



THE CONFLICT BETWEEN PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE: THE FUNCTION OF IGWEBUIKE EPISTEMOLOGY



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Abstract

The recurrent debate concerning the relationship between science and philosophy is a complex and interesting one. With the advent of the scientific revolution and the Enlightenment, the world experienced a rapid growth in technology and the empirical sciences. This resulted in the invention of Airplanes, computers, cell phones; advancement in medicine and the creation of modern social media services like Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, etc. Having seen and experienced this massive scientific and industrial development, people started placing science on a unique and exalted position that exceeds that of philosophy. Philosophical assertions were not only questioned but also doubted and suspected. This debate between science and philosophy is centred on two vital factors: the significance of philosophical inquiring for scientific research and the value of science and the limits of scientific knowledge. In this paper, I have shown that the

foundations and ideas of Igwebuiké epistemology are essential in finding a lasting solution to the disagreement between science and philosophy. I have also pointed out how the sympathetic and complimentary approaches of igwebuiké epistemology can create an atmosphere of mutual respect and collaboration between philosophy and science. I have reviewed the common history shared by both philosophy and science and illustrated the importance of science and the contributions of philosophy to scientific research. It is my hope that this research will contribute to a better understanding of the respective functions of philosophy and science to rational inquiring and societal progress. In the course of this work, I have employed the descriptive, historical and analytical methods of inquiring.

Keywords: science, philosophy, scientific method, igwebuiké, sympathetic/non-derogatory, complementary, logical positivism, scientific revolution.

Introduction

The disagreement between philosophy and science has lasted for centuries. This prolonged conflict has arisen because of the difficult relationship between them. This is based on different understandings of the value of philosophy and the role and importance of science. Hawking, in his book 'The Grand Design', writes: '... but Philosophy is dead. Philosophy has

not kept up with modern developments in science, particularly physics¹. It is then important to ask: Does science need Philosophy to progress? Can Science progress without a philosophical foundation and contributions from philosophy? Does science make philosophy irrelevant? Although this article is not a response to Hawking's statement, it will, however, elucidate the contributions of philosophy to the progress of science and also emphasis the harmonious union between them. Using Igwebuike epistemological approaches, I will show that the disagreement between philosophy and science is unnecessary since they are both partners in the same project.

What Is Philosophy?

Etymologically, philosophy is derived from two Greek words 'Philo' and 'Sophia' and means 'Love of Wisdom'. Philosophy begins with a sense of wonder. In the Greek world, philosophy began when the Greeks began to marvel about the nature of the gods and the universe. Wonder itself starts when we seek to find answers to the questions of life, and expecting that an answer may be found, however difficult. To philosophize is to explore life, asking questions about what is taken for granted or presumed to be right. Wonder is an aspect of our humanity, our

¹ Stephen Hawking, Leonard Mlodinow , *The Grand Design*, (USA: Bantam Books, 2010), p. 14

rationality. It is related to curiosity, our desire to know.

Philosophy is the search for truth, knowledge and wisdom. It studies human life, human nature, the world in which we live and the relationship between human persons and the environment. To philosophise is to undertake a rational inquiring into the meaning, the purpose, and the nature of human existence. Generally speaking, philosophers ask questions, seek answers and then question the answers they get. In the philosophical project, asking the right questions is as important as getting the right answers.

One of the interesting things about philosophy is that it originates from our natural inclination to ponder and marvel about the world, human nature and the function of men and women in the world. By nature human beings are inquisitive and long to comprehend things around them, to understand and have knowledge of them. Originally, every rational quest and inquiring was referred to as philosophy.

So, philosophy can also be understood as the profound and coherent reflection of morality, assumptions, presumptions, convictions and realities of life. Philosophy enables us to critically examine the basic questions that people take for granted like: What is the good life? What is the

purpose of life? Why am I here? What is truth? And so forth. These questions are essential because they are concerned primarily with our existence, right and wrong, ambitions and life goals. Philosophy can also be seen as an attempt to respond to the questions enumerated by Kant in the 'Critique of Pure Reason': What can I know? What should I know? What can I hope for?

