

THE PLACE OF 'THE SUPERNATURAL', AND 'THE MISSING LINK' IN INTEGRATIVE EPISTEMIC DISCOURSE

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Abstract

The objectives of this study are twofold namely: to identify the place of the Supernatural as a response to Patrick and David who argued against its possibility; and to include the missing link, both in Ozumba's articulation and formulation of Integrative Epistemology. Historical, textual, and contextual methods of analysis are employed in this research. In their essay, Identifying Some Epistemological Issues in Philosophy of Religion, Patrick and David argued that integrative epistemology has no link with the Supernatural, or religion. However, we respond that there is evidence of the Supernatural, and indeed, religion in integrative epistemology; and argue that the spiritual dimension of integrative epistemic discourse is an insight Ozumba gained from Philosophy of Religion. After the skeptics' challenge, and the debate between the rationalists and the empiricists, the logical positivists threw metaphysics overboard with their verifiability principle. The advent and strident voice of postmodernism downplayed traditional epistemology, especially justified true belief (JTB) and foundationalism. Ozumba's Philosophy and Method of Integrative Humanism encapsulates integrative epistemology as its offshoot. Integrative Epistemology synergises the cleavages among epistemological theories by positing that, "all epistemological theories can form a necessary link with one another to form knowledge"; but failed to include the historical dimension of integration in knowledge. Therefore, we add the missing link - historical integrative epistemology to Ozumba's articulation and formulation of nine (9) pillars of integrative epistemology, and then, locate the place of the Supernatural in Divine Revelational knowledge, the sixth of the nine pillars, and also, a precursor of integrative epistemic discourse.

Keywords: Integrative Epistemology, Historical Integrative Epistemology, Skepticism, Justified True Belief (JTB), *Synthetic A Priori*, Logical Positivism, Postmodernism, and Divine Revelational Knowledge.

Introduction

The saying that various fields of study are proximately or remotely linked with one another (Peters 13) is evident in integrative epistemic discourse. In this study, we intend to respond to Patrick and David, who argued that there is no spiritual dimension to integrative epistemology (34); and also, add one of the missing links in Ozumba's articulation and formulation of integrative epistemology. One of the major tasks of philosophy is acquisition of knowledge about reality. It is philosophers' quest across diverse ages to ascertain the meaning, nature, sources, scope, limitations, functions, and kinds (types) of knowledge. Epistemology as a

branch of philosophy came to be as a result of reactions and counter-reactions of philosophers against skepticism. Some of the skeptics not only denied the possibility of objective knowledge, but went much further to deny the possibility of knowledge. The traditional epistemologists notably, Plato, Descartes, Chisholm and their like, in their respective postulates, posited that knowledge is justified true belief (JTB). In the modern epoch, the debate was between the rationalists who hold that the human mind is the primary source of knowledge and the empiricists who, while downplaying the position of the rationalists posited that the human mind was a *tabula rasa* at birth; and so, tried to establish the preeminence of sense experience as the authentic and primary source of knowledge. Immanuel Kant, who trying to resolve the impasse as a mediator by espousing his *synthetic a priori* knowledge could not put the problem to a final rest. The logical positivists of the Vienna circle added to the challenge in the contemporary era by jettisoning any form of knowledge that does not fit in within the domain of their verifiability principle. The postmodernist thinkers, from their own perspective, embraced the quest for knowledge with their revolutionary and deconstructionist approach downplayed traditional epistemic postulates like foundationalism and any form of grand narrative. With the arrival of Edmund Gettier and his counter-examples to the epistemological scene still in the contemporary era, there became a need for a fourth criterion of knowledge which the traditional epistemologists had earlier defined as justified true belief (JTB), showing that JTB, which is the tripartite or traditional understanding of knowledge is deficient.

In very recent times, integrative epistemology, which is the brainchild of Godfrey Ozumba emerged as one of the epistemic theories of the 21st century. Integrative epistemology is an offshoot of integrative humanism articulated by the same scholar. It is important to note that as at today, there is no “book” Ozumba titled “Integrative Epistemology”. This study will extrapolate extensively “the epistemology” in integrative humanism, and other works published by Ozumba which contain germs of integrative epistemology. In his own words, Ozumba writes: “Each of the points enunciated as the pillars for integrative epistemology can be extrapolated, and expanded to give us volumes of discourse. Suffice it to say that integrative epistemology leaves an open-ended ambience for continuing epistemological discourse” (229). In response to Patrick and David, we argue that the Supernatural in integrative epistemology is located in the sixth of the nine pillars of integrative epistemology (Divine Revelational knowledge), showing that, in conceptualising and articulating integrative epistemology, Ozumba received some insight from Philosophy of Religion. Again, the gap to be filled (missing link) in Ozumba’s submission – ‘historical integrative epistemology’ and its various strands will be delineated.

