
The Impact of Philosophy to Human Development

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Abstract

Man's make-up comprises culture and nature. Though nature is primordial to culture, but the two are essentially and existentially inseparable. However, every development in man's life affects the two dimensions of man's existence: nature and culture and such developments can influence him negatively or positively. This simply unveils the two types of development: the authentic development and the inauthentic developments. Howbeit, the essence of philosophy is to expose and give issues, problems and evidence their deserved weight by the use of logical reasoning. It is also to set standard, ground and criteria to judging of values in any development. Likewise, another impact of philosophy to development is that it unveils the appropriate meaning of concepts, thereby making appropriate conception of human development known to the general public through "public reason". In summary, philosophy equips us with a hard look and critical attitude to see clearly the quality of human development, differentiating such from the instrumental development, and enabling us to abide by such. For example, the need for humanizing the actual development in the human society today which is likened to globalization is unfolded by the simple activity of philosophy.

Introduction

Philosophy plays a fundamental role in human development. As love of wisdom, it instills in the human mind a hard look and critical attitude towards issues and in our case development. It

examines evidence (development) from dispassionate and impartial standpoint, thereby unveiling clearly the prejudice and claims that are put forward; giving them their appropriate weight.

Moreover, philosophy downloads man with high degree of knowledge and experiences among which is the consciousness of the axiological dynamism. This consciousness leaves her with a stringent belief that there is no absolute conclusion – every evidence is liable to change. This two essential characteristics are the impacts which philosophy effects in the human mind and which enable man to examine every of his progress, in order to make right decision and good judgment in the choice of development.

However, there is a development called the human development also likened as the authentic and responsible alterity. There is also another called the inauthentic and irresponsible alterity. The later is the polar opposite of the former.

It takes therefore philosophical skills imbedded in man to examine every development and determine their expected end. Meanwhile, to determine the hermeneutics which philosophy exhibits on development, this work will be articulated under the following points:

- What is philosophy
- The characteristics of philosophy
- What is development
- And finally the impacts of philosophy to human development.

Some Conceptual Approach of Philosophy by some authority from the Ancient Greece

- i. Philosophy is a way of simplifying complexes ideas and statement about our experiences in life in order to make out sense out of (make us understand) them. (Paul Foulquie & Hugo 2005/2006, p.6).
- ii. A rational attempt in finding solution to fundamental problem of man.
- iii. A constant and endless quest by man in trying to find out a meaningful framework for expression of all thoughts actions and observable phenomena.
- iv. What an individual accepts as his guiding principles, which prompt him to act, in different way at different times, places and circumstances.
- v. A rational investigation, which examine nature and reason behind event happening in the world (NTI, Kaduna, idem; p.3).

The Characteristics of Philosophy

The essence of this very subject is to enable us see clearly the characteristics of philosophy thereby using them to examine the nature of any development in order to determine its benefits to man. The emancipation of other areas of study like the natural sciences and mathematics from philosophy narrowed the focus of philosophy leaving her with just two fundamental characteristics:

The first and foremost characteristics of philosophy is the dependency on logical reasoning to examine evidence in order to unveil clearly the prejudices and claims that are put forward and to give every bit of evidences as much weight as they deserved. This is because the justification of evidence is effectuated from the dispassionate and impartial standpoint. Philosophizing entails

therefore a hard look and critical attitude of the mind towards issues and problems.

The second characteristic of philosophy is the tentative nature of whatever conclusion that may be reached on an issue. In other words, in philosophy, there is no absolute or certain conclusion immuned to further future investigation or correction. In this regards, Gurforth says: “there belong to the very nature of philosophy as an attitude of skepticism which regards no conclusion as final and every matter, however, apparently, closed is open to further future question” (Akinpelu 1981). Philosophy appeals to human reasoning rather than authority, whether of tradition or that of revelations, is the observation of Bertrand Russell in his definition of philosophy.

In summary, philosophy as a discipline makes use of logical reasoning to verify issue and problems in order to give them their right and appropriate weight. Also it agrees with the modern sciences that there is no absolute and certain conclusion such that is immuned to further future investigation and corrections.

The Impact of Philosophy to Human Development

Human development is a development that affects man in his relationship with nature, culture and the supernatural (Buber: 1969, p.10 & p.60). When such rapport is symmetrically, authentic and responsible, it is expressed as human development. However, a development can be anti-human, when it is unauthentically and irresponsibly articulated among nature, culture and the transcendent.

For this very reason, philosophy becomes incumbent in revealing the true nature of any development, thereby establishing the human development also known as authentic and responsible alterity.

Howbeit, the power to unveil issues or problems by philosophy is imbedded in its two characteristics: the reliance on the use of pure reasoning and the stringent belief that there is no absolute conclusion in philosophy immuned for further future investigation or corrections. From the second characteristic of philosophy, it is expressional that philosophy put into consideration the fact of axiological dynamism – value change. This very fact points out the necessity for re-adjustment of any conclusion or law. For example, logically, in the 60s, the legitimate development is the destruction of nature like deforestation and road construction but today, there is a change in value. Thus the necessary and actual value is the protection of nature. So with such evolution of value, human laws and conclusion are readjusted.

