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Reinterpreting Sustainable Development through Cultural Philosophy

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A R T I C L E   I N F O

A B S T R A C T

Recently, lots of plans have been on-going in various parts of the world on the issue of development and its related concept-sustainable development. This has resulted in mapping out Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be achieved within a reckoned time. However, notwithstanding these concerted efforts by scholars, the possibility of attaining sustainable development seems not to be feasible. One of the reasons for this is that the place of cultural philosophy in promoting sustainable development was not well recognized. This work sets out to investigate how sustainable development could be better appreciated through the tool of cultural philosophy. It also shows how sustainable developmental goals can be achieved rapidly through cultural philosophy. Cultural philosophy examines the essence and the meaning of culture with the aim of providing justifications for its values, beliefs and worldview which serve as catalysts for progress. Therefore, the paper aims at reinterpreting sustainable development in line with culture. The paper argues that there is a need for a kind of sustainable development that will be culture-oriented such that progress will get to the grassroots and as such benefit even the unlearned in the society.

Introduction

Cultural philosophy is relatively a new mode of philosophy. It presents culture as a catalyst for development. Its critical approach makes possible for enhanced understanding of the principles for achieving sustainability. In the recent past, the issue of sustainable development and how it can be achieved within the reckoned time has been the primary concern of scholars in developmental studies. This has given rise to the mapping out of some sustainable development goals that should be achieved by 2030. Notwithstanding these efforts, the possibility of attaining these goals within the specified time seems to be elusive. The three pillars - economic development, social development and environmental protection - upon which sustainable development stands, seem to be shaking because of constant global insecurity, political instability and lack of awareness. More still, and very importantly, there seems to be an absence of a philosophy that is culture oriented in which people's epistemology or worldview could be appropriately situated. Some scholars are of the opinion that this constitutes a major missing link in the discussions on sustainable development (Prah, 2011).

Just as culture is the people's way of life, philosophy offers useful instrument for ascertaining the ideology behind human activities. In the same vein, as culture is an instrument for progress, philosophy is also an instrument for changing social and natural realities. Therefore, when cultural philosophy is not predicated to sustainable development, it will create an unprecedented problem that may even affect the whole idea of development. This paper is therefore, an attempt in understanding the idea of sustainable development through the eye of cultural philosophy. In doing that, we shall clarify some basic terms as related to the topic of study. We shall also look at the relationship between philosophy and development, as well as culture and development. Then, we will look at the primacy of cultural philosophy in the discussions on sustainable development. The paper argues that there is need for a kind of sustainable development that will be culture-oriented such that progress will get to the grassroots and as such benefit even the unlearned in the society.

Cultural philosophy: History, definition and nature

Cultural philosophy as a research on individual issues in philosophy first emerged in eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It also appeared in other disciplines like history, sociology, and cultural anthropology. However, as a systematic study, cultural philosophy began around the 1930's. Cassirer (1944) first adopted the concept of the 'philosophy of human culture'. Ding (2008) commenting on Cassirer's thought stated that "it was man's symbolic or figurative activity that reflected his essential nature. Such activity evolved into a cultural world that includes language, myth, religion, art, science and history". There is no doubt that Cassirer's thought inaugurated a turn from studies of individual issues to a systematic study in cultural philosophy. As a systematic study, cultural philosophy is fundamentally concerned with "changes in the mode of existence of man and culture in accordance with changing times" (Ding, 2008, p.144). There were three conditions that stimulated the emergence of cultural philosophy: (1) Modernization centred its focus on the all-round development of man; (2) the

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growing impact of globalization necessitated the idea of a world culture; and (3) the nature of people's empirical perception of culture (Ding: 2008). Cultural philosophy takes cognizance of these factors in its attempt to analyze a people's culture and its relevance to them. Cultural philosophy, therefore, focuses on the relevance of philosophy founded on the cultural heritage and identity of a people.

For us to fully understand what cultural philosophy is about, it is necessary that we examine the two operative words 'Culture' and 'Philosophy'. Generally, culture is defined as a people's way of live. This definition suggests that culture is simply the mode of human existence within a cultural context. According to Stepin (2015), culture can be interpreted as a complex, organised system of supra-biological programs of living activity (activity, behaviour and social relationships). These programs of activity are represented in a variety of knowledge, regulations, norms, habits, and ideals, models of activity and behaviour, ideas, beliefs, goals, alignments of values and so on. Stepin's definition points out that culture is the totality of human activity and constitutes people's social experiences. It is transmitted from one generation to another through various meaningful and significant systems of signs. Prah (2011) observes that culture is a large and encompassing concept. It implies "the totality of products that have resulted from the creative ingenuity of humans. Some of these products are material and therefore tangible; while others, in such area of social life like religion, language, beliefs, customs and values are intangible" (p.157). He further observed that the intangible elements of culture are more instrumental in shaping and guiding human behaviour than the material products of culture. This shows that culture is a key element in the shaping of people's behaviour and worldview. This understanding of culture is very significant in discussing developmental issues because it is conscious of specificity with respect to people who create a culture. It also takes cognizance of that aspect of culture which is common to everyone.

