

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) AND AFRICAN PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION: RETHINKING TEACHING-LEARNING AND INNOVATION FOR THE FUTURE

Jude I. Onebunne, PhD*

Abstract

This paper explores how AI may both complement and challenge traditional African educational thought, enabling inclusive, adaptive and culturally grounded yet globally conscious teaching-learning experiences. AI is transforming pedagogy across continents and its integration with core African philosophical principles offers promising opportunities for pioneering innovative instruction and empowering self-guided exploration of knowledge. Deeply rooted in holistic development which interconnects all people and honors ancestral traditions, African education emphasizes ethical community, cultural heritage preservation and the collective sharing of hard-won wisdom. AI driven tools show potential to augment these ideals through individualized curriculum, protection of indigenous perspectives and expanded access to formal and informal instruction. However, responsible development and application remain essential to ensure technology elevates rather than replaces critical thinking, problem-solving and human connection. Using the method of rigorous analysis and comparison, the author finds out that by judiciously leveraging AI, Africa may foster an adaptive educational system that skillfully blends scientific and technological progress with established philosophical foundations and priorities, for the benefit of all learners.

keywords: Artificial intelligence, African philosophy of education, teaching-learning

Introduction

We are in the era of Artificial Intelligence with its die-hard and flexible consequences as it tries redefining realities as such. Its influence on education is massive. Hence the need for African Philosophy of Education that relates well with AI. Today than ever, AI challenges and or complements human wisdom with stupefying inventions leaving humanity with inevitable relational questions on the actual nature of and differential limits between humans and automaton. As well, AI questions the future of *homo sapiens*, *homo cogitans* and *animal rationale* in the face of this unholy alliance between it and human intelligence as a result of proper and functional education. However, this challenge is possible because man allows it in as much as AI remains one of the powers of human knowledge and his creativity. This is why the systems of artificial intelligence are within the boundaries of human wisdom. An effective African Philosophy of education ought to engage AI.

Artificial

Etymologically, *artificial* in the middle English has to do with "made or done by humans rather than occurring in nature"; from early French *artificiel* (same meaning) or Latin *artificialis* "contrived by art"; from Latin *artificium* "skill, artistry, craft," derived from *arti-* (from *art-*, *ars* "skill") and *facere* "to make, do". The idea of artificial, therefore, comes in contradistinction with the idea of nature or something being natural. Oxford English Dictionary (n.d.) defines artificial as made or produced by human beings rather than occurring naturally, especially as a copy of something natural. Artificiality, therefore, is directly opposite of naturalness; a kind of naturalism as artificial simply copies natural. The concept of artificiality describes things that are man-made or simply manufactured as opposed to happening or occurring naturally. Artificial is often used as the opposite of natural. Artificiality portrays unnaturalness. A close synonym of artificial is synthetic. Other possible nearest equivalents words are: counterfeit, fabricated, manufactured or simulated. Hence, Merriam-Webster. (n.d.) defines the word artificial as something *humanly contrived*. Dictionary.com (n.d.) sees the word artificial as something *lacking naturalness or spontaneity*. Therefore, artificiality is appreciated within the boundaries of human creativity and or making.

Intelligence

Intelligence according to Oxford English Dictionary (n.d.) is “the ability to acquire and apply knowledge and skills” as well as “the collection of information of military or political value”. Merriam-Webster (n.d.) in different nuances defines intelligence as “the ability to learn or understand or to deal with new or trying situations” as well as the “the ability to apply knowledge to manipulate one's environment or to think abstractly as measured by objective criteria (such as tests)”. Intelligence is a sum-total ability to think, reason, understand and perform graspable acts instead of doing things automatically or by instinct. It is a show of reason with an ability for performance, a skilled use of reason and an act of understanding; a form of mental acuteness or shrewdness. Hence, intelligence is a quality of the mind capable of sourcing information, (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). Intelligence is one of the quotients that define humanity as *homo sapiens*, *animal rationalis* and *homo cogitans*. Intelligence is a multifarious concept that encompasses the capacity for and tapestry of brain and mind activities typified in abstraction, logic, understanding, self awareness, learning, creativity and critical thinking with indispensable ability to comprehend, infer and retain information for functional living. Hence, intelligent quotient (IQ) amongst emotional quotient (EQ), social quotient (SQ) and adversity quotient (AQ) remains one of the major and cardinal focus in determining a real balanced and integral human being.

