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THE PLACE OF PHILOSOPHY, LANGUAGE, AND LITERATURE IN LIBERAL EDUCATION (AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE)

MIEJSCE FILOZOFII, JĘZYKA I LITERATURY W EDUKACJI LIBERALNEJ (PERSPEKTYWA AFRYKAŃSKA)

Abstract

In history, philosophy, language, and literature have been a propelling force towards achieving a distinctive culture in human civilization. We are therefore reminded that philosophy, language, and literature have a great deal of educational tenet, especially in the African world view. To foster holistic values in line with education, this study investigates that philosophy; language and literature have been in the transformation of armchair theorization of various disciplines into a pragmatic solution for our contemporary challenges. Using evaluative approach, this study opens up the fact that philosophy, language, and literature is not really a single filed of disciplines but rather a catchall for a number of problems whose scope and significance are so broad that they seem to have implication for virtually every other sphere of human endeavors.

Keywords: *Philosophy, Africa, Language, Literature, and Education*

Streszczenie

Z perspektywy historii, filozofia, język i literatura stanowią siłę napędową w kierunku osiągnięcia wysokiego poziomu kultury ludzkiej cywilizacji. Filozofia, język i literatura mają wiele dogmatów edukacyjnych, szczególnie w świetle perspektywy afrykańskiej. W celu promowania wartości holistycznych zgodnie z edukacją, w niniejszym artykule zba-

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dano czy filozofia, język i literatura wpływają na pragmatyczne rozwiązanie współczesnych wyzwań. Wykorzystując podejście ewaluacyjne, niniejsze badanie ujawnia fakt, że filozofia, język i literatura nie są tak naprawdę zbiorem dyscyplin, ale raczej zaporą dla wielu problemów, których zakres i znaczenie są tak szerokie, że wydają się mieć wpływ na praktycznie każdą sferę ludzkiego życia.

Słowa kluczowe: *filozofia, Afryka, język, literatura i edukacja*

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Statement of the problem in general outlook and its connection with important scientific and practical tasks.

It is obvious that nations failed because they are not willing to endure to make their educational sector worthwhile, whose survival must dwell in the umbrella of people's philosophy, literature and language as a bastion of its instructional scheme; as no nation can rise above their education quality. So many misunderstandings and of principles came from Africans in particular; when attempting to comprehend the much damage that has already been acquired and the one underway. In accordance with the above, we are reminded that a good job is being done to transform armchair theorization of different fields into a practical alternative to our current problems.

It highlights the fact that philosophy, language, and literature are not really just a single set of disciplines, but rather a holistic one for a number of issues whose scope and

significance are so broad that they seem to have implications for virtually every other sphere of human enterprise. Subsequently, some academicians once questioned in the past whether there are any current concepts in African philosophy, its language of use and African literature beyond a more stringent tortoise and spider tale. (2015 Aja). For some scholars' literature, nay African literature is at its finest about heroic concepts and elevating thoughts obviously conceived, envisioned or dreamed and above all nicely articulated. That is to say, there is no need for his world to exist, and the feelings to express need not be true. Thus when the concept of philosophy and language is introduced in association with literature, the mental activity will look complex due to the complexity and significance of the two ideas.

Aims of paper. Methods

The aim of this paper is to recall our minds back to the importance of philosophy, language and literature as a strong tool towards appreciating the wisdom that backs up people's ways of life amidst the struggle of good education amidst the cultural differences in the 21st century.

Indeed, a critical examination was carried out on information about philosophy in an expert opinion, searches of the gray literature, national data sources, websites, and peer-reviewed journals. No inclusion or exclusion criteria were used for the source. Google, Scopus, and Thompson Reuters databases were searched currently for some

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vital information. The descriptive research design was adopted for this paper. Materials are from books and other literature that may be connected or related to the various philosophies. Journals that contain relevant information about our subject of inquiry were consulted. We analyze the contents of

these books and materials with the view to evaluating them in line with the theoretical framework of our inquiry. In other words, we used the historical, analytical, and critical method from relevant literature material consulted.

Analysis of latest research where the solution of the problem was initiated.

