

JOHN LOCKE'S THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE IN RELATION TO THE BATAGWENDA PEOPLE. A CASE OF KICHECHE SUB-COUNTY, KITAGWENDA DISTRICT, UGANDA.

Innocent Ampaire

Uganda Marty's National Seminary Alokolum, Gulu, a student at St. Mary National Seminary, Ggaba, a student at St. Pauls' Major Seminary Kipalapa, Tabora, Tanzania, and a student at Makerere University. He is currently a lecturer in the Department of Religious Studies at Kampala University and a Research Fellow at Makerere University in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. He holds an MA in Religious Studies, a BA in Theology, a BA in Philosophy, and several certificates in Research such as CITI Behavioural Research, Good Clinical Practice, and CCA.

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Abstract Background

Knowledge is a set of mental and psychological capacities that make mankind a unique, morally different creature. Although all the created may have capacities of reproduction, self-care, and memory, it is only human beings who are self-conscious, rational, and autonomous, can use language, and are responsible for their actions. This study aimed to examine the theory of knowledge according to John Locke about the Batagwenda people of Kicheche Sub-County, Kitagwenda district, Uganda.

Methods

An explorative case study design with qualitative research approaches was used. Data was collected using a semi-structured interview guide and analyzed thematically to systematically identify, code, and report recurring patterns in a narrative form. It was augmented by a systematic literature review on the life and works of the empiricist philosopher John Locke with a focus on his theory of knowledge.

Results

A total of 30 participants participated in the study. It was affirmed that knowledge is a distinct attribute proper to human beings. It is obtained through sense experience, reasoning, and revelation from God. However, knowledge is limited and all ideas should be subjected to the criteria of truth and certainty.

Conclusion

Knowledge is the highest mental and psychological faculty that defines human beings other factors notwithstanding. It is limited in nature although human beings can obtain knowledge sufficient for their functions. It is obtained in many ways including experience, reasoning, and revelation. It should be subjected to proof based on truth and certainty since it cannot be wholly grasped as it is.

Recommendation

There should be a constant search for knowledge through interactive experiences, reading, and meditation. It requires substantiation based on truth and certainty because it is relative. It should be sought and guarded jealously because it makes human beings unique while fostering a natural tendency toward perfection.

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Corresponding Author: *Innocent Ampaire*

Email: ampaireinnocent@gmail.com

Uganda Marty's National Seminary Alokolum, Gulu, a student at St. Mary National Seminary, Ggaba, a student at St. Pauls' Major Seminary Kipalapa, Tabora, Tanzania, and a student at Makerere University. He is currently a lecturer in the Department of Religious Studies at Kampala University and a Research Fellow at Makerere University in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. He holds an MA in Religious Studies, a BA in Theology, a BA in Philosophy, and several certificates in Research such as CITI Behavioural Research, Good Clinical Practice, and CCA.

Introduction

It is said that knowledge is power. The phrase "scientia potentia est" is a Latin aphorism meaning knowledge is power and it is commonly attributed to Sir Francis Bacon because it appears in his work *Meditationes Sacrae* (1597). The implication of this is the appreciation of knowledge as a special ingredient that is peculiar to

mankind and it constitutes the power to know the creator, to initiate healthy interpersonal relationships, and to relate well with the environment surrounding us. It is a creative force by which the world has been transformed right from making money and dictating social norms to the incredible technological innovations we see around us.

Knowledge is the fuel that drives human life and gaining knowledge is the primary activity that prepares mankind for a long and successful life. Mankind has the power to judge situations, decide between what is good and what is bad, and make decisions willingly. It has made us far more capable, superior, and sophisticated beings on this earth including conquering nature which has prompted human progress and civilization (Hayek, 2013).

This paper therefore presents a comprehensive concept of knowledge in light of John Locke's theory of knowledge about the Batagwenda people of Kicheche Sub County, Kitagwenda district. It is premised on the following objectives; examining Locke's considerations of truth and certainty of human knowledge; examining empirical and rational schools of thought on human knowledge; examining the Batagwenda's understanding of human knowledge and a brief comparison between Locke and the Batagwendas' appreciation of human knowledge.

Background

One of the most important branches of Philosophy is Epistemology (The theory of knowledge). Great philosophers such as John Locke, Descartes, Kant, and Hume among others have attempted to discover how we acquire our knowledge, the extent of our knowledge, and the standards or criteria by which we can reliably judge the truth or falsity of our knowledge (Hopkins & Aurum, 1969). Most often we tend to be well satisfied with what we think we know about the universe and do not ask how we obtain our knowledge or even question its reliability. Thus, to avoid being shocked to learn that what we thought was certain is dubious upon proof, Locke attempts to give a thorough explanation of our knowledge in terms of sense experience.

