

TOWARDS HUMANISATION OF MAN: THE EPISTEMIC IMPLICATIONS

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Abstract

This work exposes the need of epistemology in the development and humanization of man. Humanization and establishing a good ground for improvement of man is a necessity towards the empowerment of human species above other living being, let alone lower animals and a necessary end of any man in the world. It will shock us that in the absence of the power of reason, men are mentally equally to these lower animals, in such way, we compete with them with the little things which they grabble with. Therefore, there is need for the improvement of man. This work will expose the meaning of the terms decipherable in answering the begging questions in the above topic, the way through which we can achieve humanization of man. Using its basic tool as Epistemology, the work expounded to a reasonable length the meaning of epistemology and its application (epistemic). It will also go as far as opening our eyes to seeing the possible means through which man can help in the humanization process. There are also some effects of the humanization of man to man, which may include the valuation of human person, self-consciousness, equality and justice etcetera. The work will not have attained its valued endpoint without touching on the implications of epistemology to the humanization of human person.

Keywords: Epistemic, humanization, human person, philosophy

Introduction

While the problem of humanization has always, from an axiological point of view, been humankind's central problem, it now takes on the character of an inescapable concern.

Concern for humanization leads at once to the recognition of dehumanization, not only as an ontological possibility but as a historical reality and as an individual perceives the extent of dehumanization, he or she try asking if humanization is a viable possibility. Within history in concrete, objective contexts, both humanization and

dehumanization are possibilities for a person as an uncompleted being conscious of their incompleteness.¹
(Freire, ndp, ora)

Acquisitions of knowledge over time have made things change from primitive strenuous ways of doing things to more advanced way. Be it scientific knowledge or nonscientific, all are under the umbrella of epistemology which promotes this acquisition of knowledge. It is said that the knowledge of a man makes him approved. Biblically, it carries the same interpretation. Here, we advance the frontiers of our humanness by the employment of things unknown to add to the known, by not restricting the possible knowledge that can be captured within the confines of our intellect. We accept knowledge and browse through its probable outcomes in search of process. Recall in the first paragraph, this paper captioned this humanization as a necessary end of any man and the world he lives in. This goes further in bringing to light that, the world cannot stand akimbo to development of the person because we have been given the space to accommodate this advancement. Examining the societal developmental stages, we will derive facts backing up development in the advancement of the man. Further traced to the levels of knowledge the human person possesses as humanized to the ordinary primitive man who is not exposed to the epistemic patterns of acquiring knowledge.

Epistemology is the explanation of how we think. It is required in order to be able to determine the true from the false, by determining a proper method of evaluation. It is needed in order to use and obtain knowledge of the world around us. Without epistemology, we could not think. More specifically, we would have no reason to believe our thinking was productive or correct, as opposed to random images flashing before our mind. With an incorrect epistemology, we would not be able to distinguish truth from error. The consequences are obvious. The degree to which our epistemology is correct is the degree to which we could understand reality, and the degree to which we could use that knowledge to promote our lives and goals. Flaws in epistemology will make it harder to accomplish anything.² (Edward 2020, ora). Thus, explaining further the humanization of human person, is spearheaded by epistemic knowledge. Using the world around us as an example, understanding of the physical and material things we exist alongside with, knowing what they are and possibly how to engage them in a meaningful exercise for the goodness and betterment of man is on the humanization of human persons.

Clarification of concepts

Epistemic means "relating to knowledge (itself)"³ (ora) talking about epistemic, considerations about what we gain from knowledge are made. Epistemic is thus a byproduct of knowledge, because knowledge cannot be gotten without it. In this way, they exist to supplement the other in the acquisition of knowledge. We could, thus, talk about the "epistemic imperative" of early childhood, since children are both acquiring knowledge and learning how to acquire knowledge. And then we could talk about the epistemological investigations of Jean Piaget, who studied the various forms of acquiring knowledge children use. Frankly speaking, one cannot talk about epistemic without having a good knowledge of epistemology too. Let us examine the term epistemology as that will help us to grasp the possible output when we refer to "epistemic implications"

Epistemology is the study of knowledge acquisition. It involves an awareness of certain aspects of reality, and it seeks to discover what is known and how it is known. Considered as a branch of philosophy, epistemology addresses cognitive sciences, cultural studies and the history of science. Moreover, epistemology explains why our minds relate to reality and how these relationships are either valid or invalid. It is needed in order to distinguish between the truth and falsehood as we obtain knowledge from the world around us.

