



# RELEVANCE OF PHILOSOPHY TO NEW INTAKES IN NIGERIAN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

**Nnaemedo Bartholomew**  
Dep of Rel. Studies/Philosophy  
Abia State University, Uturu  
[nnaemedobartholomew@gmail.com](mailto:nnaemedobartholomew@gmail.com)

## Abstract

Recently there has been contention as to whether to remove philosophy as part of the General Studies done by new intakes into the higher institutions in Nigeria. Some even argue for the total removal of philosophy as a discipline in the academic curriculum of tertiary institutions. Thus, this paper investigates the relevance of philosophy to new intakes in tertiary institutions in Nigeria to either validate or repudiate the claim above. It used the library and the internet as its primary data sources and the analytical method as the data analysis and interpretation method. However, the finding portrays that philosophy plays a critical role in the academic formation of new intakes in higher institutions by enabling them to develop a critico-logical attitude and most profound insight, understand their institutions' philosophy, formulate sound philosophy of life, offer self-awareness and development, and expose them to the interrelationships of all academic disciplines. Consequently, philosophy's inclusion among the General Studies in higher institutions in Nigeria and elsewhere is not only laudable but imperative. Hence, the paper recommends teaching rudimentary philosophy starting from primary school as such would help sharpen children's reflective faculty early enough and adequately prepare them to take higher and critical academic/administrative works in future.

**Keywords:** *Institutions, New Intakes, Critical, Logical, Self-Awareness.*

## Introduction

Earlier, I had discussed the relevance of philosophy in general. There I unveiled various dimensions of this relevance: theoretical and practical (Nnaemedo, 2017). That exposition agrees with the American Philosophical Association's *Statement on the Role of Philosophy Programs in Higher Education* (APA, 2008). The statement

x-rayed what it considered the four fundamental goals of philosophy to any institution of higher learning: inculcating habits of critical thinking in students; improving their reading, writing, and public speaking skills; transmitting cultural heritages to them; stimulating them to engage fundamental questions about reality, knowledge, and value. It further discussed philosophy's impacts on an institution's core curriculum, its relations to other areas of inquiry, philosophers' contributions beyond the curriculum, different categories of philosophy programs, and a determination of the index of the success of philosophy programs. However, in this discourse, I aim to delve into the particular import philosophy has on students studying philosophy for the first time at General Studies Level. If not well informed and disposed of, such students may not take the course seriously, given many spurious impressions some scholars have created and painted about the academic discipline. So, to prevent students from falling into these prejudices, it is crucial to present a view of philosophy that makes its avowed noble roles manifest and attractive. Here I wish to present philosophy as a critical enterprise that seeks to understand reality from its most profound aspect, preparing the new intakes with a sound logical tool to understand and live out the philosophy of their institutions, as well form theirs and subsequently use the same philosophical resources to understand and integrate themselves into the society.

For the above reason, Una (2018) called for teaching philosophy, especially ethics, at pre-tertiary institutions to serve as character moulders. Thus, he argues: "Human beings with good dispositions, ...virtue and character, are... in short supply from nature. So, if you have a good community of human beings where people have good dispositions, it was because it was inculcated" (Una, 2018). Una's disputation shows the relevance of philosophy to nation-building, for today's children are leaders of tomorrow. Then, if philosophy is critical at a pre-tertiary level of education, how much more crucial would it be at a higher institutional cadre? Hence, in this paper, I aim to discuss the import of philosophy to new intakes in tertiary institutions from six pedestals: philosophy as endowing them with a critical attitude; tools for deepest insight into reality, logical apparatus, perception of institutions' philosophy, and formation of personal philosophy, and building self-awareness and development.

Before going into these, suffice it to briefly discuss the prejudices new intakes will likely have on their initial encounters with philosophy, anti-philosophical scholars, and students.