Philosophy is an activity, a way of life, an exercise that is cognitive and reflective in nature and structure. It emphasises the fact that the power to speculate about reality differentiates human beings from other creatures. Philosophy reminds us that the ability to consistently ask questions and rationalise about life is an essential part of human nature. This ability to ask questions and rationalise about life is also a function and an expression of human freedom. Is there anything like a philosophical method? Philosophy is basically what philosophers do and there is no method peculiar to it. Unlike science, philosophy has not specific methodology or a particular thinking pattern. It is unlimited in its approach and quest to find answers to the questions of life. Bertrand Russell clarifies one of the distinctive benefits of philosophical inquiring:

The man who has no tincture of
philosophy goes through life
imprisoned in the prejudices derived
from common sense, from the

habitual beliefs of his age or his nation, and from convictions which have grown up in his mind without the co-operation or consent of his deliberate reason. To such a man the world tends to become definite, finite, obvious; common objects rouse no questions, and unfamiliar possibilities are contemptuously rejected. As soon as we begin to philosophise, on the contrary, we find that even the most everyday things lead to problems to which only very incomplete answers can be given. Philosophy, though unable to tell us with certainty what is the true answer to the doubts which it raises, is able to suggest many possibilities which enlarge our thoughts and free them from the tyranny of custom.²

Hence, philosophy assists the human intellect in processing and harmonising the outcome and findings of human knowledge and the social-political environment. Consequently, these results expand the rational horizon of the human person, increase faith in the intellectual and critical capacity of the human beings and consolidate the

² Alistair J. Sinclair, *What is Philosophy?: An Introduction*, (Edinburgh: Dunedin Academic Press Ltd, 2008) p. 3.

achievement and advancement of science and technology. Boas elucidates one of the goals of philosophy:

For one of the tasks of a philosopher is precisely to study the validity of modes of thinking, or if one prefers, their fruitfulness, to codify where possible the schemata of logic, to establish the conditions of validity and significances.³

For a structural and systematic study, philosophy is generally divided into different branches: African Philosophy, Logic, Philosophy of Science, Philosophy of Religion, Philosophy of Language, Philosophy of Mathematics, Ethics, Political Philosophy, Epistemology, and Metaphysics. These different branches underscore the universal nature of philosophy and demonstrate that philosophy inquiring covers every area of human and societal life.

Scientific Method

The word 'Science' is derived from the Latin word 'Scientia', which means Knowledge. People respect and admire science because they believe it is

³ George Boas, *The Influence of Philosophy on the Science*, in the *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, Vol. 95, no 5, October 1951, p. 528.

distinctive, credible and effective. There are many proofs from our daily experiences that show that many people have high regard for science, although they blame science for the implications of the many environmental and technological problems like nuclear weapons, air and water contamination. Firms and manufacturing companies who wish to sell their products make reference to the authority of science as a means of promoting such commodities. They do this to demonstrate that their assertions are reliable and credible. The respect for science and its method goes beyond daily life and the media world; it also extends to the intellectual and academic domains. Alistair J. Sinclair explains this point of view when he asserts that:

The high regard for science is not restricted to everyday life and the popular media. It is evident in the scholarly and academic world too. Many areas of study are now described as sciences by their supporters, presumably in an effort to imply that the methods used are as firmly based and as potentially fruitful as in a traditional science such as physics or biology. Political science and social science are by now commonplace⁴.

⁴ A.F. Chalmers, *What is this thing called Science?* (Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1999) p. xix.

The uniqueness of science is primarily because it is built on observable sense perception rather than personal beliefs or feelings. Science is presumed to be special because it is rooted on facts that describe statements concerning the world. These statements are formed through detailed and objective utilization of sense experience. Scientific knowledge begins from an attentive and unbiased observation of facts, followed by a cognitive and rational movement from facts to the formulations of theories and laws. If the rational movement from observation of facts to cognition is valid, then a reliable and secured knowledge can be developed.

As an organised system, science derives its knowledge from the universe, the achievements and trustworthiness of science can be attributed to two important elements. The first element is the readiness of science to disclose its findings, results, approaches and activities so that these can be subjected to independent and objective examination. The second element is the willingness of science to discard or adjust formerly held theories when faced with a better and more reliable and tested theory.