This paper strongly believes that:

Epistemology encompasses the construction of concepts, the nature of conditions and the validity of the senses. Because the study of epistemology enables us to think about the way we think, it is a useful method for evaluating the world around us. Accordingly, without epistemology, human beings would have no reason to believe in their thoughts and actions. Teachers would have no reason to give tests or assign class work because there would be no difference between truth and error. We need epistemology in order to accept reality and live our lives in successful pursuit of truth.⁴ (ora)

The two composite of our point of discussion, human and person are quite different words with different meanings. Person has an attribute which made its suitable to be merged with human in order to wholly qualify for identifying a particular thing. Both qualities are all the qualities of a human being and speak more of an individual in this case. The attribution of person particularizes the being and humanity still speaks of man limited to some ends. Let's holistically overview these two terms and consequently make a meaningful merge of both.

Human is used to refer to man seen as a characteristic of human as opposed to God or animals or machines, especially on being susceptible to weakness. Here, emphasizing on the limits of men, one may back this limit because of the inability of man to make himself and the subservience of man to the Supreme Being. Dealing with person, we strictly go down to the qualities that distinguish one from another. Person is what makes you who you really are distinct from the make-up of any other being. The essential constituent of a human is the person. According to the classical definition, "person is an individual substance of a rational nature".⁵ (Boethi, 1950, ora) It stipulates that one of the basic definitions of person is his rationality. The physical appearance does not contribute to a whole understanding of personality. Physicals in being can only enhance the human characteristics of materiality, fallibility, transient, temporal, fakeness, disguise and in-originality. At the core of the conception of 'personhood' is mind (intellect) understood as consciousness or awareness. 'The journey of humanization is (in part) necessarily mind-centered, aimed at the development of differentiated consciousness or awareness.'⁶ (Peters, 1966, 10) Here, the explanation implies that the mind is a metaphysical entity which is fundamental to personhood in all its dimensions - cognitive, emotional, social,

moral and spiritual. These two opposing sides are brought together in human person to make whole the conception of human being.

The central feature of humanization is the attribution of feelings or qualities of mind to humans. Human nature traits are attributes that are biologically based, innate, shared, fundamental, or essential features of humanity. They are associated with cognitive flexibility, emotional reactivity, agency, openness, and individuality⁷ (Leyens, 2001, 395-411) 'Attributing a lack of Human nature traits to people is akin to explicitly or implicitly perceiving or acting toward those people as though they lack the capacity to feel (i.e., as if they were automatons).⁸ (Leyens, 2001, 395-40).

Humanization encapsulates development as a process of enlarging people's choices, allowing them the opportunity to live longer, to acquire knowledge etc. Furthermore, In principle, these options or choices can be infinite and can change over time. Income is only one of those options but not the sum total of human life. Health, education, physical environment and freedom are among other choices as important as income. The term 'human humanization' is accepted in the development economics literature as expansion of human capabilities, a widening of choices, and enhancement of freedom and a fulfillment of human rights. Rising incomes and expanding outputs in the human development. This humanization can also encompass development programmes for women, active people's participation in societal business, removing structural constraints by legislation and education, reduction of poverty and unemployment, providing basic minimum needs of health, housing, sanitation and safe water, self-sustaining growth, use of technology for development, upliftment of the weaker sections. To empower individuals with greater meaning and sense of the world, and of whom they are, a progressive initiation into the achievements of the human mind and spirit is required.⁹ Stewart, 2000, p.10).

The term “philosophy” means, “love of wisdom.” In a broad sense, philosophy is an activity people undertake when they seek to understand fundamental truth about themselves, the world in which they live, and their relationship to the world and to each other. As an academic discipline, philosophy is much the same. Those who study philosophy are perpetually engaged in asking, answering, and arguing for their answers to life's most basic questions. Philosophy is the systematic and critical study of fundamental questions that arise both in everyday life and through the practice of other disciplines.

