
A CRITIQUE OF CLASSICAL CONDITIONS OF KNOWLEDGE AND IMPLICATION ON NIGERIAN EDUCATION

UMAR MOHAMMED KANI

School of Education
Aminu Saleh College of Education Azare
Bauchi State, Nigeria
E-Mail: umarmkani@gmail.com

AUWAL MUHAMMAD

School of Early Childhood and Primary Education
Aminu Saleh College of Education Azare
Bauchi State, Nigeria
E-Mail: auwalmohammad2@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper appraised the three classical conditions of knowledge and their implications on Nigerian education. The conditions were drawn from Platos's formula of knowledge episteme as "justified true belief" in theaetetus, later itemised and critiqued as belief, evidence and truth by epistemologists. The knowledge in question is a propositional type that deals with the state of affairs mostly in the professional realm, on the creed that knowledge is possible. Belief is a subjective criterion with uncertainty issues, evidence seems objective requirement but has adequacy and construal questions, also the truth that appears to be an objective condition has relativism-absolutism and necessity-contingency disputes in addition to dependency weakness. However, Nigeria's educational process requires the intervention of the conditions for genuine knowledge, which implicate functionalism, scientism, pragmatism, progressivism, learner-centredness, meaningful learning, liberality, democracy, adequacy and relevancy of instructional facilities, ideal class size and intrinsic motivation.

Key words: Knowledge, Nigerian Education, Epistemology.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.35386/ser.v20i1&2.253>

Introduction

On the affirmative doctrine of the possibility of knowledge that defies agnosticism and scepticism, the following pages present discourse on the criteria for knowledge theorised by Israel Scheffler about Nigerian education. The conditions are originally classical, traced to Plato's dialogue, *theaetetus*, which conveys his unsettled ideas and discussions on the concept of knowledge that includes the 'justified true belief' formula as defining criteria. Scheffler only refines and provides details on the conditions, which often influence the affirmative, agnostic and sceptic positions on whether or not knowledge is possible. The classical but traditional conditions have over the millennia been triggering a debate among philosophers on their defence as concepts and potency to validate knowledge to be the case. To differentiate what knowledge is from what it is not, such and or other conditions might still be needed despite unceasing difficulties. This paper is a critique of the conditions of knowledge and their applicability to eclectic Nigerian education designed following a functionality streak to respond to sustainable national development demands in the 21st-century world.

Concept of Knowledge

Knowledge is by its nature classified into three forms (Musa, 2008), namely knowledge of acquaintance (personal), knowledge of know-how (procedural) and knowledge of know that (propositional). The acquaintance knowledge suggests second-order knowledge which enables a knower of something or somebody to recognise it upon seeing, tasting, hearing, touching or smelling, usually sense-data involving contact or experience. The know-how category amounts to abilities concerning practical performance, generally as a result of skills acquisition although it often incorporates *know that* because skilful performance requires some cognitive rules to comprehend and apply as rationally argued by Ayer (1945). The 'know that' entails propositions, ideas, experimental outcomes, and, verifiable but uncommon facts that are not innate. The last category, *know that* otherwise known as propositional knowledge is the interest of philosophers being the topical subject of epistemology. This category constitutes propositions in specialised knowledge that necessarily comes from the epistemic process *a priori* or *a posteriori*, factual knowledge that claims truth, knowing 'that' such and such is the case. For instance, knowing that 'water boils at one hundred degrees Celsius', 'volume of a cuboid is length by width by height', 'light always travels in a straight line', 'the higher you go up in the atmosphere the cooler it gets', 'enzymes aid digestion and metabolism', 'production is proportional to aggregate expenditure', 'learning has three domains'. It does not involve propositions of 'common' knowledge as 'a week has seven days', 'plants need water to grow', 'living beings usually sleep at night', 'thunderstorm occurs during rainy season' or 'water quenches fire' because neither speciality nor voluntary educational effort is involved. Epistemological discourse therefore basically centres on propositional knowledge which can accommodate the underlying arguments as the possibility of knowledge, sources of knowledge, place of experience in generating knowledge and the place of reason in doing so, the relationship between knowledge and certainty, the relationship between knowledge and impossibility of error, the possibility of universal scepticism, and changing forms of knowledge that arise from new conceptualisations of the world (Blackburn, 2005).

