



Is there a Connection between Knowledge (Epistemology), Reality (Ontology) and Leadership?

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Abstract

Examining the literature on philosophy, including the works of Plato and Buddha, we see that the body of knowledge of philosophy has experienced exponential growth, radicalisation, and transition from early theorisations. Philosophical perspectives have seeped into many other disciplines and influenced all facets of the academic landscape. Philosophy has subtly found its way into religion, health and nutrition, spirituality, mathematics, family life, demography, sociology and medicine, politics, and Education. To grasp why philosophy has seeped into the consciousness of all facets of human reality, a review of something Knight postulated put the pieces together: philosophy is "...examining, synthesising, analysing, speculating, prescribing and evaluating" information and their values and beliefs" (Knight, 2006, p. 5). The study of philosophy has guided man in his limited quest for knowledge, and yet the ultimate knowledge is simple: God. This ultimate God is so complex that humans have missed it for materialism. Why do we say this? Because man wants to create his intellectualisation of what is or what he thinks is and boast of their accomplishment, they have circumvented seeking God as the primary vehicle for understanding life. Historically, humans have intellectualised much to recognise it as a fallacy. The world was flat and a truth; the educational system taught and supported this philosophy to unearth whether this was a myth or wrong. Historically, there have been many, including the works of Isaac Newton, Albert Einstein, and the sound barrier. Leadership is only a subset of an individual's philosophy, which frames their reality, interprets what and accounts for one's reality, how knowledge is attained, and values in leadership discourse.

Keywords: Epistemology, leadership, ontology.

Introduction

The question of 'Is there a connection between knowledge (epistemology), reality (ontology) and leadership?' must be discussed with the broader context of philosophy. Philosophy is one of the scientific disciplines that have aided humans in understanding and contextualising their social and physical worlds. Although humans are animals, they can and can seek to understand their

social, physical, psychological and intellectual settings. This innate ability and capacity have brought us to this place of studying philosophy. A fascination with humans is not only their psychosocial reality; they are highly concerned with intellectualisation. Knight (2006) refers to this fascination with intellectualisation as philosophy. He contended that philosophy is a 'love of wisdom' (p. 5). He continued that even though philosophy concerns loving knowledge or wisdom, a philosopher does much more than that. So Knight opined that "philosophy in its technical sense might best be thought of in three aspects: an activity, a set of attitudes and a body of content" (p. 6). Therefore, the discipline of philosophy develops from 1) explanations, 2) knowledge or literature, 3) theorisations, 4) abstractions, 5) attitudes, and 6) ways of thought (Knight, 2006; Honderich, 1995; Popkin, 1999; Kim & Ernest Sosa, 1999; Husserl & Welton, 1999; Popkin et al., 1975; Priest, 2006).

Examining the literature on philosophy, including the works of Plato and Buddha, we see that the body of knowledge of philosophy has experienced exponential growth, radicalisation, and transition from early theorisations. Philosophical perspectives have seeped into many other disciplines and influenced all facets of the academic landscape. Philosophy has subtly found its way into religion, health and nutrition, spirituality, mathematics, family life, demography, sociology and medicine, politics, and Education. To grasp why philosophy has seeped into the consciousness of all facets of human reality, a review of something Knight postulated put the pieces together: philosophy is "...examining, synthesising, analysing, speculating, prescribing and evaluating" information and their values and beliefs" (Knight, 2006, p. 5). He stated, "The content of philosophy is better seen in the light of questions than in the light of answers. Philosophy is the study of questions. Van Cleve Morris has noted that the crux of the matter is asking the 'right' questions. By "right", he means meaningful questions and relevant—the kinds of questions people want answered and which will make a difference in how they lie and work" (Knight, 2006, p. 10). This perspective offers a comprehensive look at the philosophy and the rationale of multidimensionality in human existence.

With philosophy, seeking to answer questions that will provide information or knowledge for the advancement and development of the human race, questions relating to reality (metaphysics), knowledge (epistemology), and values (axiology) must be answered. It is easy to link philosophy and Education because of questions of knowledge, thoughts and instructions. Because Education, like learning, is a never-ending process "that can take place in an infinite variety of circumstances and contexts" (Knight, 2006, p. 10), philosophy continues to evolve and known by way of learning, it means that studying the philosophy of Education opens knowledge to the reader, broadens perspective, highlights benefits and fallacies of issues, the agent of social and physical development, and connect man to the ultimate source, God. For decades, people have overemphasised formal schooling, pragmatism, Idealism and other philosophies that have excluded connecting man to God. White (1952) laments this reality by stating that Education must encapsulate man's physical and spiritual psychology.

We must balance it, and anything that stops short of connecting this area is no education but a handicapped system of new personal gratification. Ellen G. White argued, like King Solomon, that man's ultimate purpose is to serve God and that all this knowledge should be appreciated of His greatest that it does not become a god but is used to serve God. Wow! Having examined and

evaluated the material for this work, the researchers have realised that while philosophy offers insights into our realities, it is personalised by us, much so that it fails to accomplish understanding our role in the universe and that of a deeper appreciation of God for personal need intellectualisation. We also realised that while philosophers and academics have made significant strides toward understanding more of the world and life, they still need to unearth most of the mysteries of existence and life. Where did humans come from to be here? Firstly, how is energy created? Where does the universe end? What happens after death? What energy causes humans to exist? Where does a thought come from when it reaches the mind? What do we think?