Agents of Humanization

The perception of anything both physical and mental is a proof to the existence of such percept. Whether it is a mental existence does not matter. But making reference to humanization is a proof of the existence of human and a way to improving human person. Therefore, this paper is going to examine the possible avenues whereby humanization can be effected in man.

Medical professionals: They are humanizing care by valuing the human being, as an expression of hospital humanization. This central theme is surrounded by the categories

that constitute the practical respect and value of human person. Medical doctors and health professionals are trained with a medical oath which can be traced back to Hippocrates. It was originally known as the *Hippocratic Oath* which mandates morality to govern the medical profession not only in the field of practice but also in research. In a way to humanizing human person, Medical profession have made their central issue in 'medical ethics and practice on physician-patients' relationship. This relationship can be extended to the families of the patients. Hence, ethical principles like respect for persons, informed consent and confidentiality are crucial.¹⁰ (Maduabuchi, 2016, 11). Health professionals at the study institution experience humanized care by allying technical and human competences to and achieve personal and professional realization in a dynamic and continuous care process, valuing the human being. Their values and principles experienced in care relations allow them to humanize care by valuing the human being.

Humanization requires a process of reflection about the values and principles guiding professional practice, presupposing, besides the delivery of a dignified, solidarity and welcoming treatment and care by health professionals to their main work object/subject- the sick human being/weakened being, a new ethical posture that permeates all professional activities and institutional work processes.¹¹ (Dirce, 2007, 1).

Education: can also help to counter the negative effects of dehumanization on man and help people rise from the low esteemed self-perceptual terrain to make a meaningful construction to life. It can aid in humanization by conveying the idea that we are all part of a vast, interdependent, worldwide family “sharing fundamental human similarities.”¹² (Hamburg, ora). Schools can also foster cooperative behavior among children, encouraging them to accept people different from themselves and recognize that they have needs and values similar to those of the in-group. Education is quite different from academics. They are distinct although having some slight connections. It is noteworthy to understand that education is wider in scope to academics. “the misconception and corrupt ways of viewing these two terms have landed some into feelings of negligence, poor value and most times low self-esteem”¹³ (Ezekwo, 2020,, ora) it has been a disturbing stand when some people self-isolate themselves because they claimed not to be 'educated'. The knowledge that education is not totally academics will help alleviate this low self-esteem and in so doing humanize man. Education practically goes beyond traditional reading of books and academic works. Education is more broad knowledge encompassing and generally applied to be educated is to be wise and to have a good knowledge of the world, experiences, facts, skills, ideas, boldness, daring spirit, intelligent, resourceful and the ability to solve problems without resort to textbooks.

The Media: Communication is a process through which one sends and receives information. It is derived from the Latin word 'communis' which means 'common'. Thus McQuail and Windahl opine that, “communication is a process which increases commonality, but also requires elements of commonality for it to occur at all. In modern society, mass communication is entrusted with the great task of communicating with

people from different regions and from varied backgrounds. Communication between a mass medium and its audience is called mass communication”.¹⁴ (Mcquanl, 2020, p.33). There are multiple ways by which communication is made, and these are collectively known as the "media". The word "media" is plural form of the Latin word 'medium', and it is used as a collective noun to refer to newspapers, magazines, television, radio, films, the internet, etc. The media also has great humanization potential. For example, television programming might be used “to demystify the adversary and improve understanding.”¹⁵ (Hambury, 2020, pdf) Programming that highlight human suffering and the consequences of aggression could help people to recognize the terrible toll that violence takes on real-life people. Further, violence against the adversary might come to be regarded as inhumane. By so doing, people develop strong spirit and mind to face the prevailing dehumanizing evil. The media is another way of enlightening the people, by awakening the spirit of self-actualization in human person.

