

**THE CONCEPT OF BEING IN ARISTOTLE AND E. M. P. EDEH: A
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS**

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Abstract

This paper is a comparative study of the concept of being in the metaphysics of Aristotle and E. M. P. Edeh. These philosophers belong to different socio-cultural and philosophical backgrounds which had influence on how they expressed their views. Employing the philosophical methods of hermeneutics and phenomenology, this study discovers that while both philosophers seem to differ on their understanding of being in some areas, they agreed to the fact that existence is an essential quality of being no matter how one tries to view it.

Keywords: Being, Metaphysics, Edeh, Aristotle, Existence

Introduction

The concept of being has been most recurrent in the minds of philosophers. The early Greek philosophers in their quest for meaning sought for what is. Prominent among philosophers who sought for the meaning of being was Aristotle who expounded the idea of being in his metaphysics. For Suarez, metaphysics is defined as the science which "makes abstract palpable or material things and it contemplates on the one hand, things that are divine and separated from matter, and on the other common reason of being, which can (both) exist without matter."¹ Other philosophers keyed into this study of being

such as Aquinas, Hegel, Heidegger, Bertrand Russell, Immanuel Kant. The African philosophers were not left out in this study of what being is by developing their own philosophy of being in reference to their cultural milieu. Some of these African philosophers are: John Mbiti, I. A. Kanu, E. M. P. Edeh etc. This work, therefore, focuses on a comparative analysis of two philosophers who studied the notion of being in their metaphysics: one from the western philosophical background – Aristotle, and another one from African philosophy – Emmanuel Edeh.

CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS

METAPHYSICS:

The word "**Metaphysics**" originated from two Greek words *meta* meaning "beyond", "upon" or "after" and *physika* meaning "physics" which collectively form the word *Metaphysic*², "*Meta ta physika*" literally meaning "after the things of nature."³ It can also connote the study of what lies beyond the subject matter of physics. It was an expression used by Hellenistic scholars and later commentators to refer to Aristotle's group of texts called *Metaphysics*. As a matter of fact, Aristotle did not use the term *Metaphysics* for this group of texts rather he termed it "First Philosophy" but it was Andronicus of Rhodes in the first century B.C. who classified and catalogued the works and called them τὰ μετὰ τὰ φυσικὰ βιβλία (*tà metà tà physikà biblia*) or "the books that come after the [books on] physics" under the title *Metaphysics* possibly for two reasons; It is either the work came after the *Physics* or the content of the work involves a

higher degree of abstraction than the *Physics*. That is to say "it was understood to mean the science of the world beyond nature that is, the science of the immaterial whose principal subject is "being qua being," or being insofar as it is being"⁴. According to Taylor, it is 'first philosophy' because "it has to disentangle the principles of the various sciences, and defined them by dialectic against those who impugn theme"⁵ From this, Metaphysics, then, is the study of "what is simple as such" the universal principles of structure without which there could be no ordered system of knowable objects.⁶

Being: A brief exposé

According to Merriam Webster Dictionary, being is the quality or state of having existence. It can even be taken to be something conceivable as existing. It is something that actually exists. It is the totality of existing things⁷. Philosophically, being is that which has actuality either materially or in idea. It is an absolute existence in a complete or perfect state, lacking no essential characteristic; essence.⁸ According to Aristotle, 'being' is whatever is, anything whatever, the most real of all things, the intelligible reality on which everything in the world of nature was thought to be causally dependent.⁹ Aristotle in his examination of the ancient philosophers, predominantly the pre-Socratics was convinced that they were searching for 'what is' that is for being. In this searched, some especially the Milesians and the Eleatics saw being to be one, some others such as Parmenides and Empedocles assert it to be more than one. Thus, the notion of "a being" is crucial, and everything which gets into our minds gets into them through it. It cannot be envisaged as the

fruit of intellectual comparison. It is the principle on the basis of which all intellectual comparisons are made"¹⁰.