Skepticism as a Springboard for Epistemic Discourse

Skepticism derives from the Greek word, *skeptikos*, which means inquiry, or inquiring, or inquirer. The sceptic challenged the idea of the possibility of knowledge. Gorgias, for instance, argued that nothing exists, while Protagoras, insisting that man is the measure of all things *relativised* knowledge. All these awoke epistemologists from their slumber (Wilson 32) that led to positions and counter positions, critiques and counter critiques that metamorphosed into what we have today as epistemology. Epistemology was grafted into the philosophical

discourse and its lexicon as a result of the skeptics' challenge showing that skepticism is the springboard upon which epistemology came into existence.

Divine Revelational Knowledge as 'Supernatural', and Precursor for Integrative Epistemology

Philosophical integrativism otherwise known as integrative epistemology is purely epistemic. In its conception, formulation, articulation, method and approach, it has nothing to offer in the area of Philosophy of Religion. There is nothing Supernatural in it (Patrick and David 37). In response to Patrick and David, we hold that, the reverse should actually be the case. Apart from the other progenitors of integration in knowledge like Empedocles, Bonaventure, Aquinas, Bacon, Kant, Haack and a host of others, Divine Revelational knowledge serves as an indispensable precursor of integrative epistemology. Divine Revelational knowledge could be discussed in philosophy, theology and religion. Divine Revelational Knowledge is a construct of three words namely, Divine, revelation and knowledge. Divine, from the Latin word (*divino*) basically means relating to, coming from, or like God or God. Divine is a religious or theological concept, also used by some philosophers to mean God or the Absolute or the Supreme Being (Uzoigwe 241-243). Revelation derives from the Latin word (*revelatio*) which is a translation of the Greek word *apokalypsis*, which means the removal of the veil so that something can be seen (www.plato.stanford.edu). Revelation is the disclosing of some sort of knowledge or truth through communication with a deity or other supernatural entities. On the other hand, knowledge is derived from the Latin word *episteme*.

Divine Revelational knowledge is knowledge that is disclosed or revealed by God. It could be knowledge about God Himself, man or other aspects of reality. Often times, mystics and some other religious persons make claims to this knowledge. Divine Revelational knowledge is the revealing or disclosing of some forms of truth or knowledge through communication with a deity or supernatural entity. Divine Revelational/mystical knowledge is often knowledge claim made by mystics. It is knowledge directly revealed by God. Mystics are construed by philosophers and non-philosophers alike to possess some kind of hidden knowledge that is not at the disposal of all and sundry. Divine Revelational/mystical knowledge is knowledge acquired through Divine revelation and mystical experiences. A good number of philosophers, especially metaphysicians across diverse ages were also mystics and their metaphysics received impetus from their mystical experiences. Worthy to note is that these mystics have one thing in common namely, their affirmation that reality is one. Notable among these philosopher-mystics and metaphysicians include, but not limited to: Plotinus, Spinoza, Hegel, Bradley and Whitehead.

It is our position that, there is a spiritual dimension to integrative epistemology, and in fact, a dimension that is supernaturally oriented. Ozumba had earlier noted that integrative humanism is *ratio-empirico-spirito* centric approach to reality. If integrative epistemology is an offshoot of integrative humanism, and *spirito* is the Latin word for spiritual, we consider it a fallacy of denial of the antecedent for Patrick and David to negate or deny the place of the Supernatural to it. Among the nine pillars of integrative epistemic discourse, Ozumba highlights Divine

Revelational knowledge as the sixth. We, therefore, argue that Divine Revelational knowledge falls within the confines of the Supernatural, and indeed, has religious significance, having referred to the Creator and the spiritual. To instantiate this claim, it is important to recall that, “Integrative epistemology draws impetus from the principles, methods, ideals and visions of integrative humanism. This vision is that knowledge is human and non-human cantered. It is about man, his environment, ecosystem, his creator, and the created world that could impact on man’s world and existence. Integrative epistemology seeks to integrate all these views and contributions” (Ozumba 42-43).