He does so by systematically defining our knowledge and establishing the sources, degrees, and limitations of our knowledge. Locke also advanced the standards or criteria for measuring the certainty and reliability of knowledge. In the same way, the Batagwenda People of Kicheche Sub-county, Kitagwenda district are cognizant that knowledge is the highest faculty peculiar to mankind. In addition to sense experience and reasoning, they emphasize revelation as a source of knowledge illumined upon the mind of mankind to grasp supernatural truths.

Methodology

The study employed exploratory case study design with qualitative research approaches. Primary data was collected through conducting 20 in-depth interviews and 2 Focus Group Discussions comprising 5 participants each. A systematic literature review was also conducted to validate primary data. The study was conducted in Kicheche Sub-county, Kitagwenda district with men and women above 18 years of age being purposively sampled to participate in the study.

Data analysis leveraged theme analysis (TA), a versatile method for examining qualitative data effectively. Through TA, themes within the data were identified and scrutinized, providing valuable insights into the

dimensions of human knowledge discussed in this paper. Notably, while TA is widely accepted in the social sciences, its utilization in philosophy is less common but holds significant promise. Due to its adaptability, this method offers a structured yet flexible approach to dissecting the intricate discussions often present in philosophical texts.

Results

John Locke's theory of knowledge and his consideration of truth and certainty

John Locke was an English empiricist, moral and political philosopher. He was born in 1632 in Wrington, England in a liberal Puritan family that taught him virtues of temperance, simplicity, and aversion to display. In 1646 Locke entered Westminster School where he studied classics, Hebrew, and Arabic. He received his Bachelor's Degree in 1656 and remained at the same school pursuing his master's Degree which he received in 1658. Locke then proceeded to lecture in Latin and Greek and in 1664 he was appointed censor of moral Philosophy. In his 72 long years of life, teaching, diplomatic assignments, and classical writings formed much of Locke's life until he breathed his last on October, 28th 1704 while Lady Mashan was reading Psalms for him (Uzgalis, 2001).

Locke wrote several works some of which were published posthumously. In 1689 and 1690 he published two of his most important works; the essay concerning human understanding and the Two Treatise on Government. His position in the history of Western thought rests heavily upon the essay concerning human understanding in which he examined the origin, and the extent of human knowledge together with grounds and beliefs, opinion and assent. Locke was not convinced that human understanding could know with certainty the real essence of substances. He therefore stressed that both our experience and knowledge fall short of all that exists. However, he was certain that men have the capacity for knowledge sufficient for their purposes (Walsh, 1967).

In the Two Treatise on Government Locke manifested his political opinions towards the governance of a state. He believed that all men are originally in a state of nature, a state of perfect freedom to order their actions and dispose of possession within the bounds of natural law without depending on the will of any man. But because of the tendency of some men to abuse this state of nature, then there is a need for a social contract through which an organized society is created mainly for more efficient and effective preservation of their lives, and property (Sasan, 2021).

His other two works were "Some Thoughts Concerning Education" in 1693 and its second Edition in 1694, and the "Reasonableness of Christianity" published in 1695. In education, he encouraged child study and placed the interests and capabilities of children at the center of learning. While on religion, Locke observed that various religious groups claim and compete for public dominion yet religious belief is primarily between man and God. True religion regulates men's lives according to virtue and

piety, and without charity plus love, religion is false to itself (Locke, 1968).

Locke's Theory of Knowledge

In his theory of knowledge, Locke defines what knowledge is, focusing on three main aspects of knowledge which include sources, degrees, and limitations of knowledge.

According to Locke, knowledge is the perception of the connection and agreement or disagreement and repugnancy of any of our ideas (Locke, 1974). This implies that where this perception is, there is knowledge and where it is not, there falls short of knowledge. In other words, knowledge is constituted in the perception of ideas in so far as they agree or do not agree such as white is not black or a circle is round.

Sources of Knowledge

Sensation

One source of our knowledge is experience which Locke calls sensation in this case. In the course of our lives, we have at least seen touched, or tasted things. Therefore, based on our experience, we can say a good deal about the world and ourselves (Copleston, 1979). Sensation examines things in their singularity and senses both internal and external always collect ideas of material objects in reality or apparent knowledge such as fantasies and imaginations. After examining the material objects, the senses convey the various qualities of the objects to the mind to form ideas and concepts. Although it is of a low grade, sensation is a true source of knowledge (Locke, 1968).