Being is an extremely broad concept encompassing objective and subjective features of reality and existence. Anything that partakes in being is also called a "being", though often, this usage is limited to entities that have subjectivity (as in the expression "human being"). The notion of "being" has, inevitably, been elusive and controversial in the history of philosophy, beginning in Western philosophy with attempts among the pre-Socratics to deploy it intelligibly.

Brief Biography of Aristotle

Aristotle is one of the trios that shaped ancient Greek philosophy and continues to do so even today even after the empire of his student Alexander the great has crumbled. The others are Socrates and Plato. Unlike these two, Aristotle was born in 384 B.C. in Macedonian town of Stagira. Aristotle was a student of Plato and so was influenced by some of Plato's teachings. Aristotle was a powerful and innovative thinker. His works cover a whole range of human life (Ethics, Politics, Logic, Physics, *De Caelo* - on heaven, on the soul - *De anima*, on animals, Rhetoric, Metaphysics and Poetry). He was referred to as The Philosopher by the scholastic philosophers of the middle age, because his works were regarded as authority during that era. He was not content simply to repeat the ideas of his beloved teacher Plato. Like Parmenides, who used the way of truth to correct the erroneous ideas that were prevalent in his time, he

cautiously modified some of them and vigorously refuted and rejected others. He sought not only to modify and refute his master's ideas, but also works of other philosophers before him especially the pre-Socratic philosophers.

In his *Metaphysics*, he went at length to describe the progress of the early philosophers and their limitations especially as regards the essence of being. For him, he thinks that they based their inquiry on spontaneity and chance just like untrained boxers who "go around their opponents and often strike fine blows, but they do not fight on scientific principles, and so too these thinkers do not seem to know what they say, for it is evident that, as a rule, they make no use of their causes except to small extent"¹¹. It was during these modifications and refutations that he propounded his concept of being, which according to him, is the essence of all things and without which all that exist cease to exist, in response to the erroneous concept of being that was prevalent in his time. He began with the definition of substance, which is the general makeup of being. Now it is this concept of being that we tend to expound in this work.

Brief Biography of E. M. P. Edeh

Emmanuel M. P. Edeh commonly known and addressed as "father Edeh" is a Nigerian catholic priest of Holy Ghost congregation (C.S.Sp). He is known as Very Rev Fr. Prof. Emmanuel Mathew Paul Edeh C.S.Sp. He was born on 20 May, 1947 in Akpugo in Enugu state of Nigeria. He obtained his Bachelor's degree in Divinity (B.D) from the Bigard Memorial seminary, Enugu; an

affiliate of pontifical Urban University, Rome, in 1976. He pursued and obtained bachelor of Arts (BA), a Master of Arts (MA), and his PhD in philosophy from De Paul University Illinois, USA. He is the founder of Eucharistic adoration and special Marian devotion Elele, including other congregations and universities, namely, the famous Madonna University and Caritas University, as well as polytechnics with emphasis on education for the disabled and girl's education. Some of his published works includes: the foundation of *African Philosophy, Igbo Metaphysics, Towards Igbo Metaphysics* etc.

As a master in the field of metaphysics, Edeh took a tedious task of presenting the concept of being from the African perspective. This he did using the Igbo people of Eastern Nigeria as a case study. This already forms the background of his study. In his work *Towards the Igbo metaphysics*, he maintained that the work came into existence as a result of prejudiced and biased nature of Western Imperialism which presents Africa as people with no philosophy. As a philosopher, he finds it ridiculous when the Westerners describe Africans as people without philosophy and as Hegel would put it "those Without soul." Thus, he sets out to present the philosophy of African people especially in their understanding of the concept of existence and being. This already portrays the fact that he was influenced to write the book as a result of Western Imperialism on African people. This is because Africa being part of the society is not devoid of rationality which characterized man as distinct from other animals. "Africa is part of our global society. it has a distinct culture with healthy cultural values and meanings. True philosophy based on true human values and meaning

therefore cannot but embrace Africa's unique contribution".¹² Thus conceiving Africans as a people without philosophy is nothing but prejudiced and biased. This, Edeh tried correcting by undertaking the task of presenting the African philosophy in his widely acclaimed masterpiece: *Towards an Igbo Metaphysics*.