The study of philosophy has guided man in his limited quest for knowledge, and yet the ultimate knowledge is simple: God. This ultimate God is so complex that humans have missed it for materialism. Why do we say this? Because man wants to create his intellectualisation of what is or what he thinks is and boast of their accomplishment, they have circumvented seeking God as the primary vehicle for understanding life. Historically, humans have intellectualised much to recognise it as a fallacy. The world was flat and a truth; the educational system taught and supported this philosophy to unearth whether this was a myth or wrong. Historically, there have been many, including the works of Isaac Newton, Albert Einstein, and the sound barrier. So when 'claims' they have discovered a truth, it can be time-specific and not Truth, and we are just living in a fallacious construction that time will unmask over time. It is clear from reading that humans have an insatiable appetite for knowledge, that within their thoughts lies half truths and not Truth, and that the only Truth is the word of God.

The philosophy of Education, especially *Philosophy & Education*, written by George Knight, provides information of profound value to people and opens the veil of ignorance on many things away from people. By examining this, people have a different degree of consciousness; thoughts begin to germane on issues, misconceptions clarified, beliefs altered, and new ones formed, and people's value systems will change as human truths in time. Undoubtedly, the philosophy of Education presents how humans think, examine, synthesise, analyse, speculate, prescribe and evaluate information to formulate beliefs and values. It is Education that takes philosophies and wholesale this to many people. As such, the right philosophy must be taught to people by way of school as this is the crux of framing attitudes, behaviour and values. Hence, people's behaviour, attitudes, and values are mere expressions of one's value system, aided by the educational system and another social sub-system. As White postulated, Education must include understanding everything in life and being in harmony with the will of God-it is the duty of man to serve God. Or, Education must prepare humans to recognise and appreciate life and that God created the universe and everything therein for his God including people.

Again, Education is merely a vehicle for transmitting reality, knowledge, and axiology and providing man with information that they will use to recognise and see the value of God in everything. So when George Knight indicated that the value of examining educational philosophy is 1) to better understand the problems of the educational system of which they are a part, 2) to critically evaluate solutions to the problems in Education, 3) to clarify their thinking about the goals of Education and life in general; 4) develop an internally unswerving point of view, and 5) contribute to the design of programs that reflect the larger universal context; this brings us to the juncture to transmit educational values? The answer to the last previously

mentioned question is yes. All philosophies impact attitude, behaviour and values and set the tone for reality.

Ontology (reality)

A philosophy of life guides our actions and behaviour as we go through life. Our beliefs about Truth, reality, and value determine our perceptions of the world and the universe. Our response to questions about anthropology determines our relationship with students and people in general. How we treat students and our beliefs about theological issues also determine our perception of what knowledge is most worthy of inclusion in the curriculum.

Knight (1998) suggests that even a cursory glance at fundamental metaphysical issues reveals their importance for every educational practice. He further opined that every academic program is a fact of reality rather than fancy, illusion, or imagination. School programmes, treatment of disciplinary matters, and teachers' instructional methods will differ dramatically depending on how they view each student.

Metaphysics deals with the nature of reality. Thus, many churches spend millions of dollars each year transferring specific values to students because of their metaphysical beliefs regarding the nature of ultimate reality, the existence of God, and the role of God in human beings as God's children. Metaphysics is a significant determinant of everything we, as teachers, do in the classroom.

Another branch of philosophy that is closely related to metaphysics and that stands at the centre of the education process is epistemology. Epistemology seeks to shine the spotlight on the nature, sources and validity of knowledge through which we gain information. Since educational systems and teachers in every education system deal with knowledge, they engage in an epistemological undertaking.

Knight (1998) claims that “epistemology has a direct impact upon education on a moment-by-moment basis”. This impact, he further suggests, will give rise to assumptions about the importance of the various sources of knowledge, which are in curricular emphases and teaching methodologies.

Because Christian teachers believe in revelation as a source of specific knowledge, they will undoubtedly choose a curriculum and a central biblical role in that curriculum that differ substantially from the curricular choices of secular school teachers. It is true for educators of all philosophical persuasions that their entire philosophical worldview will colour the presentation of every topic they teach.

Our beliefs about reality and Truth as educators will lead us to assumptions found in the third great philosophic realm: axiology. Axiology is the branch of philosophy that deals with the question of "What is of value?" This question stems from the fact that people value beings who prefer some things over others. Therefore, rational individual and social life are part of a system of values.

Values define what a people or society views as excellent or preferable regarding behaviour (ethics) and beauty (aesthetics). The previous concept speaks to the great efforts and expenses churches have invested in to pass their beliefs about good behaviour and beauty to the younger generation. Though controversial in daily life and the classroom, when parents, teachers, and students disagree about various issues, such as television, music, or sexual behaviour, somebody must elucidate in society to ensure acceptable values are practised and transmitted.

The problem we face is making sense of the complex world in which we live.

Human beings' almost universal longing to make sense of their world has led them to ask questions that form the heart of philosophy. A Christian view of metaphysics provides the foundation for Christian Education.

Metaphysics, epistemology and axiology have imposing implications for the operation of a Christian school. As a consequence, the goals teachers choose suggest appropriate decisions about a variety of areas: students' needs, the teacher's role in the classroom, the most important things to emphasise in the curriculum, the best teaching methodologies to communicate the curriculum, and the societal function of the school. Only when one has taken a position on such matters can appropriate policies be implemented. According to Palmer (1998), to educate is to guide students on an inner journey toward more truthful ways of seeing and being in the world.