In the past era, a person is judged on his or her level of IQ, (Cambrilearn.com (n.d.). The higher a person scores on a test, the more academically capable and balanced they were perceived to be. This notion was challenged based on the fact that IQ is not enough to describe one's being and personality as such. Gardner (2011) argues on the ground breaking classic *Frames of Mind* that to limit our understanding of intelligence is to “book smarts” misses much of what makes human beings is amazing. Furthermore, he argues that all human beings are born with a multiplicity of intelligentsias which can, and should, be developed by society to achieve great individual accomplishment and to fulfill greater social goals. This idea is within the domains of learning (like psycho-motor, cognitive, affective and kinetic). Etymologically, the word intelligence is derived from the Latin nouns: *intelligentia* or *intellectus* which in turn stem from the verb *intelligere*, to comprehend or perceive. Colom, Karama, Jung, & Haier (2010) explain that “intelligence can be defined as a general mental ability for reasoning, problem solving and learning. Because of its general nature, intelligence integrates cognitive functions such as perception, attention, memory, language or planning”. Wikipedia (n.d.) defines intelligence in many ways thus: “the capacity for abstraction, logic, understanding, self-awareness, learning, emotional knowledge, reasoning, planning, creativity, critical thinking and problem solving. It can be described as the ability to perceive or infer information; and to retain it as applied knowledge. Moreover, Wikipedia (n.d.) suggests that intelligence can be divided into various domains or competencies broadly typified in human and non-human. This is why intelligence, that is, human intelligence, in computers or other machines is called artificial intelligence. Thurstone (n.d.) in his theory on intelligence enumerates seven primary abilities of intelligence. Intelligence is primarily expressed in these mental capabilities as verbal comprehension, word fluency, number facility, spatial visualization, associative memory, perceptual speed and reasoning, (Thurstone, n.d.). Contemporaneously, scholars suggest that there are particular competencies with regard to intelligence as faculty of logic, reasoning, problem-solving and planning. However, Benneth, M. (2024) opined that “one of the most miraculous qualities of humankind is the ability to learn new concepts and ideas from a small number of samples, sometimes from a single one. Most humans are even able to understand and identify a pattern and to use it to generalize and extrapolate”. Here lies the power of human intelligence. In *one-short learning* a human would be able to determine with high accuracy images once seen and encountered, (Benneth, 2024). Nevertheless, intelligence borders much on the act of human intellect, that is, on the faculty of thinking which Brugger, W. & Baker, K (1974) refers to as “the power of non intuitive insight into existence and relationships. Man as a finite being enjoying human intellect is wholly dependent on sense knowledge. Hence, realities as all forms of existence,

are presented to the human intellect only in and through the essentials that shine forth in the sensible things - *intelligibile in sensibili*. (Brugger, & Baker, 1974). Some scholars, however, may refer to this character as a form of intellectualism which gives preference to spirit, ideas and intellect. The idea of intelligence, therefore, ought to connote a kind of intelligibility, trying to understand something through and through.

Artificial Intelligence

Man as *homo sapiens* has, in the cause of evolution in the last three millennia, developed a broad set of interactive skills, a form of intelligence grounded in its development as a social animal. He has equally shown mastery of other skills as regards all the domains of human intelligence especially in judgement, intuition, communication and imaginative acumen, (Benneth, 2024). However, Partridge, D. (2017) explains that artificial intelligence, which is humanlike, is in “has always spurred extensive philosophical controversy”. Hence, Benneth questions thus, can human intelligence be no more than the right algorithm running on a biological computer, sometimes called wetware as distinct from the hardware of modern computers? (Benneth, 2024). Nevertheless, it is averred that “artificial intelligence systems outperform humans in a range of important categories. Artificial Intelligence, particularly machine algorithms, is strikingly effective at processing and integrating new information and sharing new knowledge among separate artificial intelligence models”. One must, of course, acknowledge that the endurance of artificial intelligence is also superior to human intelligence. Hence, machines do not require rest and do not get distracted as such. More so, artificial intelligence works at speeds well beyond those of human intelligence while outperforming humans at most tasks that both have been trained to complete by many orders of magnitude, (Benneth, 2024).

The idea of intelligence in this concept is qualified by artificiality. The artificialness or unnaturalness simply shows the nature of intelligence being discussed. The concept of *artificial intelligence* is a form of intelligence that is unreal and unlikelike, man-made and manufactured. Such knowledge or intelligence is simply artificial. Artificial intelligence (AI) refers to a field where computer manipulates data and processing vast amount of information it has received for some human solutions through thorough mimicking human-like abilities and competencies. AI simply refers to all forms of applied technology that enables devices like computers and machines to simulate human intelligence and problem-solving capabilities sourced from vast amounts of information all in a bid to bringing vagaries of solution to human predicaments.

Human beings are naturally and definitively endowed with intelligence as well as *cognitive* abilities otherwise one regarded as a mad person and more a mere brute or animal. Intelligence becomes a differential defining factorial point between human beings and animals. Hence, human beings are naturally born with intelligence. Therefore, mankind is an *animal intelligentsia*. Since human beings are naturally disposed to be intelligent they are very conscious of their environment with external and internal senses. Man, therefore, learns, thinks and acts as implied by his being. This idea might have led Rene Descartes to conclude *cogito ergo sum*. Ultimately, man using this power of intelligence creates machine for his own helpful-good. Such machines seem to show and exhibit and mimic man’s intelligence, hence, the idea of artificial intelligence (AI). AI is simply the idea that is related to every demonstration that is man-like-intelligentsia. AI exists in any form of human like based skills by machine. The Conceptual word AI was coined in 1956 by John McCarthy at a conference at Dartmouth. As the celebrated father of AI, McCarthy defines AI as the science of and engineering of making intelligent machines. AI, therefore, is a man-made ability with all its competencies. Hence, AI is a human achievement, a breakthrough in man’s creativity. We see in this statement that man’s place in creation and every one of his creative activity is a top-notch. No wonder Protagoras of Abdera maintains that *man is the measure of all things*. In this understanding, however, man becomes the *locus* of every *modus operandi* and *modus vivendi*. All these operations are the resultant application of human intelligence. Therefore, AI

remains nonhuman extension of human intelligence. It's devoid of anything in relation to being or to be human.