Understanding the Concept “Philosophy”

A beginner in philosophy is perturbed to find the real definition of philosophy. As he/she proceeds, he discovers that different philosophers have given different definitions of philosophy.

Using its tools/function such as Analytical, Speculative, Normative, Inspirational, Prescriptive and Co-ordinating Functions; some philosophers have laid emphasis on psychological facts, moral facts, epistemological facts, social facts, logical facts, ethical facts, cultural facts, educational facts, historical facts, jurisprudential facts, metaphysical facts, semantics facts, and others have given more importance to values.

It worthwhile to posit that the progress of human civilization is the product of education, but the answer to every educational question is ultimately influenced by our philosophy of life.

According to John Dewey, "Whenever philosophy has been taken seriously, it has always been assumed that it signified achieving wisdom that would influence the conduct of life." (www.cukashmir, 2018)

On the other hand, according to Windelband, philosophy is "...the critical science of universal values." (www.cukashmir, 2018). While there is much difference in Indian and Western definitions of philosophy, one finds widely different definitions presented by Western philosophers also. Of


these definitions, some emphasize the critical aspect of philosophy while others lay emphasis upon its synthetic aspect. The above-mentioned definitions of philosophy show that while some philosophers have mainly emphasized critical philosophy, others have defined it as a synthetic discipline. In fact, both these viewpoints are one-sided because philosophy is both critical as well as synthetic.

Literally speaking, the word 'philosophy' involves two Greek words-Philo meaning love and Sophia meaning knowledge. Thus literally speaking, philosophy means love of wisdom. The literal meaning of philosophy shows that the philosopher is constantly and everywhere engaged in the search for truth. He does not bother so much to arrive at final conclusions and continues with his search for truth throughout his life. His aim is the pursuit of truth rather than its possession. Those who enjoy the journey do not care so much about the destination, neither are they perturbed when the destination is lost in sight in spite of the continued long journey. In an effort to define philosophy, one arrives at the difficulty that there is no genus in this case and also no differentia. In defining a science one points out to the genus science and also to the particular area of the particular science which differentiates it from others.

This is, however, not possible in the case of philosophy because philosophy is one and not many. Hence in order to arrive at the

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meaning of philosophy will have to discuss its problems, attitude, method, process, conclusions and results. In brief, philosophy is a philosophical process of solving some characteristic problems through characteristic methods, from a characteristic attitude and arriving at characteristic conclusions and results. Some might find this definition very vague and inadequate. Therefore, what is vague and inadequate if we say that in order to understand philosophy one must understand the attitude, problems, activity, and conclusion and results peculiar to it? This will also clarify the distinctions between philosophy and science which have been forgotten by many philosophers. One can now say that philosophy is questioning the normally unquestioned in the life of man and his environment, be it immediate or extended. (Afolayan, Class Maxim in UI, 2008)

Understanding the Concept “Language”

In [https://www.uio.no/studier/emner/hf/ikos/EXFAC03AAS/h05/larestoff/linguistics/Chapter%201.\(H05\).pdf](https://www.uio.no/studier/emner/hf/ikos/EXFAC03AAS/h05/larestoff/linguistics/Chapter%201.(H05).pdf)), language is seen as a means where human beings can communicate with each other. We are able to exchange knowledge, beliefs, opinions, wishes, threats, commands, thanks, promises, declarations, feelings—only our imagination sets limits. We can laugh to express amusement, happiness, or disrespect, we can smile to express amusement, pleasure, approval, or bitter feelings, we can shriek to express anger, excitement, or fear, we can clench our fists to express determination, anger or a threat, we can raise our eyebrows to express surprise or disapproval, and so on, but our system of communication before anything else is language. In this work, our concern is the language used as a means of communication to portray people’s identity, philosophy and values.

Understanding the Concept “Literature”

In <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Literature>, literature, most generically, is any body of written works. More restrictively, literature refers to writing considered to be an art form or any single writing deemed to have artistic or intellectual value, often due to deploying language in ways that differ from ordinary usage.

Its Latin root *litteratura/litteratura* (derived itself from *littera*: letter or handwriting) was used to refer to all written accounts. The concept has changed meaning over time to include texts that are spoken or sung (oral literature), and non-written verbal art forms. Developments in print technology have allowed an ever-growing distribution and proliferation of written works, culminating in electronic literature.