Criticalness: When we hear, read, or work on something, it is very important that we question everything and pay attention to details. Such an approach can improve our thinking ability because humanization requires more brain work than mere observations. To this point this paper has been assuming some familiarity with the idea of humanization on the part of critical thinking. It is time to clarify and defend this notion more fully.

For the purpose of drawing a relation and a possible way to humanization of human person, it may include, the capacities to acquire and develop knowledge and understanding, including self-knowledge and self-respect; the capacities to think clearly and critically, to exercise an independence or autonomy of judgment, to frame purposes, goals, and plans; the capacities to develop moral virtues (e.g., concern, compassion, self-discipline) and grow in moral awareness, conduct and feeling; the capacities to imagine and empathize; to experience and refine emotion including the feelings of 'wonder' at the contingencies of the natural world and of 'attachment' to nature as our dwelling place¹⁶ (Stewart, 2000, 9).

to look into realities and make a positive outcome of them or even see the side effects. Put simply, the more one develops these qualities, the will, or resort to necessarily exercise them as well as possible, the more fully a person one becomes, or the more fully in touch one is with one's humanness and the human condition.

Effects of Humanization on Man

The effect of humanization on man could be felt through power and technology. Power gives people the ability to control themselves and their environment, and this control is considered a fundamental human need. People in a position of low power viewed themselves as less human relative to people in a position of high power; furthermore, people with low power believe that they are viewed as less human by others as well.

Power allows people to control outcomes with respect to both the environment and the self. This control is

considered to be a fundamental human need; therefore, it follows that powerlessness will disrupt an individual's sense of humanity, which coincides with the fact that many civilizations have equated power deprivation with humbleness, lowliness, and fewer expressed human traits¹⁷ (Lindner, 2004, 143-173).

The current study on this notion is based in order to demonstrate that perceived powerlessness induces self-dehumanization. Thus, the possession of power is a boost to the humanization potentials.

Technology humanizes by freeing human beings from disease and other burdens of nature. Economist Julian Simon, for instance, has been an outspoken advocate of the view that technology has increased human prosperity and well-being and will continue to do so as long as humans are allowed to freely develop and deploy it. A collateral argument is that computers and artificial intelligence humanize not just nature by placing it under human control but the world of artifice as well by overcoming the limits of machines and making them more human-like.

Self-consciousness is another way through which the effect of humanization of the human person is manifested. Consciousness of the self is equal to existence, and in such case, there is no need for existing when one is lacking in consciousness. Likened to the case of a mad man along the street without self-consciousness, the world will look like a dump of mad men without focus and goals. There is apparent need for the humanization on man, for this will elevate the awareness of humans over themselves and the world around them. Activities of men on earth spring from the point of understanding themselves and evaluation of the things that he can do or that fits him. Without this evaluation, there will be several unsuitable occurrences which makes the world disorganized and unplanned. This self-consciousness cannot isolate itself with introspection, whereby we look inwardly to examine and understand ourselves. Total assessment of the self is a positive outcome of humanization of man.

Furthermore, the effect of humanization of man is observed in the valuation of the human person. The human condition as a principle of humanization is actually recovered through authenticity, dignity, solidarity, affection and respect for human individuality. Humanization presupposes a value system, that is, a complex system of organization and civilization that respects individuals' autonomy, diversity of ideas and freedom of expression and recovers subjectivity. Naturally, human are the highest and most intelligent beings in the wars. But owing to some levels of economic inequality and domination of the minorities, this respect for humans has deteriorated and as such humans are seen as equal to lower animals in some cases. We have heard several incidences of man's inhumanity to man, disrespect for life, and use of life as a means to selfish ends. This happens as a result of the loss for human value. Humanization of the human person is an avenue to boost the valuation intellect of man towards realizing the beauty of human person. The beauty in the diversities exhibited and accord some respect to them.

Not only from the sides of the oppressors as Paulo Freire noted in his work can we find dehumanization and the devaluation of human person, it is also evident in the self, when people depreciate themselves by way of inferiority complex and lack of value. The import of humanization here is to bring to an end the unfair way of conceiving human person and promote a value system for all irrespective of race, sex, colour or whatsoever may be the case apart from lacking in the character of personhood.