Aristotle's Concept of Being

One cannot make any assertion on Aristotle's concept of being without making proper allusion to his *Metaphysics* or *First Philosophy* properly. He defined his *Metaphysics* as the study of *being qua being*; being in so far as it is, "that is the study of things as regards their existence, rather than any other property they have, and thus the nature of existence itself"¹³. Furthermore, he saw this being as the character of 'what is' with the science studying it as *Philosophy*. Following this line of thought, then, the unavoidable question remains, what then, did he conceive this *being* as? This ushers us properly into the one of the major thrusts of this paper. According to Aristotle, "what being is just the question, what is substance?"¹⁴ This is because, what makes something a substance is the first universal principle lying beyond being itself.¹⁵ Thus, "to *be* is to be a substance as the product of a dynamic process".¹⁶ To the question what is substance he addresses it as "that which is both itself a being among others and a principle and cause of being for all the beings in other categories, qualities, quantities, relations and so on." ¹⁷

Types of Substance

According to Aristotle, there are three kinds of substance, namely, one that is sensible and eternal, for example, heavenly bodies. There is the one that is sensible and perishable, for example, plants and animals and one that is immovable and eternal – God, with many subdivision depends on various opinions.¹⁸ The first two types of substances are called "physical" because they are liable to change. Aristotle argues that it is necessary that there be such a substance (or substances), which is eternal, unmovable mover, fully actual and good: "Since there were three kinds of substance, two of them physical and one unmovable, regarding the latter, we must assert that it is necessary that there should be an eternal unmovable substance. For substances are the first of all existing things, and if they are all destructible, all things are destructible"¹⁹: thereby highlighting the principles of being with respect to its apparent subsisting dynamism. Thus, being for Aristotle is the product of an unavoidable dynamic process, which necessarily remains substantial with respect to the modes of prevalence. Before delving into the principles, it is important that we examine Aristotle's sense of being.

Aristotle's Sense of Being

Aristotle posits that there are two senses of being or to be. (i) Being *per accidens* and (ii) Being *per se*

Being per accidens

The act of being in an accidental sense is to exist in a non-primary sense of being. He defines the term accidental simply as "that which is neither always

nor for the most part.¹²⁰ Accidental beings presuppose ranges of categories from quantity, quality, relation, where, when, action, passion and position. It answers to the question how then is it? For example, the boy is intelligent, the Cat is dark, the child is here, the man is in love, the building is high. In all these instances, the accidents are self-evident.

Being Per se

For this part it entails beings that exist by their own nature, that is to say things that are in their own right. Having noted other sense in which a thing can be said to be, however he underlines that among all these senses of being, that 'that' which is primarily is, is the 'what', which indicates the substance of the thing. He confirms that all these other accidents are said to be only in relation to that which is in the primary sense. E.g. of this is the unmoved mover, the man who became musical at some point in time etc.

Aristotle's Principle of Being

Aristotle projected his idea of being using the concept of the unmoved mover. To start with, since he had held that the thinking is the clear example of which is aimed at, not just any thinking but rather divine thoughts, how then does this happen? What then should be the preoccupations of this divine being?

Here then, the philosopher tries to determine the actual object of thought of the (mover), denying the idea of idleness in thought, potency for thought, depending on something else before thinking and thought concerning

something else, stands out of question because it hovers above these. However, it must think of something precisely that which is most divine and precious, and acts of thought because of its limitations cannot be the best thing. Therefore, as the most excellent of things the divine cannot but think about itself since its thinking is a thinking on thinking²¹. It is good to note also that, since in theories the object of thinking is the act of thinking and the divine is immaterial, his act of thinking cannot but be the same with his object of thought, the same reason for his indivisibility and wholeness of his thought (and this is where goodness is founded), since its thoughts cannot be compartmentalized, which in turn supposes matter divisible, but the eternal cannot but be whole. Finally, Aristotle now decides to create a link between the aforementioned types of substances, that between the sensible and insensible substances. This he did with the intention of hitting the nail on the head, as it pertains to the principle behind change, as an answer to the perennial question of *being qua being*. Toeing this line, he adapted the concept of good, and proceeded towards uniting its fractions.