Knowledge like every other concept is difficult to define because of the risk involved. Definition in its normative sense denotes giving a cognitive and definite account about a concept which presumably says everything about it, and absolutely no other concept can take that description. However, some accounts carry what every definition may contain, and are enough to denote a concept. Knowledge is therefore described with its essentials but shunning defining characteristics to avoid undermining the conditions.

Plato's formula that knowledge is *justified true belief* (Trans. 1973: 201 cd) has been the classical source of virtually all arguments on the definition of knowledge, which Burnyeat and Barnes (1980) contend that Socrates undertakes to refute by induction from other *dialogues* that preceded theaetetus, a claim that has many questions to answer. It may not be unconnected with the worries involved in defining the concept. Kant succumbed to this fear and dodged giving any straight statement to mean knowledge, but capitalises on *a priori* and *a posteriori* distinction which bases majorly on experience-reason dichotomy and resultant objectivity trouble (Kant, 1965). However, although never immune to criticism, epistemologists give some

accounts about the concept in question. Descartes (1911) sees knowledge as clear and distinct ideas or perceptions. According to him, if a concept is true and is beyond the ability of the mind to doubt, then the truth could be claimed. The postulation is aligned to his doubt theory but the inability of the mind to hint at doubt does not rule it out, so the doubt and certainty doctrine he tries to infuse is still lingering. Gribble (1969) describes knowledge as a matter of what can be remembered. His submission seems more of memory and retention after acquiring the knowledge than the substance itself. In the view of Nozick (1981, p.178), "to know is to have a belief that tracks the truth. Knowledge is a particular way of being connected to the world, having a specific real factual connection to the world: tracking it". Connection to the world defines the state of affair stripe which knowledge carries forth, also tying object with the subject. The justified true belief tradition is held by most epistemologists (Ayer, 1956; Chisholm, 1957) although in different tunes and often with additional requirements. Even Gettier (1963) could not define knowledge while throwing counterexamples in which all the classical conditions were met but knowledge could not be ascertained.

The unavoidable thread in the submissions on the concept of knowledge connotes proposition to be acquired through a deliberate process like learning or accidental happening. Knowledge being the end result of the verb "know" can simply be put as grasped fact. To know is to commit a fact or information into consciousness, to have an idea about something, to rid ignorance of something. Knowing is a verb, a task and activity, accomplishment of which results in knowledge. It is a state of possession of facts, information and truth about a state of affairs. The necessary reality about knowledge is being aware of a state of affairs, how something is or how something works (Hospers, 1967). Knowledge is synonymous with the idea, cognition, truth and wisdom; and sharply dissimilar to ignorance, agnosticism and falsity. As noted by Hassell (2007), the concept of knowledge definition wise is messy and risky, but whatever it is and however it is defined, its truth and experience properties suggest mental possession of some intellectual stuff.

Conditions of Knowledge

The classical definition of knowledge *justified true belief* in Plato's theaetetus (Trans. 1973:201 cd) entails three conditions logically drawn by Scheffler embedded in his structural description: X knows P, if and only if (a) X believes that P, (b) X has evidence that P, (c) P is true (Scheffler, 1965). While X stands for the knower, P stands for the proposition. Meaning, knowledge is the case only if the 'knower' believes the proposition, has evidence for the proposition, and the proposition is true. The three conditions of knowledge specifically mentioned are belief, evidence and truth.