Human Intelligence

AI is an alternative to human intelligence. Every act that depicts human being using unaided human reasoning in encountering realities surrounding them is an act of human intelligence. Hence, an identification of human being as *homo cogitans* and *animal rationale* is a portrayal of human intelligence. This is why Colom, Karama, Jung, Haier (2010) are of the opinion that "reasoning, problem solving and learning are crucial facets of human intelligence". Wikipedia (n.d.) maintains that "human intelligence is the intellectual capability of humans, which is marked by complex cognitive feats and high levels of motivation and self-awareness. Using their intelligence, humans are able to learn, form concepts, understand and apply logic and reason." Human intelligence in contradistinction to artificial intelligence is a varied intellectual quality that embraces several abilities and receptive capabilities within the competencies of learning-teaching through experiences, adapting to new situations, understanding abstract concepts and manipulating knowledge. Hence, Colom, Karama, Jung, & Haier, (2010) defined human intelligence as "a general mental ability for reasoning, problem solving and learning. Because of its general nature, intelligence integrates cognitive functions such as perception, attention, memory, language or planning". In humans, intelligence is commonly associated with the sum of possible mental capabilities and capacities in significant, symbolic and abstract solutions to existential problems and essential problematics. Therefore, there are four kinds of human intelligence, intelligence Quotient (IQ), Emotional Quotient (EQ), Social Quotient (SQ) and Adversity Quotient (AQ), (Wikipedia, n.d.). Moreover, Homer Garner in his *Frame of Mind* in enumerating these types of quotients was simply dealing with domains of balances in human kind that defines humanity as such in their differences.

Appreciation of African Philosophy as a Disciplinary Movement

There is African Philosophical Tradition (APT) which has given room to African philosophical enterprises, (Onebunne, 2023). African Philosophy through many debates, after barrages of doubts of its possibility, has finally shares in the world philosophical heritage as a subject area of its own. Kanu, A. (2015, xvi), is of the opinion that "African Philosophy is one of the resilient and fastest growing areas of human inquiry". A functional African Philosophy is simply appreciatively defined as a discipline and a movement. It is simply a disciplinary movement. African Philosophy has come to stay and Kanu, A. (2015, xvi) reiterates on such an idea thus, "the question of whether there is an African philosophy or not has been overtaken, captured and conquered by African philosophers. "

Definition as a Discipline (Etymological, Traditional and Scholarly): African Philosophy traditionally is the knowledge of African realities and African realisms in their englobing universal principles. Iroegbu (1994) was very premier in giving this succinct definition. In this definition, one can read a kind of defence as regards African philosophy. This is why for Iroegbu, African philosophy is a *philo-sophia*, a quest for African wisdom. Moreover, as a discipline, African philosophy is the love of African wisdom, that is, *philosophia Africana*. However, Socrates in epitomizing the idea of philosophy as pursuing of wisdom defines philosophy as the pursuit of wisdom. One, therefore, defines African philosophy as the pursuit of African wisdom. African Philosophy, therefore, is *scientia rerum per ultima causas* within African realities. It is the search for the unaided authentic human knowledge that is philosophical and African. It is the habit of every wise and reasonable African man.

Definition as a Movement: Movement connotes a kind of reaction and denotes a strong activity towards. Consequently, African Philosophy as a movement is a clarion invitation by Bob Marley's redemptive insinuation to "emancipate yourselves from mental slavery...none but ourselves can free our mind". His *redemption song* demands a total breakaway from the stereotype innuendos that philosophy is the prerogative of the West, therefore, questioning

directly our human nature as *homo sapiens* and *homo cogitans* as well as *animal rationalis*. As a movement, African Philosophy, rooted in and springing from African philosophical tradition, is a cursory look into the problematiques and prospects of Africa as part of the world philosophical heritage. As a movement, African philosophy is an effort at recovering all lost status as a result of the stolen legacies with regard to philosophy and its historical origin. As a movement, African Philosophy searches for the authentic knowledge that is philosophy and African within and or outside the African cultural world-view. Therefore, a definitive-thoughtful interpretation and critical analysis of the symbols of African cultures would be African philosophy *qua tale*. In Contemporary times, African Philosophy is primarily a discipline and secondarily a movement. It is more of a movement as it tries to reclaim its position as a discipline within the world of philosophical heritage. African Philosophy, therefore, is fundamentally a disciplinary movement as it tries to rediscover itself within the world philosophical heritage and equally establish itself as such.

However, such profundity in the critical appreciation of African cultural world-views make veritable moments for African philosophy. With the methodological moments and proper hermeneutics, one can dependably and realistically infer that African Philosophy is philosophy with African source and is nourished from African culture as its cultural reservoir and primary critical nourishment. Okere (1983) was the *primus inter pares* in asserting authoritatively that culture is the foundation of philosophy by hermeneutically engaging Paul Ricoeur extensively on the existing relationship between culture and philosophy thus, “It is by interpreting the symbols of a culture that one can arrive at reflexion, philosophy.” Okere opines that Ricoeur defines reflexion as the connection between the comprehension of signs or symbols and self-comprehension. In a methodical process from culture to philosophy, the movement from symbols to reflective thought, Ricoeur proposes three stages, or levels of interpretation: the phenomenological stage, the hermeneutical stage and the reflexive stage. Thus for Ricoeur, one can philosophize from culture, or at least from those elements of culture that can be called symbols. This is the borderline that gave room to ethnophilosophy.