As part of a whole, he establishes that taking the universe as a complex, that in the case of "good" both the whole and the part are affective toward each other. Just like those who posit pairs of contraries "good" has as its contrary, "evil". What then is the nature of this good? Stating and criticizing the positions of people like Empedocles, whom he asserts made the mistake of generalizing the principles, Anaxagoras whose view he defined as one sided devoid of a contrary etc., positing the notion that what is primary has no contrary, since

there cannot be any contrary that is essentially a moving or productive principle, its action would be coming after its potency thereby qualifying the world as not eternal, whereas the world is eternal.

The Concept of Being in E. M. P. Edeh

Edeh observed that in Igbo metaphysics that there are four things which are responsible for the coming to be of things. These four things he identified are:

1. *Ife ana afu anya* – The visible and tangible
2. *Nke zolu ezo* – The hidden (invisible)
3. *Onye nka* – The artisan
4. *Ife kpatalu* – The purpose

In his explanation of these four factors, he identified that the first two 'the visible and the invisible' bear witness to the Igbo theory of duality which states that for the Igbo whatever exists in the physical or visible world also exists in the invisible world and so everything has both a visible and invisible entity. The third factor which is the artisan is external to the being and is either visible or invisible for it is either mediatory (the carpenter asking the gods for help in building a chair) and ultimately (referring to the creative power of the head of the invisible world) the work of the unseen world. It is the artisan that brings something into being. The fourth and not in the least is the purpose. This is because according to the Igbo people anything which exists must have a reason for its existence; hence anything which does not have a reason for existing is

worthless. Therefore, the validity of what is (being) is the purpose which its existence serves.

In the book *Towards an Igbo Metaphysics*, Edeh observed that the Igbo have no word that automatically translates the English word 'Being'. He however provides two hypotheses in which the term being can be translated into the Igbo language. The two hypotheses are: the '*onye* hypotheses' and 'the *ife* hypotheses'.

The '*Onye* hypotheses'

The term *onye* is used by the Igbo in three different ways: 1) as a pronominal adjective, 'who (*onye*)' as in the clause: *onye no ebea* (who is here). 2) It can also be used as an interrogative adjective used in asking questions such as: *onye?* Who? Eg. *Onye ma echi?* Meaning who knows tomorrow? 3.) This term is finally used as a noun. In this category, its closest English equivalent is person. It can be used to refer to both human and supra human entities. When used as a noun, it does not stand alone but follows another adjective or noun such as:

Onye ozo meaning another person

Onye nzuzu meaning a fool

Edeh asserts that "at first sight it would seem appropriate to use the word *onye* for the Igbo concept of being. This is because it unquestionably conveys the idea of a human being and it can be employed to designate spiritual being."²² Not minding this said above the major defect in this hypothesis is that it cannot

be used to signify inanimate objects such as stone, wood etc. Hence he concludes that *onye* is not comprehensive enough to translate the term being'.

The 'Ife hypotheses'

The Igbo word *ife* primarily means 'thing' whether it is material or immaterial, it can also be used to refer to a happening or affixed to any verb to mean a specific thing. For example²³;

Ife Obuna means anything whatever

Ife ebube means a wonder,

Ife mbelede means chance, accident

Ife nkiti means nothing

Edeh subscribes to this particular hypothesis because of the following metaphysical reasons:

1. The Igbo notion of *ife* is all embracing that is it covers all categories of being unlike *onye* which covers only the human and supra human excluding inanimate, non-human animate and vegetative entities.
2. Ife primarily refers to inanimate entities like the English word thing but it can by expansion refer to humans and supra human entities. This is made evident in the questions proposed by the author's correspondent: "Kedu ife melu njo n'uwa?" (What thing made evil in the world? or What is the root of all evils in the world?) I answered, "Ego" (money). "Kedu ife melu Ego?" (What thing made money?) I answered "Madu" (human beings). Note that

"ife" in the first question refers to an inanimate entity, money. But 'ife' in the second question refers to the human"²⁴.

