themselves.

Each person shapes his or her life and shares his or her experiences in the marketplace, where personal exchanges become commodities. Investing in oneself is an exclusive choice in the quest for wealth. If the need for people did not exist, investing in human capital would no longer be economically profitable. The replacement of body parts such as livers and kidneys and the trade in wealth, money, knowledge and standards reflect the commodification of human attributes. Without these trades, elements such as wealth, knowledge, standards and money would not exist, and without people, economic, social and technological development would not be possible. *"The technological initiatives help to enhance the power of individuals and go a long way into breaking gender barriers, improving diversity"* (Alshraah et al., (2024, p. 98). Although wealth, knowledge, standards, and money can be accumulated and spread, real people remain unique and irreplaceable, increasing their value in the market economy. Human manifestations are increasingly abundant in a world with limited resources and a growing population. *"Per capita income, population size, unemployment rates, fiscal capacity, and fiscal decentralization influence sectoral shifts"* (Muhlisin et al., 2025, p. 387). The ability and need for creativity drive the formation of real people. People are not only manifestations of wealth but also agents of various lifestyles - from hard work and creativity to negative behaviors such as theft, smuggling, corruption, and bribery. Money becomes a measure of Wealth makes life a race for financial profit. Among the many ways to make money, one of the most effective ways is to invest in the true potential of people. The labor market becomes a market of social institutions, the freedom to choose a career becomes a free life in a large institutional market in the context of globalization. At that time, if you don't live here, you live somewhere else, if you don't do this job, you do that job, if you don't follow a traditional family career, you work in a religious place, if you don't work in a state agency, you work in a corporation. A life of freedom in career becomes the freedom of life. Money becomes a need of commodity production, causing science, technology, machinery, robots, and AI to be constantly produced. The existence of robots and AI is the satisfaction of the needs and abilities of unique, creative individuals. People are still the objects that need each other in the process of constantly creating abilities and needs through different economic institutions. When people are no longer needed by each other, economic institutions also disintegrate.

The Role of Family, Religion, State, and Business in Human Development

In a commodity economy, selling labor is buying a job to do, and buying labor to make a profit is doing business in jobs. Labor is a commodity in making money, profit, and income are mostly equal to the price of money. Money becomes a measure of human value, investing to make money is investing in people themselves. Money corresponds to people, so having people means having money, and having money means having people. From the beginning, those who invested in themselves were often patriarchs, religious leaders, government officials, and business executives. They spent their lives supporting the disadvantaged, helping the poor, and developing talents. But their strengths lie in their ability to connect people, allocate resources, and meet the needs of the masses,

thereby helping individuals realize their potential in different organizations. However, "*organizations may encounter challenges in implementing recommended changes due to limited financial, human, or technological resources*" (Sutrisno., 2024, p. 68).

Great leaders address basic human needs and turn loneliness, helplessness, and suffering into historical lessons. Knowledge of these issues is preserved as a social norm, formed through socialization. Each sphere of society has its own connecting mechanism: families are connected by affection, religions are connected by faith, governments are connected by authority, and economic interests are connected to business. Families, religions, states, and businesses are the structures that maintain social order.

These institutions exist through specific individuals—chiefs, priests, officials, and entrepreneurs—but their value extends beyond individuals. Institutions exist both outside and inside capable people, the need for institutions. Each individual assumes a specific social role - be it family member, religious believer, citizen or worker - and these roles are linked to the market economy. Therefore, people and social institutions form a unity in the economy in performing natural functions, assigning social tasks. The family is a system that binds generations - husband and wife, parents, children and grandparents. Religion is a community of priests and believers. The state is a group of officials who enforce laws and manage society. Enterprises are organizations of business people who create economic value. Therefore, institutions need to "*implement continuous training programs in inclusive governance, integrating workshops and practical activities that enhance coordination capacity and transparency*" (Merino et al., 2025, p. 466). Each individual owns his or her life, just as leaders own and shape their organizations. Workers live by their intellect and profession, while leaders maintain and develop the organization with all their abilities.