Promotion of societal equality and justice is another means of manifesting the effect of the humanization of the human person. Any account of humanization therefore must be understood to be well embedded within a framework of basic moral principles, in particular the principles of respect for persons and of justice. According to Stewart:

The first principle is required to ensure that every individual (regardless of level of human development or human capacity) has a basic right to be treated with the respect and dignity that is their inherent due as human beings, and to show that those who would take the "not-yet fully-human" idea to justify oppression or exclusion are profoundly immoral in their beliefs and actions. The second principle (in conjunction with the first) is to ensure an equal opportunity to become as fully human as possible and therefore an equality of access to the conditions under which the individual cultivation of humanness can be best achieved or at least best approximated.¹⁸ (Stewart, 2000, 10).

Justice (here) does not imply an equality of outcomes. The idea of "equal outcomes" (and for that matter "equal inputs") is particularly insensitive both to the notion of humanization as being a matter of degree and to the reality of genuine differences in talents, interests, and diversity of student conditions and needs. What justice in the context of schooling for humanization demands is an "equitable distribution of pedagogical resources and appropriate learning environments (with the necessary funding) so that opportunities for those students with the greater barriers to learning and growth are more equalized as a result".¹⁹ (Ibid).

As part of the article of the Universal declaration of human right, it was clearly stated in

Article 7 'All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination'²⁰ (Nwankwo, 2008, 187).

Epistemology and the Humanization of the Human Person

"Epistemology is the branch of philosophy that deals with the nature of knowledge, that is, with questions of what we know and how we know it".²¹ (Jeane W, 2002). As with many branches of philosophy, there are now also other traditions of thinking about epistemology, such as in the cognitive sciences, in the history of science, and even in

cultural studies. One knows what he/she claims to know all by the application of epistemology and knowledge itself is the byproduct of epistemology. In this sense, knowledge of the external world and the intuitive or internal stuff is proved by the grounds which we employ to make them a valid knowledge. In the theory of knowledge (Epistemology) we conceive knowledge under three conditions as a justified true belief.

The truth condition: It requires that if one knows a proposition then that proposition must be true. If the proposition is not true, then that person does not know what he claims to know. The truth condition makes the difference between opinion and knowledge.

The belief condition: That condition demands that if one knows a proposition then he believes that proposition.

The justification condition: That condition requires a practical way of justifying that the belief one has is true.

Putting together these conditions for knowing, one may conclude that according to Ayer; “the necessary and sufficient conditions for knowing that something is the case are first that what one is said to know be true, secondly that one be sure of it, and thirdly that one should have the right to be sure.”²² (Ayer, 2009, 11-13) The right to be sure can be earned in different ways which are cultural and contextual dependent. These conditions are usually synthesized in a logical format. “Considering S to be the subject or the knower, P to be the proposition the subject is supposed to know, one may write:

P is true,

S believes that P, and

S is justified in believing that P.”²³ (Getteier, 2009, 14-15)

This serves as an importance of epistemology to human. Critics might surface throwing up claims that knowledge cannot be attained only through the conditions of justified true and belief. That a belief can attain all the qualities yet it is not knowledge. The above critic is well acknowledged, thus, the origin of Gettier problem. All the necessary or possible articulatory steps towards the acquisition of knowledge are all under epistemology. Which will eventually, leave us in total ignorance and no conviction of what we seem to believe if we do not employ epistemology. Thus, the reason for the development of epistemology is for the perfection of our claims to knowledge, to stay clear from illusion and be able to differentiate knowledge from mere suppositions which might not stand the test of knowledge.

Epistemology is also called to widen the scope of one's intellect, to inculcate in people the zeal to know, and acquire more knowledge of the world; the understanding that nobody is an island of knowledge, that in existential terrain, knowledge cannot be totally known. Thus, it is like a pin of light in the thick darkness of the whole night. With these at the back of our mind, it will implore us to open our minds to the processes of knowing and acquisition of knowledge.

There are more to explain on the need to adopt epistemological approaches to things but for the want of time and space, we shall be concentrating this time on the epistemological import to the humanization of human person.