What method is peculiar to science? From the discussion so far, it is clear that science systematically studies the behaviour, property, structure and nature of the world. Its aim is to analyse, describe, explain and understand the

natural and physical world. The scientific method, therefore, is the process through which facts are objectively established through experimentation. This process involves making observations, formulating hypotheses and theories, postulating predictions, conducting experiments, and then critically analysing results. Hepburn and Anderson explain this more clearly:

Among the activities often identified as characteristic of science are systematic observation and experimentation, inductive and deductive reasoning, and the formation and testing of hypotheses and theories. How these are carried out in detail can vary greatly, but characteristics like these have been looked to as a way of demarcating scientific activity from non-sciences⁵

Igwebuike Epistemology

Epistemology originates from two Greek words- episteme (knowledge) and logos (study or theory). Epistemology, therefore, means theory of knowledge. Epistemology critically studies the origin, nature, extent, capacity, credibility and

⁵Brian Hepburn, and Anderson Hanne, *Scientific Method in The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2021 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2021/entries/scientific-method/>>.

justification of human knowledge. Thus, epistemology is interested in the two primary questions: What is the origin of knowledge? What is the nature of knowledge?

To assert the existence of an African philosophy is to affirm the existence of an African epistemology since African epistemology is a subdivision of African philosophy. Therefore, African epistemology is an African perception of the origin, nature, justification, validation and function of human knowledge. Igwebuiké epistemology is a different kind of African epistemology that is unique to the African people.

Igwebuiké can be used in two different ways: as a sentence and as a word. As a word it is written as 'Igwebuiké'; as a sentence it is written as 'Igwe bu ike'. 'Igwe' denotes 'population' or 'number'; 'bu' means 'is' and 'ike' translates as 'strength' or 'power'. Joined together, 'igwe bu ike' means 'number is power'. In other words, human beings are powerful and stronger and can make meaningful progress when they unite or agree.

Igwebuiké started with a sense of awe and amazement on the nature and structure of the universe. This sense of awe and amazement inspired Africans to reflect and ask questions on the universe, existence and human life. These questions centred on

the beauty of the universe and human life, the human experience, sufferings, sorrows and joy, success and failures, death and immortality, sickness and mortality. Africans also asked questions that centered on morality and human behaviour, the meaning of good and bad conducts, the orderliness and arrangement of seasons, the existence of mountains, rocks, moon, stars, animals, fish in the ocean, etc. The quest to find answers to these questions enabled Africans to discover that what sustains the universe is a strong inter-subjective relation within it.

Igwebuike ideology is founded on an African viewpoint that claims that the existence of the human person is framed on solidarity and complementarity since to be is to be with other persons in a community. This point of view is itself characterised by common linguistic, cultural and historical patterns, common behaviour, tribe and colour. An important aspect that is essential to the way we perceive reality as Africans is the idea of commonality, complementarity and our perception of existence as a collective and common experience. In Igwebuike concept of complementarity, difference is not a reason for division but rather a source of strength and harmony. Thus, Igwebuike epistemology is an African idea of knowledge that is valid, justifiable and complementary in nature. The complementary aspect of knowledge from the

outlook of igwebuike epistemology emphasises the fact that the main reason for the acquisition of knowledge is for the benefit of others in the community whose existence is connected with mine. Igwebuike model has its basis in African socio-cultural viewpoint. The Igwebuike blueprint emphasises the integral place of harmony, unanimity, and interdependence in societal progress and interpersonal relationships⁶.

There are numerous cultures and different religious and philosophical in African. For this reason there abound different values, aspirations and systems in African. As a result, 'Igwebuike' is preferable to the term 'African epistemology'. The concept of igwebuike signifies that Africans share a common perspective of reality and there are many similarities and areas of agreement concerning African understanding of reality. Kanu explains clearly:

In this sense, the igwebuike concept becomes a unifying factor amid the plurality of the epistemological perspectives in Africa; it can also be considered the underlying principle in

⁶ Anthony Kanu, *Igwebuike Epistemology: Towards A Decolonized Theory of Knowledge*, in the *Journal of African Studies and Sustainable Development*, Vol. 6, No. 1, 2023. ISSN Online: 2630-7073, ISSN Print: 2630-7065. www.apas.africa/journals.php. pp. 2-6

African epistemological expressions
which remains constant amid the
changes in epistemological
perspectives in Africa⁷.