Belief Condition

Belief is the state of mind directly opposite of doubt. Contrasted by Peirce (1877), doubt is an uneasy and dissatisfied state from which we struggle to free ourselves and pass into the state of belief, while belief is a calm and satisfactory state which we do not wish to avoid. Both are psychological states of mind measuring which is seemingly not possible, and the opposites cannot be at the same time. Belief amounts to being at ease, free from scepticism. In the words of Scheffler (1965), it seems more

plausible to construe belief as a relatively abstract state but quickly remembers to question the detail in which such construal could be interpreted. To believe a proposition is holding it to be true, but the philosophical problem with it as observed by Blackburn (2005) is what constitutes it, whether a disposition to behaviour or rejection of such or verbal skills and behaviour are essential to it. In any case, being an abstract state, though manifests through action in some cases without certainty, what could be said about pre-linguistic infants and non-linguistic animals? Their action of crying to be attended to by caregivers insinuates belief in them despite the absence of the pre-supposed tendencies.

The dispositional theory (Audi, 1994) has it that belief could be suggested by of cluster dispositions to do various things under various associated circumstances, but the type of the things and the circumstances are vague, so the difficulty remains. Some dispositions may be linked to certain beliefs, for example, the belief that stone is hard triggers applying more force to break it than do to crush a paw-paw. The state of mind in this situation is translated into doing some things under the associated circumstance. Notwithstanding, as an instance, the proposition that applying sand on a fresh wound stops bleeding and heals is likely said to be believed by whoever did it, but may not entail belief, it could be just a trial or pretending to deceive or disguise.

As a criterion to warrant knowledge, belief is personal. One may believe something but fail to know it, because the belief may not be evident or true, but the mind may hold it to be, hence Hospers (1967) calls it a subjective requirement. A proposition may be true independent of any belief, say "Abuja is the capital of Nigeria", it is true even if nobody believes it, but the epistemological problem in question holds that there cannot be knowledge without belief because it involves the agency of the knower. Usually, people believe something on the ground of truth and available evidence but yet be mistaken. One may believe that impurity causes disease and later in life realise the mistake in the belief, but there is no mistake in knowledge. There may be belief without knowledge but there cannot be knowledge without belief because the "knowing" whole implies believing. But what of statements as (a) "I know that I made first class but I cannot believe it" or (b) "I know that Dada was convicted by a court of law for theft based on evidence but I do not believe that he has committed the offence"? Statement (a) is rhetoric, belief is missing but does not invalidate the knowledge. In statement (b), I know the offence dada was charged with but still doubt it – belief is missing, yet knowledge could be claimed. Both statements are glaringly not conveying any specialised proposition, rather, common knowledge which does not require belief condition or other conditions.

The impossibility of quantifying belief to fulfil the requirement of establishing knowledge is another problem. It can be said, which may not necessarily be true, "I believe" or "I strongly believe", and none is a measure. How can belief and strong belief be distinguished with quantitative precision? Besides, belief is not a physical activity like to say "I am busy believing", it is a continuous process upon which to develop over time, although it often develops from a simple statement, so it is both attendant state and instant fiat.

Such problems make belief a questionable concept in epistemology on vagueness ground, at the same time a subjective condition, therefore fragile to endorse a proposition to be knowledge. However, belief can still stand as a condition of propositional knowledge at least for a simple pragmatic reason. Propositional

knowledge is always a tool, used or applied in *know-how* realm or other epistemic dimensions as argued by Ayer (1945), or in personal life matters that need the intervention of the knowledge. Inductively with disregard to scepticism, applying knowledge in such circumstances implies believing it. In this respect, therefore, belief may stand as a condition of knowledge.

Evidence Condition

Evidence, the second condition of propositional knowledge is the justification of assertion, fact in support of a claim, basis for confirming a proposition, ground for establishing truth and usually defence for belief. Blackburn (2005) calls evidence that raises or lowers the probability of a proposition. It serves as proof that affirms a propositional claim as a second condition to lead to the third but often determines the first condition. In day-to-day affairs, we require proof for assertions, positions and even stories or reports for authentication, anything presented to convince us is evidence.