### **Some questions for budding philosophers**

For a budding philosopher, some challenges are inevitable. These hinge on prejudices about philosophy among some scholars. Among these biases is the presumed abstractness of philosophy as an academic discipline, imputation of non-relevance to philosophy, according to natural sciences, a preeminent status vis-à-vis philosophy, and relegation of philosophy as merely an academic enterprise incapable of changing the world. These prejudices take their toll on new intakes into philosophy by making them disregard the discipline. However, a little perusal of history helps clear the bias, as many cogent arguments counter the negative views above. These arguments are not only of theoretical order but backed with concrete evidence. For instance, looking at how the early Greek philosophers, such as Thales, Anaximenes, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, etc., could navigate the course of their society is evidence of philosophy's practical use. Socrates was accused of corrupting the youths because of his teachings' significant impact on their lives (Plato, Apology). The same applies to the lectures of Hegesias, which caused many that attended the lecture to commit suicide, showing that philosophy can also have a negative impact. Also, looking at the French Revolution reveals another great impact philosophy had and could still play in people's lives.

### **Relevance of philosophy to new intakes in tertiary institutions in Nigeria**

This section concentrates on the six perspectives from which one could approach philosophy's relevance: as a tool for critical thought, deeper thought, logical thought, a lens into an institution's philosophy, a gateway to self-awareness and development, and as an aid to the formation of students philosophy of life. For clarity, I would discuss them piecemeal.

### **Philosophy instils a critical attitude in them**

Expectedly, new intakes enter tertiary institutions with lots of preconceptions. Some of these presumptions are undoubtedly very positive and would add a sound and integral formation to the students involved. It is so because some assumptions are products of good home training. As a result, they go into making the best out of the students that possess them. Conversely, some preconceptions are either narrow or negative and could hurt students' overall development. Often, such affects not only the students but others with whom they come into contact. Hence, it is necessary to help students eliminate such infectious and harmful preconceptions to avoid spreading them to others. So, to achieve these objectives, new intakes into tertiary institutions must undertake some courses in philosophy, at least at an introductory level.

An introductory course in philosophy would introduce them to a critical approach to reality. For instance, coming into contact with the early Greek philosophers will challenge the student not to stay put in their preconceptions. It would be a caveat against dogmatism and a summons to rethink their original views about life. Following the early Greek thinkers' critique of the existing order in their era, new intakes would see the need to challenge their basic assumptions. Eventually, such a critical attitude would give them new insight into reality and constitute a caveat against presumption. With philosophy's critical attitude, new intakes would now modify their views about life, readily accept other peoples' ideas based on the principle of superior argument, and no longer on tribal sentiments. Reason, not passion, now takes the central stage in their life engagements. These students would perform their actions based on the relationship of such behaviour with sound reason. Thinking and action by this new development take their respective proper positions in the life activity of the students in question.

Exposure to a critical approach to life enables new intakes to understand the strength and weaknesses of their preconceptions. It encourages them to jettison the harmful ones and improve their strong points. It makes cross-pollination of ideas possible as one discovers that what constitutes areas of weakness in one's system have a remedy in another person's worldview. Hence, mutual sharing of areas of strength and correcting areas of weakness is inescapable.

During their studies, the students come into contact with a barrage of issues, texts and views requiring subtle distinction and choice. Such presents them with three problems, namely: "how to discriminate between information and misinformation, how to distinguish between what is central to a particular topic and what is peripheral, and what is likely to be fruitful as opposed to what is barren" (APA. 2008). Philosophy plays a significant role in ensuring that students make the best choice out of these options by instilling in them the prerequisite critical attitude for achieving an optimal decision.