Origin Of The Of The Disagreement Between Science And Philosophy

Modern philosophy was influenced by the substantial development of the empirical sciences in the modern era. What, then, was responsible for this? The scientific revolution and the Enlightenment prepared the ground for the development witnessed in the empirical sciences.

The scientific revolution of the 16th and 17th century had a deep effect on the attitude and disposition of people towards the society and the physical world. This period, which prepared the ground for modern science, witnessed a complete change in scientific methodology and structure. Armed with new scientific knowledge and reasoning, people started questioning religious ideologies, moral values and conventional attitude. The Scientific Revolution emphasised the capacity of the human person to achieve progress without reference to moral, religious and conventional authority. This attitude was instrumental to the evolution of the

⁷ Anthony Kanu, *Igwebuike Epistemology: Towards A Decolonized Theory of Knowledge*, p. 3.

Enlightenment. The Enlightenment or the Age of Reason was an intellectual period of the 17th and 18th century that was characterised by the belief in the use and power of human reason to create a better world. This conscious belief in the power of reason had its root in the scientific discoveries and theories of Copernicus and Galileo in astronomy, Newton and Einstein in Physics as well as advancements in biology and chemistry. The results of the Enlightenment and Scientific Revolution opened a new page in human history. This is clear from the new discoveries that took place in every area of human and societal life. The invention of computers, Airplanes, televisions has improved the quality of life and also made life easier for us. The advancement in medicine during this period was unprecedented in the history of humanity. The discoveries of medical science have empowered us to fight diseases and cure ailments that hitherto had no solution in ancient times. Also, new knowledge from medical research has helped reduced casualties in surgeries and child-birth. Science and technology have also aided society and human growth in the area of communication through the invention of cell phones, computer and printers. The creation of social media networks like twitter, instagram, fax, facebook have all made communication faster and efficient.

The Significance Of Scientific Growth

The exceptional development of the applied sciences like engineering, architecture and computer sciences has impacted positively on the lives of people. People who live in urban areas and cities feel the impact of science and so appreciate the contributions of science and technology on human beings and the society. However, they may be ignorant of the basic structures of scientific methodology. Copleston captures this point when he writes that,

I am talking now of the "masses" who live in highly industrialized and materially developed societies. These people are very conscious of the great benefits which have been brought to them and to society in general by applied science. They understand little of the nature of scientific hypotheses or of the provisional character of many scientific concepts; but they see clearly the practical benefits of applied science and they become accustomed to look to science for anything which makes " a difference " to life. Philosophic theories and speculations about the world seem to them, so far as they ever think of such theories, to be little more than a harmless pastime; they make "no difference " and they produce no tangible results. If one wants tangible

results, one must go to the scientists; and it is tangible results which are the criterion of real knowledge about the worlds.

Thus, having experienced this tremendous scientific and industrial development of cities, the inhabitants of these urban areas hardly question the authority of science since its value is evident and can be seen by everyone. As a result, science is accorded a unique and exalted status that exceeds and overshadows that of philosophy and theology. So, theological and philosophical assertions are not only questioned but also doubted. Copleston outlines the implications of this position for philosophy and theology:

Once philosophy was regarded as the "handmaid of theology": now it has tended to become the "handmaid of science." As all that can be known can be known by means of science, what more reasonable than that the philosopher should devote himself to an analysis of the meaning of certain terms used by scientists and to an inquiry into the presuppositions of scientific method? The philosopher will not increase human knowledge in the sense of

⁸ Frederick Copleston, *Contemporary Philosophy: Studies of Logical Positivism and Existentialism*, (London: Burns and Oates, 1956) p. 28.

extending our factual knowledge of
reality⁹

Logical Positivism And The Effects Of The Scientific Method

Logical positivism (also known as logical empiricism) was a scientific motivated philosophical movement that began in the early part of the 20th century. Inspired by and influenced by the progress of science, it asserts that only logical truths and propositions that can be empirically verified have meaning. . All other propositions that do not fulfil this condition are meaningless. Some of the influential members of the Vienna Circle were Rudolp Carnap, Moritz Schlick, Betrand Russel, A.Y. Ayer, Friedrich Waismann.