Literature is classified according to whether it is fiction or non-fiction, and whether it is poetry or prose. It can be further distinguished according to major forms such as the novel, short story or drama; and works are often categorized according to historical periods or their adherence to certain aesthetic features or expectations (genre). It is this written works that update the lives of the people in a community with references either for acting or in the form of a play or consciously and unconsciously embedded in people’s curriculum.

Understanding the notion “Education”

The Latin word 'Educatum' means to train. 'E' means from inside and 'Duco' means to draw out, to lead out or to bring up. (<https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/educatum>). By combining the two words education comes to mean to draw from within. Education is a process that draws from within. Each child is born with some innate tendencies, capacities and inherent powers. Education draws these powers out and develops them to the full. Latin words 'Educare' and 'Educere' mean to bring up, to lead out and

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to develop etc. In this way, the word education means to develop the inborn qualities of a child to the full. Thus education is a process of development.

Exposition of main material of research with complete substantiation of obtained scientific results. Discussion.

Traditional African Education

By African traditional education, we mean the theory and practice of education whose origin is Africa and which was practiced in Africa before the coming of the Europeans. Ociti contends that:

Like any other form of education, simple or complex, African indigenous education was based on some kind of philosophical foundation. That this education lacked in some elements of Western education (such as formalization, specialization and systematization) does not disqualify it from being educated. When education is defined as the entire process of developing human abilities, capabilities, potentialities and behavior; a process by which people are prepared to effectively and efficiently live in their environment, and a channel through which culture and other values are transmitted from one generation to another, then, African indigenous education qualifies to be regarded as genuine education. (Ociti, 1973). African traditional education, is an education for living, was intimately intertwined with social life. This was evident in the fact that the content of education was deliberately designed to relate to people's concrete and social circumstances. Learning by imitation and by participation helped the young people to appreciate education as part of life and not as an external imposition. As such this education embraced practically all aspects of the social life; from inculcation of moral, religious and cultural values to knowledge of history, traditions and collective opinions of the wider society, and from learning of practical life skills to acquisition

of theoretical knowledge that was valuable to the individual and the society as a whole. We can, therefore, rightly conclude that this education (similar to Plato's conception of education) contained character building; that is, development of physical aptitudes and acquisition of moral qualities, relevant knowledge, and acquisition of moral qualities relevant in social life in its various forms. This manifests an emphasis on "social responsibility, job orientation, and political participation, spiritual and moral values.

From the foregoing, according to Ociti; several philosophical principles can be identified as having been at the basis of African education: "Communalism, preparationalism, functionalism, perennialism, and holism. (Ociti, 1973). The five philosophical principles coined by Ociti are more of ordinary principles of life than principles of technical philosophy. On the other hand, other philosophers and scholars like Mbiti and Mosha have delineated these four philosophical principles as basic to African traditional education: "metaphysics, epistemology, ethical and dialectics or existential principles." (Ociti, 1973).

Apart from transcendental realities, the African people also possessed great regard for the physical universe. The traditional view was that both the transcendental and the cosmological realities formed one universe that was interconnected and an interdependent whole. The traditional African did not bother to compartmentalize and dichotomize these intrinsically linked entities. As such there was no distinction between the

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spiritual and the material, the sacred and the secular, the moral and the intellectual, knowledge and wisdom, human and transcendental realities, technology and spirituality. Rather these dimensions were seen as a manifestation of a unified oneness. Separating one from the whole would destroy the whole. For example, the living members of the community would encounter God, ancestors and other spiritual beings in libation, sacrifices and communal rites. On some of these occasions, animal blood would be a mark of this encounter. Again, such sacrifices and ceremonies were offered in specified places and locations such as under certain trees, in the forest or in caves. This proves that the physical or spiritual realities in the universe were intrinsically linked.