### **A tool for deepest thought**

Philosophy not only imbues new students with a critical attitude to various life issues but also inspires them with the deepest thoughts. On entering higher institutions for the first time, new students confront many situations that differ from their usual home experiences. Philosophy helps them place these experiences in their proper perspectives. As well it enables them to have the deepest insight into them. It elevates them to what APA (2008) conceptualised as active participants in the learning process, motivated, frequently, by curiosity, individually capable of independent inquiry, apt to question other people's views and not see them as sacrosanct or unquestionable. Also, the statement noted that philosophy achieves this objective by teaching students to adopt attitudes of benign scepticism and puzzlement. Hence, philosophy prepares them to question fundamental assumptions, views and works of others in the spirit of genuine academic inquiry, as against considering them as a dogma of faith and so impenetrable and monadic. It is so as philosophy trains people to look at things not merely from the periphery. While not discarding the data and information gathered from the five senses, it considers these insufficient grounds for knowledge. Hence, it challenges people to look beyond appearances, conscious of the shortfalls and unreliability of sensitive knowledge. For instance, studying philosophy's history exposes new students to the development of philosophical thinking and cautions them against dogmatism in human knowledge. It shows the gradual unfolding of human thinking down the ages. For instance, from Thales' notion of water as the primary material, Anaximander's indeterminate or boundless (*to apeiron*), Anaximene's concept of air as the

*urstoff*, etc., one notices a progression in human thought. The history of philosophy exposes them through the length and breadth of the progress in human knowledge. It shows the length and unveils scholars' progress about a particular knowledge item. This consideration reveals how scholars have improved on a given line of research and opened a greater aperture towards better insight into the issue at stake. In this case, new intakes would discover that the researchers' findings shed more light on the subject. The history of philosophy also indicates the breadth of progress by showing those with contrary views on the subject matter. Hence, access to the twofold progress in philosophic thinking disposes of new intakes in tertiary institutions to be more cautious in holding any view in life, knowing that they are amenable to improvement or even outright rejection.

Another thing that could steer the deepest thought among the new students is the phenomenon of appearance and reality, as evidenced in cases like apparent depth and real depth, the fact of a stick appearing bent when inserted inside a bucket of water, parallax, mirage and the rest. Philosophical exposition enables them to understand that appearance is reality, which will modify their senses of the judgment of things that confront them daily. It helps them place things in their proper perspectives, foreclosing what Ryle (1949) described as a category mistake. Besides, it will influence choice-making among students, having been exposed thus far, as knowledge of the difference between appearance and reality extends to insight into the differences among things.

### **Logical thought**

Critical and deep thought are not the only things new intakes gain by studying philosophy in higher institutions. Philosophy also trains them in logical thinking. Principally, it achieves this objective with logic, which subsists as one of its branches. With logic, philosophy trains new intakes in "techniques and principles used to distinguish correct from an incorrect argument" (Baliard, 1972, 5). It shows them the basic rules to avoid shortfalls in their discursive relationships and engagements in the institutions. Such is the case, as logic is a "discipline demanded of the human mind prior to its comprehension of any subject matter" (Wallace, 1977, p.4). Before entering higher institutions, most students have basic ways society views certain issues. Some of these approaches appear very

sound on the periphery, presumably because of the widespread usage they have acquired. Such an idol as Bacon (1898)<sup>1</sup> would call it a kind of insulator to true knowledge of reality. It is so, given the fact that old habit dies hard. With preconceptions, biases or prejudices, new intakes into tertiary institutions often fix what they know with the true position of things. So, with a course in logic as an essential requirement, they are opportune to avail themselves with the basis for thinking logically, given that logic is "the organised body of knowledge, or science, that evaluates arguments" (Hurley, 2012, p.1). Such would help them distinguish sound and valid arguments from invalid and unsound arguments, thereby enabling them to avoid nosediving into fallacy. It helps them to understand that the strength of a proposition does not lie in how many people support it but in its soundness and validity. Taking a contrary posture in this regard would amount to a resort to *argumentum ad populum*, an argument based on the majority carrying the vote: which forget that the majority could be a foolish one.