These institutions are the means of human survival and the products of their creation. Just as intelligence and labor are the property of individuals, so the family, religion, state, and business can be considered the property of leaders. In a market economy, patriarchs, priests, officials, and executives appear to be individual phenomena, while the rest of society continues to function on the basis of human needs and capacities. As capacities and needs increase, these institutions develop and become more influential. Human survival depends not only on love or morality but also on mutual support mechanisms. Family members live not only on affection but also on material support. Priests cannot maintain their religions without the generosity of their followers. Officials cannot enforce the laws without taxes from citizens. Businessmen cannot operate their businesses without the work of their workers. The division of labor creates different occupations - from agriculture to industry to services - all of which play an essential role in the economy. But "*the fourth industrial revolution is set to usher in an age of human intelligence, with machine learning becoming an indispensable part of daily life*" (Huang, W. ., & Hsieh, M. H., 2025, p. 589), it will change the structure of employment and occupations. Scarcity is an inevitable reality and when real people become scarce, false values will emerge. In some cases, patriarchs, priests, officials and businessmen may act for their own benefit instead of the common good, causing society to fall into injustice. When this happens, dissatisfaction among the working class increases, leading to problems such as inflation and inequality, and falsehoods appear more frequently.

Leaders shape people's needs and abilities not only in reality but also in imagination. Therefore, there is a need for a mechanism "*preventing stereotypes and biases within the home environment, involving parents in broader research initiatives*" (Agustin et al., 2024, p. 38). In a market economy, support between family members is unconditional, voluntary and without expectation of reciprocation. However, when these values are distorted, love can become an obligation and support becomes a form of exchange of benefits, reduced to monetary measures. Death is an inevitable reality, but in religion, it is understood as a meaningful event associated with high moral values. Sacrifice for others is considered a virtue according to religious teachings and ethical standards. Therefore, "*religious morality, which is closely linked to the religious laws of each religion, often contains separate regulations and can lead to discrimination between individuals in the process of globalization*" (Quoc, N. A. ., Chien, D. V. ., Dinh, P. T. ., Toan, D. X. ., Chung, T. T. T. ., & Nghi, L. V., 2024, p. 1660). Belief in the afterlife and eternal happiness creates the notion that life and death are also a form of exchange, in which the value of a person is present and extends across generations and the beliefs of the community. Even though communication in religious life is free, the interweaving of money makes religion a special commodity, making religious life a commodity. Clergy and believers are no longer products of religion but products of money, religious life is divided. Therefore, institutions in general need "*the achievement of training outcomes and trust in the training institution play a crucial role in influencing customer loyalty*" (Kiemas et al., 2024, p. 928). Each individual is unique and differences between people are a natural phenomenon. However, some corrupt officials can take advantage of these

differences to justify injustice and legitimize income inequality. Laws are established to maintain justice and order but are sometimes manipulated to serve personal interests, even in a market economy. Laws serve life, but legal research finds loopholes to deal with it.

Each individual creates his or her own unique labor products, contributing to the enrichment and creativity of society. The exchange of these products is not only a necessity but also a reflection of human nature. However, the excessive accumulation of money has led some businessmen to consider justice as a tradable commodity. When money becomes a common means of transaction, people can exchange important values in life. Each individual in turn, in exchange for the money earned, is "*valued members of their families and societies, even as migration shapes the global landscape*" (Rahmanova et al., 2025, p. 718). Accordingly, freedom becomes a prerequisite for each person to exchange themselves without violating tradition, religion or law. Therefore, elements such as love, justice, truth, gratitude, hope, promise, norms, law, money and freedom become the core elements that form social trust. Freedom in a market economy becomes the freedom to buy and sell labor, which is the freedom to trade in people. The poor are free to sell themselves, while the rich have the freedom to buy people of value and ability.

Superficial values created by patriarchs, priests, officials and businessmen are often aimed at meeting the daily needs of people, especially those who are easily influenced or lack critical thinking. However, education plays a decisive role in the sustainable development of these values. Therefore, the education market is "*a strategy that has ensured that education goals correlate with the market standards especially in engineering as well as business promoting employment*" (Yang, H., 2024, p. 261). Scientists impart practical knowledge, help students develop creative thinking and demonstrate their talents. However, some teachers teach "truth" according to dogma and rigid doctrine, define "justice" according to current laws, impose traditional prejudices that make education no longer a place for creativity, and judge people based on financial success. Prejudiced education, judging success through the amount of money earned is turning the whole society back to traditional instincts or the instinct of fighting for money.