In establishing knowledge, evidence is by the classical formula a necessary condition. Scheffler (1965) bases his claim of the necessity of evidence in labelling any information as knowledge on Augustine's teaching theory, that, the teacher cannot be thought of conveying knowledge to students through his words only, he would need to prompt the learners to confront reality for themselves through evidence. As reported by Bubacz (1981), Saint Augustine insists that one can at best believe a proposition if one fails to find the realities for it. Meaning, if A tells B that P but fails to find the realities of the P, B can at best believe P but cannot know it. This position stresses the requisition of evidence in generating propositional knowledge. He seems rational but strictly on the normative formula, and his submission would be confronted by several problems. To Scheffler, if we say X knows that P, then X's evidence must provide empirical support for the P. So he argues, the surplus strength of knowing consists in the knower's having evidence for the belief in question.

Evidence has some problems that may negate its veracity as a condition of propositional knowledge. Is evidence to substantiate the presence of knowledge or strengthen it? What could be the measure of the evidence to warrant knowledge? Could it be all evidence, total evidence, complete evidence, or what? To be on the safer side, adequate evidence is suggested. If the requirement for admission into the university is five credits, one's "all", "total" and "complete" credits maybe three, certainly cannot fetch him admission. And, if five credits is an "adequate" requirement, how much is adequate evidence to warrant knowledge? The totality of evidence and implicit reference to standard as put by Scheffler have some shortcomings because of the relativism factor which should not come in the case knowledge that ought to be consistent and stand the test of time. The totality of one's evidence of today may differ from that of tomorrow with a significant difference. Scheffler insists that adequacy involves standards that are normally applied more strictly in some cases, more approximately in others, thus giving rise to multiple interpretations of knowing. But who sets the standard and how correct or infallible is that person? Having not specifically mention the measure of the adequacy of evidence needed to qualify knowledge, do we just conclude that adequate evidence is set at one's conviction? This suggests vagueness inadequacy and standard of evidence enough to justify knowledge.

Evidence has some applicability limitations for that there are certain cases in which it is ruled out or at least unnecessary. One may believe that he is in pain (belief condition satisfied) and he is truly in the pain (truth condition satisfied), evidence may not be needed for the person to know that he is in pain. Even if there may be the need for evidence it has to be provided by him, the feeling he has serves as the evidence for him. The knower would need evidence like a doctor's report or verifiable symptoms to convince others of his pain, so they can believe and know. Scheffler tries to strike a balance to relegate evidence in similar cases where being in the position to know is itself sufficient for knowledge to be. In a deviating bid to do that, Hospers (1967) supports that evidence determines strong and weak senses of knowledge. With adequate evidence in the most rational sense of it, which is also subjective, knowledge is said to be strong while the absence of evidence at best renders knowledge a weak one. Hospers believes that the latter is the sense of knowledge frequently used in daily affairs for that no evidence in the claims.

Hospers cautions that what is taken as evidence may deceive, so many philosophers become sceptical on the possibility of a strong sense of knowledge even common realm, the evidence tendered in many instances has questions to answer. For example, say "I know that sun will rise from the east tomorrow" is not safe, it may decide not to rise all of a sudden despite consistent rises up to today, or may decide to rise not from the east anymore. Even real objects could be faked by hallucination or the power of imagination. If I claim to know that "I have a heart" on evidence of the general assumption that every human being has a heart or positive scan result or simply feeling the beat, it is still a probability. Virtually because dissection is not conducted on every single individual to reveal what everyone has if at all there is agreement on what organ is heart, there is no certainty of the scientist's being accurate or truthful, the machine is not certainly safe from error or manipulations, and, the felt beat could be from another organ.