From another perspective, among other things, Ozumba responds to the logical positivists (empiricists) who hold that whatever will qualify as knowledge must pass through the crucibles of their verifiability principle. We agree with Ozumba that some knowledge are absolute and divine (Revelational Knowledge), which clearly shows that it is not all knowledge that can be empirically verified. There are some aspects of reality that are not experiential, yet, they can be known. For example, right from the medieval era, the scholastics and other philosophers have tried to prove the existence of God through various ways like St. Augustine’s doctrine of Divine illumination and St. Thomas Aquinas’ “*five ways – quin quae viae*”. From the foregoing, Ozumba is trying also to show that whether knowledge is construed from the absolute or divine (Revelational knowledge) perspectives, both have to be integratively periscoped because they have unique roles to play in the quest for knowledge; and none will give a holistic view of knowledge left alone, hence, the need for integration (Uzoigwe 245). Expectedly, it is not all that the mystics say that other philosophers take hook line and sinker. However, what these mystics say or hold as their views cannot be wished away as an illusion or as purely subjective experiences because they could be making some sense. If mystics who have never met each other, and who belong to very different schools of thought and religions are unanimous in saying that reality is one, a totality, an un-fragmented whole, there must be some truth in what they are saying. Perhaps they lack the language with which to express it accurately. But they are talking sense, and there is some truth in what they are saying (Omoregbe 37). It is so because knowledge about reality is not restricted to the physical. There are some forms of knowledge that could be arrived at through Revelational or Divine mystical experience. In formulating integrative epistemology, Ozumba construes that man is a being unto eternity. Therefore, Divine Revelational knowledge should be at the foundation of the quest for knowledge, because man will give account of His stewardship on earth including the knowledge he acquires and how he makes use of it the Great Divine. It is on that basis that the terrestrial, celestial and the mundane dimensions of reality have some roles to play in knowledge acquisition. From the above analysis, it is our position that ‘Divine Revelational aspect of integrative epistemology is Supernatural’ and has to be integrated into Philosophy of Religion.

Justified True Belief (JTB) and Integrative Epistemology

Justified true belief is an epistemological theory which holds that for any proposition to qualify as knowledge, it must be believed to be true and justified to be so. What connection does justified true belief have with integrative epistemology? Ozumba unambiguously addresses this

question when he writes, “Our position in integrative epistemology is simply.... That knowledge has as its basic, necessary criteria as justified true belief” (229). So, not discussing justified true belief in this work would amount to fallacy of denial of the antecedent, because, JTB is one of the foundations upon which integrative epistemology is anchored. Worthy to note is that after the traditional epistemologists like Plato, Descartes, and Chisholm conducted their debate, they took it for granted that the meaning of knowledge was a settled issue. In fact, along the ages of the history of the development of philosophy, no issue has gained acceptance more than the tripartite definition and understanding of knowledge as justified true belief. Edmund Gettier challenged the traditional understanding of knowledge as JTB, which led epistemologists to go in search of the fourth criterion to knowledge.

Foundationalism as a Launch Pad for Integrative Epistemology

For any epistemologist to espouse new epistemological ideas in the contemporary era, he has to directly or indirectly make reference to other already existing fundamental epistemic theories like justified true belief and foundationalism in order to have a clearer picture of the new theory he wants to advance” (Whiteman xii). Foundationalism is an epistemological theory which holds that there exist non-inferentially basic propositions whose truth and certainty are obtained through direct and nonmediated experience. Some of the scholars that played outstanding role in epistemic foundationalism are Parmenides, Plato, Descartes, Husserl, Moore, Chisholm, Lehrer and Kekes. According to Mark Pastin, “We can talk about radical and modest foundationalism.” The radical foundationalists hold that there is indeed certain sub-basement of facts that are overwhelming. The modest foundationalists argue in terms of self-warrant. This study is not also unaware of Classical/Aristotelian foundationalism, Cartesian foundationalism, Husserlian foundationalism, Moorean foundationalism, and Chisholmian foundationalism.

Kant’s *Synthetic a Priori* as Precursor for Integrative Epistemology to Flourish

A close look at integrative epistemology shows that Ozumba draws a lot of insight from the mediatory role of Immanuel Kant between the rationalist and empiricist epistemic divide. This must have been why Zanzu describes integrative epistemology as “Ozumba’s 21st century advancement of Kant’s *synthetic a priori*” (31). On his own, Roy identified Ozumba’s integration of diverse epistemological postulates as “Kant’s mediation in the 21st century” (19), while Peters describes it as “Kant’s *synthetic a priori* in a new way” (34). No matter how it is viewed, what is clear is that Kant’s epistemic ideas influenced the formulation and articulation of integrative epistemology.

