

# Reflection on Lonergan's Transcendental Philosophy of Education As Way of Redeeming African University Education so as to Foster Intellectual, Moral and Religious Conversion Among the Students.

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## Abstract

Africa has been regarded as backward not only because of her social, economic and political situations, but also, because of the kind of education that is offered in our learning institution. It is not hard to depict the fact that Africans have embraced a kind of education that is not suitable and which can not be sustained by their environment. Like Nyerere, many great thinkers have maintained that Africans have got accustomed to European type of education that thrives in western world which is developed and it has failed to adequately work in Africa. The reason behind this is that education system best suited for African is that which prepares them for a future that is open to them. Secondly the kind of education that is more suitable to Africa must take in consideration African values such as respect for life, integrity, responsibility and dignity of human life. Third, a strong emphasis for both theoretical and practical arm of knowledge in all its levels of learning is desirable in Africa. This value must be inculcated not only in primary and secondary schools, but also, in African universities where higher learning is conducted and brought into term. Consequently, education in African universities must be seen to inculcate the most essential and fundamental principles of life. Such principle should promote individual development and self-fulfillment of each member of the society. Moreover, they should foster in students sound moral and religious values and strong pillars of social equality and responsibility.

The aim of this paper is to show that African universities can be improved and tailored so as offer a true and authentic education build man not only intellectually but also, morally and religiously. However, I will endeavor to show that this can only be achieved if we attest to the fact that every act of genuine learning is supposed to be transformative and educative, and it should lead us closer to the core of being. Moreover, I will show that as a method, learning is a path to self knowledge and it possesses the following transcendental guidelines: be attentive, be intelligent, be reasonable, and be responsible. Finally through the appropriation of this paper, it will be realized that education is an application of Lonergan's *Insight* and it leads to formation of person's intellectual skills, forms him, so as to become responsible, and religious citizen. The climax of this paper will be to demonstrate that education is ideally a process of a holistic conversion of the human person- intellectually, morally, and religiously, and this begs to our topic of discussion.

**Key words:** Transcendental philosophy, education, holistic conversion.

## 1. Introduction

Bernard Lonergan, a western philosopher of education has highlighted a unique and elaborate method of education that will ensure that university education is not only training learned and intelligent knowers, but also, morally and religiously converted beings. This method is called transcendental method of education. I will corroborate this method in trying to argue that in Africa we can improve and develop a sound and authentic education.

In the contemporary society, the term transcendental has been variously used and emphasized. In this paper, I will use this term to mean the kind of philosophy which refers to the activity of the self (me and you) as a knowing subject seeking itself through personal appropriation of one's own rational self-consciousness. It involves knowing the whole process of knowing, that is, experience, understanding and judgment and finally moral judgment of our actions. This process of knowing is not without an object of knowing. Knowing in a proper sense is knowing being.

Lonergan's transcendental philosophy of education probes into the essence of learning and is developed in relation to the theme in his work the *Insight* which can be described as self appropriation, learning about oneself, and discovering oneself. In this journey of learning about oneself, one realizes that education and philosophy are intimately and intrinsically linked. Education is the continuous revitalization of learning about life. Intellectually, education means the formation of understanding as a response to the calling of being, which is the end of our knowing. In other words, to know is to comprehend being in its totality. However, in order for us to comprehend being (meaning), one requires three forms of conversion as indicated by the topic of presentation.

First, he needs intellectual conversion, which is the radical clarification and consequently the elimination of an exceedingly stubborn and misleading myth concerning the reality, objectivity and human knowing. This involves the identification and distinction of the two principles of knowing so that we can turn to viable criteria by which we determine our learning and knowing. This is done by being faithful to the dynamic cognitional structure which is operative in proper human knowing.

The second type of conversion which is required is the moral conversion. This is generally at the level of our actions. This kind of conversion changes the criterion of one's decision and choices from satisfaction to values. Said briefly, moral conversion is a change from doing which is motivated by our desires, feelings, and personal satisfaction and pleasure to doing which is motivated and informed by being attentive, being intelligent, being rational and being responsible about what we do to ourselves and to others. This is important to education and it plays a key role in guiding educational programs so that they achieve an integration of the theoretical and practical dimension of learning.