Interestingly, all the members of this movement, also known as the Vienna Circle, had one major thing in common-they had a background in science and admired the scientific method. In his 'Intellectual Autobiography' Carnap points out how the common interest of the members of the 'Vienna Circle' that made discussion easier and smother:

The task of fruitful collaboration, often so difficult among philosophers, was facilitated in our Circle by the fact that all

⁹ Frederick Copleston, *Contemporary Philosophy: Studies of Logical Positivism and Existentialism*, p. 30.

members had a first-hand acquaintance with some field of science, either mathematics, physics or social science. This led to a higher standard in clarity and responsibility than is usually found in philosophical groups, particularly in Germany. Also, the members of the Circle were familiar with modern logic. This made it possible to represent the analysis of a concept or proposition under discussion symbolically and thereby make the arguments more precise¹⁰.

Apart from their common interest in science, the logical positivists were deeply suspicious of metaphysical and theological terms. They insisted on a new way of philosophy that is a departure from the traditional method of philosophy. Carnap explains this point clearly:

Furthermore, there was agreement among most of the members to reject traditional metaphysics. However, very little time was wasted in a polemic against metaphysics. The anti-metaphysical attitude showed itself chiefly in the choice of the language

¹⁰ Rudolf Carnap, 'Intellectual Autobiography' in *The Philosophy of Rudolf Carnap*, Paul Arthur (ed.) (USA: Open Court Publishers, 1991) p. 20.

used in the discussion. We tried to avoid the terms of traditional philosophy and to use instead those of logic, mathematics, and empirical science, or of that part of the ordinary language which, though more vague, still is in principle translatable into a scientific language¹¹.

The logical positivists use the Principle of verification as a criterion to differentiate meaningful factual propositions from meaningless statements. The principle of verification asserts that propositions have meaning only if it is possible to determine their truthfulness or falsehood by experience. The principle of verification, according to Horrigan, 'maintains that, aside from the tautological statements of logic and mathematics, meaningful propositions must be verifiable, either directly or indirectly, by sense experience¹².'

This entails that the standard to be used in establishing meaning is only through verification. . Ayer, one of the influential members of the Vienna Circle, is credited with the spread of logical positivism to the United States and Britain through

¹¹ Rudolf Carnap, 'Intellectual Autobiography' in *The Philosophy of Rudolf Carnap*, p. 20.

¹² Paul Gerard Horrigan, Critique of Logical Positivism, p. 1.
https://www.academia.edu/9966303/Critique_of_Logical_Positivism.

his influential book titled: *Language, Truth and Logic*. He explains the importance of the principle of Verification as a necessary criterion for establishing meaningfulness:

The criterion which we use to test the genuineness of apparent statements of fact is the criterion of verifiability. We say that a sentence is factually significant to any given person, if, and only if, he knows how to verify the proposition which it purports to express—that is, if he knows what observations would lead him, under certain conditions, to accept the proposition as being true, or reject it as being false¹³.

As we have discussed, one of the factors that provided a favourable atmosphere for the growth of logical positivism in the modern era is scientific progress. The logical positivists affirm that science has contributed positively to the development of human beings and the society. They believed that philosophy, like science, should develop a method that provides a standard and well-structured criterion for determining the truthfulness and falsity of propositions.

The Controversy Between Science And

¹³ A.Y. Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic*, (London: Foubert's Place, 1935) p. 6.

Philosophy: The Role Of Igwebuike Epistemology

How, then, can we best address the rational conflict arising from the disagreement between philosophy and science? What solution can be proffered to the problem caused by the mutual suspicion between them? Igwebuike philosophy can offer rational and meaningful solutions to the perennial controversy regarding the relationship between science and philosophy. In addressing the intellectual conflict between science and philosophy, I shall adopt two approaches in Igwebuike Epistemology- the first is the Sympathetic and the second is the Complementary¹⁴. These approaches will serve as a foundation and inspiration for finding a lasting solution to the problem.