African Philosophy is philosophy as it is done in and for Africa and others. It is a by-product of human enterprise on African people’s culture and Weltanschauung. It is a philosophical tradition that is African within the mainstream of philosophy as a systematic study. African Philosophy is the critical and universalizing interpretation of the culture and the world-view of African people by philosophers within and outside African continent. It is philosophy done within African philosophical tradition designating the *corpus* of African philosophical writings. However, African Philosophy, like other philosophical traditions, has a historical development along the path of human consciousness, critically encountering their realities. Amidst all sorts of bizarre and false ideas on the capability of African man to philosophize, questioning the depth of their philosophy, one can boast of African philosophical scholarship as well as African authorship. However, Iroegbu, P., (1994) an optimistic contemporary philosopher was very apt in defining African philosophy as: “the reflective inquiry into the marvels and problematics that confront one in African world, in view of producing systematic explanation and sustained responses to them. It is an inquiry with two aspects: philosophical and African”, (p.116).

On the Definition of African Philosophy of Education

For a proper appreciation of the definition of African Philosophy of Education, having appreciated deeply the meaning of philosophy and African Philosophy as such it is fitting to equally appreciate a good understanding of education as a human enterprise.

Appreciation of Education

Smith, P. G. (1965) defines education as *educere* - the process of leading one out of ignorance and *educare* as the consequent act of cultivating or leading one into knowledge. Hence, Onebunne, J. (2023) maintains that education literally means the ability to lead one out of ignorance and train or lead one into knowledge which is power. Education, formal or

informal, therefore has a normative implication of dealing with ignorance with all the instruments of knowledge. And the product is always discipline that is value-oriented. Education in this regard is a human enterprise that trains and tames the animality in human beings with rationality. Education, therefore, is an all round project as it positively affects the holistic and societal development of the human person for himself and for the society. This is why John Dewey asserts that education is not just preparation for life; education is life itself. This is why Hugo Victor says that he who opens a school door, closes a prison. Education remains the bedrock of every successful society. As one of the oldest industries in human history, education is the main instrument employed by the society to preserve, maintain and grapple with its social balance; hence, a society's future depends largely on the quality of her citizens' education. Education, therefore, is an instrument of change and value orientation. However, Nelson Mandela was credited the saying that "education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." Nigeria in Africa was and has existed with vagaries of human enterprise like indigenous or traditional education and all forms of enterprising merchandise before the advent of White-man and his cohorts who started to partition and plunder Africa, with the popular Europeans' invasion and exploration of African boomed with slavery, colonization and later capital flow.

The concept of education according to ancient philosophers of Western philosophical traditions varies in different philosophical traditions and systems. Philosophers like Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle emphasized that education was not simply the transmission of knowledge, but the development of wisdom, virtue, and the flourishing of society. Distinct yet interconnected views on education through thinkers like Plato, Socrates, Confucius, and Aristotle. Education, according to Socrates (470–399 BCE), is all about preparing one for the critical and reflective thinking. Socrates dismissed the notion of education as merely the relaying of facts. Instead, he taught that you should question and have a dialogue, a practice now called the Socratic Method. He claimed: "education is the lighting of a fire, not the filling of a pail." (Apology, 38a). For Socrates, real education was the examination of the self and the pursuit of wisdom, not rote memorization (Plato, 2002). Plato (427–347 BCE) held that education is the search for truth and justice. Education, according to Plato, was a process of leading the soul toward truth and justice. Education, according to him, plays a critical role in guiding people out of the darkness of ignorance and into the light of knowledge, making them capable of leading their society (Plato, 2007, as cited in Pritchard, 2017). The ancient philosopher Aristotle (384–322 BCE) believes that education is directed towards the cultivation of virtue. Aristotle thought education should develop rational thought and moral virtue, instructing people as good citizens. He even goes so far as to write in *Politics*: "the education of the young is a preparation for the formation of character, reason and virtue, which together produce the best citizen and the happy society." (Politics, Book VIII, 1337a). Education is still a sort of moral compass and instrument for social cultivation, as Confucius (551–479 BCE) had reiterated. Included in its ideals are virtues like respect and benevolence, which Confucius believed were aspects of self-cultivation that took years of education and study; this was because he saw education as not only a process accomplished through education, but also as a worthwhile journey over all of one's lifetime in a state of learning, where the goal of life was to care more for others and the world than oneself. Rounding off the whole universe with man, Pythagoras (c. 570–495 BCE) believes that education is the way to achieve universal harmony. Pythagoras connected learning with maths and philosophy and theorized that knowing the relation of numbers signifies harmony between the soul and the cosmos. Education is for leadership and eloquence for Quintilian (35–100 CE). Quintilian was a Roman teacher who taught that education was to prepare people in rhetoric and virtue to lead.