It can be rightly said that both rationalism and empiricism have a common origin which stems from a common prejudice. In his book, *A History of Philosophy*, Mascia argues that, “The common origin of rationalism and empiricism consists in the phenomenalism prejudice that man does not know things directly but grasp only the impression these objects make upon him” (290). Certainly, the bias above means that man does not know reality as it is but only the appearances which reality produces on us. And so, the rationalists and the empiricists set out to see how far we can penetrate reality, and that is the main problem they set out to tackle. The

rationalists and the empiricists shared a similar tendency that is, “an anxiety to provide a rational justification of the claim of the possibility of knowledge” (Hamlyn 12). The rationalists and the empiricists agree on the possibility of knowledge, but their point of divergence is mainly on the approach or method of acquiring knowledge. That is why the rationalists strongly hold to the use of pure light of the mind to illuminate innate truths, while the empiricists strongly hold that devoid of experience it is practically impossible for knowledge to be acquired. The differences in the approach of the rationalists and the empiricists were occasioned by the great influence the scientists of the renaissance period in the like of Copernicus, Kepler, and Galileo exerted on them. The rationalists and the empiricists having had this influence also tried to radicalise and revolutionise the quest for knowledge in their diverse ways conducting their debate as if both variants cannot be unified. Similarly, rationalism is an epistemological theory which holds that the human mind (reason) is the primary source of knowledge. Rationalism as an epistemic theory as well as school of thought was championed by French scholars namely, Rene Descartes, Benedict Baruch Spinoza, and Gottfried Leibniz, who are widely known as the Continental rationalists. The rationalists in line with the Cartesian tradition strongly hold that reason, intuition, a priori truths, and the mathematical method of inquiry are the best available tools in the world to be employed in acquisition of knowledge.

On the other hand, empiricism is an epistemological theory which holds that sense experience is the primary and authentic source of human knowledge. According to the empiricists, the five senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch are the windows through which the human mind receives knowledge (Ed Miller 64). By implication, it is what the sense experience writes on the human mind that it brings forth as knowledge. Just like rationalism downplayed the senses as the primary and authentic source of knowledge; the empiricists espoused and advanced the preeminence of sense experience over and above reason. Having jettisoned reason, the empiricists hold that the human reason has nothing to contribute and cannot be counted as the primary and authentic source of knowledge. Notable among the empiricists are: John Locke, David Hume, and Bishop George Berkeley who are known as the British empiricists. The empiricists in line with the Baconian tradition strongly hold that only the senses characterised by observation and experimentation are the surest ways of arriving at knowledge.

In his resolve to reconcile the problem of knowledge acquisition exceedingly ignited and escalated by rationalism and empiricism, Kant posited a fundamental question in his *Critique of Pure Reason*: Can a synthetic proposition be *a priori*? Before Kant, it was believed that only analytic propositions could be *a priori*. All synthetic propositions were believed to be *a posteriori*. It is the position of Kant that a proposition can be both *a priori* and *a posteriori* at the same time. Kant argues that there are some *synthetic a priori* propositions in physics, mathematics and ethics. Kant likened his new approach in epistemology to the Copernican Revolution—that is, the kind of a thing which Nicholas Copernicus (1475-1543) did in the field of science. It was generally believed that the earth was at the center of the universe, and that the sun and all the planets were moving round the earth. Copernicus, however, went contrary

to this view by showing that it was the exact opposite - the sun was at the center of the universe and the earth and other planets revolve around it.

Prior to Kant, it was believed among philosophers that in the process of acquiring knowledge, it is the human mind that conforms to the objects of knowledge. It was Kant that discontinued with that mindset and reversed the order by arguing that we can know *a priori* of things only what we ourselves put into them. For Kant, it is the objects that conform themselves to the structure of the human mind (324). We do not see things as they are in themselves, but only as the structure of our minds make them appear to us. Things as they are he called the *noumena*, and things as they appear to us he called *phenomena*. For Kant, all knowledge begins with experience, but it by no means follows that all knowledge arises from experience. All human knowledge, according to Kant, is a joint activity of sensibility and understanding. Sensibility is the capacity of the human mind to receive the content of sense perception which are the representation of objects. Understanding is the active power of thinking about the objects of sense perception or intuition as Kant sometimes refers to it (Ojong and Ibrahim 172). As a passive power, sensibility only receives sensory intuition. As an active power, understanding enables us to organise the sense perception into meaningful object. Sensibility and thought therefore play a complementary role in the process of knowledge acquisition.