The Sympathetic/Non-Derogatory Approach asserts the importance of acknowledging and appreciating the point of view of others. This approach can help resolve the disagreement between science and philosophy because it creates an atmosphere of mutual respect. It also provides an opportunity for both sides to recognise their respective contributions to the development of the human person.

¹⁴ Anthony KANU, *Igwebuike Epistemology: Towards A Decolonized Theory of Knowledge*, p. 9.

Some people, including university students and experts in academic circles, believe that philosophy and science have nothing in common and should be independent of one another. Frank explains the idea that philosophy and science should be separate disciplines:

When it comes to the question of science and philosophy, the average college student and even the average college professor are isolationists. Physical science is one department, and philosophy is another. They appear to have little in common¹⁵.

As a way of understanding the debate between philosophy and science, the Sympathetic approach of Igwebuike Epistemology is vital in this regard. This is because this approach helps us understand and appreciate the common history shared by philosophy and science by drawing our attention to the influence of ancient Greek philosophy on modern science. The misunderstanding concerning the relationship between science and philosophy is a modern phenomenon. This is because the union between science and philosophy was never previously questioned or doubted, especially in ancient Greek society. Originally, the terms 'Science'

¹⁵ Philip Frank, *The Origin of the Separation between Science and Philosophy*, in *the Proceedings of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, May, 1952, Vol. 80, No. 2, p. 115.

and 'Philosophy' were understood as one and therefore used interchangeably. Secondly, the ancient Greeks employed the terms 'science', 'philosophy' or 'natural philosophy' to every form of observation of things that resulted in theoretical propositions and postulations. Aristotle, for instance, grouped disciplines like biology, physics, cosmology, politics under the broad title 'Philosophy'¹⁶. Thus, there was no separation between philosophy and science before the modern era because the history of philosophy was interwoven with the history of science.

Applying the Sympathetic approach (with its emphasis on appreciating and recognising the value of the other), we realise that the common history of Philosophy and science and their respective contributions to intellectual and societal progress call for mutual respect. This is because the early Greek philosophers were also scientists whose philosophical views and scientific knowledge were relevant for many centuries. I will mention a few of them. Aristotle (384-322 BCE), the ancient Greek philosopher and scientist contributed immensely in different fields of knowledge. He made vital discoveries in physics, cosmology, biology and

¹⁶ Philip Frank, *The Origin of the Separation between Science and Philosophy*, pp. ^{115_120}.

astronomy. His contribution in logic is clear in the Aristotelian Organon that was used in logical analysis for many centuries.

Pythagoras (born around 570) was a Greek philosopher and mathematician who formulated the Pythagoras Theorem in Mathematics. This theorem explains the connection between the three sides of a right-angled triangle. The Greek philosophers-Leucippus and Democritus were the earliest proponents of the atomic theory in the Greek world. As the originator of the atomic theory, nothing much is known about Leucippus and his work is almost lost. His student Democritus systematised the atomic theory of his teacher and mentor. He taught, from reliable sources, that everything in the natural world is composed of two essential components-atoms and space. Atoms, according to him, are always in motion, eternal, infinite, undivided and indestructible. Aristotle states the position of Leucippus and Democritus on the nature of atoms:

The primary masses, according to them,
(that is Leucippus and Democritus) are
infinite in number and indivisible in
mass: one cannot turn into many nor
many into one; and all things are

generated by their combination and involution¹⁷.

The contribution of Descartes (1596–1650CE) to mathematics is worthy of mention. Descartes invented Cartesian geometry (also called Analytic geometry). Analytic geometry forms the basis of modern geometry, and is used in different fields like engineering, mathematics, aviation, etc. Another great figure was Gottfried Leibniz (1646–1716CE). He was a philosopher and mathematician who co-invented Calculus with Isaac Newton (1642 – 1727). Calculus is a branch of mathematics that deals with change and motion. As a philosopher and scientist, Immanuel Kant (1724–1804CE) developed an hypothesis on the nature and movements of the solar system.