Further, it is a reminder that an appeal to force does not constitute the veracity of a proposition. Also, it entrenches that appeal to mercy (*argumentum ad mesericordiam*) is a defective basis for ascertaining the truth of a proposition. Summarily, the logical dimension of philosophy helps new intakes distinguish faulty propositions from valid and sound ones by exposing them to different kinds of fallacies. Such sound knowledge of the basic logical structure of a proposition prepares new intakes on three fronts: thinking, verbal expression, and practical actions. It leads to logical thinking as it arms them with proper logical templates, with a high propensity for detecting fallacy. Soundness in thought metamorphoses into sound logical expression and logical, practical actions. With this improved attitude to thinking, expression and practical actions, new intakes into tertiary institutions are at vantage positions to emerge as future leaders with a better disposition for bettering society. Such is the case because no one gives what he has not (*nemo dat quod non habet*). Invariably, as a breed of students with what it takes to work in society, these emerging future leaders are sure signs of a better and

---

<sup>1</sup>Francis Bacon identified four kinds of idol that becloud our intellectual visibility: Idols of the Theater, Marketplace, Cave, and Tribe.

promising future for society. Part of the problem with contemporary society is the lack of leaders that do not think and act well.

### **A lens into an Institution's philosophy**

Every institution has a philosophy. The same is true of every discipline done in various higher institutions. "The mission, vision, and philosophy of the institution serve as a guide for creating objectives and goals of the organisation, thus providing a road map to be followed by everyone" (Bueno, 2019). To understand these philosophies, students should have the appropriate tool for dissecting them. Hence, exposing new intakes to philosophy offers them such an opportunity. It teaches them how to understand their institution's philosophy. Insight into an institution's philosophy is essential to grasping its objectives and expectations of students. The objectives stipulate what an institution hopes for and the rationale behind such aspiration. It depicts the spirit behind the institution, that is, what informed its actions and inactions. So, when a student is new to an institution, it is proper that he/she know the institution's philosophy. Such knowledge would put him/her on a better pedestal with the institution's dos and don'ts. It would, in turn, regulate the student's every action in the institution. Most often, some students fall into trouble in their institution due to a lack of proper knowledge of the primary institution's requirements. Some keep floating for more of their stay in the institution, only to discover themselves later. However, with proper insight into their institution's philosophy, a student is at a vantage point of knowing from the outset what he/she ought to do and what he/she should avoid. With such a foundation, a student finds a better footing in the institution.

Knowledge of philosophy also equips a new student to constructively criticise his institution's philosophy and discipline. Having studied philosophy for some time in an institution bequeaths a student with the basic rudiments for judging his institution's philosophy and discipline. Such a critical approach to an institution's philosophy enables students to place the philosophy in its proper perspective. It ensures informed compliance with the philosophy. At that level, students follow the philosophy out of conviction and not sheepishly. When compliance



results from personal conviction, there is a high probability that the students would readily integrate the philosophy into their life patterns. Resultantly, such students end up groomed in the culture of the institution. One thing often noticed among some students is that they pass through their institutions without the institutions passing through them. The proper thing is that students who pass through any institution should bear a certain resemblance to such institutions. Their institutions should have a certain influence on their lives. An institution is expected to model students' behaviours for the better. That is one of the reasons parents send their children and wards to school. However, when the reverse is the case, the aim is defeated.

Understanding an institution's philosophy and the capability to criticise the same enables a new intake to propagate the philosophy. By this, the new intakes, apart from integrating the philosophy into their lives, are better disposed to inform others about it. Through this process, they help to protect their institution in a better light. Students are often their institution's most effective advertising agents and image-makers. Some students opt for certain institutions based on the information and impressions they obtain from other students studying there. It is because the students practically express what an institution stands for and offers. Many students do not rely as much on the information on the university website as they rely on the information and feedback they get from the students in the institution. That is why excellent institutional image-maker should do more in building their students to be at the forefront of the promotion of their institution. Once an institution fails in this regard, the information they disseminate via its website and other means may not achieve much.