Lastly, the third type of conversion which philosophy incorporates to education is religious conversion. This is simply that moment of efficacious change of the direction of one's life when all the human pursuit of the true and the good is transcended in total self-surrender to the ultimate ground of all existence.

### 1.1 Transcendental Method

Perhaps before we tackle what is meant by transcendental method let us start from the term transcendence and immanence. The terms transcendence and immanence are always opposed to each other. By immanence we mean that exercise by which we struggle to attain knowledge through the activity of understanding and judging. We appeal to the process that takes place within our cognitive operation. Brian Cronin, in *Foundation of Philosophy*, agrees with this and contends that "awareness of how understanding unfolds reveals that there are norms which are immanent and operative in that unfolding. (Therefore) the rules for correct understanding are immanent in intelligence. This is how the mind works, how it is designed," (Cronin, 1999: 37). Consequently, paying attention to this knowing becomes the content of our acts. Furthermore, the immanent process is a characteristic feature of the polymorphic nature of the subject. That is, the subject operates in different level of consciousness, which are interrelated, yet distinguished by their meaning, which they assign to objectivity, reality and epistemic value. Transcendence is a unique term. Lonergan uses this term in many ways, but for our present purpose, I will highlight two senses and I will introduce another sense that I will call ordinary sense. Transcendence in the ordinary sense means moving beyond where we are. In ordinary language if some one said that 'you need to transcend this or that', he implies that you need to go beyond that which you see, that which you hear, that which you have witnessed and go beyond all this in the sense of thinking through to the end. In other word, Think issues further and further, don't be blinded. This kind of thinking actually presupposes the act of questioning.

The second sense highlights and complements the first sense, which doesn't seem to contain the intellectual force. To transcend is the act of going beyond not in arbitrary sense or just pushing in any direction without something motivating but interestingly in an epistemological progressive manner. We transcend our experience through inquiry, insight to understanding, and understanding through formulation, grasping of evidence to the reasonableness in affirmation. Lonergan writes: "So inquiry, insight and formulation do not merely reproduce the content of sensible experience but go beyond it. So content with mere objects of supposing, defining, considering, but go beyond them to the universe of facts, of being, of what is affirmed truly and really is," (Lonergan, 1967: 635).

In scientific language, one transcends from relating things to himself (description in common sense knowing) to relating thing to one another (explanation in understanding) transcendence, in brief, is the elementary matter of raising further question. Third, Lonergan introduces a new dynamism of meaning to this conception of

transcendence. He says, "Transcendence then ...means a development of man's knowledge relevant to a development in man's being," (Lonergan, 1968: 636). Therefore transcendence involves movement from the experience of acts of experiencing, to the experience of the acts of understanding, and finally to the stage of the experience of passing judgment of fact and of value in ethics. This development involves the mind in mastering its own manifold operating not only on the horizontally in the levels of its dynamic structure, but also by vertical finality, which underlies the principle of development. Lonergan, further maintains, "but man is in the process of development in as much as he is intelligent and reasonable, free and responsible, he has to grasp and affirm, accept and execute his own development. It is to extrapolate not only horizontal but also vertically..." (Lonergan, 1968: 636). Thus, one's way of looking at things develops because of the dynamic unrestricted attention and the notion of being that operates beneath every cognitional pursuit in a transcendental manner. The physical eye is transformed into the intellectual eye, the eye which grasps the intelligible and the verifiable. But the immanent source of transcendence in man is this same critical spirit, which we have identified as the detached, disinterested, unrestricted desire to know. And this desire is the origin of all his questions, learning, education, and living. The notion of transcendence reveals that in order to move from one level of consciousness to another, we need transcendence, which is, the elementary motivation of raising further questions which are brought by the desire to know.

Moreover, transcendental philosophy of education is the one and only key to education in Africa in the sense that it determines the meaning of the key educational variables, that is, knowledge, reality and objectivity. It does this in that the form of consciousness which is dominant at any particular time takes root and assigns the meaning of the above variable from where every other conception will depend in philosophy. But philosophy is meant to deal with this conception and they influence its utterance and contribution in every aspect. Transcendence, also, can be attributed to be the key to philosophy of education because its spirit is to move beyond every aspect through questions till we find firm foundation of what we can call knowledge, reality, and objectivity. Transcendence enables one to climb the ladder of human knowing from experience to understanding and from understanding to judgment. During these shifts consciousness will shift depending on the activity that is operating. Both of these claims can rightfully be achieved if the desire to know sets its detachment and disinterestedness in opposition to one's attached and interested sensitivity and inter subjectivity.