The Complementary approach stresses the role of collaboration and alliance in the project of intellectual pursuit and acquisition of knowledge. Kanu highlights the positive impact of the Complementary approach in promoting harmony and knowledge. He asserts that 'The communal support and intellectual stimulation provided by group engagement is believed to improve the quality of knowledge that is generated¹⁸.'

¹⁷ Aristotle, *On the Heaven*, III 4, 303 a 5, translated by J.L. Stocks

¹⁸ Anthony KANU, *Igwebuiké Epistemology: Towards A Decolonized Theory of Knowledge*, p.10.

One of the reasons for this disagreement between philosophy and science is the difference in their respective modes of enquiring. The scientific method requires greater emphasis on careful observation of facts, detailed examination of results and experimentation. Philosophy studies the elements of scientific enquiries and questions the assumptions, hypotheses, basis and structures of scientific theories. Its starting point is not the observation of facts and experimentation¹⁹.

As a result of this, some people have a negative perception of what 'philosophising entails. For these people, philosophy has nothing to offer science and has never been beneficial to scientific progress. In other words, philosophy has no practical effect on real affairs on the society. In this regard, philosophy is understood as a vague, abstract and pointless theoretical enterprise that contributes nothing to scientific progress and human development. The reasons for this particular view of philosophy can be traced to the advent of the Enlightenment and the consequent scientific and technological progress. Field explains the rational suspicion towards philosophy by making reference to a review in a

¹⁹ George Field, *Ancient Philosophy and Modern Science, Meeting of the Aristotelian Society at* ²¹, Gower Street, London, W.C.

¹, on February 1st ¹⁹²⁶, p. ¹⁷

journal where the author opines that psychology has not made any meaningful progress compared with the physical sciences because of its obsession with philosophical and metaphysical notions and assumptions²⁰.

What is the way forward? The Complementary approach in Igwebuike Epistemology, which emphasises collaboration in the pursuit of knowledge, is relevant at this point. This approach, in this particular case, reminds us that the rational and critical contributions of philosophy to technological and scientific progress should not be overlooked. An essential tool for the success of scientific theories is explanation. A critical analysis of scientific theories like the Copernican Hypothesis, Darwin's theory of evolution, Albert Einstein's theory of Relativity demonstrates the role of rational inquiring and convincing elucidation that only philosophy can offer. Field rightly observes that the success of science goes beyond the conscious examination of facts and experimentation²¹. Before a scientific theory is accepted by the general audience and even by the scientific community, there is always a critical, rational and detailed explanation of observed facts and the outcome of experimentation.

²⁰ George Field, *Ancient Philosophy and Modern Science*, p. 118.

²¹ George Field, *Ancient Philosophy and Modern Science*, p. 119

Boas asserts this point by acknowledging 'that the philosophical attitude has been one of the great orienting forces throughout the history of science²²

Conclusion

In this article, I have enumerated the significance of both philosophy and science. I have also illustrated the relevance of the common history that philosophy and science share. To get a proper understanding of the debate between philosophy and science, I clarified the origin of the problem between them which can be traced to the scientific revolution and the growth of technology and the empirical sciences. To find a solution to the problem between science and philosophy, which is the main purpose of this research, I introduced the concept of Igwebuiké. I also emphasised the function of the sympathetic and complimentary approaches of Igwebuiké epistemology in addressing the debate in question. The epistemological approaches of Igwebuiké philosophy have demonstrated that the relationship between philosophy and science should be complementary and cordial due to their respective contributions to intellectual and societal progress. Scientific discoveries have improved the quality of life through advancement in health and technology.

²² George Boas, *The Influence of Philosophy on the Science, in the Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, Vol. ⁹⁵, no ⁵, October ¹⁹⁵¹, p. ⁵²⁸.

Philosophy has been helpful in eradicating ignorance, developing imagination, broadening experience, exploring human values, and synthesizing knowledge. It is clear that the positive impact of philosophy and science on lives of human beings in particular and life in general cannot be over-emphasised.

As we have seen from the disagreement between philosophy and science, no sphere of knowledge is absolute because every domain of human study is finite and confined. As result, Igwebuike sympathetic and complimentary approaches affirm the fact that no particular area of human inquiry can provide all the answers to all human problems.

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