Evidence as a condition has some weaknesses and consequential limitations of applicability, and there could be knowledge without it especially with "in authority to know" and "right to know" problems. Susceptibility to elusion and vagueness of adequacy also issues weakening evidence as a condition of propositional knowledge.

Truth Condition

Being the sequentially last condition of propositional knowledge, truth often results from evidence. The truth could stand to mean accordance with fact, consistency with reality, opposite of falsity. It is the state of being true, literally insinuating correctness, rightness, accuracy and maximum distance from error. As put by Blackburn (2005), every statement must have either truth or falsity value, and nor statement has both. Truth is the quality of being true, it qualifies a statement or proposition to be true. To Scheffler (1965), if X is admitted to knowing, he must be judged not to be mistaken, and this is the point of the true condition. Since knowing is not just believing, there ought to be no mistake. Hospers (1967) describes truth as defining characteristic of a true proposition, which also translates into a statement of affairs. Despite the many theories argued by Kirkham (1992) and Schmitt (2003) in later times, the correspondence, coherence and pragmatic theories of truth remain the inclusive and widely accepted theories of truth.

Correspondence theory maintains that truth is the case when a statement or proposition corresponds with the world. True statements correspond with the actual state of affairs in real-life situations. Meaning, a proposition is true only when it agrees with the real world as it is. For example, the statement "stone is too hard to crush barehanded" would be true if the real stone is found and prove to be too hard to be crushed barehanded as the statement claims. It becomes a fact, the world, and on this account, the statement is true by correspondence. A major problem with this theory is the construal of the corresponding world, like the interpretation of stone in this case. Coherence theory holds that a statement could be true if it is consistent with other independent statements claiming the same thing unarranged and without one knowing about others, and all support one another. The truth of the statement amongst the many must cohere with one another. The truth of proposition and statement is determined by the availability of supporting statements. An example, the statement "philosophical discourse is interesting" could be true if all other or majority of testimonies on philosophical discourse hold the same position without manipulation or influence of one another. The central problem of this theory is the risk involved in trusting the individual statements to be uninfluenced and the necessity of truth emerging from just several statements instead of substance. It is not democracy to be justified just by number. Having said well of a person by many people does not guarantee the truth, they might be sycophants, kinsmen, knowers of his only good sides, or, the testimonies could be sincere but coincidentally from like minds. The pragmatic theory holds that truth is simply what works. The theory is scientific, experimental and result oriented. It recognises truth only based on its ability to manifest upon practice. The truth could be claimed if a verifiable proposition is tested and gives the expected result. For example, the proposition "sugarcane juice mixed with salt can serve as fuel in German cars" would be regarded as true only if sugarcane juice mixed with salt is used as gasoline in different made of German cars and work satisfactorily. The pragmatic result gotten in this experiment makes the proposition true. This theory too has construal issues particularly regarding the concepts involved.

In any case, truth has some problems that are likely to weaken it as a condition of knowledge, one of them is absolutism and relativism dichotomy. Peirce holds absolutism of truth (Machan, 1980) suggesting that truth remains true regardless of place, time and circumstance. For example, snow is white, fire is hot, and rain falls from the sky. These statements may not be affected by limits, they are absolute, but construal problem looms. On the other hand, James is of the view that truth is relative (Putnam, 2005), that, certain factors determine the truth or otherwise of statements. For instance, this town has a river, I am fair in complexion, and, today is Friday. The first statement is true only if made in a town that has a river, the second statement can also be true only if said by a person that is fair in complexion, the truth of the last statement is equally the case only on a Friday. It may not be absurd to strike a balance by harmonising both positions to suggest varieties of truth, but the hitch about that is the one we should stick to in generating knowledge that is supposed to be universal, but the universe concerning humanity may not easily be bound by universal realities.