Transcendental method is what flows from the intrinsic dynamism of the human knowing. This method of transcendence requires the heightening of one's self consciousness, that is, applying one's cognitional capabilities to four epistemological precepts. These precepts are: Be attentive, Be intelligent, Be reasonable, and Be responsible. To be attentive means to be familiar and conscious of the experience both external and internal. Without being attentive, one cannot be able to acquire the necessary data for possible understanding. To be intelligent is to be open minded so that one can be able to understand properly without being biased. This requires one to formulate, suppose and make further and inclusive inquiry into the matter being brainstormed. To be reasonable is simply to be critical to what you understand. This method is not only important in redeeming African education but also timely so as to produce students who are intellectually sound, morally upright and religiously converted.

## 1.2 Knowledge Proceeds and Precedes Education as a Term

There are two fundamental questions that are appropriate in this section. These questions are: can one be educated if he has not acquired proper knowledge? Can we acquire any speck of knowledge if we are not empirically, intelligently, and rationally conscious? These questions are trick and need a preliminary discussion.

To start with, the pursuit of knowledge is a collaboratively conscious, intelligent, rational, deliberate and methodical effort. Knowledge is not accidental but deliberate. It is deliberate in the sense that one has to develop the desire to know and direct and direct it methodically in a process which is transcendental starting from experience, understanding and finally reasonable judgment. In other words, human knowing precedes the act of educating and proceeds education. This kinds of activities which we call human knowing is a dynamic structure in that it refers to a whole whose parts are cognitional operation. These operations, so to speak, are uniquely distinct yet functionally related to each other.

To be explicit human knowing as a dynamic structure specifically consists in experiencing, understanding, reasoning, and deciding. These activities, at all cost, should be the focus of education as it proceeds in its mission of enhancing a true and authentic human existence. According to Lonergan, a firm philosophy of education must be build in epistemological fourfold levels of consciousness which are made up of different activities yet they are related functionally to their logical end. Briefly, said, their interrelatedness is such that when we speak of one, we

necessarily refer to the other three along with it.

Consequently one would argue that the process and methodology which are to be preferred in education in African universities should take into consideration the above fact. That knowing which is the object of African education is never complete without experience, understanding, reasoning and deciding. Our knowing must inform our action.

### 1.3 Dynamic Structure of Knowing and Knowledge of Being

The dynamic structure of knowing which operates collaboratively and which consists of functionally interrelated operations leads us to a better understanding of knowledge as put forward by the title of this paper. In deed, it goes without saying that every act of any of these operations point to the universe of being. By being I mean the object of our knowing and this is 'the reason' why we know. You will agree with me that no one could be called educated if he/she does not have true knowledge of the world where he lives, the people he mingles with and the environment where he operates. In other words, education in african university should make one to understand himself gain self knowledge, which will help him to live well with other, thus attaining an authentic existence among others. Accordingly, "the dynamic structure of human knowing intends being. Being is the originating desire of human knowing," (Lonergan, 1967: 228). Without being human being cannot think and without thinking, they can not know and get educated. Being calls forth our cognitional activities and brings them all into a dynamic, moving unity of inter-related operations. Conclusively, one could say that human knowing is a mode of being. As such the former is capable of reaching an objective mark. For the objectivity of human knowing is a triple cord: there is an experiential component that resides in the givenness of relevant data; there is a normative component that resides in the exigencies of intelligence and rationality guiding the process of knowing from data to judging; there is an absolute component that is reached when reflective understanding combines the normative and the experiential elements into a virtually unconditioned i.e a conditioned whose conditions are fulfilled, (Lonergan, 1967: 230). It is in this case that one would confidently say that he has acquired knowledge methodically and formally.