African traditional education was also theocentric. Theodicy is a sub-branch of metaphysics that studies the nature of God from the point of view of human reason. In traditional Africa, there was no clear dichotomy between the secular and the sacred. Mbiti describes the African person as: “notoriously religious.” God and other transcendental entities were viewed as mysterious and incomprehensible and were approached with awe and wonder. The transcendental divine mystery permeated human life and every other phenomenon thereby making the human person mysterious. Similarly, the physical environment possessed some transcendental aspect. That is, every physical reality had a religious significance; there was a close bond between the worldly and the celestial worlds. Consequently, therefore, knowledge and information about the human person, the cosmos, the society, cultures, and other elements were not complete except in the context of passing the idea from one generation to the next via African indigenous educa-

tion, this and many more is the philosophical foundation of African indigenous education.

Contemporary African Education

From the foregoing, we argue that: To achieve their aims, it is argued that the colonial education was merely funneling information into empty minds instead of teaching them what they (the Africans) call values. (Aja 2015). With the colonial encounter, it is also admitted that Africa and Africans can never be as before. (Peters & Malungu 2013). With the attainment of independence, it dawned on many African countries that the philosophy of the colonial era was designed by the makers for a specific purpose: domination of the colonized. (Aja 2015). African nationalists and freedom fighters now then acknowledge that for any philosophy of education to be worth the name, it should aim at the progressive discovery of our ignorance and self-reliance. (Nyerere 1968). Indeed, there is a need, of course, for the mixing dimension in education in Africa so as to reflect the needs of the new Africa and at the same time recapture the values of the past.

Thus seen, we consider the fundamental theme of colonial African philosophy of education, language, and literature to be that of domination; while the postcolonial philosophy of education, language, and literature to be that liberation. In order to achieve humanization where supposes the elimination of dehumanizing oppression imposed on Africa, it is necessary to surmount the situation in which Africans were reduced to things. Again Aja posits that the starting point for organizing the program and content of such a system of education must be the present existential concrete situation, reflecting the aspirations of the people. (Aja 2015). With this in mind African philosophers of education, language scholars on

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African thought, makers of African literature must never merely discourse on the present situation; must never provide the people with programs which have little or nothing to do with their own preoccupation, doubts, hopes and fears—programs which at times, in fact, increase the fears of the oppressed consciousness. So far a truly humanist philosophy of complex is underway. Indeed, Philosophy, language, and literature offers no protection from impending danger, (e.g) Ebola epidemic; it does not cure loneliness, allay fear or provide a sanatorium wherein the spirit of man finds refuge from the increasing chaos of the contemporary world. Then why Philosophy, language, and linguistics? And why philosophy with his complication? Why language with his as a tool that controls human civilization? One is focus to ask. This is because according to Wittgenstein, philosophy unites the knocks in our thinking which we have foolishly put there; (Wittgenstein. 1922). Again Wittgenstein said, languages equally mirror your world. But to do that, it must make movements that are just as complicated as those knots. We resort to philosophy to satisfy the impulse of curiosity, language to interpret them and literature to fantasize about them.

Understanding the Concept “Liberal Education in Philosophy”

Liberal education in philosophy is that ideology which empowers individuals liberates the mind from ignorance, and cultivates social responsibility. Characterized by challenging encounters with important issues, and more a way of studying than specific content, liberal education can occur at all types of colleges and universities. (Schneider 2004, 6-11). For instance, the Africans see it as an informative strategy toward decolonization from the western epistemological denigration of African thought system. It serves as a free license

for the Africans to inculcate their educational tenet in their children without any barrier.

Role of Philosophy in Liberal Education


Starting with Wittgenstein's account of natural philosophy, according to him, it is not a deductive discipline; it cannot be placed side by side with the natural sciences, but it informs the raw materials of education science and humanities. (Wittgenstein 1922). With all the recopying puzzle, the philosopher tries to make a coherent survey of this puzzling universe. Thus seen, facts, it is true the philosopher must know; but, his concerned not so much with conclusive as within their significance. We resort to philosophy to satisfy the impulse of curiosity.” (Aja, 2015). From there, the philosophers try to make a coherent survey of this puzzling universe in which we live, a survey which must include a treatment of the time-honored questions which in all ages men have asked about the universes.