### **An aid to the formulation of a sound philosophy of life**

Generally, the philosophy of life plays a significant role in people's life, constitutes one of the building blocks of their goals, and is a *vade mecum* for their authentic existence. It is the basic principle governing and regulating their dos and don'ts, which could be formulated by each individual or derived from existing ones. The principle's validity is predicated on its ability to spur its owners towards achieving their goals. It does not require official philosophical scrutiny for acceptability. That is why the philosophy of life does not subsist as a philosophy per

se, since it has not passed through the crucible of a thorough philosophical distillation process. Nevertheless, it still bears the name philosophy, at least in the loose or literal sense, given that it offers people "some necessary intellectual basis and a launch pad for their daily encounters with the exigencies of life" (Nnaemedo, 2017, p.222). Thus, Krishnananda (n.d) was right to affirm that "Life without a philosophy is unimaginable" (p.37). Further, he argued that "even those who hold that there is no need of any philosophy have a secret philosophy of their own" (p.37). He says these people "have a theory of reality, though it may only mean denying it altogether. They have a theory of the world, though it may be only one of crass material perception, or of a superstitious belief in the supremacy of the personalities and forces of myth and fable" (p.37). So, given this critical role philosophy of life plays, he advocated that though everyone does not need to be a philosopher, every life's event must "find an explanation in a satisfactory philosophy of life" (p.501). Every event requires the same to thrive effectively and successfully, as already expounded under philosophy as a lens into the institution's philosophy. Likewise, every reasonable human being requires a philosophy of life to confront the challenges of life and succeed. It is essential for the student and teacher, the learned and the uneducated, the rich and the poor. Each category of humans above cannot do without conscious or unconscious life-propelling principles that enhance their propensity for life-goal attainment.

One requires knowledge of certain philosophical principles to achieve a sound philosophy of life. Studying philosophy offers knowledge of these principles. So, philosophy plays a primary role in formulating students' philosophy of life by exposing the new intakes to the fundamental philosophical apparatus necessary for deriving these principles. For instance, studying ancient philosophy acquaints them with the discipline's originators and how they navigated their era's cultural and religious bias to a critical attitude. The medieval epoch would expose them to the theocentric attitude of the time and the dialogue between faith and reason (*Fides et ratio*). Renaissance and the modern era exposed them to the emergence of modern science and the danger it posed for humanity. Finally, the contemporary era prepares and equips them with discontent with idealism and a move towards the concretisation of philosophy.

Philosophy aids new intakes to critique existing philosophies of lives, formulate theirs, and auto-critique themselves to achieve a better one. Students enter higher institutions with lots of background knowledge, part of which is other people's philosophies of life, gathered through the internet, print media, and daily interactions. The crude nature of some of these philosophies demands that they be refined using philosophical criteria, given that it is impossible to do philosophy without these tools. Studying philosophy in higher institutions makes this critical apparatus known and available to students. With them, they could criticise these crude thought patterns and suggest a better option. Through such critical scrutiny, they could help the possessors of such philosophies and others to attain optimal philosophy of life. Besides, before entering higher institutions, new intakes also have their philosophy of life, some of which are crude. Thus, philosophical knowledge also places them in a vantage position to take a new look at these philosophies, know their deficient areas, and the best way to amend them. As a result, their philosophical knowledge assists them in improving their philosophy of life, thereby enhancing their response to issues confronting them within and outside their institutions.

Therefore, a philosophy of life is essential in students' life, and indeed that of every human being, in tripartite dimensions as it constitutes an originator, catalyst, and *delimitationer* of human actions, aspirations or goals. As an originator of people's actions and goals, their philosophy of life is an aspect of the initial rationale for beginning a thing. One thinks and acts in tandem with his/her philosophy of life. Our responses to issues are based on what we consider essential, which resultantly govern our scale of preference. Our philosophy of life, on the other hand, regulates this preference. Hence, it forms one of the bases for embarking on any project. Besides, it performs the role of an accelerator or catalyst by helping to push us as we go about the project. Here, it performs the role of action-inducer and sustainer, which is critical to achieving any feat. Without a goal or action *catalyser* or motivator in psychological parlance, one may begin and never end. Also, the philosophy of life acts as a *delimitationer* by helping to define the limit of human actions. It shows any human project or endeavour's point de départ (departure point) and point d'arrivée' (arrival point). So, as a delimitationer, the philosophy of life

constitutes the scope of human actions and goals. Therefore, without a philosophy of life, students might encounter difficulty accomplishing their academic goals.