From this presentation it can be seen that 'ife' in a particular sense refers to thing (inanimate) while in its universal sense it embraces all beings be it material or immaterial, inanimate or animate, human or non-human. The problem with this use of this hypothesis is that when standing alone it excludes the fact of existence which is an important part of being. This problem is however solved when we "remember that ife can be affixed to any adjective or to a verb to mean a specific thing. The Igbo verb to be in the sense of to exist is *idi*. *Idi* used as an adjective can be suffixed to anything to show that it exists, for instance: Okwute-di: The stone that exists, John-di: John who exists, Chukwu-di: God who exists"²⁵ In a similar manner *idi* can be used together with *ife* to mean anything that is in existence. A combination of *idi* and *ife* in Igbo orthography will result to *Ife-di*. He finally says that *ife-di* is the most appropriate term that can be used for the English term being.

The Categories of *Ife-Di*

According to Edeh there are three categories of ife-di each category also comprising of sub- categories. They are:

1. Supra sensory category: under this category we have the following sub-categories: *Chineke* and *Ndi-mmuo* (the unseen).
2. Human category: this is sub-categorised into: *Ndi di ndu* (the living) and *Ndi-nwuru anwu* (the dead).

3. Thing category: this is categorized into three major groupings:

- a. *Anu*- literally translated as meat but here refers to animals as distinguished from human beings and inanimate beings.
- b. *Ife-nkiti* which is literally translated as thing and cover all inanimate and vegetative beings such as minerals and plants.
- c. *Ogu* which are beings which have no existence of their own.

Being and Man's Understanding of Being

The Igbo idea of being follows from the two-fold division of the universe. The invisible and the visible. The visible is inhabited by two beings: humans and non- human. The human being is the principal focus of the visible world and this is seen and expressed in their names and proverbs such as: *Maduka*: Human beings are the greatest, *Ndubisi*: Human life is the first. For Edeh the Igbo seem to be aware of what is (being) by being aware of man as a visible concrete instance of what exists. He supported this assertion by a review of the answers to his questionnaire²⁶:

Q.1. Gini bu ife-di? What is being?

A. Ife-di bu ife-di. Being is being.

Q.2. Gini di? What is?

A. Ife nine bu ife-di. All things are beings.

Q.3. Kedu k'isi malu na ife di? How do you know that beings are?

A. Emegi ife ozo, amalum	I know this at least from
'nkea maka na madu di,	the fact that human beings
maka n' anyi di.	We are,

- Q.4. Kedu uzu isi ama ife bu How do you know what it
 n'ife di? is that beings are?
- A Ofu uzo bu sita na Una One way is by knowing
 ife bu na madu-di (mma-di). What it is that man is.

The answer to the first question (Ife-di bu ife-di) might be considered as a tautology but it only emphasizes the fact that the Igbo cannot define the term being. Even though the term being is an ordinary concept it cannot be defined. In this definition the Igbo subscribe to what Thomas Aquinas says in the *De Veritate* "that being cannot be defined in the way essences are defined. We cannot, strictly speaking, form an essential idea of being. It is the most evident concept to which every other concept is reducible"²⁷. The answer to the second question (Ife nine bu ife-di) gives credence to the fact that the notion of being covers and penetrates all other and hence is present in the formulation of every concept. Here also the notion of being in Igbo subscribe to the view of Bernard Lonergan:

... the notion if being is unique; for it is the core of all acts of meaning; and it underpins, penetrates, and goes beyond all cognitional contents. Hence it is idle to characterize the notion of being by appealing to the ordinary roles or laws of conception.... Other thoughts result from some insight either into the use of their name, or into things-for-us, or into things-themselves. The notion of being ... cannot result from an insight into beings, for such an insight would be an understanding of everything about everything, and such understanding we have not attained.²⁸

In the answer to the third question (Emegi ife ozo, amalum nkea maka na madu di, maka n' anyi di) the Igbo brings out the notion that the awareness of the concept of being arises from the awareness of the existence of man.