Truth should by its effect be an objective phenomenon, not subjective, therefore it should be determined by an objective tool like evidence. But as mentioned in the previous paragraphs, is the evidence reliable? The same fear applies in the case of truth. To say that "Nigeria got independence in 1960" seems absolute truth requiring

no evidence, but what could confirm the truth? It is not verifiable except written record which is also vulnerable to fabrication. However, truth requirement is determined by evidence or another which may be obscure, but could there be anything capable of justifying the truth besides evidence? Could it be a possibility even in the case of necessary truth? Logically, truth mostly comes as a product of the available evidence, particularly contingent truth which could have been false except for certain dependable reasons. Resultantly, doing away with truth in favour of belief and evidence is precluded. Interestingly, Scheffler subscribes to correspondence theory which holds the truth itself as an objective requirement.

From the forgone, each of the three conditions of propositional knowledge has some level of weaknesses as phenomena. Belief is a subjective requirement, but evidence and truth are by default objective criteria. Although belief is the weakest among them for that it is a state of mind which we cannot ascertain, evidence and truth also are not entirely safe. One thing about the chain is that belief may not need evidence, but truth does, yet evidence comes after belief to lead to truth. In some cases, it is doubtful that triggers seeking evidence to arrive at belief or confirm the truth. Prompted by weaknesses of the Scheffler's conditions of classical origin coupled with the counterexamples of Gettier (1963), other conditions were proposed to strengthen, such as indefeasibility condition, infallibility condition, cause condition, external factors condition, safety condition, defence condition, right to be the sure condition, and Cartesian condition which could not add anything outside the classical conditions (Kani, 2012). Despite their flaws, therefore, the three conditions could be relied upon to sieve knowledge for the realisation of functional education.

Epistemological Foundation of Nigerian Education

There can never be education without a body of knowledge is the essential stuff, so knowledge is necessarily inferred whenever education is the topic. However, it would be worthy to state particularly that the footing of Nigerian education bases on the acquisition of the strong form of knowledge in its drive for functionality as embedded in the national philosophy of education (the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013). It is a wholesome idea that requires completeness as per the criteria of Peters (1966), effectiveness for problem-solving, formation and integration of applied ideas for overall national development, and, reliable capacity building to face the challenges of the modern world. The synergy of both empirical and rational methods is indispensable, but its justification lies exclusively in its epistemic maturity. Education, being the 'instrument per excellence for achieving the national objectives is built on the acquisition of evidence-based knowledge to make the education capable of capacitating the citizens to make the system work effectively. The National Policy on Education, therefore, emphasises science and technology-related disciplines as well as scientific methods in generating and imparting the knowledge of non-science disciplines, all for no other reason than pragmatic experience and result oriented application. This sure pathway, as rightly depicted in Buenyen (2000), obliges the existing process of generating knowledge to be free from fallacy, so the substance would be unfailing. In essence, Nigerian education is by its philosophy subject to epistemological refining.

The implication of the Conditions of Knowledge on Nigeria's Educational Process

Place of the conditions of propositional knowledge in Nigerian education is a necessary one, they ought to be satisfied for knowledge to be the case, which is the major substance of Nigerian education (Buenyen, 2000). In the teaching and learning process, the learners should believe the piece of information given to them, they would need to confront the reality through adequate evidence to convince them of the information presented, so its truth can objectively manifest. Inability to meet the conditions amounts to a lack of credibility to warrant knowledge and consequently, the educational system becomes impotent. Nigerian education should by implication base on the knowledge that meets the conditions, at least for the necessity of knowledge in education as insinuated by Peters (1966). Along the same line of thought, Bagudo (2006) opines that application of the conditions of knowledge implies inculcation of a strong sense of knowledge which can be proven and justified to answer the truth, for that the learner would scientifically distinguish between belief and opinion. It is imperative for schools as a formidable agency of imparting knowledge in the strong sense of it to fulfil the conditions so learners can acquire verifiable knowledge, not just develop belief. The speculation of Peters (1966) and Bagudo (2006) may face construal and fallibility troubles respectively, but all the same, the body of knowledge is a necessary essential to education, and, some apparatus must be employed to differentiate what knowledge is from what it is not.