Kant, in his explanation of the *synthetic a priori* made what was seemingly impossible possible in the epistemological world. Kant's epistemology, then, was a complete reversal of previous theories. No longer do we form concepts based on our experience; rather, the concepts exist first and shape all of our experience (Egbo 72). In this way Kant redeems such principles as those of causality and substance from the skeptical clutches of Hume. The senses supply the raw data, then, the mind supplies the forms and synthesises (unifies) our experience. This helps us to get the fruit of knowledge as a cooperative activity of the mind and the senses. This means that the empiricists and the rationalists were all partially right. Knowledge is the product of the mind's activity and the functioning of the senses. This new metaphysical explanation gave rise to a new form of knowledge called *synthetic a priori* knowledge. This means knowledge that result from the fruit of experience (synthetic knowledge) and the supply of the mental categories of necessity and universality (*a priori* knowledge). Mathematical truths come under this kind of knowledge which Kant called *synthetic a priori* (Ozumba 38).

Logical Positivism as a Catalyst for Integrative Epistemic Ideas

Logical positivism as a philosophical theory as well as a philosophical movement holds that the only way of doing philosophy is by way of verification. The logical positivists set out to do away with metaphysics in all spheres of philosophical enterprise (Roy 106). It is no longer a matter of philosophical debate to posit that the members of the Vienna circle – the logical empiricists like Moritz Schlick, Otto Neurath, Rudolph Carnap, A. J Ayer, and their company gained a tremendous insight from the works of Ludwig Wittgenstein. According to Wittgenstein as cited in Munitz (*Contemporary Analytic Philosophy* 227), "...in order to get clear how a certain sentence is used it was a good idea to ask oneself the question – How would one try to verify such an assertion? How is this word learned? ... But some people have turned

this suggestion about asking for the verification into a dogma – as if I had been advancing a theory about meaning”. It is Wittgenstein’s view that in verificationism are two divides namely, proposition and hypothesis and, while conversing with Schlick and Waismann, Wittgenstein further says: ‘... the sense of a proposition is the method of its verification’ (228). From the above, there is no doubt therefore, that this statement by Wittgenstein goes a long way to instantiate the claim that he is actually the originator of the position of the verifiability theory of meaning.

Ozumba’s reaction to the philosophical postulates of the logical positivists, among other things, is one of the key foundations for his introduction of integrative epistemology, with which he intends to unify all the gains in diverse epistemological theories. Ozumba sees clearly the harm which the logical empiricists intended to do philosophy by trying to expunge completely anything spiritual from the realm of reality. Throwing more light on his project of integrative epistemology, Ozumba writes: Being an integrativist philosophy is not averse to any progressive philosophy, but must be reconstructed to admit the temporal and spiritual dimensions of reality. At this point we capture the background and formulation of our philosophy of integrative humanism. And knowledge is about the physical and the metaphysical, temporal and spiritual, mundane and transcendental. Our epistemology is, therefore, integrative. It integrates the physical and the spiritual dimensions of reality. We must draw insights from our physical environment and from the spiritual milieu which abounds in human experiences and from the Holy Books (14-15). The fact remains that the greatest medium of knowing which is open to all men is the senses. This fired the logical positivists to assume a radical posture of annihilating all knowledge that are neither verifiable, inter-subjectively controllable nor empirically testable. This is borne out of the ignorance that there are different forms of knowledge and different purposes which this knowledge fulfills” (Ozumba and Chimakonam 42-43). As it were, among other criticisms against the logical positivists and their verifiability principle is that, ‘the verification or verifiability principle itself cannot be verified.’

Postmodernism and the Formulation of Integrative Epistemology

The radicalisation, revolutionary approach and total deconstruction of already established positions in philosophy by the postmodernist philosophers signaled danger to age-long norms of philosophical enterprise encapsulated in traditional epistemology. For Ozumba “We must close the door of the postmodern period and open a more viable dispensation; and this is the philosophy of integrative humanism. We insist that the era of philosophy today is the era or period of integrativism” (14). For the postmodernist thinkers like Fereyabend and Rorty, “anything goes”; and this Ozumba saw and called the attention of the epistemic world to integrate their positions to form a formidable front in the cognitive pursuit. He writes: my reading of positions, contentions, submissions and general proposition of postmodern scholars led me into a philosophical eclipse and disillusionment. I began to ask myself, if Richard Rorty merely announced the demise of philosophy even though it is contestable whether he actually meant what he said because, in the same vein, he suggested conversational hermeneutics as a new way of doing philosophy, then, what are we still doing as philosophers? With this, one can