Reflection

The ideas we have from reflection are in some important ways quite different from those we get from sensation. In book II of his essay, Locke asserted that the mind turns its view inward upon itself and observes its actions about those ideas it has. That is why Locke highlighted modes of simple ideas of reflection such as remembering, discerning, reasoning, and judging. He observed that sensation differs somehow importantly from reflection because in reflection the mind controls itself and observes its actions to produce further ideas (Locke, 1974).

Degrees of Knowledge

Locke recognized two degrees of knowledge in the strict sense of the term and barely admitted the third which mainly centers on the particular existence of finite things.

Intuition

Of all, intuition is the most fundamental and certain degree of knowledge. The mind perceives the agreement or disagreement of two ideas immediately by itself without the intervention of any other force (Copleston, 1979).

This kind of knowledge is irresistible, and like bright sunshine forces itself immediately to be perceived, as

soon as ever the mind turns itself that way. It leaves no room for hesitation, doubt, or examination but the mind is presently filled with a clear light of it.

Therefore, intuitive knowledge is the greatest degree of assurance we can ever have. That is when simply by looking at two or more objects, we immediately grasp that something is true or not true about them.

Demonstration

Unfortunately, not all the agreements or disagreements between our ideas can be known in an intuitively certain manner. Sometimes when we merely consider certain ideas together, we fail to tell if they do or do not have something in common, and we must instead first connect ideas we are comparing with others before we can come to any knowledge.

This process of going through several steps to conclude the agreement or disagreement of one idea with another is what Locke calls a demonstration.

In this kind of knowledge, the mind perceives the agreement or disagreement not immediately, but through other mediating ideas and each step in demonstration rests heavily on intuition (Locke, 1974).

Sensitive Knowledge

Although Locke was willing to admit only intuition and demonstration, he was compelled to consider, in addition to these, another degree of knowledge that assures us of the actual existence of particular finite things. And this is sensitive knowledge which must not be dismissed as a degree of knowledge.

Despite all the doubts raised by rationalist philosophers and skeptics about sensation, we are still pretty sure that some of our experiences are of things that exist outside our minds. Therefore, Locke asserted that our senses are capable of producing knowledge although to a limited degree. He also believed that human beings possess a common sense that harmonizes and coordinates both our internal and external senses.

Limitations of Knowledge

In what is probably the most important area of our knowledge, it is severely limited. When we examine what we know about the real existence of things, Locke admits one case that we can be intrusively certain of, namely, our existence (Tipton, 2012). In addition, we can have a demonstrative knowledge of God. For anything else, we can only have sensitive knowledge. However, Locke emphasized that sensitive knowledge extends no further than our ideas and specifically no further than the agreement or disagreement of our ideas. The truth is that we cannot know all the relations of our ideas or rational knowledge of all necessary relations between many of our ideas.

Therefore, to make the limitation of our knowledge explicitly clear, Locke reduces our affirmations and negations about knowledge in mainly four categories and he labours to examine how far our knowledge extends in each one of them.

Identity and Diversity

Locke observed that human knowledge of identity and diversity extends only as far as our ideas. Locke asserted that in this first sort of agreement or disagreement of our ideas, our intuitive knowledge is as far extended as our ideas themselves and there can be no idea in the mind which it doesn't presently perceive of what it is and to be different from any other (Locke et. al, 1964).

However, intuitive knowledge extends itself not to all the relations of our ideas and all that we could know about them. For example, I may know that a circle is not a triangle, or even a cute triangle is not an obtuse but I can't know whether or not they are equal by intuitive knowledge. Thus, our knowledge of identity and the diversity of our ideas lies bare of all truth and certainty.

Co-existence

Secondly, as to co-existence, our knowledge is very short, though this consists of the greatest and most material part of our knowledge concerning substances. Locke argued that our ideas of species of substances are but certain collections of simple ideas united in one subject and so co-existing together. We can't know anything further than this co-existence of various simple ideas unless we inquire into the qualities of these substances which shall all be an indirect rotation on a combination of simple ideas (Halverson, 1981).