In Christian epistemology, one must always check the findings of reason against the Truth of scripture. Epistemology has a direct impact on Education on a moment-by-moment basis (Knight, 1998). For example, somebody will undoubtedly reflect assumptions about the importance of various sources of knowledge in the curriculum emphases and teaching methodologies. Christian teachers believe in revelation as a source of valid knowledge. As a result, these teachers will undoubtedly choose a curriculum and a role for the Bible in the curriculum choices, even for nonbelievers. The philosophical worldview of teachers' faith will shape the presentation of every topic taught.

A distinct metaphysical and epistemological viewpoint will lead the educator to a value orientation. However, one must agree with Knight (1998) that the most fundamental and inescapable observation facing human beings is the reality and mystery of personal existence in a complex environment. A Christian view of metaphysics provides the foundation for Christian Education. Christian education systems are based on the worldview that God exists, and belief in His existence sheds light on the meaning of every aspect.

Christian values should impact people's daily activities as educators at all levels. Thus, every aspect of a Christian education is a part of the biblical worldview of reality. Biblical metaphysics should decide what we study in schools and the contextual framework in which every subject is involved. As such, the biblical view of reality supplies the curriculum selection and emphasis criteria. A biblically based curriculum has a unique metaphysical viewpoint. Biblical metaphysical presuppositions not only justify and determine the existence of curriculum and social role in Christian Education but also explicate learners' nature, needs and potential. Also, it suggests the most beneficial types of relationships between teachers and their students and provides criteria for selecting teaching methodologies. According to Arthur (2010), Education

involves transmitting values. Based on this truism, axiology, metaphysics, and epistemology are the foundational aspects of Christian Education. Other realities in philosophies are Idealism and Realism.

Idealism and Realism are two broad philosophical "schools" of thought that apply to today's Education at the metaphysical level. These two broad world philosophies originated from the ancient Greek philosophers Plato and Aristotle. Idealism and Realism are two of the general frameworks in philosophy that provide the root or base on which various educational philosophies blossomed. The area of metaphysics seeks to find unity across these domains. The concept of metaphysics means "beyond the physical". The philosophical basis of Idealism and Realism, their central core, which worldviews I feel more comfortable with, and why are discussed below.

Idealism

According to Knight (2006), at the core of Idealism is an emphasis on the reality of ideas, thoughts, minds, or selves rather than stressing material objects and forces. Therefore, Idealism is a philosophical approach that has as its central tenet that ideas are the only actual reality, the only thing worth knowing. It postulates that in a search for Truth, beauty, and justice that is enduring and everlasting, the focus is on conscious reasoning in the mind. Thus, Idealism argues that the mind is essential or before matter and further contends that the mind is natural while matter is the end product of the mind (cited by Knight, 2006).

The father of Idealism, Plato, espoused this view about 400 B.C. in his famous book, *The Republic* (cited by Knight, 2006). He postulated that there are two worlds. The first is the spiritual or mental world, which is eternal, permanent, orderly, regular, and universal. There is also the world of appearance, experienced through sight, touch, smell, taste, and sound, which is changing, imperfect, and disorderly. This division is the duality of mind and body. Reacting against what he perceived as too much of a focus on the immediacy of the physical and sensory world, Plato described a utopian society in which "education to body and soul all the beauty and perfection of which they are capable" as an ideal. Knight (2006) showed us how Plato, in his allegory of the cave, demonstrated that the shadows of the sensory world must overcome with the light of reason or universal Truth. He believes one must pursue knowledge and identify with the Absolute Mind to understand Truth. Plato also believed that the soul is fully formed before birth and is perfect and at one with the Universal Being. Realism is contrary to the previous perspective.

Realism

According to Knight (2006), to a certain extent, Realism is a reaction against the abstractness and otherworldliness of Idealism. To the realist, the essential starting point is that objects of our senses exist in their own right quite independently of their being known by a mind (Knight, 2006). Thus, as its central core, realists believe that reality exists independently of the human mind. The ultimate reality is the world of physical objects. The focus is on the body/objects. Truth is objective and not a socially constructed reality. Knight (2006) wrote,

“For the realist, the ultimate reality is not in the realm of the mind. The universe is composed of matter in motion, so the physical world in which people live makes up reality. This is a straightforward approach to a world of things that operates according to laws built into the very fabric of the universe” (Knight, 2006, p. 51).

Aristotle, a student of Plato who broke with his mentor's idealist philosophy, is called the father of both Realism and the scientific method. This metaphysical view aims to understand objective reality through "the diligent and unsparing scrutiny of all observable data." Aristotle believed that its ultimate form had to be understood to understand an object, which does not change. For example, a rose exists whether or not a person knows it. A rose can exist in mind without being physically present, but ultimately, the rose shares properties with all other roses and flowers (its form), although one rose may be red and another peach-coloured. Aristotle was also the first to teach logic as a formal discipline to be able to reason about physical events and aspects. The exercise of rational thought is the ultimate purpose of humankind.

The worldview that some people feel comfortable with is Idealism. This comfort is because, in Idealism, Education aims to discover and develop each individual's abilities and complete moral excellence to serve society better. Its curricular emphasis is subject matter of mind: literature, history, philosophy, and religion. Teaching methods focus on handling ideas through lectures, discussions, and Socratic dialogue, which uses questioning to help students discover and clarify knowledge. Introspection, intuition, insight, and whole-part logic bring the latent forms or concepts in the mind to consciousness. One's character is developed through imitating examples and heroes.