Being and God

Edeh in his work brought out the fact that for the Igbo people, Chukwu (God) who is the Supreme Being is the source of all beings and existence. "According to the Igbos, as well as many other African peoples, the power of production is the only true power a being has. It is a power that the Igbo people behold with awe because they see it as derived from the power of God in producing the world. God is sacred and commands man's veneration for he has created the universe and all things therein"²⁹ The Igbo people are not concerned with formally proving the existence of Chukwu. To him the very fact of the existence of God is obvious and for Edeh there are primarily two reasons for this:

The Igbo religious background, and man's sense of dependence. These are interconnected. An Igbo feels insecure when on his own, that is, without reference to higher powers. This sense of insecurity naturally arouses in him a tendency to seek shelter from superhuman powers who, in his judgment, are strong enough to assure him maximum protection in every sphere of insufficiency. These superhuman powers are the ancestors, spirits and messengers of God. They are in constant communication with human beings and make the presence of God felt as an unquestionable fact among the people. Apparently a typical, traditional Igbo is in constant communion with God through these superhuman powers. Thus he satisfies his religious inclination and strengthens his dependence on God³⁰

The Igbo man is born religious and therefore has no doubt about the existence of God (Chukwu). There are three ways which according to Edeh the Igbo man becomes aware of the existence of God:

- a. **Nature:** the Igbo believe that if there is no God then there will be no existence whatsoever. From this inference it can be seen that ordinarily the existence of being presupposes the existence of *Chukwu* the source of all existence.
- b. **Through Igbo nomenclature:** the Igbo people also express the existence of God based on the names they give to their children at birth such as: Chukwu-di (God exists), *Chukwudifu*, *Chukwuno* etc.
- c. **Through the Igbo idea of life and death:** the coming to be and ceasing to be of life and of death are all realities outside the control of finite beings. Hence a higher being should be responsible for this coming to be and ceasing to be for the Igbo people hold that nothing takes place without a cause.

Seven Ways of Naming Chukwu

- i. **Onye- Okike:** okike comes from the verb ike meaning to create. onye Okike therefore in reference to God means a being that creates which is the primordial function Chukwu as creator.
- ii. **Okasi akasi (the highest highest)** this suggests that Chukwu is over and above all things. According to Edeh "the sublimity of this transcendence is depicted in a beautiful Igbo expression descriptive of Chukwu thus: "Eze bi n'igwe ogodo ya n'akpu n'ani"; literally, a king who lives up in heaven with his garment touching the ground. This is an idiomatic way of saying that Chukwu is beyond the ordinary; he rises above heaven and earth"³¹.
- iii. **Amama amasi (known but never fully known):** this shows that the knowledge the Igbo people have about God is only but a scratch and not wholesome for

we cannot have a perfect knowledge about God. Hence the Igbo people refer to God as 'Ogbalu Igbo ghali (incomprehensible to the Igbos'.

- iv. **Ife-anyi (for whom nothing is impossible):** this expresses the all-embracing power of God (Chukwu). Even what seems to be most impossible is possible for Chukwu.
- v. **Eze ogholigho anya (king of knowledge who knows all):** this indicates the inexhaustible knowledge which Chukwu has even the impossible and the most improbable. This indicates that Chukwu for Edeh is the source of all knowledge.
- vi. **Chi-gboo (God for ever):** gboo here refers to the eternity of God's existence. This means that God has existed, exists and will always exist for ever.
- vii. **Eke ji mma (creator who holds goodness):** this suggest that it is Chukwu who is the perfection of goodness and that Chukwu is goodness. This is seen in the Igbo name Chukwu-amaka (God is superlatively good).

A Comparative Analysis

In the metaphysics of both Edeh and Aristotle, it can be seen that there exist some basic similarities and also some differences between the two. These are outlined below:

Similarities:

1. **Basic notion of being:** both Aristotle and Edeh have a common notion of being. While Edeh was using 'Ife-Di (what is)' to explain his understanding

of being, Aristotle also used substance to also bring out his own idea of 'what is (Ife-Di)'.