### **A gateway to self-awareness and development**

Part of the rationale for philosophical knowledge acquisition is self-awareness and self-development. Knowledge exposes the possessor to the state of an affair or prevailing situation. People aspire for knowledge to understand themselves and their environment. Philosophy offers a new intake auto-critique mechanism for ongoing self-evaluation. It enables and encourages them to a life of continuous self-criticism for self-improvement. Of course, such is in tandem with the inscription in the Delphic Temple of Apollo: know thyself - *Gnothi seauton* (Charmides, 164D; Protagoras, 343B; Hipparchus, 228e; Phaedrus, 229e5–6; Duncan, 2013.).<sup>2</sup> According to Green (2018, p.15), this dictum provides an instance of "a people appealing to, and placing value on, self-knowledge." Green further argued that knowing oneself requires self-examination "through debate and dialogue, the contours of concepts that seem necessary for living a good life: knowledge, justice, virtue, piety, and the like" (p.15). Such is the case as an unexamined life is not worth living (Apology, p.24; 38a5–6). So philosophy enables the new intakes to examine themselves to achieve a better self-evaluation and attain their academic and other goals in life.

Besides, self-awareness is a fundamental departure point for every philosophical inquiry. It shifts from the known to the unknown, from *already-at-hand* to a *yet-to-be-realised*. The principle of self-awareness requires that a philosopher begin a philosophical reflection on his existence; then proceed to other things. This mode of philosophical journey informed the philosophy of existentialists. Unlike the essentialists and rationalists, they began their philosophy with the inquirer, humans, as objects of inquiry who must be understood as a gateway to other realities. This way, they circumvent the idealist method that approaches philosophical inquiry from the outside. Idealists talk about reality without first establishing the possibility of the inquirer undertaking such an

---

<sup>2</sup>Duncan, R. (2013) attributed the saying, *man know thyself*, as, "perhaps one of the world's oldest and most important sayings". He also attributed it to Imhotep whom he described as "the world's first multi-genius, and perhaps the greatest creative mortal individual who ever lived" (p.9).

inquiry, which is described as doing philosophy from without. That is building a house without first establishing the capacity of the owner and builder to achieve the project. Self-awareness helps establish the possibility and capacity for the philosophical project and constitutes an inviolable justification for a philosophical certitude. Cartesian arrival at *indubitandum* through methodic doubt is a glowing instance of this. Descartes (1637), in his search for what constitutes the ultimate source of all reality, ended up realising that even though he doubted everything, he could not doubt his doubting. In this way, he arrived at *cogito ergo sum* – I think therefore I am.

Therefore, philosophy helps to instil self-awareness into the new intakes by making them conscious of their existence. It enables them to be aware of their identity as persons who exist among others in higher institutions. Their understanding of their personhood enables them to stand out as distinct individuals., who must responsibly interact with others to realise their different life goals. Appreciation of their identity is a safeguard against crowd-following which often characterises the lives of most new intakes into higher institutions. For this reason, some of them enter into relationships which subsequently ruin and cause them existential anguish. Self-awareness makes them understand themselves as, what Kant (1785) called, ends in themselves and not a means to an end. Here they see themselves as subjects possessing inviolable dignity who must not only protect such but should also accord the same to others. With these basic features go the readiness to take responsibility for their actions. In this way, philosophy translates them from acting under anonymity, instead making them take a definite and visible status and stand out as distinct individuals capable of contributing their quota to their different institutions.