say that philosophy has survived after all, after the post mortem. But the most fearsome vitriolic against philosophy is the postmodern orientation in philosophy because, it left philosophy bleeding from all pores. If standards, rationality, structure, logic, order, consensus, objectivity, some forms of absolutism, and values are despised and relegated to the background, it is enough signal that the philosopher should go home to his uneventful cradle since the child of knowledge he was raised to tend has died before childhood (Ozumba 4).

Philosophy and Method of Integrative Humanism

Integrative humanism derives from two words ‘integration’ and ‘humanism’. Integration is a mathematical word which derives from its root word “integers” which means “whole numbers”. Integrative humanism is simply defined as a *ratio-spirito-centric* approach in understanding human existence, interpreting human affairs, and a rigorous philosophical attitude which takes into consideration, the spiritual and the mundane philosophising from the point of view of holistic truth bearing in mind that man is both mortal and immortal, terrestrial and preternatural, spirit and body (Ozumba 22). The implication of this is that, in integrative humanism, there is also a spiritual dimension to knowledge that must be taken into consideration in all pursuits of knowledge.

Understanding Integrative Epistemology

Integrative epistemology is an epistemic theory which holds that all epistemological theories can form a link with one another to form knowledge. “Integrative epistemology is continuing epistemological discourse” (Ozumba 229), and an attempt to conceptualise knowledge and contextualise their approach and understanding. A wholesale, homogenous understanding of reality is not possible from a purely sensual or rational or spiritual perspective – the three must be present. Thus knowledge can be sensual or rational but with a vision and insight into the spiritual realm better knowledge possibilities stare us at the face (Ozumba and Chimakonam vi). In integrative epistemology, faith and reason, for instance, are not at rivalry but complement each other in a bid to achieve knowledge that is apodictic. For Ozumba, “Our position is that for knowledge to be consummated, then, there is need for a conflation of reason and faith. When we seek the truth only by means of reason, we are bound to get stuck somewhere. But faith provides us with the wings with which to cross the borders of phenomenality into the domain of reality” (86). In integrative epistemology, integration, harmonisation, and contextualisation hold sway.

Some of the Strengths of Integrative Epistemology

In his work titled, *A Concise Introduction to Epistemology*, Ozumba highlighted the key issues (9 pillars) of integrative epistemology when he writes: “Our position in integrative epistemology is simply that (1) All epistemological theories are potential, necessary planks in the repertoire of knowledge. (2) That knowledge has its forms and contexts namely subjective, objective, absolute, relative, scientific, intuitive, linguistic (propositional), perceptual, spiritual, mystical, etc. (3) That knowledge involves a process of analysis and synthesis. (4) That knowledge has its basic, necessary criteria as justified true-belief. (5) That certain knowledge are absolute and divine (Revelational knowledge). (7) That the logic of knowledge can be one

valued, two valued, three valued, four valued, five valued or multi valued depending on the context of discourse or form of life. (8) That all epistemological theories can form a necessary link with one another to project knowledge. Though some form of knowledge may be simple, like some perspective knowledge, they are nevertheless synthetic. (9) The motto of integrative epistemology is “analysis for synthesis” (228-229).

From the findings so far, Ozumba conceives knowledge as an exercise that can be embarked upon within a context, and must have goal in view and, in fact, integrative in nature. That is why he avers that, “Our criterion for knowledge is Integratively-Justified-Contextually-True-Belief” (43). Again, there are some basic questions we have to ask if one says one has knowledge. These questions will help for clarity and precision. Those salient questions include: if you say that you have knowledge, in what form of life, in what context, what ideas, state of affairs, beliefs are necessary for us to build such knowledge and be entitled to be called a possessor of knowledge? Worthy to note is that integrative epistemic discourse construes that there are things we know with certainty, others we believe with certainty, and others we are having more informative insights about as we continue in our search.

The Missing Link in Integrative Epistemology

Just like other positions in philosophy, integrative epistemology is not without some challenges and therefore cannot be immune from criticism. In the course formulation, articulation and development of integrative epistemology, there is no single place where its progenitor mentioned historical integrative epistemology. To fill the gap, this study adds the historical integrative epistemology and its various strands considering integration in epistemic discourse across diverse ages.