People really become victims of the contradictions between creativity and instinct. Standards and money come from the real needs of people inside and outside society. They can be tools for self-development, but if they become the ultimate goal, they will expose the hypocrisy of those in power. Knowledge has the power to change lives, but when bound by tradition, morality, law and money, it can make people fall into a spiral of loneliness, unconsciousness, helplessness and unhappiness. Education about love, gratitude, eternal life and justice - if commercialized - will only serve material needs instead of raising real awareness. Love is a universal capacity and need, but compassion is unique. Only practical experience helps people live honestly and support each other with sincerity. Today, human responsibility does not stop at distinguishing right from wrong or justice and injustice, but also includes the ability to freely and generously exchange and connect with others with all the truth of life. Each individual exists in nature and social systems such as family, religion, state and business. Therefore, competition between these institutions is inevitable in perfecting human nature in a free market, where institutions are commodities, where people can choose family, religion, state, business, country when they have enough money.

If families, religions, the state and businesses compete fairly according to standard rules, human development will take place more quickly in a market economy. The state's monopoly on issuing money becomes a policy of social redistribution through taxation for the rich. "*One of the basic rules of tax is the rule of equality, which is synonymous with the rule of tax justice*" (AL-Tamimi, Z. H. A. A., & Daoud-Al-Sharea, I. H. . (2024, p. 507). In the economy, counterfeit and substandard goods will be eliminated, so will the institutional market. In the family, religion, state and education, the perverse personal ambitions of patriarchs, priests, officials, businessmen and teachers will also be gradually eliminated. Instinctive functions are replaced by robots, AI makes wrongdoings have no place, true human nature will be revealed through sincere actions, contributing to the perfection of society in the development of the commodity economy.

3.2 Discussion

In a commodity economy, people are not only the subject of production but also the central factor determining sustainable development. Without people, all processes of production, exchange, distribution and consumption of goods cannot operate. Moreover, people are the driving force for creativity, technological innovation and improving labor productivity, thereby creating long-term and sustainable economic development. Some opinions emphasize that when people are the subject of production, they play an important role in creating

the value of goods and services. All economic activities, from material production to service provision, require human labor. In this study, we believe that labor is not simply labor but also includes knowledge, skills, creativity and the ability to apply technology. Therefore, promoting human potential through education, training and improving the quality of human resources is a prerequisite for developing a sustainable commodity economy. People not only create material wealth but are also the driving force for innovation and creativity. In a knowledge economy, creativity plays an important role in helping businesses and countries maintain their competitiveness. The development of technology, the emergence of new business models or the improvement of production processes all come from human intelligence and creativity. Therefore, investing in scientific and technological research and encouraging entrepreneurship is the way to maximize human creativity in a commodity economy. Economic development cannot be separated from social development, and people are the bridge to balance these two factors. A sustainable commodity economy not only aims at profit but also must ensure social welfare, economic fairness and environmental protection. When people are given the opportunity to work and enjoy the fruits of their labor fairly, they will be motivated to contribute to common development. Therefore, economic policy should aim to improve the quality of life, ensure social security and create a healthy working environment to maximize human potential. It is clear that people are not only the center of the commodity economy but also the key factor determining sustainable development. Exploiting and promoting human potential not only helps to improve labor productivity, promote creativity but also contributes to building an economy that balances economic growth and social progress. This is the foundation for moving towards a modern, sustainable and humane commodity economy.

The article analyzes the role of people in the commodity economy, from creativity to sustainable development. The study focuses on exploiting human potential, finding an economic institution that balances growth and social welfare, and pointing out the process of distributing and promoting human resources in the commodity economy. The article uses a combination of humanistic and social philosophical approaches with qualitative analysis methods¹. Applying the principles of “*cause and effect*”, “*necessity and freedom*”, “*subject and product*” to clarify the transformation between people and the economy. At the same time, the article uses the method of synthesizing socio-economic documents to present scientific and practical arguments. In a market economy, the exchange between people, knowledge, norms and money is inevitable. Clarifying the relationship between them, in which people and human values are the core. However, if not properly managed, this can lead to social injustice and the gap between rich and poor. Analyzing the impact of the market economy on human development. The market economy creates development opportunities and poses challenges such as inequality, labor exploitation and social pressure. Institutions such as family, religion, state and enterprise play an important role in shaping human capacity and needs.