### 1.4 Learning/ Education as a Way of Broadening Horizon

Human beings are capable of knowing things which are within their horizon. Horizons differ from person to person. Thus, what we always know appears to us in a horizon of proportionate being, which is the intellects' immediate object. In deed this goes without saying that we can know to the extent that being lies within our horizon. But what is this horizon? A horizon is a maximum field of vision from a determinate standpoint. How is this related to education in African universities? This concept is important in the learning process. This is because it determines the limit, the frontier, the opening of being. This has a big implication to education and the learning process. For instance, in the field of education, learning is recognized as the process of broadening of one's horizons. This horizon can be broadened by the horizontal and vertical dimension. Horizontal broadening of our horizon is to increase the attentiveness to all the experience that goes around us. Experience broadens our horizontal horizon in that it brings more data to our life thus lengthening the area of operation of the understanding activities.

Vertical horizon refers to the levels of the cognitional structure which one has to transcend in order to attain the finality of knowing. This helps one to move from the level of experience, to the level of understanding and finally to the level of judgment. Vertical horizon can be analogized to climbing a tree. If you climb a tree, you will increase your horizon. You will be able to see wider and broader because you have heightened your standpoint. Mwalimu Nyerere captured this contention in his allegory of the mountain when he maintained that education is a tool for liberation. It liberates people by heightening their horizon and broadening the way they view the reality. In the Allegory of the mountain, the mountain depicts knowledge, and not just any knowledge but authentic knowledge. He insisted that in order for education to be meaningful, it must help man to get out of dangers of flood, that is, to get away from the diseases, misery, poverty, among others, (Nyerere, 1978: 36). Climbing the mountain of knowledge here depicts people getting into heights of being able to see reality globally for they have reached the apex, which is referred above as a higher view point. Very significant especially to us philosophers of education is the 'climbing'. Climbing depicts the various struggles involved in acquiring knowledge. This must be emphasized in African universities where people finish university education yet remain the same in terms of their disposition. The process of knowing is not easy or automatic. It involves a lot of painstaking activities which of experiencing, understanding and judgment. It is a struggle between biasness, prejudices and ulterior motives of imagination and intellection which is guided by being attentive, being

intelligent, being reasonable and being responsible.

Anybody who is educated does not remain on the apex but goes back to the real issues which need solution. It is in this that I admire Nyerere's emphasis that education, especially in Africa, should liberate individual; socially, economically, psychologically, culturally, physically, intellectually, morally and spiritually, (Tanzania Educational Journal, 1974: 5). However this is not the end of education, after appropriation of knowledge and we are liberated, we should come back to the valleys of challenges and lead and urge others to climb for education has a social dimension without which, it remain unauthentic, and invaluable. This contention is shared by Plato's Allegory of the cave. Plato as a philosopher of education insisted that those people who are privileged to see the light and the real objects as they appear in the world should come back to cave to enlighten others of their discovery and urge them to turn in the direction that can lead them to true knowledge. Now if learning is essentially the process of broadening one's horizons, then learning demands a change in our outlook. In other words, there is a difference between a person who has learnt three computer programs and the one who has just began. The difference is that the one who has already reached three quarter way has changed his outlook while the other just starting, has a meager way of looking at things.

Broadly speaking, this is the challenge of philosophy of education and it is only philosophers who can rightfully tackle this problem. They can only do this by recognizing that it is learning how to cope with the exigency of being. This is to say that at the heart of the learning pursuit is a fundamental correlation of being. Therefore, the process of learning in educational field should help people to broaden their horizon and increase their view. The climax of learning in education is the attainment of a higher view point.

#### 1.5 A Correlation Between Philosophy and Education

All of us are familiar of the extrapolated debate on how philosophy is validated to education. My familiarity with the debate is that it is carried out by people who have learnt how to memorize and state various positions and theories word by word. For them to be educated is to state theories which have so far been constructed in their realm or discipline. To us as philosophers, this doesn't amount to what we call education. This conclusion needs to be strongly defended. Let us start by stating basic facts about philosophy of education.