On the other hand, the Realist curriculum emphasises the subject matter of the physical world, particularly science and mathematics, and the teacher organises and presents content systematically within a discipline, demonstrating the use of criteria in making decisions. In this philosophical view, teaching methods focus on mastery of facts and basic skills through demonstration and recitation. The researchers find the realist views helpful in today's classroom, where it challenges students to demonstrate the ability to think critically and scientifically, using observation and experimentation and utilising the scientific approach to curriculum, standardised. With its distinct discipline base, the benefits of developing students, minds in Idealism far outweigh the realism worldviews. In the realist view, one's character is fashioned through training in the rules of conduct, which is essential in today's society.

Realism is a worldview that holds that the world has an existence independent of our perceptions of it. Science is an attempt to explain in thought the things that act independently of thought. Realism has some similarities with empiricism, but they are different concepts.

On the other hand, Idealism is the worldview that postulates that the world exists only as far as people think it exists. If our thoughts change, then so does the world. We follow Idealism and its entrance into social science primarily through the work of Kant (1724–1804). For Kant, the mind introduces order into sensory experiences, establishing their objective character. He argued that the mind also contained values and freedom of action, distinct from the world of facts. Values were the determinants of human life and were ordered based on reason and purposive actions.

The postmodernists argue that there is a 'crisis of reason', which means that the old paradigms are questioned and found wanting in what they can deliver and that the old views of morality, knowledge, and power have changed (Peters, 1996). Therefore, the postmodernist seeks new ways to define social and power relations and, for educationists, deliver Education that is not overly reductionist, subjective, or based on structures of power and control that mitigate against individuals. Postmodernism is interpreting things in multiple ways in multiple settings. It is interpreted differently in the arts, by feminists, and in Education (Peters et al., 1996).

Since it became a prominent philosophical issue, Postmodernism has impacted Education in general and Christian Education in particular. Two threads of Postmodernism affect Education, particularly Christian teacher education and graduate education in Schools of Education. The first is through popular culture, and the second is through philosophical trends.

In pointing out these threads, it is essential to recognise that the influence of one of these threads is separate from the other. Educational philosophers who extend the concepts of Postmodernism to Education and the broader culture have illustrated how it paves the way for many forms of thought to enter Education. The relativistic notions of Postmodernism open the way for all beliefs to have equal footing in the debate, which must contend in public schools. The violent content of specific content selections and the number of what may be described as occult selections in student activity books and the book's activities on witches, witches' conventions, casting spells, and similar activities that would usually have parents furious are now accepted. Parents who usually had concerns and complained about these issues have sensed and seen something they could not articulate. They did not like the occult activities; however, they thought such activities for Halloween were cute. They did not like the violence and relativism they saw but were unable to connect these to a particular set of beliefs or philosophies.

Today, besides some self-esteem programs and textbooks that teach explicitly or implicitly relativism of values and beliefs, there is a thread running through popular lyrics, movies, and popular literature that exhibit postmodern thought and connect to the relativism exhibited by New Age thought. This thread teaches that all beliefs are of equal value, no values are better than others, and all religions are the same. A similar thread runs through intellectual and philosophical Postmodernism. Schools and universities educate students who eventually become part of society and, hence, are the ones who influence the writing of scripts, lyrics, and other social texts. Thus, it is evident that there is no separation between the two strands identified.

Most Christian authors believe that Postmodernism has affected higher Education, particularly by weakening the meaning of Truth. The assertions that science and scientific facts cannot be proven and that there are no meanings except on one's perception of meaning formed through the construct of language, which has no meaning, are two examples (Hackney, 1999). However, Christians reject the postmodernist claims that there are no true truths or grand metanarratives on which to build our faith. According to Hackney (1999), "with God out of the picture, humans loom as the ultimate creators of reality. To Marsden (1997), the self, or perhaps the community or nation, is inflated and absolutised". In response to Postmodernism, Grenz (1996) opined that we dare not overreact and embrace modernism's claim to be able to find the ultimate Truth through human endeavours (Grenz, 1996). Christians recognise that since the fall, there have

been limitations to human reason and its ability to find God. Christians also acknowledge the areas in which human reason during the modern period was able to discover many things through scientific and other objective forms of reason. Christians also may affirm the postmodern view that not all knowledge is good (Grenz, 1996). The postmodernists seem correct in asserting that objective knowledge humans can discover is not the only form of knowing. As Grenz (1996) puts it, Christians "believe that the myth of knowledge dispelling ignorance and thereby bringing in the golden age is based on a dangerous half-truth.

According to Grenz (1996), the reaction of Christians to postmodern evaluation and rejection of reason could be a recognition of the importance of salvation, conversion, and God alongside a search for meaning, reality, and Truth. Postmodernism's post-rational view of reality opens a way for evangelicals and other Christians to focus on more than saving the soul. In contrast to the dualism of the modern view of the separation of soul and body, there is now the possibility of viewing people as whole persons (Grenz, 1996).

Modernism presents a problematic position for Christians such as Adventists by its insistence that science and objectivity can answer all questions. By refusing to recognise the existence of God and his active part in creating and sustaining the earth, modernism limits specific possible answers to questions. A belief in God might have provided new directions for inquiry and questions. Postmodernism opens the way for perspectives about the world and life by emphasising subjectivity. However, relying on subjectivity, Postmodernism relativises Truth and reality in a way that limits a belief in a particular God or set of truths. It questions the existence of facts, calling them pragmatic positions held conveniently for practical purposes at this time.