The Implications of Epistemology to the Humanization of the Human Person

Epistemology itself deals with the question like what can one know? Must one know

something? Can there be something known or something unknown? How can one justify the claim of knowing something? All these demands justification from epistemology. The contribution of epistemology to human person is that of an eye opener and consciousness of one's levels of knowing. Human person is who he is by one of the basic features which cannot be overlooked. This feature is that of acquisition of knowledge and reason. For what makes up a person is the ability to know something or else one is reduced to the level of lower animals. Epistemology can help in the humanization of man in these ways:

Firstly, the knowledge of epistemology will open our eyes to the truth that there are more to know to what we have already known. The mass of knowledge to conceive cannot all be totally grasped even at the end of age. Take for instance, a motor mechanic cannot boast of knowing much in the area of repairing a car to the fact that the metals, cables, paints, engine, grease, and many tools he makes use of are composed of different complicated constituents like chemicals, inculcation of spirits, processes of becoming, and their active components. Here, he can make handy the use of the instruments and construct or repair most and repeated car problems to some professionals, they might have engaged themselves in further complicated cases yet, they cannot boast of being all knowing in the field they are into. This is a clear invitation to accepting that knowledge is not one but many. This will lead to the next inline which is captioned as development of knowledge.

Again, development of knowledge. Epistemology can help in the further search of knowledge. Knowing them and thereby enhancing and bettering the human person. It is the level of what we know that distinguishes us from others therefore making us more advanced and literate. It does not end in knowing, it also goes further than that into its development. One who does not derive interest in the development of his/her knowledge remains a mediocre and in so doing dehumanize him/herself. The need of epistemology in this work is to lift us above our shared level of ignorance and mediocrity with others in the society to an advanced level. It enables human to refine and advance their acquired knowledge to the betterment of the world particularly the human person.

More so, according to Sarah, "anthropocentrism is a philosophical viewpoint arguing that human beings are the central or most significant entities in the world. This is a basic belief embedded in many Western religions and philosophies."²⁴ (Sarah, ndp, ora). Anthropocentrism regards humans as separate from and superior to nature and holds that human life has intrinsic value while other entities (including animals, plants, mineral resources, and so on) are resources that may justifiably be exploited for the benefit of humankind. Epistemology will widen our scope of knowledge making people to see themselves as the central or most significant entities in the world. Thus, making people to work on their self-ego positively and not in the way of dehumanizing others.

Finally, epistemology also helps us to understand that we cannot know all. A bit of this has been explained, but in this subheading, we are driving to the point of respect for human person. Knowledge cannot be comprehended in its entirety; we only know a little portion. Therefore, building us not to be arrogant but respect other human person's view because we are trying to learn or know more. It is a way of enhancing human nature to be more advanced and conceding to diverse opinions of human person after a reasoned approach. Knowledge breeds respect while the vice is an instrument of ridicule. One can testify to most vices to be perpetrated by the untutored and primitive-in-brain individuals. But most positive steps are instituted by the knowledgeable people and this breed respect. If we all

can queue to the admission of knowledge and allow epistemology to play an active role in our life, humanization and respect for person will not be far-fetched.

Conclusion

The situation whereby low self-esteem is the order of the day is an ugly situation that should not characterize a civilized state where human beings inhabit. The understanding of the values of human person is here craved to be upheld and respected. Human person is at the centre of the world civilization and thus, cannot be sidetracked no matter the race, sex, colour or whatever may be the case. Considering all these, we discovered that some factors can help curb the unwarranted disregard for human person and thus revive the long dead spirit of anthropocentrism. One of these factors is the employment of epistemology; it has in a large extent opened the bank of knowledge and understanding towards the humanization of man. In this work, diverse applications of epistemology to the humanization process have been dealt with. This paper indulges the public to adhere to the stated procedures and ongoing means of humanization through epistemology. The consciousness of the self is another strong point which should not be eluded. We have to take cognizance of the self, the privileges of human personhood and the place of human person in the universe. This will help rise above the squalor-like condition of existence which does not promote humanization, rather it dehumanizes.

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