Philosophy is a discipline whose method is pedagogical, (Lonergan, 1968:398). Because of this there is virtually no issue in education which is more fundamental than philosophy of education. The importance of philosophy to education cannot be denigrated in any open discussion. Philosophy is what given education its vision and direction, without which education loses its social significance. For simple reason that philosophy endeavors to us, through a habit of committed thinking, to discover our being in ourselves, one can competently say that philosophy is heuristically and metaphysically pedagogical (methodical). In a general sense, though not totally exclusive, education is the lifelong process of coming to know the truth of who we are. This reminds us of the greatest maxim which has been cherished since antiquity; Socratic maxim 'know thy self'. This captures the complex meaning and mission of education to man. To be educated is to know thyself, that is, being able to reach a responsible self awareness where responsible self awareness suggests the ethical injunction: be thyself in truth, freedom, and goodness. The weight of this imperative, which we have identified to be central to education basically lies in its transformative character to effect a radical change in the way we see ourselves, others and the world. This is what has been captured by my topic of discussion which is conversion, intellectually, morally, and religiously. This is to say that the purpose of education is really to bring about integral transformation of the human situation through habituation of critical reflection. In his lectures on education in Cincinnati, Lonergan says, "Philosophy is a reflection on the human situation at an ultimate level. It is a fundamental thinking about the human situation. And education is the great means for transforming the human situation. It changes people's minds and wills. Consequently, philosophy and education are interdependent," (Lonergan, 1959: 5).

They are interdependent on the sense that philosophy is the reflective component and education is the active component, at the ultimate level of reflection and action in human life. Ideally speaking, philosophy guides education. It is the guide and the inspiration of education. It clarifies and sets goals, trains the mind to think and be critical, opens the mind to major concerns, thus vindicating the desire to know. Education too does a great deal to philosophy. Education is the verification, that is, the pragmatic justification of philosophy. Furthermore, another intrinsic relation that is exhibited by philosophy is concerned with social action. It is a critical engagement in the practice of truthful living. It deals with issues pertaining to man while living with others and in the society and the meaning they make of all things.

Moreover, education is viewed as an integration of the theoretical and practical dimension of learning. As such, education is an existential horizon and this can only have significance only within a horizon of meaningful integration. This requires a philosophy which is methodical, critical and integral. Nyerere on while emphasizing of what Education for Self Reliance held, “The education given to the young must be geared to making them an integral, and more useful, part of the society in which they live and which they must serve..... education is to be made an instrument of liberation, and for it to have that quality it must strive to integrate the school system,” (Nyerere, 2004: 5).

By methodical we mean that philosophy as the reflection of the ultimate level should attempt for the viability of an intelligent course of action. Also, philosophy is described to be critical, in so far as it ascertains the veracity of statement and is integral, insofar as philosophy proposes a unity of vision.

Education is as we have noted a process of learning to come to self knowledge. This kind of learning does not depend upon someone or something else other than ourselves. It is something that we do in ourselves and for ourselves in conscious freedom.

#### 1.6 Education in Relation to Self Appropriation or Interiority

In this paper we have insisted that education is not about reading books and clamming the theories that there is in our profession. Education looked from this perspective will be far much fetched. Instead this paper establishes that education as the process of letting every learning experience become a creative moment of insight, that is, become an act of unified understanding. In other words, every genuine learning is transformative as it is educative. It helps us to learn more about our being and any genuine learning must head us to the core of our being, which is the good. This focus should be brought to completion in order to improve African universities. In words of Nyerere, education must liberate the individual of the society. And education is supposed to be liberative. This aspect is necessary and essential for education in African universities. It attains this aim in so far as it is able to help man to know and identify the good, that is, good life. Thus, for him education to be wholesome it should liberate the mind and the body of a human person. In this case, it becomes complete. It is incomplete if it merely teaches a human person only to be an efficient toolmaker or user who neglects his/ her own personality (being) as well as inter-personal relationship, (The Tanzanian Education Journal, 1974: 4). But what is this good? It is what we all aim at. It is what gives purpose to our every action. It is education which fundamentally sets a sense of a sound approximation of the good. Consequently, without embracing genuine education in African universities, one cannot be able to acquire a true sense of knowledge of the good.

#### 1.7 Transcendental Method: A Guide to the Proper Learning Process

It would do us a great harm if we do not realize this important consideration and tackle it effectively. Let us proceed by way of question. What is it that guides our learning process? The answer to this question is not far from reach. First, learning requires a set of self- regulative, on going, inter dependent process. One of these processes is method. A method is a way of learning. The study of these methods is what educationists call pedagogy. According to Lonergan, learning is self correcting method of discovering oneself and thereby being oneself by discriminating of the contents of knowledge. As a method, it aims at achieving a heightened self-consciousness. It leads to self knowledge, self appropriation and self affirmation. In order to achieve this goal, learning has to be guided by fourfold transcendental guideline: be attentive, be intelligent, be reasonable and be responsible, (Lonergan, 1973: 20).