Historical Integrative Epistemology and its Various Strands

Right from the pre-Socratic and Socratic, medieval, renaissance, modern, and contemporary epoch, philosophers have always made reference to the already existing ideas in order to espouse and advance their own ideas. The various strands of integrative epistemology include:

a. Integrative Epistemology in the Ancient/Classical Era

In the ancient era, Heraclitus of Ephesus, for instance, noted that everything was in ‘flux’ and advocated “water” as the primary stuff of all things. Anaximenes advocated “air”, for Heraclitus, it was “fire” which he called (the One), and Empedocles integrated the positions of his predecessors above, after his own contribution – “earth”. Instantiating this claim, Fieser notes: “Empedocles (c. 495–c. 435 BCE) held that there are four basic elements—namely earth, air, fire and water—which are organised by the two forces of love and strife” (James Fieser www.utm.edu/staff/jfieser/110). Empedocles, with the spirit of unification of ideas, tried to reconcile the theories of Heraclitus that everything changes with that of Parmenides that there is no change, that nothing comes into being and nothing goes out of being. As an integrativist thinker, Empedocles maintained that there were four eternal elements, namely, earth, air, fire and water (Omoregbe 18), the primary stuff of reality.

b. Medieval Integrative Epistemology

Plato argued that the objects of our knowledge are things in the world of Forms. St. Augustine as cited in Omoregbe (*Epistemology: Theories of Knowledge A Systematic and Historical Study* 71) appropriated and integrated this with his own (St. Augustine's) idea when he argued that: "The objects of our knowledge are not the material things of this world, but the eternal ideas in the Mind of God". Thus Augustine, Christianising Plato's world of Forms, interprets the world of Forms as the Mind of God, and the Forms are the eternal ideas in the Mind of God. Bonaventure was a Christian philosopher of the Augustinian tradition. But in his epistemology, he combined Augustinian position with Aristotelianism. The human mind according to him, is a *tabula rasa* (a blank slate) at birth, with no innate ideas in it except two namely, the knowledge of the existence of God and that of moral virtues" (Omoregbe 71-72). It is important to note also that St. Thomas Aquinas complemented and integrated the insights employed by Aristotle and St. Bonaventure in his epistemic ideas. For Aquinas, there are no innate ideas; at birth the human mind is a *tabula rasa*, all knowledge comes from sense perception. This led him to argue: *nihil est intellectu quod non prius fuerit in sensus* (there is nothing in the intellect which was not first in the senses), which the empiricists: Locke, Hume and Berkeley later appropriated the line of thought of Aristotle, St. Bonaventure and St. Thomas Aquinas that there are no innate ideas.

c. Integrative Epistemology in the Renaissance Interlude

Towards the end of the renaissance, the voyage for reviving the past philosophies began to subside: instead, there began to appear "new philosophies" and "new systems of thought" proudly announced as such, for instance, the *Nova de Universis Philosophia* offered by Francesco Patrizzi or the *Great Instauration* (explicitly opposed to a "restoration") of Francis Bacon. However, most of these efforts at original creation clearly bear stamp of some ancient sects of philosophy. Even Nicholas of Cusa, the most original systematic mind of the Renaissance, could be called (and indeed once called himself) a Pythagorean. As it were, "Philosophers hardly ever make a complete break with the past, even when they most loudly claim to be doing so. The great merit of the Renaissance was that thinkers learned what they could from the school of Athens and brought what they learned to bear with fresh vigor upon the problems of human life" (*The Encyclopedia of Philosophy* 177). Francis Bacon's idol of the cave is the reminiscence of Plato's allegory of the cave where individuals are circumvented in the cave and by the cave knowing only customs of their environment; each individual has his own cave which determines his level of enlightenment. What Plato communicates in his idea of allegory of the cave is that those that see shadows, the ephemeral and the fluxing things of this world think that the sensible things of this world are real and as such contented. This allegory shows that there is a world of shadow and a world of reality. In Bacon's idol of the cave, individuals are shut in their caves and being limited to the kind of books they read, the idea they consider relevant and the intellectual authorities they hold in high esteem. This idol leads men to look for sciences in their own narrow world instead of the larger world. In fact, Bacon got some inspiration from Plato, integrated and enlarged it.

d. Modern Integrative Epistemology

Kant integrated Plato's idea with his own and came up with the idea of *noumenal* and phenomenal worlds in the process of formulation of his *synthetic a priori*. What is sensible world for Plato is the phenomenal world for Kant, while the intellectual world (the real world of Forms) for Plato is the *noumenal* (things as they are) world for Kant. What we try to establish at this point is that the idea of the *noumenal* world and the phenomenal world introduced by Kant in his Copernican revolution is not a new thing in epistemology, and yet, it is part of his contribution to knowledge as it is acknowledged by philosophers across diverse ages and orientations. What is actually new are: the "nomenclature" he employed - *noumena* and phenomena, which for him, are things as they are in themselves and things as they appear to us, respectively.