Relations

The next sort of agreement or disagreement the mind perceives in any of our ideas is what Locke calls relation. This involves the relation between any two ideas of whichever kind, be they substances, modes, or any other (Ayer, 1974). All ideas must eternally not be the same and so are universally and constantly denied one another. Therefore, there is no room for positive knowledge at all if we do not perceive any relations between our ideas, and find out the agreement or disagreement they have, one with another in several ways the mind takes in comparing them. However, this knowledge reaches no further than grouping our ideas; i.e. those found to be similar or different from another.

Real Existence

The fourth categorization of human knowledge according to Locke is the real and actual existence of things so much so that we have an intuitive knowledge of our existence and the demonstrative knowledge of the existence of God. The existence of anything else falls under sensitive knowledge which extends not beyond the objects present to our senses (Locke, 1974).

Thus, like any other form of knowledge, real existence cannot give us true and absolute knowledge of all that exists.

Locke concluded that if all forms of our knowledge are limited, a science in the sense of the necessary and true information is not possible, if all our information is

restricted to empirical elements which we have acquired from sensation then human knowledge is severely limited.

Locke's Consideration of Truth and Certainty

Since all the knowledge we have is of particular or general truth, it is evident that whatever may be done in the former, the latter which is that which with reason is most sought, can never be well known and is apprehended. It is therefore not out of our way in the examination of knowledge to inquire into truth and certainty.

General Truth

Nominally, we could define truth as conformity between what is asserted and what is. It is also the conformity of the intellect to being. This conformity resides in the mind since the mind belongs to the faculty of conforming a concept to reality (Locke, 1974). Truth is called logical if the intellect consciously conforms to being and ontological if being conforms to the intellect.

For Locke, truth signifies the joining or separating signs, that is, if the things they signify do agree or disagree. The joining and separating of signs mentioned here is what by another name Locke calls proposition; such that truth properly belongs only to propositions. To form a clear notion of truth, it is very necessary to consider the truth of thought and then the truth of words distinctly one from the other.

Firstly, mental propositions are the ideas in our minds without the use of words put together or separated, by the mind perceiving or judging their agreement or disagreement. Secondly, verbal propositions are words, the signs of ideas put together or separated in affirmative or negative sentences. So, propositions consist in joining or separating signs while truth consists in putting together or separating these signs as the things they stand for agree or disagree.

Falsity is one of the aspects Locke briefly handles in his inquiry of general truth. As truth is the conformity between intellect and reality, so is vice versa, when there is no conformity then there is falsity. Falsity is where contradiction occurs between being and the idea perceived of that being in the mind. Judgment is yet another last aspect of truth that Locke examined because truth is a vital property of judgment.

Epistemologically, judgment is an act of the mind by which it composes or separates two ideas (Borroso, 2007). For example, when I say, Maria Ednavece Kanoel is a loving mother, I am making a judgment not that I am praising her but an amalgamation of two ideas; mother and loving. It also implies grasping these two concepts, namely, mothering and loving as pertinent. This process happens subconsciously in our daily life; critical reflection is done though, in the process of thinking that requires crucial decisions about ourselves.

Certainty

In general terms, certainty is a state that accompanies true judgment and rests in the truth as truth rests in the mind.

It is identical to the assent given to the proposition and if certainty is given to an apparent truth, then it is an error (Marušić, 2021). Certainty is a twofold entity that entails truth and knowledge. Therefore, in order not to be misled and misled, for the doubtfulness of terms, it is fitting to examine each entity of certainty separately.

Certainty of truth is when words are so put together in propositions as exactly to express the agreement or disagreement of ideas they stand for as really they are. On the other hand, certainty of knowledge is perceiving the agreement or disagreement of ideas as expressed in any proposition. The perception here would be immediate or mediate. For example, as it has been proposed all through intimated that we have an intuitive knowledge of our existence, it is immediately grasped and it is so certain that man can't deny it since he is constantly conscious of his existence.

Important to note here is that Locke advances the standards or criteria by which we can measure the certainty and reliability of our knowledge. These, he calls the foundations of certainty of our knowledge. These include immediate evidence as in the case of intuition, induction, and deduction plus testimony.

Locke differentiates these foundations from the qualities of sensible objects. He observes that there are primary and secondary qualities of an object. He further argues that primary qualities necessarily follow from the object while secondary qualities are fiction and a result of our imagination.

Therefore, according to Locke, the primary qualities of an object convey to the mind the true data of an object and are also a criterion for the reliability of knowledge. Unlike secondary qualities, primary qualities give us true knowledge because they subsist in an object.