To be attentive is simply to be aware of what is there to be experienced. It is as phenomenological as analytical. Looking at your own experience, you can be able to identify what will happen to learning process or education if one is not attentive. Attention is a vital element without this student will not have an experience of knowing and experiencing knowing process during the engagement. Student must be involved right from the beginning so that they can be able to learn by themselves as opposed to being told. In a nutshell the quality of awareness or attention goes a far way in determining the quality and quantity of data that they will attend to. Thus this precept guides the learning process without which learning process cannot commerce.

Be intelligent:

I suppose you will agree with me that there are people who are intelligent and other are not. What do you think is the difference? The difference lies in one being intelligent to what he or she understands, in sorting what is important, significant, relevant and essential from unimportant, insignificant, irrelevant and non essential. There are right questions which should be asked in order to understand something fully and there are wrong question

which may lead us a stray. It is wise to say that from right questions there come right answers. In *Foundation of Philosophy: Lonergan's Cognitive Theory and Epistemology*, Cronin argues that the untaught questioning is the pure, detached and unrestricted desire to know. One questions about data of experience and is triggered to move towards understanding and judgment, (Cronin, 1999: 259). To be precise, therefore, to be intelligent about things implies a rational assessment of their nature. In Education, this is adapted when we emphasis on truthfulness and being realistic in our understanding.

The third transcendental presents a demand to be reasonable. To be reasonable is when one becomes critical enough to form one's decisions. Usually within the process of understanding one is confronted with various aspect of what is being sort and this brings about different fashions. Again there are many presuppositions, formulations, theories, which come up as possible understanding but all cannot be true to the same phenomenon or reality. This demands that one has to exercise reasonability in order to ascertain which fashion is the best and rightful explanation of the reality. This is a critical moment and one has to form a critical mode which is preceded by the question; is it true or is it not true? To be brief, being reasonable means to have a critical evaluation of the evidence that justifies the conclusion .... The goal now is the real, the true, the actual universe and the laws and relations that can be correctly affirmed to be operating, (Cronin, 1999: 347).

The forth imperative triggers a further question towards the process of knowing. This imperative demands that one has to be responsible on what he knows. It introduces questions like is it right or wrong? Or is it good or bad? Human beings are not only knowers but also doers. There is an exigency knowing and doing. According to Cronin, this forth level "recognizes the human person as not only knowing but also deciding, acting, implementing and oriented to God," (Cronin, 1999: 346).

#### 1.8 Education and Transcendental Method

According to Aristotle it is true that each one of us by the virtue of being human, we have unrestricted desire to know, (Aristotle, 1966: 981a15). However, our unrestricted desire to know requires a method which enables us to use our mind appropriately and concretely so that we can unfold our intellectual capabilities of attention, intelligence, reasonability and responsibility. According to Lonergan, learning must involve a method. By method we mean "a normative pattern of recurrent and related operations yielding cumulative and progressive results," (Lonergan: 1973: 4). This method must be transcendental in the sense that it goes beyond the confines of the knowing subject. This method is unique and enriching because it involves the examination of the operations of our rational self consciousness. This in a kind of way confirms Socrates dictum 'know thyself'.

Admittedly, out of this methodic approach to knowledge, we can rightfully conclude without any shadow of doubt that university education should make one to realise that he or she is a dynamic knower; a methodic interpreter, a discursive doer and a committed subject. He ought to have all these and perform all this operations.

#### 1.9 Education: a journey to Intellectual Development

Self appropriation, as we have noted, is a vital condition of achieving the sense of one's own humanity. We are human because we are rational, moral and religious. Thus, through self appropriation, we are constituted as transcendent beings. Furthermore, self appropriation helps us to make a methodic movement towards the ideal of knowledge. In order to achieve a complete self appropriation, the following reflective operation of cognition must be fulfilled, that is, self attention, self appropriation and self affirmation. These three operations further constitute the process of self transcendence. Accordingly, human beings achieve authenticity in self transcendence. This transcendental notion, that is, our question for intelligence, for reflection and deliberation, and the genuine fulfillment in answering them is what we call intellectual and moral conversion which should be realised and reinforced in African universities. In other words, self transcended is mediated in conversion. Self transcendence is our engagement in answering the basic question: what am I doing when I am knowing, Why is doing that knowing, What do I know when I do that? (Lonergan, 1973: 25).