In ancient Africa philosophical tradition, education was not simply a means of acquiring knowledge; it was a system of moral and wisdom training designed to prepare individuals to live in harmony with others and their community. Other early thinkers like Ptahhotep and Imhotep offered their perspectives on the role and the goals of education, including

living well, ruling, and realizing knowledge. According to Ptahhotep (c. 2400 BCE), education was for moral and ethical teaching. Ptahhotep, an Egyptian vizier of the 5th Dynasty, was best known for *The Maxims of Ptahhotep*, one of the earliest pieces of writing on the ideas of ethics and education. He believed education should be used to nurture wisdom, humility and righteous leadership. His philosophy was not limited to, but included, life-long learning towards social harmony and justice (Obenga, 2004). Dynamic, applied knowledge as a legacy to nation, science, philosophy and spirituality all in learning, education for nation-building and leadership-highlighted through his teachings.

Ancient Eastern-Oriental thinkers benefited from an abundance of views on the organics of educational learning. Confucius taught me to exalt moral and social cultivation, Laozi and Zhuangzi sang the song of natural wisdom and self-discovery, and Buddha understood education as liberation from the dark cave called the material world. Their thoughts have shaped educational philosophy up until today, and continue to ring in the direction of learning, that it is much more than knowledge but as well virtue, wisdom, and living in harmonisation with the world. Historically, an educational connection to divine wisdom was found in the three Abrahamic religions: Ancient Jewish, Islamic, and Christian philosophers believed education was a means toward wisdom and the pursuit of virtue and divine truth. Philo of Alexandria combined faith and reason, Al-Farabi stressed the importance of education in creating a just society, and Augustine of Hippo viewed learning as a path to know God. Their teachings still influence today's religious and philosophical thought, cementing education as both an intellectual and moral pursuit.

Basically, education is the way of providing knowledge, skill, values and attitude to the society for personal and social development. It is a basis for intellectual development, socialization and economic advances. As John Dewey (1916) describes it, education is the "reconstruction or reorganization of experience which adds to the meaning of experience and increases the ability to direct subsequent experiences" (p. 76). This definition highlights how education helps shape people and their societies through the continuous acquisition of knowledge. Education is categorized into formal, non-formal and informal. Formal education refers to a learning process carried out in formal institutions: schools, colleges, and universities, and based on a structured, standard curriculum (Farrant, 1980). There are two main types of education, which is the non-formal and formal; Non-formal education covers organized learning outside a formal institution, such as vocational training and adult education programmes (Coombs & Ahmed, 1974). In contrast to formal education, informal education is based on unstructured learning experiences that happen during everyday activities, social interactions, and individual learning (Smith, 1999).

On African Education

African education was traditionally based on natural education systems focused on community living, which had an anthropological intent and a practical regularity to it (Ayara, 2002). Even before the colonial era, education was seamlessly integrated into society, with knowledge transfer through oral traditions, apprenticeships and learning from the community. This picture witnessing dramatic transformation with the introduction of colonial education with the introduction of formal western-style educational models which actually overlooked the indigenous ways of knowing. Today, contemporary African education stands in a paradox of setbacks and progress. From 2000 to 2020 primary education enrolment rates improved substantially, raising from 60% to 87%, according to UNESCO (UNESCO., 2020). But, persistent challenges are in the domain of infrastructure deficits Many schools lack basic amenities, with 40 percent of sub-Saharan African schools without access to electricity and adequate sanitation (World Bank, 2018). challenge teacher shortages. The cost of universal primary education includes a shortage of 2.4 million additional teachers by 2030, according to (African Union, 2020). The second involves limitations on resources. Few countries manage to spend the 4-6% of GDP recommended for education.

Yet positive changes are also encouraging, particularly in the realm of digital learning initiatives, which are mounting and many countries are operationalizing national digital education strategies. Curriculums are oriented toward decolonization. And those efforts are gaining steam, and they bring local knowledge and cultural perspectives into the mix. More, much has been done towards bridging the gender gap in education. So, the future of African education has transformative potential based on these. The future of African education has a bright outlook with as: an increase in technological integration, more pan-African educational partnerships, a greater emphasis on meaningful, context-relevant learning and continued investment in human capital growth. The central role of education in socio-economic transformation was discussed at the African Higher Education Summit (2015), reinforcing the need for education as one of the fundamental enablers of continental development. The educational system in Africa is a rich mix of traditional knowledge and western influence. Africa, a continent that has historically faced many obstacles, still holds great promise for educational innovation and development.

However, having appreciated what education is all about alongside a good understanding of African education, we turn to have a good appreciation of African Philosophy of Education. There is, however, this unique differential nuances of the definitions of African philosophy of education. This leads to the the idea of linking education and philosophy with prepositional conjuncts like *and, of, in, at* and *for which, however*, was borrowed from the unique work of Smith, G. (1964), *Philosophy of Education*.