Consequently, the responsibility of Christian educators to understand the times that they and their students are living in is great. With the pervasiveness of postmodern thought throughout all of culture, it is essential to know what it is and is not. The researchers suggest that Postmodernism presents significant challenges to Seventh-day Adventist Christians. It subtly invades all of culture and philosophy, and its tenets must be examined critically and thoughtfully with one's mind and heart in the control of Biblical principles.

Idealism is the metaphysical view that ideas are the only reality. It denies the existence of material things, while Realism is the metaphysical view that physical objects continue to exist when they are not perceived. On the other hand, Postmodernism espouses a view of reality that allows for no firm truths, relativises morality, and equalises all religions. This form of relativism evangelicals Christians reject. In addition, Postmodernism opens the way for Christians to be part of the discussion of different ways of knowing. Postmodernism also espouses radical constructivism which rejects even suggestions of foundational truths. Christians affirm constructivism, which encourages young people to embrace faith by constructing their faith based on biblical principles, and rejects modernism's excesses in developing science, which builds atomic bombs; Christians agree while affirming modernism's ability to conquer some diseases.

Philosophy

Philosophy is the love of wisdom, which is "an activity; a set of attitudes and a body of context" (Knight, 2006, p. 6). Like Knight, City University of New York (CUNY, 2000) forwarded that a philosophy is a type of thinking or "an activity of thought". It argued that it is more than a 'thought' and more so a critical and comprehensive thought and that it relates to "...resolving confusion, unmasking assumptions, revealing presupposition, distinguishing importance, testing positions, correction distortions, looking for reasons, examining worldviews and question conceptual frameworks" (Cuny, 2000). Brown University (2017) contended that it is a "systematic and critical study of fundamental questions that arise both in everyday life and through the practice of other disciplines" and denotes that philosophy analytical approach to the study of life, nature, situations and social existence of humans. Education, on the other hand, is defined as "...the harmonious development of the physical, the mental, and the spiritual powers [of an individual]" (White, 1952, p. 13). Unlike Mrs. White, using Webster's Dictionary, Yero (2001-2002) stated that Education imparts knowledge, skills and character. Hirsch (1987) saw knowledge as the fact or a body of information outside human development. Although Hirsch's definition of knowledge implies that knowledge is outside human constructions, Webster and Yero have narrow definitions of Education.

The deliberate attempt by the learner or by someone else to control (or guide, direct influence, or manage) a learning situation to bring about the attainment of a desired learning outcome (Laska, 1976, p. 7)

Laska's definition is more in keeping with formal or structured Education than with general Education. Therefore, Mrs. White's definition of Education is more comprehensive than the dictionary's perspective and is ideal for this paper. Hence, when Education and philosophy are combined, it deals with "...the meaning and purpose of life and education" (Knight, 2006, p. 5). Therefore, the philosophic issues in Education, as outlined by Knight (in Chapter Two), deal with 1) metaphysics, epistemology, and axiology, and these will be the focal issues of this paper.

Knight wrote, "Metaphysics is the branch of philosophy that deals with the nature of reality" (Knight, 2006, p. 5). Put, metaphysics is a subset of philosophy examining reality's nature. He further explained that this could be from an ontological perspective nature of being or reality-and a cosmological vantage point being a structured worldview (see also Dunn, 2005). Simply put, the issue of metaphysics seeks to examine the nature of the world or what the world is like and, in this, constitutes a reality. To comprehend the nature of the world does not appear to be metaphysical questions about its existence (ontology, fundamental issue, objective issue, causation, laws of nature and modality. Brown University wrote:

The rigorous study of these questions has often led metaphysicians to make surprising claims. Plato thought that alongside the observable, concrete world was a realm of eternal, unchanging abstract entities like Goodness, Beauty, and Justice. Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz claimed that the world was composed of tiny, indivisible souls called monads. Even today, contemporary metaphysicians doubt the existence of ordinary objects, deny the possibility of free will, and argue that our world is just one of a plurality of worlds (Brown University, 2017)

On examination of the perspective of Brown University, one can deduce that metaphysics examines reality from an objectivist paradigm, with concrete issues existing outside of human constructions. On this basis, metaphysicians seek to explore what is, rather than what ought to be and therefore account for their abstractions, hypothesis testing, measurement, impersonality examination of issues, rationality, and logic. Knight contended that metaphysics primarily concerns "what is ultimately real?" This question means that metaphysicians seek less to employ their construction and more to ascertain the Truth of reality. For this reason, Knight forwarded that there is a reliance on objectivism, measurement, rationality, logic, and abstractions, with less or little focus on personalised constructions. When philosophers speak of metaphysics, it mainly surrounds the concept of reality, which ranges from physicality to the sociology of existence. The nature of reality may be simple to complex, as is the case with the reality of the universe or life. Knight contextualised the degree of complexities of metaphysics this way, "The complete verification of any particular answer to these questions [the reality of the universe to life] is beyond the reality of human demonstration" (p. 16). He referred to questions such as 'How was human life created, the universe's existence, and how is energy created? However, metaphysics employs objectivism, impersonal deductions and inductions, measurement, logic, rationality, and a systematic thinking process. Historically, evidence existed that the Persians were lovers and practitioners of metaphysics (Iqbal et al., 2001). Iqbal linked the development of metaphysics to the Persian, which speaks to its long history and practice in society and the rise of positivistic models in knowledge-seeking (Recci, 1997).