Intellectual, moral and religious conversions are intimately related to education and they are *conditio sine quo non* for any sound and authentic education in African universities. The relationship can be analogized as that of wax and wax shape. In other words, we cannot have education which is mediated in true learning process, without involving the turn around and revision of people's position about the reality, knowledge and objectivity. This amounts to saying that conversion is a total surrender to the human spirit: be attentive, be intelligent, be reasonable, be responsible and be in love.

This discussion really captures the theme and title of this paper. Education in African universities should be transcendental i.e. responding to our spirit of being attentive, being intelligent, being reasonable, being good and loving. One cannot be called educated if he is not intellectually, morally and religiously converted. Education is integral and holistically formative. This is because these three conversions are what education aim at and they are the fundamentals and momentous change in the human reality. Nyerere finds his way into this discussion when he maintained that education must liberate only the intellectual part of human being, but also socially, economically, psychologically, culturally, physically, and spiritually, (Tanzanian Education Journal, 1974: 5)

Moreover, education, or learning process, or self appropriation are all geared towards uprooting people from one set of roots to another. Especially in African where culture has a great influence in people's perception of the reality, true education must make people to change the basis of their lives. This occurs when people realize what is inauthentic in them and turn away from it as much as they discover what the fitness of human authenticity can be and embraces it with her whole being. Education is not only aimed at this or ought to aim at this but it is also a means, a process, a journey through which this is achieved.

Perhaps the best way to wind up from this aspect is to pose two questions. What shows that one has undergone through an authentic learning process in African university? Or how do we know that one is educated? I suppose there are many answers to these questions. To my abstraction, the best answer to these questions is; first, the university education he has gotten must help one to be converted from his previous position to a new position informed by a new horizon and a higher view point which he has reached. In other words, genuine learning is an experience of conversion which completes itself in communication. Strictly speaking, education has to lead individual and the society at large to communicate, talk to each other but not to talk at each other. In a deeper sense, education should be conceived and seen to be sociologically redeeming and enhancing. According to John Dewey, "education is that reconstruction or reorganization of experience which adds to the meaning of experience and which increases the ability to the direct cause of subsequent experience," (Dewey, 1916: 90). This new experience comes due to the broadened horizon both horizontally and vertically.

Conclusively then, education as a learning process is an experience of learning to be oneself so that people can share humanity, by being good and humane to each other. Said in another way, when we begin to truly realize the truth of who we are, which is deeply rooted in our desire to appreciate the good, we are led to a higher plane of self knowledge, which is the knowledge of our radical relation with others.

#### 1.10 Proper Education Entails a Holistic and Integral Conversion

This statement is not completely alien to philosophers of education. But to an extent, it is foreign to those who are educational theorists. Education is ideally a process of holistic conversion of the human person intellectually, morally, and religiously. This holistic conversion is extremely fundamental in that it grounds our capacity for a healthier self knowledge, more meaningful integral relations and a greater sense of the ultimate meaning of life. In this sense, education is taken as a means through which human beings achieve a transformation. Transformation means a change of position about one's life. If education is a means through which we transform ourselves positively, then by way of inference one can say that education in African universities must be strongly linked and geared towards the achievement of self- development. It is on this view that Dewey held that the aim of education is to form man and this belongs to the part of education which stretches from the earliest studies through high school to the period of the university studies which looks to the improvements of the society, to enable him to specialize," (Dewey, 1916: 320). Consequently, the self in process is always the goal of educational appropriation. To be precise, education targets the self who struggles to attain it and the climax of this endeavor is when he has owned knowledge and it has transformed him to the extent of appropriation of his pursuit.