The method of imparting knowledge in Nigerian education is sanctioned by the conditions to be scientific, experimental, evidence-based, to be endorsed by both reason and empirical proof. In relatively reverse order of generating knowledge according to demands of the conditions in question, the evidence presented to learners can establish truth which would consequently instil belief. Its coming last would not invalidate the knowledge acquired so long as other conditions are fulfilled. This process often called fixation of belief by Peirce (1877) is most effectively done through the scientific method, where the believer acquires the belief on evidence and truth grounds. Although there may be belief before evidence or without the evidence at all, at times, the real fact makes one believe in the strength of evidence. For example, one may not have a prior belief that excessive heat melts iron, but witnessing the experiment will make him believe because the truth is judged from evidence. Pragmatism is impliedly prescribed, insisting on scientism with proof for every piece of knowledge, but what could be the fate abstract subject areas like history or religion that are unverifiable by testable evidence? Propositions like "France was once the world superpower under Napoleon" or "God revealed divine law to Moses at Mount Sinai". Does it suggest removing them from the curriculum? Probably emphasis and maximisation of scientism is the meaning, not ruling out others.

The moral defensibility of the pedagogical process in Nigerian education could be another implication of the conditions of knowledge. The learners must believe, ponder on the evidence provided and infer the truth, the teacher is indirectly just a guide and facilitator of learning democratically rather than authoritarian. Essentialism is hereby relegated to the advantage of learner-centeredness which Rousseau (1979) promotes in the name of progressivism. On this dictum, learners actively dominate the teaching and learning process while the teacher serves the supervising role as a gardener to

learner plants by observing what they need (by their mental readiness) at a particular stage of learning, particularly at lower levels of schooling. At all levels, learners need to be made to willingly believe whatever is presented to them on the strength of evidence and truth with rationality. Indoctrination is evaded here, no use of authoritarian force except that of reason to believe, at most through persuasion. But on ethical plains, is a persuasion not encouraging cajoling or coaxing? Whatever it is, the absence of force is in place, the learners see the reason to believe or disbelieve. Classes should therefore be liberal and democratic, and dispensation of knowledge ought to use concrete realities in the most simplified ways to reflect real-life situations for the learners to acquire a strong sense of knowledge.

Apart from the method, the content of education is also implied by the conditions of knowledge. Functional education as emphasised by the National Policy on Education (the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013) for overall national development can only be realistic with a strong version of knowledge which the conditions validate. It is pertinent to acquire knowledge validated by belief, testable evidence and verifiable truth as the main substance of the education package so the citizens can apply it to solve the country's problems and aspire for greater heights. It can therefore be deduced that science-related fields of study are promoted which incline more to empiricism and verificationism. The process of ensuring propositional knowledge through the conditions under discussion is more applicable to non-abstract subjects, supposedly making case for realism.

Moreover, to ensure validated knowledge in the strong sense of it as demanded by the conditions, intrinsic motivation ought to be boosted in the minds of students to pursue education for its own sake. To do this, certain material attachments like a paper qualification that is seen as the ultimate end may need to be relegated to portray knowledge as the most precious stuff. Observing the conditions may be a reality and unavoidable when economic skills are given preference. Besides, ensuring the calibre of teachers to impart knowledge to students convincingly based on evidence and resultant truth becomes essential, so mediocrity would need to be withered away. Teaching and learning should therefore be critical in active form by both students and teachers, also examination and other evaluation tools should go beyond memorisation testing. In addition, moderate sizes classrooms with a corresponding teacher-student ratio become necessary for better instruction. Facilities like laboratory and workshop equipment for evidence-based teaching should be provided adequately for meaningful learning to take place.