- **African Philosophy as Education**

African philosophy can be conceivably appreciated in many ways alongside the idea of education. *In lato sensu*, African philosophy of education can be understood in many ways. Primarily, African philosophy can be seen as an activity of the mind while education remains a process of personal development, (Smith, 1964). This is why African Philosophy of Education is appreciated more within the conjunctive bounds and comprehensible propositional limits within the bounds of African Philosophy and Education, African Philosophy in Education as well as African Philosophy for Education. The concepts of African philosophy as education show a relationship between African philosophy as a discipline and education as disciplinary measure through the meaningful process of *educere* and *educare*. The *as* in between African philosophy and education connects the two concepts. It links the conceptual ideas of African philosophy to education. Beyond the sequential appreciation of *and* in the theme above it expresses a joint action and shared characteristics of African philosophy as education. African philosophy, therefore, studies and is greatly concerned with the products of education as regards nature of reality, knowledge and values.

- **African philosophy and Education**

The relationship between African philosophy and education is deeply rooted in the values and principles of traditional African societies. African philosophy provides a framework for understanding education as a holistic, communal, and utilitarian process that aligns with the cultural, moral and practical needs of African communities. In African Philosophical dispensation, education goes beyond formal schooling to encompass moral, spiritual, intellectual and physical development; emphasizes learning by doing, that is acquiring practical skills that ensures learners are equipped to contribute meaningfully to their communities. Education in this relationship entails and involves the community participation in nurturing values and skills that benefit everyone, reflecting the belief that "a person is a person through other people". The *and* in between African philosophy and education connects the two concepts. It links the conceptual ideas of African philosophy and education. African education within the limits of African philosophy is utilitarian in nature. Hence, African philosophy of education challenges colonial legacies by reclaiming indigenous knowledge systems, integrating African values and perspectives into curricula, emphasizing the preservation and celebration of African heritage. African philosophy views education as a

process of enculturation, aimed at preserving cultural identity, fostering social cohesion, and equipping individuals for meaningful participation in their societies. (Smith 1964).

- **African Philosophy in Education**

The preposition "in" is used to indicate various relationships involving location, time, state, condition, or involvement. Its meaning depends on the context in which it is used, (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). Here are the primary uses of "in": African philosophy in education shows a form of involvement of African philosophy in education. To what extent is African philosophy involved in the development of the content of the curriculum and general pursuit of education. The *in* in the African philosophy in education serves to establish a relationship of presence, containment, or engagement of African philosophy in education. This is why, African philosophy in education refers to the application of African philosophical principles to teaching, learning, and the overall approach to knowledge. It emphasizes values, cultural relevance, and the holistic development of individuals within their communities. In sum, African philosophy in education advocates for a system that respects and integrates African cultural heritage, emphasizes communal values, and prepares individuals for practical and moral contributions to their communities. It is a call for education that reflects Africa's unique identity. Expanding Smith (1964) view, one can say that that African philosophy in education is the sole attempt to view education in the comprehensive, penetrating and flexible manner that has characterized the philosophic approach regardless of the problem areas.

- **African Philosophy for Education**

Merriam-Webster. (n.d.) maintains that *for* is used as a function word to indicate the object or recipient of a perception, desire or activity. The preposition *for* before a concept or word indicates purpose or reason, support or advocacy, intent, suitability or appropriateness, benefit or representation. Its meaning depends on the context. In these presumed and presupposed uses, *for* establishes a connection that emphasizes the idea of purpose, benefit, or alignment with the concept that follows. In this appreciable understanding, therefore, African Philosophy for education suggests the application, contribution or alignment of African philosophy to the field of education. The phrase could carry several nuanced meanings depending on the context. African philosophy as a framework or foundation to shape educational systems, curricula, and teaching practices. Promoting African philosophy remains a critical component of education that ensures representation, diversity and decolonization of knowledge systems. African philosophy is well-designed and suited to address specific educational challenges or goals. African philosophy, being taught in or for educational institutions as a subject is to help cultivate critical thinking, identity and cultural awareness. Hence, African philosophy contributes to the development of education especially the content of the curriculum by providing alternative ways of understanding knowledge, ethics and human development. In sum, African philosophy for education emphasizes the role of African philosophy in enhancing, transforming, or informing educational systems and practices. (Merriam-Webster, n.d.).

Effective Definition of African Philosophy of Education

The preposition *of* primarily indicates a relationship or connection between two elements in a sentence. Its meaning can vary depending on the context, but it often denotes possession or belonging, part-whole relationship, origin or source, cause or reason, material or content, subject or reference and apposition or identification. *Of* serves as a versatile connector, linking ideas and clarifying relationships between nouns, (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). By way of definition, African philosophy of education is an applied philosophical discipline that explores how African cultural, ethical and philosophical traditions while reshaping the purposes, processes and ideals of education. African philosophy of education encompasses the onerous acts of directing, guiding and regulating education as such with products (of knowledge, truth and value), through the process (of mentoring, training, teaching, instruction, etc). However, African philosophy of education is a discipline (as one of the formal subjects and courses in our schools and institutions of learning). It seeks to align educational practices

with the continent's socio-political *cum* traditional realities, cultural values and developmental needs. Rooted in African concepts, it emphasizes Afrocentric models in its approaches reflecting African worldviews. This philosophy also critiques Eurocentric models, aiming to decolonize education and make it relevant to African contexts, fostering holistic development and societal progress. This is possible through the work of African philosophers of education.