To further explain metaphysics, Knight divided metaphysical questions into four major areas: 1) cosmology-study of theories on the origin, nature and development of the universe as an orderly system; 2) theology-the conceptions of and about God; 3) anthropology humanity; and 4) ontology study of nature of existence or 'what it means for anything to be' (Knight, 2006, p. 18). Hence, metaphysics and Education come in handy as philosophy impacts Education. As such, metaphysics, the notably agreed reality of life, explains the nature of the look of the classroom, how lessons are taught, how teachers are trained, the general thinking of the society, concepts expounded and believed, problem-solved, and Education should be in society. This perspective explains why Christian schools spend millions of dollars annually on an educational paradigm that reflects a Christian philosophy. The secular worldview (i.e. Cosmology) is not the same worldview for Christians, which is why a Christian education should reflect a Christian philosophy. The metaphysical issues are different for the Christian and the secular world. Therefore, one's educational system must reflect one's philosophy and not another's reality. As such, one's philosophy accounts for one's behaviour, thoughts, and interpretation of reality, which begs the question, 'How do you know what you know (i.e., epistemology)?

Epistemology and Education

Crotty proposes that epistemology is "the theory of knowledge embedded in the theoretical perspective and thereby in the methodology" (Crotty, 2005, p. 3). This concept of Crotty indicates that an epistemology accounts for how knowledge guides the interpretation of the world and physical, and it is the nexus of human behaviour. Furthermore, he notes that a theoretical perspective is "the philosophical stance informing the methodology and thus providing a context

for the process and grounding logic and criteria" (Crotty, 2005, p. 3), and this justifies why a particular epistemology shapes behaviour, actions, and decision-making of humankind. Based on Crotty's perspectives, the issue of epistemology lies at the nexus of all human actions, thinking and rationale of knowledge, as well as providing a guide to how they collect data, interpret the data, understand the issues, and justify beliefs. Outside of Michael Crotty, other scholars such as Alton (1989), BonJour (1985) and Zalta (2005) have examined the issue of epistemology and generally agreed that it is a way of acquiring knowledge. George Knight joined in the discussion like the scholars above. However, he took a different variation from the others by examining philosophy and Education, with epistemology being an element of epistemology.

While Crotty's epistemology defines the research process, Knight's perspective is from the broad area of philosophy and the philosophical stance related to Education. Knight did not provide a categorisation of epistemologies as viewed by Crotty in his book, 'Philosophy and Education: An Introduction in Christian Perspective'. Crotty classifies epistemologies into three main areas: 1) constructionism, 2) subjectivism, and 3) objectivism (Crotty, 2005, p. 5). He contends, "Constructionism is an epistemology embodied in many theoretical perspectives, including symbolic interactionism as this is generally understood" (p. 3). Crotty continues, "Objectivism is the epistemological view that things exist as meaningful entities independently of consciousness and experience, that they have truth and meaning residing in them as objects" (Crotty, 2005, p. 5). On the other hand, Knight (2006), instead of using objectivism, uses Idealism (p. 43-49) and Realism to refer to what Crotty classifies as subjectivism and constructionism (pp. 50-54).

Both Crotty and Knight concur that objectivists/idealists see from the premise of absolute truths, reality in ideas, thoughts, minds, or selves and is about material objects or forces. Unlike Crotty, Knight (2006) went to the origins of objectivism/idealism and indicated it existed before Christ by Plato (427-347 B.C.) or developed in the fourth century. Subjectivism/ constructionism/ realism is an alternative epistemology to idealism/objectivism as it opposes the abstractiveness of Truth or the absolute Truth that exists somewhere. Knight argues that "Truth through observation. The epistemology of Realism is a common sense approach to the world that bases its methods upon sensory perception, and this Crotty is called subjectivism or constructionism. Crotty issue of subjectivism or interpretivism owes its origin to Max Weber, who argued that the only way of viewing the world- social and physical is through the lens of objectivism (Weber, 1949, 1974, 1981). Both Crotty and Knight forward other epistemological viewpoints in the acquisition of knowledge than idealism/objectivism and using W.E. Hocking's words emphasise this perspective, "realism as a general temper of mind is a disposition to keep ourselves and our preferences out of our judgement of things, letting the objects speak for themselves" (in Knight, 2006, p. 51). To the realist or the subjectivist-constructionist, reality is a way of seeing, feeling, and tasting, and these are personal in trying to understand how things function or work.

The dominant epistemology is idealism/objectivism, which may be partially due to its long tradition compared to the newness of others. Idealism has substantially influenced the educational landscape, reflected in curriculums and the teaching-learning process in schools. Idealism or objectivism accounts for our emphasis on perfection, correctness, and truths that drive disciplines such as mathematics, biology, physics, accounting, demography and economics. Knight opines, "Pure mathematics is also an appropriate discipline since it is based upon

universal a priori principles and provides methods for dealing with abstractions" (p. 48). From Knight's perspective, idealism/objectivism does not allow for the inclusion of feelings, intuition, sensory, spiritual, and emotions. Hence, this can explain why there is an emphasis on truth-finding in contemporary society, which is because of the legacy of idealism/objectivism. Knight puts it this way, "If Truth is ideas, then the curriculum must be formed around those subjects that bring students into contact with ideas. The idealist [or objectivist] curriculum emphasises the study of the humanities. For many idealists, the proper study for people is humanity. History and literature study are central to their curricular systems because these subjects help students most in their search for the ideal humanity and society" (Knight, 2006, p. 48). From the previous perspective, why do the idealist/objectivist abandon a spiritual epistemology and not want it taught in school because it contradicts the premise of Idealism? Spirituality has no absolute truth, which is the non-inclusion of idealism/objectivism in this space.