Finally, there is a need to eliminate the mismatch between qualification and job where medical doctors work as bankers or geologists working as population commission officers and many funny instances of similar nature. In such a situation, expertise and specialisations are not taken with due regard, hence weakness of knowledge acquired because its application is likely contingent. If every knowledge is applied fittingly, the conditions must be fulfilled to ensure reliable and potent knowledge.

Conclusion

The conditions of knowledge as concepts are not free from weaknesses for that belief condition is subjective, evidence is objective but ruled out in some cases and has no measure in other cases, also the truth criterion could be both relative and absolute,

necessary and contingent. Yet, they stand despite undisputed criticisms to validate genuine knowledge, so they apply to Nigerian education as they prompt reasonable implications that have the potency to facilitate the achievement of a strong category of knowledge.

References

- Audi, R. (1994). Dispositional beliefs and dispositions to believe. *Noûs*, **28** (4): 419-434.
- Ayer, A. J. (1956). *The Problem of Knowledge*. London: Macmillan.
- Bagudo, A. A. (2006). *Philosophical foundations of education*. Saniez Books.
- Blackburn, S. (2005). *Oxford dictionary of philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bubacz, B. (1981). *St. Augustine's theory of knowledge: a contemporary analysis*. New York: E. Mellen Press.
- Buenyen, L. (2000). *Knowledge in the Nigerian educational process, a critical appraisal: an introduction to epistemology and education*. Jos: Ehindero (Nig.) Ltd.
- Burnyeat, M. F., & Barnes, J. (1980). Socrates and the jury: Paradoxes in Plato's distinction between knowledge and true belief. *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volumes*, **54**: 173-206.
- Chisholm, R. M. (1957). *Perceiving: A Philosophical Study*. New York: Ithaca.
- Descartes, R. (1911). *Meditations on first philosophy*. (E. S. Haldane, Trans.). Cambridge University Press.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria. (2013). *National policy on education, 6th edition*. Abuja: Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council.
- Gettier, E. L. (1963). Is justified true belief knowledge? *Analysis*, **23** (6): 121-123.
- Gribble, J. (1969). *Introduction to philosophy of education*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon Inc.
- Hassell, L. (2007). A continental philosophy perspective on knowledge management. *Information Systems Journal*, **17** (2): 185-195.
- Hospers, J. (1967). *An introduction to philosophical analysis, second edition*. London: Prentice-Hall.
- Kani, U. M. (2012). *Critical analysis of Israel Scheffler's conditions of knowledge in relation to Nigerian education*. (M.Ed thesis unpublished). University of Jos, Nigeria.
- Kant, I. (1965). *Critique of Pure reason* (N. K. Smith, Trans.). New York: St. Martins Press.
- Kirkham, R. L. (1992). *Theories of truth: A critical introduction*. Massachusetts: MIT Press.
- Machan, T. R. (1980). CS Peirce and absolute truth. *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society*, **16** (2): 153-161.
- Musa, J. M. (2008). *The rudiments of Philosophy of Education*. Pankshin: Eureka Academic Foundations.
- Nozick, R. (1981). *Philosophical explanations*. Harvard University Press.
- Peirce, C. S. (1877). The fixation of belief. *The Essential Peirce, I*.
- Peters, R. S. (1966). *Ethics and education*. London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd.
- Plato. (1973). *Theaetetus*. (J. McDowell, Trans). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Putnam, H. (2005). James on truth (again). *William James and The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Centenary Celebration*, 172-82.

-
- Rousseau, J. J. (1979). *Émile or on education*. (A. Bloom, Trans. originally published 1762). New York: Basic.
- Ryle, G. (1945, January). Knowing how and knowing that: The presidential address. In *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, **46**: 1-16. Aristotelian Society, Wiley.
- Scheffler, I. (1965). *Conditions of knowledge: An Introduction to Epistemology and Education*. Chicago: Scott, Foresman.
- Schmitt, F. F. (2003). *Theories of truth*. New Jersey: Wiley-Blackwell.