African philosophy of education as one of the conceptual nuances in understanding education covers African philosophy *and* or *in* education. It simply deals with African philosophers' influential contributions to education as a human enterprise. Hence, education, having been seen as human heritage, this unique section tries to expose such philosophers and their educational engagement as such. Being as old as man that learns, education remains a by-product of human being as *homo cogitans*, *animal rationale* or more *animal educationalis*. In this section, going on with traditions of philosophy, we will deal with philosophy as world heritage and then African philosophy within this philosophical heritage. This section deals and appreciates the basic ideas of African philosophy of education. African philosophy of education emphasize the integration of African cultural values, traditions and philosophies into the educational system. It challenge colonial legacies in education and advocate for systems that reflect African realities, promote critical thinking, and empower individuals within their communities with some key significant figures and concepts related to African philosophy of education.

African Philosophy of Education and Artificial Intelligence (AI)

This area has to do with enhancing the future of teaching and learning with AI. The connection between technology and the of teaching and learning is associated with AI. AI and African philosophy of education is a chance to recognize a novel approach for rethinking future education. In the 21st century, education is being re-structured by the conjunction of artificial intelligence (AI) and African philosophy of education. African philosophy of education, which is characterized by communal learning, ethical reasoning and holistic knowledge acquisition poses a problem for the application of AI. AI can provide inclusive, contextually relevant and human-centered education. These problems can be interpreted as such as *AI and the Future of Communal Learning*, *Ethical AI and Indigenous Knowledge Systems*, *AI and Holistic Learning Approaches*. More over, African philosophy of education is deeply-rooted in interconnected models of being, such as belongingness, *igwebuike* and *ubuntu*, *et cetera*. It stresses communalism, community and shared knowledge (Letseka 2012). AI can help to foster this communal aspect by offering intelligent learning systems that enable peer collaboration across physical classrooms. For example, AI-powered virtual learning environments and adaptive learning platforms could support group learning to ensure that education retains its social, community-based edge (Nkondze 2021). AI-enabled chatbots and virtual tutors can also help children in rural areas bridge the educational gap by providing local and easily obtainable digital learning resources. Furthermore, at the heart of African education lies an ethical foundation which is based upon moral reasoning and social responsibility (Waghid, 2019). For AI to be a tool for human empowerment rather than simply perpetuating injustices, future AI-driven education must conform to these standards. It is conceivable that AI will one day respect African indigenous knowledge systems so that oral traditions, storytelling and cultural histories will be preserved in digital form (Molosiwa, 2020). At the same time, the processes AI uses to make decisions in education—such as personalized learning recommendations—must be essentially characterized by fairness, inclusiveness and cultural relevance. African education seeks only the completeness and integration of learning by linking not only technical knowledge, but moral tutelage with critical thinking, (Higgs & van Wyk, 2007). AI can bring this about by tailoring education to learners' diverse needs while at the same time embodying African epistemologies in practice. This is why, AI-driven natural language systems can provide education on African language to students in such a way that their own dialect is spoken (Wiredu, 1996). Moreover, AI can integrate hands-on application of knowledge into real-life settings. It promotes skill-based and

experiential learning which is appropriate for the socio-economic realities of Africa. In summary, the integration of technology is not only aiding and assisting Africans in future learning but AI also requires us to strike a fine balance between cultural preservation and technological innovation. Traditional pedagogical methods should not be replaced by AI, but rather enhanced by it through communal learning and ethical engagement of learners. By making AI align with African educational values, we are able to come up with an inclusive and contextually relevant future for learning.

Bringing Innovation Through AI and African Philosophy of Education:

Bringing innovation through AI and African philosophy of education entails a reevaluation of modernization. The Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). definition of innovation is a new idea, method or device. It can be associated with novelty and new introduction techniques or methods, novelty. It just means that which has not happened before in that place or to that thing. One notes that one of the key factors in innovating education is the consideration for the needs of society as a whole and blending local culture with scientific knowledge systems synchronizing artificial intelligence (AI). Hence, African philosophy of education can provide teachers and learners the opportunity for such innovation. African educational philosophy stresses its community spirit, its ethical choices and holistic education framework which may determine altogether new innovations for AI. The principle of community education and connectivity in African educational thought is the central principles for African education as college students of multi-ethnic groups. Their culture shows self-originated ethos and habitat-type of education systems (Letseka, 2012). AI can supply intelligent tutoring systems for community education, online learning platforms enabling members of a (global) community to teach one another and teach each other with adaptive learning tools for village-level schools where it is also 'a community' linked thing. What they need is an educational support environment that works with them. With AI-empowered learning hubs, students and teachers from different districts might share a teaching platform located in the cloud (Nkondze, 2021). And in addition, AI-driven knowledge warehouses could help preserve and publish indigenous African knowledge systems online for distribution, making traditional wisdom-knowledge accessible. In summary, AI should be a good instrument to confront the difficulties all in education and benign development of skills, but not to mask traditional African educational methods. It is only by introducing AI in culture friendly ways that Africa could establish an innovative productive and sustainable education system for to-morrow which still reveres its In place values of history.