Also, the characteristics of philosophy are well displayed in the fact of globalization. How? Globalization as we know is defined as the opening of borders of nations for the rapid and free circulation of goods and services. It aims at making the world a small village. It encourages the relativity of time and space and facilitates rapid knowledge of humanity through inter and intra personal relationship. Science and advanced technology is the instrument used by globalization to perfect its objective. Globalization, though American way of life comes with a mission to instill interculturalism in order to eliminate universalism, ideological imperialism and multiculturalism.

Some Conceptual Approaches

Universalism is an opinion that recognizes only the universal agreement. The fact of universalism is logically right but wrong on empirical ground. This is because in the human perspective, it is the conflict of interest and cooperation of interest, the rational and the reasonable respectively that are the irrevocable tendency. Thus to affirm a particular culture at the expense of the other or to affirm one's interest at the detriment of the other is, in short, the mutilation of the human person. Authors like August Comte, Levy Bruhl etc are few proponents of such opinion

The ideological imperialism is an imposition of a restricted ideology or culture on the people of diverse cultures and the consideration of such as the only truth of which all must adhere. Indoctrination and dogmatism are few examples of the ideological imperialism.

Multiculturalism is the coexistence of many cultures within a state or society. It is a school of thought (of course American) that condemns the cultural hegemony of the white aristocratic leaders towards the minority. It advocates strongly for the defense of the full recognitions of the minority.

Howbeit, what is wrong with ideological imperialism, universalism and multiculturalism? For the ideological imperialism, the problem is the imposition of a particular culture on people of diverse culture. In universalism, truth is seemed and should be seemed in logicity and anything outside this is irrational. It is thus from this very point that authors like August Comte, Levy Bruhl and Hegel consider the African culture as irrational. Universalism is therefore evil-a mutilation of the human person. It is in the rational and the

reasonable that the human person finds his accomplishment. Meanwhile, multiculturalism, though an attempt to solve the problem of universalism, raises a problem of relational inequality.

However, by hard look and critical attitude of philosophy from the dispassionate and impartial standpoint, it is discovered that globalization gave in to a new problem the interculturalism. For Jacques Maritain the problem of interculturalism is the **ism** in the concept. Though problematic globalization, its benefits are enormous.

The profits of globalization are:

- i. That logicity of statement or ideas or beliefs is not a fundamental and universal truth to guaranty the validity and legitimacy of any culture. For example the African world-view must not be considered as illogical or prehistoric as was affirmed by levy Strausse and Hegel because it lacks the western logicity.
- ii. That ideas and beliefs of a particular social group must not be imposed on people of different culture. Doing such is an annihilation of the human person. Culture and nature intrinsically attached, provokes the avoidance of ideological imperialism.
- iii. That people of different culture, form different places must not just only co-habit but must recognize and respect cultural equality, thereby never see their culture as the best vis-à-vis the other peoples cultures.

Benefits notwithstanding, globalization fell into a temptation call the interculturalism. Globalization expresses the aforementioned benefits plus the exploitation of the under-developed and the developing countries by the developed countries. This manifests in

divers ways of which few are: the brain drainage syndrome, the exploitation of natural resource, child abuse in the labour market, etc.

However, the content or components of globalization was able to be seen because high level speculation, questioning, critics and analysis were applied. Through logical examination, we were able to decide that despite the benefits of globalization, there are still some daunting problems to which attention must be given. Via philosophy, it becomes expressional that globalization needs to be humanized, it need to be more ethically articulated so as to suite humanity (Pallente:2007, p.88).

Moreover, in the theories of social contract, one can also discover some evolution from Thomas Hobbes to John Rawls. For Thomas Hobbes, Rousseau and John Lock, the validity and legitimacy of any positive law is, if such law is found on the liberal conception: right to life, to liberty and to property. Meanwhile, with Kant and John Rawls there is a shift. It is the conditions that guaranty the formulation of principle of equal liberty that is the framework of our social cooperation. Rawls was indebted to Kant's moral thought except for his subjectivism. For Rawls, his theory of justice is objective. It is procedural. It makes use of public reason, overlapping consensus, reflective equilibrium, etc. Howbeit, the critical look and analysis we have made are essentially the skill imbedded in us via our knowledge of philosophy. The best way of studying philosophy is by doing it. Also in our daily life, philosophy helps us to manage rationally and reasonably our life so as to make out the best out of it. The impact of philosophy is not just that it loads us with knowledge, but engenders skills in us that enable us to consider and examine issues from the dispassionate

and impartial standpoint in order to expose prejudice and claims so as to give them the weight they deserved.

Conclusion

This work was destined at unveiling the impacts of philosophy to human development. It started by explaining philosophy as a love for high degree of knowledge and the use of pure reasoning to expose the nature of evidence and in our case development. This work made it clear that with the two fundamental characteristics of philosophy, exposed in this work, one can clearly see the real and feasible nature and effect of any development in the human environment. The work equally explains some human reality like the fact of social contract theories, the fact of axiological dynamism and globalization; and how philosophy intervenes to enable man make right decision and good judgment via pure reasoning and the use of conclusion liable to change.

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