Evaluation of Locke's approach to knowledge

On a positive note, Locke was able to explain the origin of our ideas as deriving from sense experience. He also went ahead to stress that all the knowledge we have comes to us through experience. He strongly argued that there are no innate ideas stamped upon our minds at the time of birth except that we have capacities in us to know several truths using our faculties of the mind.

Additionally, Locke also made it explicitly clear that our knowledge is severely limited. This doesn't imply that we lack basic knowledge but that at times we have to admit our ignorance of certain things. Through sensation and reflection, we are capable of attaining knowledge necessary for our proper human function.

Locke was concerned with the certainty and reliability of our knowledge to advance standards or criteria for measuring it. These standards which he called the foundations of certainty include; immediate evidence as in the case of intuition, deduction, and induction plus testimony.

On the other hand, in the course of working out his empirical theory of knowledge, and trying to show how knowledge derives from sense experience, Locke revealed

certain difficulties of the empirical approach as examined below.

Locke greatly relied on sense experience as the only source of our knowledge, if this was true, then a good deal of the knowledge that philosophers such as Plato, and Descartes claimed we have, would have to be regarded as illusionary and factious.

In addition, all knowledge that depends upon innate ideas would have to be declared invalid since such ideas do not depend on our sense experience.

Consequently, an empirical theory of knowledge that Locke underscores can yield limited results in the sense that knowledge that can't be tested and justified by experience has to be discarded.

Locke was also at the end when treating the limitation of human knowledge. Our knowledge is indeed limited but we shouldn't fancy our ignorance. We should instead search for more and more knowledge as is pertained in our human nature.

On treating the knowledge of the existence of God, Locke was rather abstract and didn't offer a grounded explanation. He only insisted that by using our faculties of thinking and reasoning we can know God. However, he didn't explain that those who have these faculties of the mind yet do not know God. Therefore, other factors such as the environment in which one is born and grows and one's instruction about God were underscored.

And lastly, concerning the standards to measure the certainty and reliability of our knowledge, Locke simply mentioned them but did not categorically show where which one is applicable and how sufficient it is.

A brief understanding of the concept of knowledge according to other philosophers

Epistemology being an interesting philosophical field concerned with the nature, sources, and degrees of knowledge, attracted the attention of many philosophers some of whom have been grouped below according to their different schools of thought.

Empiricist Philosophers

It should be noted that in their theories of knowledge and truth, the empiricist philosophers were reacting to the views of rationalists who argued that the world could be best understood not through sense experience but through principles of pure thought. Empiricist philosophers inter alia Thomas Hobbes, David Hume, and George Bekerly emphasized that all knowledge begins with sense experience. For instance, Hobbes insisted that knowledge starts and ends with sensory ideas while Hume insisted that all human knowledge could be reduced to two kinds of sense impressions, namely, faint general images and vivid individual phantasms (Hume, 1977).

In a word, empiricist philosophers prioritize sense experience as the basic source of our ideas and therefore our knowledge. They deny the possibility of innate ideas in our minds at the time of birth. Locke goes the extra mile to indicate that at birth the mind is "tabula rasa" like a

white blank paper but gradually and through sensation it is fed with such ideas as hot, hard, green, or white.

Rationalist philosophers

In philosophy, rationalism is the epistemological view that regards reason as the chief source and test of knowledge or the position that reason has precedence over other ways of acquiring knowledge (Leibniz, 1934). It is often in contrast to other possible sources of knowledge such as faith, tradition, or sensory experience. The chief proponents of rationalism include Descartes, Kant, Leibniz, and Spinoza who believed that the criterion of knowledge and truth is not sensory but intellectual and deductive. For instance, Descartes posited that the origin of knowledge comes from within the mind, a single indisputable fact to build on that can be gained through individual reflection (Descartes, 1908). He also believed in innate ideas arguing that human beings can grasp knowledge about God, themselves, and environmental realities without relying on their senses. For Spinoza, knowledge obtained by intuition "Scientia intuitiva" is the most powerful and most desirable kind of knowledge, and hence superior to reason (Walter, 1964). In a word, rationalism is the idea that knowledge can be acquired through pure reason. Human beings are born with innate ideas that are developed through reason to make conclusions about existential realities.

The understanding of the concept of knowledge according to the Batagwenda people

The maintenance and continuity of every society or institution necessitates the perpetuation of a historical tradition which may be written or oral. And to understand a society or an institution, one has to understand its historical tradition. Therefore, a brief background of the Batagwenda people is key before proceeding to their understanding of the concept of knowledge.