G.E. Moore employed the idea of common sense in the contemporary era, but St. Bonaventure had earlier employed it in the era of scholasticism (medieval period) when he was analysing how knowledge is acquired. According to Bonaventure as cited in Omeregbe (*Epistemology - Theories of Knowledge: A Systematic and Historical Study* 73), "Objects impress themselves on the sense organ during sense-perception. The common sense synthesises the different sensations and stores it up in the imagination...." Aquinas also employed common sense in his analysis of four (4) innate senses postulated by him. In *Defense of Common Sense*, G.E. Moore integrated the ideas of Bonaventure and Aquinas in his postulates on common sense. Today, Moore is known for his empiricist view of "common sense" more than Bonaventure, Aquinas, or even Aristotle, whose tradition Bonaventure and Aquinas adopted, and he (Moore) advanced. Employing Leibniz as another case in point to instantiate the claim of philosophers integrating ideas of preceding thinkers with theirs, showing that integration in knowledge acquisition has been a reoccurring decimal along the ages of development of philosophy, Ozumba and Ukah write: "Leibniz philosophy is... highly eclectic. It is chiefly a welding together of preceding philosophies. In his epistemology, he is seen using Aristotle's 'potentiality and actuality'. In his proof of the existence of God, he draws largely from Descartes and the scholastics. In his monadology, he is found to have adopted the theory of monadology of Democritus" (4). One interesting thing from the above analysis is that employing all these philosophies has not in any way diminished the idea that "monad" is a term for which among other things, Leibniz is known in the philosophical world just as Ozumba is known for the terms "integrative epistemology" in spite of the fact that 'integration in knowledge' has been there long before Ozumba was born. This is part of the splendour of philosophy.

Conclusion

One of the primary concerns of philosophy is acquisition of knowledge about reality. Skepticism, which ushers in epistemic branch of philosophy, is not only as old as philosophy, but stands as an instrument of labour in the hands of philosophers. The major concern of integrative epistemology is to harness, harmonise, integrate and complement the major gains of diverse epistemological theories in an integratively unified manner. By so doing, epistemology will naturally continue to rise over and above the skeptics' challenge and transcend beyond the realm of uncertainty. Integration in knowledge acquisition pre-dates

Socrates. That is why some progenitors of integration of ideas in the formulation of knowledge in the like of Empedocles, Plato, Bonaventure, Aquinas, Bacon, and Kant to mention a few were highlighted in this study. This study also looks critically at the foundation upon which integrative epistemology is built. It has been discovered that integrative epistemology covers a plethora of epistemic theories across diverse ages and divides of epistemological orientations. For the purpose of clarity and precision, this work selected skepticism, justified true belief (JTB), foundationalism, rationalism, Kant's *synthetic a priori*, logical positivism, and postmodernism as key among the epistemological theories that gave Ozumba insight and impetus in his formulation and articulation of integrative epistemology, not losing sight of integrative humanism which integrative epistemology is an offshoot.

We tried to clear the doubt by way of critical response to Patrick and David that for the fact that Divine Revelational knowledge is not only one of the pillars of integrative epistemology, but also precursor of integrative epistemology, it logically follows that there is a place for the Supernatural in conceptualization and formulation of integrative epistemic discourse. We further argued that Ozumba gained some insight in including the spiritual segment of integrative epistemology from Philosophy of Religion. Similarly, historical integrative epistemology has been identified as the missing link or the gap the study filled. It is in the course of analysis that we discovered the progenitors of integrative approach to knowledge in the like of Empedocles, Plato, St. Bonaventure, Bacon, Kant, and so forth. It is on that basis that another insight is illumined by way of various strands of historical integrative epistemology namely, ancient/classical integrative epistemology, medieval integrative epistemology, integrative epistemology in the renaissance interlude, and modern integrative epistemology. From this perspective, historical integrative epistemology, therefore, becomes a new insight in understanding, appreciation, and advancement of integrative epistemology.

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