White (1952) warns against the narrow conceptualisation of Education by many as she writes, "True education means more than the perusal of a certain study" (p. 13). Hence, it would be myopic for people to only advance Idealism as the ideal way when the world is complex and comprises many elements, including feelings, taste, sight, and intuition. Knight writes:

To the realist, students function like an organism that can, through sensory experience, perceive the world's natural order and come into contact with 'reality'. Pupils can see, feel, and taste. The world is a 'thing,' and pupils can know it through their senses....Suppose the student is considered a spectator viewing the universal machine. In that case, the teacher is a sophisticated observer who knows much about the laws of the cosmos. Thus, the focus of the realist curriculum is on demonstrable facts and the structural frameworks of the academic disciplines that give meaning to those facts (Knight, 2006, pp. 52-53)

One can deduce from the realism epistemology that the instructor/facilitator/teacher needs demonstration, role-play and illustrations in the classroom curriculum. To go further, Knight writes, "The modern realist favours demonstrations in the classroom, field trips, and the use of audio-visual aids in situations where field trips would not be practical or would be too time-consuming. In contemporary society, there is evidence of a legacy of Idealism in the curriculum, and alternative epistemological viewpoints, such as Realism, are also present. Courses such as auto mechanics, biology, chemistry, food and nutrition, hospitality management, tourism management, medicine and nurses, and many others require demonstrations, field trips, and so on, et cetera. However, the legacy of Idealism is to study the dominant epistemology in the educational curriculum as it influences teaching approaches, including truth searching, proofs, testability of results and logical deductions of argument.

Neo-scholasticism "is a new or updated form of scholasticism that emphasises and appeals to human reason. Neo-scholasticism is, therefore, a modern statement of a traditional philosophy. In twentieth-century educational thought, neo-scholasticism was a philosophical position with two branches. The most important segment in educational establishments was the religious branch, which formed the substructure of Roman Catholic educational philosophy. The second division, the secular branch, was represented by such individuals as Mortimer J. Adler and Robert M. Hutchins. Their beliefs were often labelled 'rational humanism', 'classical realism', and 'secular

neo-Thomism" (Knight, 2006, pp. 55-56). On examination of the perspective above, it is a mixed epistemological stance in which there are elements of Idealism, Realism and interpretivism-spiritual understanding of one's world. The issues can be taken from a research perspective and outside of philosophy to grasp the problem of knowledge acquisition from other perspectives.

The leadership discourse had its genesis long before humans began documenting information on tablets, scrolls, walls, or any other material for preservation. The leadership issue began with Yahweh, the Almighty God of the Jews, making man Adam and giving him dominion over all things. In Genesis 1 verse 28, the Bible says, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and every living creature that moves on the ground." This was Yahweh's instruction to the first man, Adam. One can deduce from the instruction above of Yahweh that humans follow his lead. Therefore, leadership began long before we knew how to document our experiences and assist others. A question that arises here is whether Adam was a manager or a leader, and this commences the discourse of the former and the latter that has continued to this day. This paper, a synthesis of the course Issues in Leadership Research, takes the discourse of leadership from long ago to the current, provides information from empirical perspectives and charts a path for further work.

Leadership

Interestingly, leadership interfaces with all facets of human existence and drives social, psychological and physical development. The issue of leadership extends to all aspects of human bodily existence and to man's spirituality, which started many centuries ago. Stone and Patterson (2005) opined that.

Leadership, and the study of it, has roots in the beginning of civilisation. Egyptian rulers, Greek heroes, and biblical patriarchs all have one thing in common—leadership. There are numerous definitions and theories of leadership; however, there are enough similarities to conclude that leadership is an effort to influence and the power to induce compliance (Wren, 1995). Our work, work environment, motivation to work, leaders, leadership, leadership style, and many other work-related variables have been studied for almost two centuries (Stone & Patterson, 2005, p. 1).