Acquisition of philosophical knowledge also tends to self-development. The goal of academic formation is to achieve an integral human being by making a person attain what Bloom et al. (1956) tagged the three domains of learning: cognitive (knowledge), affective (attitudes), and psychomotor (skills). It implies that the intakes should work to attain personal and institutional goals using the resources available to them within and outside their institutions. Only when one is conscious of the reason for attending a higher institution and the personal and societal import of achieving the academic objectives therein, that he/she can vigorously aspire for such goals. So,

philosophy by making new intakes aware of their personal and institutional goals adequately equips them to aspire for and attain them. Under this awareness, the goals constitute their road map and shield them from prevailing institutionalised distracting and derailing lifestyles on the campus. The goals define the border to the left around which they cannot exceed in search of their actions' starting point. At the same time, it delineates the borders to the right beyond which they cannot transcend in search of a result/final answer. Consequently, the new intakes graduate into responsible students that would be their institutions' pride.

### **Exposition of interconnectivity among various disciplines**

One of the benefits of philosophy to new intakes in higher institutions of learning is its ability to expose students to the relationship between different courses done in tertiary institutions. History has it that there were taught as philosophy before different disciplines gained autonomy. Gradually each became a different academic course. The proof of this is very clear from Andronicus of Rhodes' (70BC) classification of Aristotle's work into two: physics and metaphysics. The works on physics embody things Aristotle discussed on nature or visible things, while the latter were things he deliberated on non-empirical but intelligible things. Nevertheless, the two comprised one discipline during Aristotle's time and were taught as philosophy. Today each of these exists as a separate course and is taught accordingly. Part of the goal of philosophy is to show the relatedness of these diverse disciplines as the offspring of the same parent. That is why epistemology – a branch of philosophy - always insists on the oneness of knowledge, which promotes interdisciplinary research as an optimal truth discovery measure. The oneness is evident in the final and highest degree obtainable at the end of one's academic pursuit in higher institutions of learning, namely PhD – *doctor of philosophy in the particular discipline the student studied*, as a recognition of the parental stock or surname of all disciplines. Hence, Nnaemedo (2017) called philosophy "the ancestor of all disciplines" (p.240), making it the origin and the end point of all disciplines.

Knowledge of the above interconnectivity helps students appreciate each discipline for what it stands for and reasonably grasp the "*kpim*"<sup>3</sup> (kernel) of what it offers. Such knowledge goes beyond the acquirer to potential tertiary institution students who seek guidance from these new intakes. Pieces of advice of that nature will save such potential students from enmeshing themselves where they would regret in future. Hence, it enables them to make informed choices. Also, understanding the link among different disciplines prepares the new intakes for a variety of job opportunities in future. Sometimes job applicants fail interviews due to their inability to establish the link between their study area and others, given that most establishments consist of personnel from various academic studies. Failure to establish this relationship could imply not knowing one's scope of operation. Every employee should know the delimitation of his/her task. An employee should also understand the areas that require cooperation. Without such background knowledge, an employee may divest his or her energy on irrelevant areas, under-expend energy on areas requiring his/her best, meddle in unnecessary areas, or fail to synergise where team spirit is the watchword.

## Conclusion

The much-debated issue of the relevance of philosophy has an argument for and against it. Advocates of its non-relevance often accuse it of being abstract and speculative vis-a-vis natural sciences. There is the issue of divergent definitions of the discipline and the inability to reach a consensus among philosophers. The arguments notwithstanding, this paper maintains that philosophy is relevant at the theoretical and practical levels. The paper depicted how this relevance is evident among the new intakes into Nigerian higher institutions and argues that including the discipline in General Studies is insufficient. Studying it as an entire course is not enough too. More is required. Hence, beyond extending the discipline to pre-tertiary levels, this paper also advocates teaching the discipline in indigenous Nigerian languages to help them discover its African root and its practice among our forefathers, all to make it a real African experience. Such helps to resolve the issue of discontent and contempt

---

<sup>3</sup>Iroegbu (1995) was the first to use this Igbo word, *kpim*, in academic discourse in exposing the place of metaphysics in philosophy, where he described metaphysics as the *kpim* of philosophy. By *kpim* he meant the *core, kernel, or mkpuru-obi (soul)*.

for the discipline as esoteric, abstract, and of no practical use. For those that do not offer it as their primary discipline, it should be taught beyond the General Studies, especially its ethical and logical aspects, given that these areas are *vade mecum* (go with) and a *sine qua non* for every academic discipline. Every profession uses a logical tool and operates on certain ethics. However, one can extend this study by looking at the relevance of philosophy in primary and secondary school.