Papal Directives on AI

A review of works on AI and the Wisdom of the Heart: Towards a Fully Human Communication¹ shows the necessary connectedness between AI and Education. Reuters News reported that Pope Francis (attending a session on Artificial Intelligence (AI), Energy, Africa and Mediterranean on the second day of the G7 summit in Borgo Egnazia, Italy, Friday, June 14, 2024) as the first Pontiff to address a Group of Seven summit on Friday, warned the world leaders and super powers that artificial intelligence must never be allowed to get the upper hand over humanity urging them that humans must not lose control of AI. Pope Francis acknowledged the ambivalence surrounding AI, saying it could inspire excitement and broaden access to knowledge around the world but nevertheless stressed on the need for close oversight of the ever-developing technology to preserve human life and dignity. According to Pope Francis, the super powerful algorithms should never be allowed to decide the destiny of humanity thus, "no machine should ever choose to take the life of a human

¹ *Artificial Intelligence and the Wisdom of the Heart: Towards a Fully Human Communication is the Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the 58th World Day Of Social communications*, highlighting the need to integrate technology with wisdom and spirituality.
<https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/communications/documents/20240124-messaggio-comunicazioni-sociali.html>.

being", other humankind will be without a future, a mere automaton. The Pope highlighted AI's potential to take on labour-intensive tasks and engender an "exponential advancement of scientific research", but he said the machines could also be duped into relaying false information since "it does not develop new analyses or concepts, but repeats those that it finds". Pope warned on the risk of legitimising fake news and strengthening already dominant cultures, (Gouliamaki, 2024).

Years back, St. Pope John Paul II noted in his *Evangelium Vitae* with the rise of hyper-technologies (IVF, Embryo transfer,) reminded the world that technology is on the tunnel of madness. However, Cardinal Michael Czerny (2024) noted that at a time when technological advancements are blurring the lines between reality and fiction, the Vatican's concern for the ethical implications of artificial intelligence is more pronounced than ever. In the Chapter, *New Threats to Human Life*, of *Evangelium Vitae*, Pope John Paul II proclaims thus: every individual, precisely by reason of the mystery of the Word of God who was made flesh (cf. Jn 1:14), is entrusted to the maternal care of the Church. Therefore, every threat to human dignity and life must necessarily be felt in the Church's very heart. This is in line with Second Vatican Council (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes*, no. 27.). In the above papal encyclical, Pope John Paul II upholds that it's the primary and fundamental duty of the Church and her Magisterium to foster in individual conscience and in the civil society at large a total recognition of the meaning and value of human life at every stage and in every condition.

Pope Francis, therefore, acknowledges the development of systems of artificial intelligence that is radically affecting the world of information and communication, and through it, certain foundations of life in society. These changes, Pope foresees affect everyone, not merely professionals in those fields. The rapid spread of astonishing innovations, whose workings and potentials are beyond the ability of most of us to understand and appreciate, has proven both exciting and disorienting. This leads inevitably to deeper questions about the nature of human beings, our distinctiveness and the future of the species *homo sapiens* in the age of artificial intelligence. In all these, Pope questions hysterically, how can we remain fully human and guide this cultural transformation to serve a good purpose? This document, however, is divided into subsections beginning with: *Starting with the Heart, Opportunity and Danger, Growth in Humanity and Questions for Today and for the Future*.

Conclusion

The advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and African philosophy of education should inspire a new vision of teaching, learning, and innovation for the future. The intersection of AI and African philosophies can guide the design and implementation of AI systems in ways that resonate with communalism, context, and holism, making the education system more inclusive, adaptable, and transformative. It highlights the need to foster critical thinking, creativity, and cultural relevance in learners as you harness the potential of AI to personalize the learning experience and help bridge the gaps in available resources. This integration of ICT in African advancement can embrace communities, act as a vessel for indigenous knowledge, and enable sustainable development, as we step forward into knowledge-dominated world. In doing so through the lens of this collaboration provides the opportunity for education to successfully process for liberation, for equity, for growth, in an ever-changing world.

Early-class AI provides an artificial intelligence and African approach, a transformative convergence of technological disruption and centuries old humanist values. At this intersection of technology and soul, we have a moment, unique to our time, to rethink the paradigms of education that marry the promise of the modern with the best parts of tradition. They were wrong, African philosophical perspectives of education have always been about holistic development of the self- in relation with others, understanding that learning is never an isolated affair, but rather, a process through which we co-design knowledge towards the

betterment of society. In fact, rather than replacing these philosophical foundations, carefully used AI can be a massive multiplier of them. By embracing this alignment forged through appreciating the complementary philosophies of AI and African pedagogics, educators can inspire their practice to become transformative spaces that are flexible, localised, and most importantly, honouring and integrating rich individual and communal epistemologies. In this context, AI technologies could act as mediators or bridges between traditional knowledge systems and modern educational paradigms, facilitating knowledge sharing, personalized learning pathways, and innovative problem-solving strategies grounded in African epistemologies.

But this integration requires critical and sophisticated attention. We need to be able to harness AI technologies developed with authentic cultural sensitivity, with African scholars, educators, and community leaders shaping their design and execution. It's not technology that rules or pervades — that's too hierarchical. It is not a matter of either embracing technological innovation or philosophical tradition; rather, the key to a better future of education is fully harmonizing the two (digital education and traditional education) to enhance each other in new ways, with artificial intelligence being a helpful ally for human creativity, critical thinking, and collective wisdom.

***Jude I. Onebunne, PhD**

Department of Philosophy
Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka
juno,anyi@gmail, +2348112118464
ORCID iD: 0000-0002-89956097

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