2. **Being Defies Definition:** for Edeh the concept of being cannot be defined as other concepts. This is instanced when he asks the question Gini bu ife di? And with the corresponding answer Ife-di bu ife-di which is a tautology used by the Igbo to project the difficulty in the definition of being. Aristotle on his own part subscribed to the use of substance as the proximate possibility for the definition of being.
3. **Commonality:** For Aristotle being applies to everything that exists example; plants, animals, man etc. Edeh on his own part also uses *ife-di* to account for all that exists. Hence for both philosophers, being encompasses all existents both visible and invisible.
4. **Eternity:** Aristotle and Edeh all believed in the existence of a being which is both immaterial and eternal. This being has always existed and will always exists. It is this being that is referred to as God.
5. **Presence of accidental beings:** Aristotle holds that there are beings which are dependent on other beings for their existence and these he calls accidental beings. Edeh on his own part hinted on the existence of these types of being when he stated that some beings cannot exist on their own example Ogu.
6. **Categories of being:** both Edeh and Aristotle adopted the idea of beings existing in different categories as well as hierarchy. At the apex of these categories they identified the existence of an eternal and immaterial being,

Aristotle called this the unmoved mover while Edeh placed his in the supra sensory category which includes Chineke and Ndi-mmuo.

Differences:

1. **Conservation/Limitation in Existence:** For Aristotle the idea of being is conserved, being is subject to qualified and unqualified change; in both, the matter is neither created nor destroyed, there can only be generation and corruption; whereas for Edeh existence is limited in the thing category where the animals (who when dead pass away from what is (exists)) when dead, they are not classified in the same level with man who for Edeh exists even after death as the living dead.
2. **Anthropocentrism:** Edeh's concept of being is based on what man can see and perceive that is to say that only what man considers as being exists (being is subjective in nature) while Aristotle concept of being circles even those that cannot be seen or perceived by man (being per se).
3. **Mediation:** In Edeh, there is the existence of intermediaries between God and man ranging from ancestors, deities, priests, etc. But for Aristotle there is a direct link between man and the unmoved mover without any intermediary.
4. **Religion:** the concept of God in Edeh has a religious undertone and he is worshipped but the concept of God in Aristotle is based on rational justifications.

6. **Method of proof:** Edeh and Aristotle both differ on how they offer their proof of the existence of beings. Whereas Edeh resorted to the senses as proof of what exists, Aristotle resorted to reason as proof of what exists.

Conclusion:

Having studied Aristotle and E. M .P. Edeh's concept of being, we realized that both philosophers did a great job in their different capacities with regard to the idea of being. Though they equally viewed it from different perspectives and as well existed in different epochs and background, they were influenced by the fact that being is that which exist. Furthermore, all things being equal, they agreed to the existence of being. For Edeh, four elements make a thing to be, for instance, Ife ana afu anya, Nke zolu ezo, Onye nka, Ife kpatalu. For Aristotle four elements are necessary for a thing to be, they are; matter, form, agent, and end. Hence it is clear that both also agreed in four elements which make a thing to be, even though they appear differently and unique by the use of language, they are still threading on one part. We should bear in mind that 'being', here does not imply only to human being per se but applies to all things that exist and even that which exists in the mind. Succinctly put, one fact summarizes this study: that 'being is that which is' no matter the angle we may take to study it.

ENDNOTES:

- ¹ F. Suárez, *Disputationes Metaphysicae*, cited in J. L. Marion, "Metaphysics and Phenomenology: A Summary for Theologians," in *The Postmodern God*, ed. Graham Ward, Oxford: Blackwell, 1997, p. 280.
- ² A. I. Bekker, *Aristotelis Opera*,
<https://archive.org/details/aristotelisopera01arisrich>, (Accessed 12.04.2018).
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- ⁴ A. I. Bekker, *Op. Cit.*, par. 4.
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- ¹⁹ Ibid., bk 6, p.987.
- ²⁰ Ibid., *Metaphysics, VI*, p.780.
- ²¹ Ibid., *Meta, Book, IX*, p.784.
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- ²³ Ibid. p.95.
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