History of the Batagwenda

The history and settlement of the Batagwenda have multiple accounts advanced by different scholars and study groups. However, it is generally agreed among scholars that the history of the Batagwenda dates far back in time around the last quarter of the 17th century. It is believed that a succession battle ensued between Junju a contested king of Buganda and his twin brother Semakookiro (Kiwauka, 1971). The population was divided depending on whom they paid allegiance. The battle ended in the assassination of the contested king paving the way for his brother to ascend the throne. The aftermath saw a section of the people migrate westwards of the kingdom and settle in Kabula, a county in Ankole that had been wrested from Bunyoro kingdom under King Rwebishengye. This area was later gifted to the Buganda kingdom by the colonialists following the the1900 Buganda Agreement (Rubaraza, 1971).

Another famous account of scholars holds that around 1818 there were religious wars in Buganda, prompting a

section of Christians fleeing from persecution to migrate to Kabula a county in Ankole kingdom (Morris, 1962). It is evident in both accounts that the Baganda immigrants settled in Kabula where they stayed up to the last quarter of the 18th century. They further moved westwards via River Katonga settling at the shores of L. George (Ogot, 1967). They established settlements at a place called Kyarubingo expanding to nearby areas to cover what is known today as the Kitagwenda district. It is evident that by the end of the 18th century, Kitagwenda was already an established society comprising mainly of Baganda whose culture is still surviving with kiganda names, the Banyankole whose descendants up to the present day keep cattle with their dominant Baliisa clan, the Banyoro whose offsprings still maintain Kinyoro practices including pet naming (Ingham, 1975).

Batagwendas' notion of knowledge

The Batagwenda defines knowledge from religious and moral perspectives. From the qualitative interviews, one respondent mentioned that knowledge is a gift God gives us to discern what is good and bad. And as such, act responsibly to maintain harmonious living in society. God is thought to have perfect wisdom and we only participate in his mass of knowledge. Through the sources enumerated below, one develops this gift by shaping it in various forms to enable it to shoot its highest peak.

Important to note about knowledge of the Batagwenda, is that there are innate ideas stamped upon our minds at the time of birth. And so, the mind carries with it such ideas as the existence of God, the natural law of doing good and avoiding evil, and the natural tendency towards perfection.

In the understanding of knowledge, the Batagwenda are not convinced that human knowledge can grasp with certainty all things that do exist. Therefore, they contend that both our understanding and knowledge itself are limited in some way.

However, this limitation doesn't disregard man's capacity to attain knowledge of things worth his survival. In much as we can't know all things and know them in so far as they are, we are capable of knowledge worth our survival. On this limitation another respondent had this to say;

It is very hard to know all the things that exist in the world, but what we know is enough for us to live a happy life. Even though I thought I lived near the lake, I for sure do not know the exact liters of water in it or the number of fish in it, but I know that at least that lake contains some water and some fish (Key Informant interview).

The above indicates that the Batagwenda people appreciate the fact that human knowledge is limited and so there is a need to pursue the acquisition of more and more knowledge.

Nevertheless, the Batagwenda do not view knowledge from purely religious and moral perspectives. This is because some of the respondents consider knowledge as the capacity to manipulate resourceful skills to do productive work. It is the capacity to grasp things as they are communicated to us and an instrument by which

mankind finds impetus to work and care for the environment.

From both approaches to the definition of knowledge advanced by the Batagwenda, we can comprehensively say that knowledge is the ability to know things as they are. It is a faculty peculiar to mankind and is essential for judging what is good or bad, and all these enable him to act responsibly and live harmoniously with his fellow men but above all, his divine creator.

Sources of Knowledge

Regarding the acquisition of knowledge, the Batagwenda advances various sources, important of which I have grouped into three broad categories. All of which leads us to a knowledge of ourselves, the world, and the creator.

Experience

The Batagwenda hold that experience is the primary source of knowledge. In our daily life, they argue, by the use of our external senses, we see, touch, hear, and smell things. Though the effect of sensation may vary from subject to subject, on this basis of experience we can undoubtedly say something about ourselves and the world. And this according to them qualifies experience, and sensation as a true source and basis of our knowledge. To illustrate that experiences vary, one respondent explained;

A car accident may happen, If ten people witnessed the accident and are asked to mention what they experienced, different people may report different ideas and different accounts of the magnitude of the accident. But for me what is important is that at least all will say something true about the incident (in-depth interview).

The underlying element in the excerpt above is that despite the insufficiency of experience, as long as our senses are normal and come into contact with reality; we are able to get knowledge.