Little wonder a good philosophy, by influencing politics favorably might well help even to make us wealthier than if we had a bad one. Again the enormous development of science and technology with their consequent practical benefits depended on their possibility a good deal on their philosophical background. It has even been said that the whole education, development, and civilization could be traced to the scientific; and the idea of causation, that is from the magical to the scientific, and that idea of causation belongs to the subject - matter philosophy. Again Aja asserts that the educational and scientific outlook is itself philosophy and was brought into being initially to a large extent by philosophers. (Aja 2015).

More so, due to changes in time and in space both in African world and in the universal world, it is imperative that we recognize our humanity, keeping a deep thought

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of history, trying not to forget the traditional method of gaining knowledge through African values, lateral thinking and shared opinions within communities. This, I suggest needs to be mainstreamed into a new African epistemological and technological paradigm, a way to discover African basis science which will provide harmonious togetherness with the emerging technological world for Africa.

Role of Language and Literature in Liberal Education

Language has played a major role in civilizations' rise and fall. The language provides a range of opportunities for humanity. It represents the type of idea produced in a community as language is the portrait of individual ideas. Therefore, language training allows a person to communicate his or her ideas in the most eloquent manner. Relationships have been well established and documented between languages, literature and culture (whether foreign or indigenous) (Olaoye, 2002, Isyaku, 2004).

It was discovered that without language there is no literature. Culture and language cannot be separated because they are intricately interwoven. In man's education and domestic growth, they perform a basic duty. Literature is an art that is entertaining and educating. It warns people of danger or threat and teaches them by opening the eyes of people to a wide range of experiences and a deeper understanding of these experiences. Literature introduces, as stated (Fatokun 1992), conditions, documents, and opposition. It put forward in people's minds a wide range of values and attitudes as they grow within society.

Conclusions.

To conclude, teaching and studying ideology, dialects and literature will provide students with a comprehension of the African

Indeed, we use Proverbs as a class in prudence, kindness, persistence, and wisdom that are all vital to mankind's path and society's constancy. Literary artists use languages to scorn or denounce antisocial behaviors such as corruption, assassination, political thuggery, religious intolerance, oppressive rule or dictatorship, any form of dreadful human conditions, and unfair living out of society. Our understanding of culture is grasped from the beginning to the start of historical literature. According to (Asade 2000), we discovered from historical literature about apparently immoral despots and their disgusting and sorrowful ending, and that their unexpected demise was brought about by the flooding of mayhem and butchery that they had masterminded and performed.

Indeed, helping individuals chart fresh and humanistic, sociopolitical and financial paths in this linguistic understanding contributes to a fresh earth condition. This is language and literature's contribution to Africa's national development. Language, be it overseas or aboriginal, is therefore impossible to remove the mark of the uniqueness of a people. As (Fani-kayode 2006) puts it, our people's core values must be the spin for national reforms. He claims that our traditional values are to be integrated into honesty, transparency, regard for organizations, established officials, and the sanctity of man and nature. These core values are reflected in the identity, cultures, traditions and systems of the people, summarizing in their languages a number of times.

society's issues. Therefore, we cannot over-emphasize the significance of philosophy,

cultures, and literature as three interconnected sociolinguistic factors from whose milk; natural humans need to consume to create a good soul in a good flesh as we are oriented towards sustainable African growth in natural philosophy, language, sciences and culture.

Philosophy is one discipline that if it ceases to exist, the building up of new knowledge in the domain of scholarship which informs an upshot of human civilization also ceases to exist. Philosophy is a strong key to a human cultural civilization which displays richness in literature and language of the people. Information on the reality either in action or in literal forms informs the world of cultural connectivity through its actions and various languages of expression. The teaching of wisdom, studying of Metas,

ISMS, and Ologies, (e.g) ideologies, dialectics and ethics etc., are all duties of philosophy making it simple in people's literally acts and languages. Therefore, we cannot overemphasize the significance of philosophy as it is the interconnected factors from whose milk; natural humans need to consume to create a good soul in good flesh as we are oriented towards sustainable African growth in natural philosophy. African Philosophy, in the 21st Century Africa, has gone beyond the response to the western epistemological denigration of African thought system to devising a means of dealing with our situation amidst all historical cannons. It is then necessary for us to say that it can stand the test of time by informing African civilization.

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