#### 1.11 African Universities: Redeemer of African Society

The most effective, genuine and fundamental characteristic of education is that it redeems the society. This is true to education in African university settings. Purposively, African universities must have a genuine and interactive relationship with the society. The redemption that am talking about is not only material but also intellectual, moral, spiritual, social, cultural, economical and political. Dewey acknowledges this and goes on to indicate that education is not and end in its self but a means to a better life. He saw education as a process of social reconstruction. It is a social process, since inquiry involves common needs of the society, (Dewey, 1916:

86). For him, the purpose of education is to develop this type of probing search which alone will make it possible for man to survive. This survival will be possible if both the society and the school are democratic and if the teacher acts like a guide to help the child as a growing organism. Nyerere too is echoed to have insisted sound and authentic education must be universal, relevant to the people's needs and societal problem solving. Hence, education should be for the liberation of man and society not an instrument which alienates man from his fellow men or alienates man from the whole society, (Nyerere, 2004: 160). Thus any educational philosophy must offer a vision to guide our course of action; if it is to bring about significantly long lasting effects upon the life of the society as a whole. Moreover, this vision must be that which reveals the ultimate meaning of human life within our society. Again any sound education must be deeply rooted in a philosophic inquiry and purposively oriented towards scientific pursuits and it should possess a clarion call to promote social equity. Furthermore, in order for education to redeem the society through liberation, it must be proactive in the pursuit of the balance between theory and practice which finds perfection in people's life centered in reflection.

According to Lonergan, education should be centered on cognitional theory of learning which emphasizes on teaching people how to ask fundamental question which enables them to be engaged in those occasions of self reflection that truly matters to their existence through committed acts of understanding. This is contained in the educational command that "Thoroughly understand what it is to understand, and not only will you understand the broad lines of all there is to understand, but also you will possess a fixed base, an invariant pattern opening upon all further development of understanding," (Lonergan, 1968 :XXXVIII). In other words, the concentration is not on matter but so much to develop a firm pattern which will enable one to understand other similar reality. This is not very different from what Paul Freire said in support to this notion. He maintained that above all, education consists in acts of cognition, not transfer of information, (Freire, 1993: 61).

Admittedly, central to the life of the society is the quality of education offered in its learning institutions. The social responsibility of education lies in improving and promoting people's discursive capabilities. In deed each and every one of us is familiar with some societies which are made up of people who are not attentive to what is happening around them and therefore, cannot in any way question them. They are neither discursive nor critical. The problem in such society stems right from the quality of education which can be described as somber or in dismal. It follows from our discussion that education in African universities must consist in the creation, formation, and expansion of integral knowledge for social progress. In a nutshell, education has a long lasting remedy to the people's social, moral, intellectual, religious, economic and political life.

Conclusively then, education demands a relation to truth. Sound and authentic education cannot be founded on falsity neither is our quality life centered on self deception or falsehood. Any talk about quality of education in African university must take into serious account the discourse about quality life for which the former is pursued. What does this mean? It means that quality education is pursued because people want to live quality life in the society.

#### 1.12 Implication of Philosophy on the Quality of education

There are a number of implications which can be extracted from the foregoing ideal. First of all, the philosophy of a people determines their social, economic, academic and political life. This is because philosophy clarifies what the realities that man takes issue with. It is worthwhile to emphasize that a complete educational program must be heuristically transformative and dynamically reflexive. By this we mean that the content of our curriculum in African universities must be designed from a context that is culturally sensitive, historically attentive, philosophically creative and globally competitive as well. These ideals capture the reason why we should improve our curriculum to the current state.

Secondly, it should be kept in mind that course offering, while providing students the training of skills, must likewise present them with an inspirational meaning of life. This is especially captured by the Vocation of Catholic Institutions: *to remain ever committed to the promotion and protection of human dignity, while respecting everyone's cultural identity*. The same task applies too to Catholic education which Lonergan educational thought steadfastly promotes. More than anything else Catholic education orients itself to the liberation of human reason from ideological prisons through the truth of revelation that is born of love. For which reason, Catholic education is the formation of the heart; it is the aedification of character. It emphasizes not only on religious communication but also values and meaning of intellectual capabilities. In this way education has been given a new dimension, that is, of protecting the human person from degeneration because she is subject to moral impotence.

## Conclusion

African universities must be fashioned and molded in a firm and proper foundation which will initiate and inculcate education in all fields that is sound and authentic. This paper has considered and proposed that transcendental method of education will assist in building education in African universities and make it not only intellectually profitable but also morally and religiously transformative.

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