Revelation

In addition to experience or sensation, the Batagwenda hold that human beings are capable of knowing certain truths in the form of a message from God, and this is a revelation. During interviews, respondents emphasized that knowledge is a gift from God. Through divine enlightenment of the mind by the Omniscient, we are capable of grasping both physical and metaphysical realities.

Reflection

Data from Focus Group Discussions demonstrate that reflection is different from experience or revelation. This difference lies simply in the case that in reflection, one takes careful thought about an idea already obtained from experience to develop more ideas. Unlike experience where the mind just observes the agreement or disagreement between sensible objects and revelation where the mind, through faith, simply accepts revealed truth from scriptures, in reflection according to

respondents, the mind confronts itself and observes its own activities.

Degrees of Knowledge

The Batagwenda admit at least three kinds of knowledge, that the human mind is capable of acquiring. They are intuition, reason, and sensibility.

Intuition

This kind of knowledge informs us of our existence. It is the fundamental and most certain block of knowledge. Two respondents from the key informant interviews posited that the mind perceives immediately the relationship between our ideas. In this type of knowledge, the mind can know the qualities of different objects without the intervention of any other force. For instance, the mind immediately grasps that sugar is white or the circle is not a triangle as soon as it turns its view on those objects.

Reasoning

From the qualitative data, reasoning is yet another degree of knowledge because not all the relations between our ideas can be grasped immediately in an intuitive manner. Therefore, it always requires us to undertake a process of thinking about ideas presented to us by our senses. For instance, we can know that a man is not a woman but we cannot tell their intrinsic differences and operations by intuition. Thus, in cases where we can't exactly tell the agreement or disagreement between ideas, by merely looking at them, we need to undergo a process of reasoning.

Sensitive Knowledge

Having seen mankind's intuitive and rational knowledge, we now consider how he comes to know the world around him through sensitive knowledge. According to the study participants, in sense knowledge, the individual concrete forms of an object, that is, visible, audible palpable features stimulate the sense organs of mankind and impress a variety of ideas on his mind. Sense knowledge, the simplest and basic type, is, according to the respondent's primary contact with the external world affected through one or more of our sense organs.

Limitations of Knowledge

The Batagwenda complies with that which seems to be a natural ordering; the limitation of human knowledge. When we examine the real nature of things, they argue, we can't help realizing that we fall short of the knowledge of all that exists. Again, when we look at daily and continued scientific and philosophical discoveries of new knowledge, we are humbled to recognize that there is more that exists than we know.

The Batagwenda do not enumerate ways in which we are limited in the range of knowledge but offer a convincing explanation that, truly, as human beings, we are limited both in our understanding and knowledge. They were willing to admit only one case that we can be intuitively

certain of, and that is our existence; we can never justifiably deny our existence. In addition, we can know God through revelation and reasoning.

The Batagwendas' Consideration of Truth and Certainty

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General truth

Truth in general according to the Batagwenda is conformity between what is said and what is. It could also be the conformity between the mind and reality with specific reference to material objects. Truth is that which can be proved beyond doubt, it is that which is. In all definitions, we find elements of the mind and real existence. And since it is the mind which proves, in this case conforming, we can certainly conclude that truth is the conformity of the mind with reality or else between what is said and what is real. In case there is a discrepancy, for the Batagwenda, this results in falsity. Falsity is a misrepresentation of the mind to reality. One of the respondents in a focus group discussion contends that in falsity, a person's mind is certainly clear about an idea but chooses to say a different thing altogether. She mentioned thus;

The opposite of truth is like telling lies, for example, the mind is very well aware that I am a councilor but upon being asked at one time, I deny it. That is falsity (FGD).

This brings about a conflict between the mind and the order of reality hence, falsity.

The Batagwenda, notes that falsity is a result of many factors, among them, opportunism, prestige, and defense mechanisms. That is, people choose to tell lies in order to attain personal gains, appear presentable, and evade issues that would otherwise be troublesome.

Certainty

The term certainty as applied here, means a state of being sure that the knowledge we have of something is true and is not doubttable. The Batagwenda remarked that our knowledge of certain things is at times proved false. So, to avoid being shocked to learn that what we thought was certain is dubious upon proof, they advance the standards or criteria by which we can reliably measure the truth or falsity of our knowledge. Additionally, it was noted that certainty is not odd to truth, it is a state that accompanies true judgment, and hence, it is identical to the assent given to a proposition. The standards of our knowledge are the foundations of certainty, which determine how far true our knowledge of certain things is. The standards include; immediate evidence, induction, and deduction as well as testimony.