## REFERENCES

- APA: American Philosophical Association's Board of Officers. (2008). *Statement on the role of philosophy programs in higher education*. [https://www.apaonline.org/page/role\\_of\\_phil](https://www.apaonline.org/page/role_of_phil)
- Bacon, F. (1898). *Novum organum or true suggestions for the interpretation of nature*. London & New York: P.F Collier & Son
- Baliard, K.M. (1972). *Copi: Introduction to logic* (4th ed.). New York: Macmillan Publishing Co. Inc.
- Bloom, B. S., Engelhart, M. D., Furst, E. J., Hill, W. H., & Krathwohl, D. R. (1956). Taxonomy of educational objectives: The classification of educational goals. In. *Handbook 1: Cognitive domain*. New York: David McKay
- Bueno, D. C. (2019). Evaluating the Institution's Philosophy and Objectives towards Continuous Improvement. *The Journal: A Multidisciplinary Research Review, Volume 14*, 1-7 <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/David-Cababaro-Bueno>
- Descartes, R. (1637). *A Discourse on Method: Meditations and Principles* (V, John, Trans.). London: Orion Publishing Group.
- Duncan, R. (2013). *Man, know thyself. Vol 1: Corrective knowledge of our notable ancestors*. USA: Xlibris Corporation. <https://books.google.com.ng/books?>
- Green, M.S. (2018). *Know Thyself The Value and Limits of Self-Knowledge*. New York: Routledge. <https://humilityandconviction.uconn.edu/>
- Hurley, P.J. (2012). *A concise introduction to logic* (11th ed.). USA: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning.
- Iroegbu, P. (1995). *Metaphysics the kpim of philosophy*, Owerri: International Univ. Press Ltd.



- Kant, I. (1785). *Fundamental principles of the metaphysics of morals*. In Wood, Allen, W. (Ed.) (2001), *Basic writings of Kant*. New York: Modern Library.
- Krishnananda, S. (n.d). *The philosophy of life*. [https://www.swami.krishnananda.org/phil/Philosophy\\_of\\_Life](https://www.swami.krishnananda.org/phil/Philosophy_of_Life).
- Nnaemede, B. (2017). Relevance of philosophy. In S. N. Agu, O. Onuoha & A.O. Dimgba. (Eds.), *An Introduction to Philosophy and Logic for Beginners*, pp.220-249. Okigwe: Whytem Publishers, Nigeria.
- Plato, *The Dialogues of Plato*, Trans. Benjamin Jowett, M.A. In 5 Volumes (3rd ed.). Oxford: University Press. <https://oll.libertyfund.org/title/plato-the-dialogues-of-plato-in-5-vols-jowett-ed>.
- Plato, "Apology", Trans. Benjamin Jowett, in Enrich Sagel (2006). *The Dialogues of Plato*, New York: Bantam Dell.
- Plato. "Phaedrus", In J. M. Cooper & D. S. Hutchinson (Eds.) (1997). *Plato: Complete works*. Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company. <https://hardyhaberland.com/>.
- Ryle, G. (1949). *The concept of mind*, New York: Barnes and Noble.
- Una, J. (2018, May 17). Teaching philosophy at pre-tertiary level of education for national development by philosophers of Nigeria. *Premium Times*. <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/more-news/268738-teaching-philosophy-can-address-some-of-nigerias-challenges-pan.html>
- Wallace, W. A. (1977). *The elements of philosophy: A compendium for philosophers and theologians*. India: St. Paul's/Alba House.