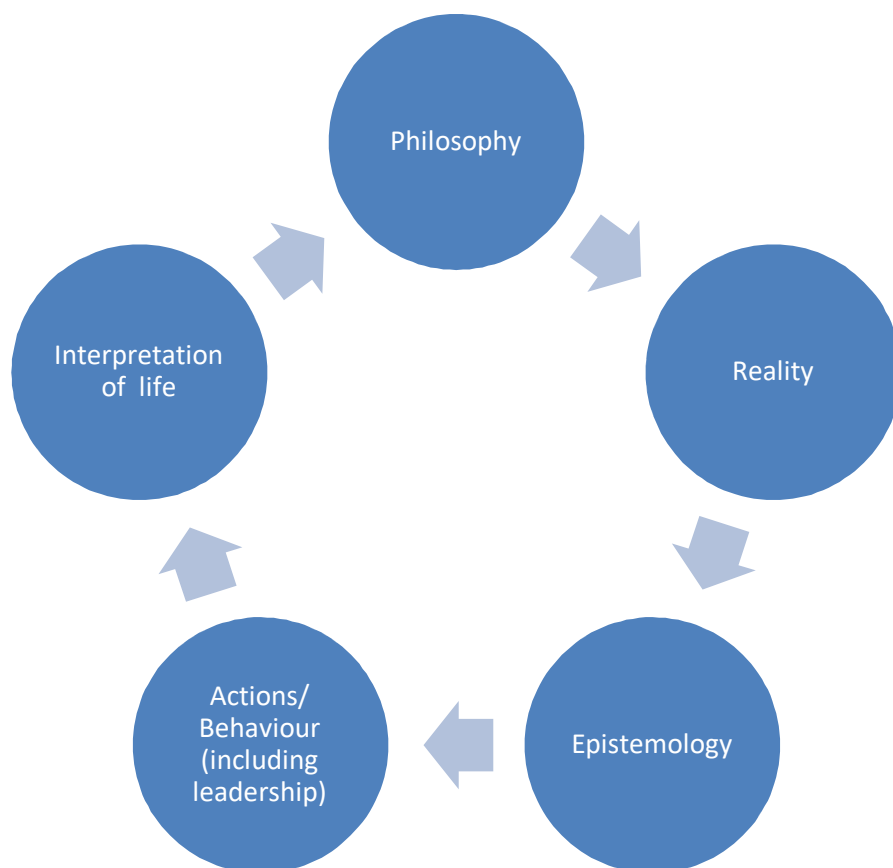
Based on the perspective forwarded by Stone and Patterson (2005), the matter of leadership rose from the bowels of civilisation and interfered with all tenets of man's milieu. Although their proposition is extensive and covers almost everything, nowhere in their general writing did they include/discuss leadership from the perspective of man and spirituality. Another limitation of Stone and Patterson's perspective is that leadership dates back to civilisation. The researchers are not in agreement with such a perspective as the English word 'civilisation' is associated with 16th-century French 'civilise' (Sullivan, 2009), which comes from 'civilised conditions' and matter that came from the 1760s out of France (Adams, 1966; Haviland, 2013; Wright, 2004; Llobera, 2003; Fernandez-Armesto, 2001; Boyden, 2004; Solms-Laubach, 2007).

Civilisation is the culture of a society, not merely the society itself. As we can extrapolate, the matter of leadership beginning from civilisation can be extrapolated to the first man, his family and the function of that first society and culture. However, there has to be a consensus on an

accepted definition of the terminology. Surprisingly, the discourse on leadership is not extensively embedded in spirituality as this phenomenon is critical to the functioning of all cultures, particularly in Stone and Patterson's writing. Still, Andrews University, Greenleaf, Shumaker, and others brought the matter to the course. In examining leadership, this course brought in all tenets of man's culture, including spirituality, which takes the discussion from history to definition and other areas.

Is there a connection between knowledge (epistemology), reality (ontology), and leadership?

Having outlined the issue of the different philosophical perspectives that frame people's reality, behaviour and actions as well as how they interpret the world, the question of '**Is there a connection with knowledge (epistemology) and reality (ontology) and leadership?**' can now be extensively examined for a conclusion. Using scholars such as Knight, argued that one's reality is based on their philosophical stance and that his frame how knowledge is garnered and the world is viewed. With this said, from the various literature that one's epistemology is derived from one's philosophy or reality, and the leader, as well as subordinates, will act based on their reality or general philosophy of life, which is framed by cultured socialisation of the trainers' philosophy and experiences in life. Leadership, therefore, must be framed with a particular philosophy of the individual, and this reality will predicate the person's actions or behaviour. The knowledge from this philosophy. We can best express the above in a diagrammatic form; see Figure 1 below:



Conclusion

Education, therefore, is carried out in a particular epistemology, and knowledge is a paradigm that fashions attitudes, actions, perceptions, and interpretations of the social and physical space. "Epistemology, like metaphysics, stands at the base of human thought and activity. Educational systems deal in knowledge, and therefore epistemology is a primary determinant of educational beliefs and practices," Knight states (Knight, 2006, p. 26). An epistemological view of the educator or, to a large degree, the educational system dictates what is knowledge, assimilated, and interpreted, ultimately guiding beliefs and actions. With the view by pragmatic theorists, many modern philosophers, that there is no absolute or static truth, this takes away from the validity of using an idealism/objectivism epistemology in the education system. While pragmatists offer some insights into expanding knowledge acquisition beyond idealism/objectivism, Realism offers some truth. It explains why educators have begun using experimentations, lab practice, field trips and demonstrations. Some scholars and philosophers believe there is no absolute truth to be discovered so that somebody can obtain knowledge subjectively or objectively. The issue is that knowledge can be obtained/ acquired by authority, senses, revelation, reason, intuition, experimentation, and error, so ruling out one epistemology is to fragment education, as was inferred by Ellen G. White. White (1952) warns against the narrow conceptualisation of Education by many as she writes, "True education means more than the perusal of a certain study" (p. 13), and for this reason, a holistic approach to Education. We can align all the epistemologies in the quest for knowledge against educational fragmentation and subjective objectivity under the bias of Absolute Idealism. A holistic epistemology influences education, including the senses, feelings, intuition, and spirituality used to search for and understand the social and physical milieu. One's philosophy frames the person's reality and accounts for knowledge acquisition, which later directs the actions of the leaders or even the issue of leadership. Therefore, leadership is only a subset of an individual's philosophy, which frames their reality, interprets what and accounts for one's reality, how knowledge is attained, and values in leadership discourse.

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