Discussion

A comparison of the understanding of knowledge, truth, and certainty between Locke and the Batagwenda

Having examined Locke's and Batagwenda's concepts of knowledge distinctively, this section makes a comparison

of the two approaches while observing similarities and differences.

Similarities

Both Locke and the Batagwenda concur that human knowledge can't grasp with certainty all that exists. Human beings, however, can know sufficient for their purposes or else survive. This implies that our knowledge is limited but we can have knowledge worth our being.

About the sources of knowledge, both Locke and the Batagwenda regard experience and reflection as the basic ways through which we acquire knowledge. Experience on one hand is the primary source of knowledge and an avenue through which man gets into contact with outside reality. On the other hand, reflection is where the mind observes itself and forms new ideas from the already existing ones. At this level, man is said to be thinking remembering, and willing.

About the degrees of knowledge, both Locke and the Batagwenda recognize intuition, demonstration, and sensitive knowledge as fundamentals that make us aware of ourselves, our creator, and the world outside us.

Regarding limitations of knowledge, both Locke and the Batagwenda accept that our knowledge is limited. It was established that only one case we can be intuitively certain of is our existence.

Differences

In much as Locke's understanding of knowledge is identical to that of the Batagwenda there are sharply divergent views that are worth noting.

Locke gives a categorical definition of knowledge as the perception of the agreement or disagreement of any of our ideas. While the Batagwenda adopts a more religious and moral definition of knowledge as a gift from God to discern what is good and bad.

Unlike Locke who vehemently denies the principle of innate ideas on the contrary the Batagwenda holds that there are innate ideas stamped upon our minds at the time of birth.

About the sources of knowledge, they almost concur except that the Batagwenda call experience what Locke calls sensation.

The Batagwenda also adds revelation to sensation and reflection as an authentic source of knowledge. It is based on the premise that knowledge is a gift from God and human beings simply share that knowledge which makes it limited. It is held that this knowledge is from God himself addressed to men of goodwill. They argued that we cannot fully comprehend the mysteries of God and so revelation as a source of knowledge, for it requires a leap into faith.

Therefore, unlike Locke who mentioned only two sources of knowledge, namely, sensation and reflection, the Batagwenda goes an extra mile to add revelation to the other two.

Although Locke and the Batagwenda admitted three degrees of knowledge, namely, intuition demonstration and sensitive knowledge, the Batagwenda were rather

inclined to call reasoning what Locke had called demonstration.

Conclusion

In summary, knowledge is a complex set of relations between the knower, the knowing, and the known, whose elements are sensual and mental processes. Potentially the mind by itself and through sense experiences can obtain ideas. Human knowledge is limited in so far as it cannot fully comprehend all the physical and metaphysical realities the way they are. Nevertheless, man can know sufficient for proper functioning.

Limitations

The study was limited by time and resources. It was academic by nature meaning that it had to be completed in a specific period of time. This implies there was a limited sample for data collection as large study populations require more time and funds to cover.

Recommendations

From the findings of the study, it is recommended that; Knowledge in all its forms is a faculty peculiar to man and for that, it is the highest gift mankind possesses which should be subject to conditions of truth and certainty for it to achieve its purpose.

There are several ways through which man obtains knowledge namely, sense experience, reasoning, and revelation. There is a need to recognize all these sources for mankind to optimally utilize these sources.

Knowledge being limited in nature though sufficiently available for human functions, every man and woman should seek more and more knowledge in the execution of day-to-day assignments.

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Conflict of interest

The author has no conflict of interest.

Author contributions

The author was responsible for the study conception, design, data collection, validation, and drafting of the article. He also conducted data analysis, validation, and draft review. Finally, he critically reviewed the final version of the manuscript submitted for publication.

Data availability

The data is entailed in the paper and can openly be accessed by the readers to improve knowledge as a theory and practice.

Informed consent

The author ensured that the study participants knew about their rights to participate in the study. Detailed explanations of the topic and intention of the study were availed to the participants and they voluntarily participated. Privacy and confidentiality were also exercised during data collection and report production.

Author Biography

Innocent Ampaire is a passionate academician and researcher who believes in the power of knowledge to transform the world. He is blessed with a wife and children who are a beacon of strength and success in his career. He holds a BA in Philosophy, a BA in Theology, an MA in Religious Studies, and short courses in Behavioral Research, Good Clinical Practice as well as CCA. Apart from teaching and research, he is interested in voluntary work for community development.

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