Through the article, we affirm that people are the center of the commodity economy, not only the productive force but also the driving force of social development; the balance between economic growth and human development helps maintain a sustainable economy. The article clarifies the relationship between people, knowledge, wealth and money in the market economy. It emphasizes the role of family, religion, state and business institutions in shaping human capacity and needs. Emphasizing the need for a sustainable institutional market, that is, human development must be associated with ethics, scientific knowledge and social connection. Different institutions become resources to develop policies and solutions to effectively exploit human resources, towards sustainable development instead of focusing only on economic profits. In this study, we also point out the shortcomings of modern society and propose solutions for promoting the human factor, that is, each person, depending on their ability and needs, chooses a job and career that is suitable for each institution, which is a free life in labor. The increase of standards, money, and virtual values can push people into a spiral of loneliness, unconsciousness, and unhappiness. Promoting human values, scientific education, and raising awareness of social values are essential solutions.

Sustainable development requires human development, investment in education, science and technology, human resource management, along with management policies to reduce inequality and ensure balanced economic, social and environmental development. In a commodity economy, people are not only the subject of production but also the decisive factor for sustainable development. People are the central factor in the entire process of production, distribution and consumption of goods. The exploitation and development of human potential is becoming an important challenge in the context of globalization and technological transformation. One of the core issues is how to balance economic growth and human development. As the market economy expands, businesses often focus on

profits, leading to overexploitation of labor and quality of life. In addition, the development of science and technology is changing the nature of labor, creating many new opportunities and posing many challenges. Workers must constantly learn, innovate and improve their skills to adapt to market changes. The production process also needs to aim for sustainable values, connecting people with the natural environment and ensuring harmonious development between economy, society and ecology. This article will analyze the role of humans in the commodity economy from the perspective of creativity and sustainable development, and at the same time point out the process of distributing and regulating labor to exploit and effectively promote human potential in the modern economy.

CONCLUSION

Through discussion and results, we draw the following conclusions: the content of the article presents and systematically analyzes the role of humans in a market economy, affirming that humans are both producers and consumers, which is a decisive factor for sustainable development. At the same time, it emphasizes the richness of needs as a condition to promote and maximize human potential in a commodity economy; Sustainable development requires not only profits but also human rights, reducing inequality, and improving the quality of life. At the same time, it requires humans to learn, innovate, and constantly adapt to scientific and technological advances. To maintain long-term development, a market economy needs to focus on human values associated with ethics and the environment; This study adds an important theoretical and practical framework for policy makers, entrepreneurs, and individuals to develop appropriate strategies. Investing in education, training and improving life, work and labor skills helps individuals develop, creating economic and social development; The article also points out that many issues need further research, especially the impact of technology, artificial intelligence and automation on the labor market and the relationship between economic development and environmental protection, therefore, it is especially necessary to continue research to find suitable economic institutions and optimize the role of humans in the commodity economy towards sustainable and comprehensive development.

Limitations, implications and future research directions

The paper focuses on the role of humans in the commodity economy from the perspective of innovation and sustainable development. However, the scope of the study is limited (mainly based on traditional philosophical and economic theories, lacking empirical data), global context (lack of detailed comparisons between economies), technological factors (no analysis of the impact of AI and automation on the future labor market) and economic models (no consideration of alternative models such as the sharing economy, the circular economy or economic systems based on blockchain and digital assets).

The paper affirms the role of humans in the commodity economy, emphasizing that humans are both producers and drivers of innovation and sustainable development. Thereby, proposing a balanced approach between economic benefits and comprehensive human development, economic competition is closely linked to human participation in the development process. It is necessary to further analyze income inequality, labor exploitation and market trends to support policy makers in developing more effective human resource development strategies and expand research based on economic theoretical frameworks and philosophical methodologies to clarify the relationship between people, society and the economy.

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