Anya (1998) defined culture as "a summation of human experiences… a way of life and worldview, it is conservative in nature, tending to preserve and to forbid human actions that might otherwise be possible or feasible but can be disruptive of established order" (p. 13). This definition highlights the fact that culture is all about human existence and human systematic experiences like economic and political endeavours, intellectual outlook and moral standard. Wiredu (in Oladipo, 1996), observed that culture is not just about art, song and dance. It also includes everything that relates to the people's way of life. For example, work, recreation, worship, courtship and so on. It also involves the way a group of people investigate nature and utilize their potential, as well as the way they view themselves and interpret realities around them. Barclay (1986) agrees with Wiredu that culture involves the totality of people's way of life when he asserts that culture consists of all material and spiritual characteristics as well as products of human intelligence. It has to do with the language, knowledge system, customs, technology, beliefs, human institution and so on. Oladipo (1999) sees culture not just from the material and spiritual characteristics but as a tool for societal growth. In line with this, he outlines some fundamental functions of culture:

1. Culture is a means of creating order in society.
2. It provides the basics for development of common reactions, common actions, common interests, common attitudes, etc. It is an instrument of social integration.
3. It makes events in human experience intelligible and significant. It is a regulator of change.

Oladipo underscores the importance of a people's socio-cultural experiences as a vehicle for development. Therefore, for human and societal development to take place, culture must be at the heart of the dialectical relationship between the people and the environment. Culture is therefore, "a conduit for the exposition of human needs and it is through it alone that solutions can be properly proffered to human needs" (Fadahunsi, 2002, p. 67).

The second operative word is philosophy. Etymologically, the word philosophy comes from two Greek words *phileo* which means 'to love' and *Sophia* which means wisdom. From the etymological point of view, we can say that philosophy is the love of wisdom. It is a love of wisdom because it is a rational, critical and objective inquiry. Philosophy is concerned with the ultimate foundation of reality. It is concerned with the judgment of human actions, the value and reliability of human knowledge, the most basic foundation of human culture religion and social ethos (Oguejiofor, 1998). Asike (2017) observed that the concept philosophy can be understood in two ways: as a first order activity and as a second order activity. As a first order activity, philosophy is seen as a preserver of all rational beings. As such it can be understood as a worldview or a principle that guides people's lives. It is a unique way people try to make sense of their human experiences. As a second order activity, philosophy is understood as the activity of professionals. Fadahunsi (2002) understands philosophy as a tool for development. For him "philosophy represents the human effort to provide rational and logical answers to the agitated mind in order to generate an explanatory anchor or organizing principle for development, explain the origin of life, give direction to life's activities and provide goals to motivate and challenge it" (p. 58). Philosophy therefore probes into the core principles on which human existence is structured, organized and advanced. Philosophy looks at the intellectual foundation on which a system or institution rests.

Having carefully but briefly looked at the two operative words we can now say that cultural philosophy is a critical reflection on values and behaviour of a people within a cultural context with the view of identifying what is about peculiar to them, and how any such peculiarity guides and promotes their overall worldview. Philosophy, therefore, emerges as a response or justification for a specific culture. What cultural philosophy argues is that philosophy is an essential part of every culture. Philosophy is the means by which every culture provides justification for its values, beliefs and worldview. It is also a catalyst for progress (Tosam, 2016). Ding observes that the study of cultural philosophy consists of three distinct but interconnected basic levels. They are the study of Philosophy's cultural values, cultural metaphysics, and cultural criticism. These three levels are intrinsically connected. "The study of philosophy's cultural values establishes the legitimacy of cultural philosophy,

making the study of cultural metaphysics possible, while cultural metaphysics provides the theoretical foundation and value principles for cultural criticism. Cultural criticism, in turn seeks to foster the ideas of cultural metaphysics throughout cultural practice" (Ding, 2008, p. 151). Thus, we can say from Ding's perspective that philosophy is the totality of culture. It gives culture a structural meaning and a systemic role; it is the spirit and soul of culture. In Lakatos' words, philosophy is the hard-core of culture. Cultural philosophy, therefore, underscores the importance of the worldview of a people. It "integrates and communicates among cultures from different fields and localities, with a view to dissolving their relative fields of vision and absolutist tendencies and highlighting the experiential field of vision of culture itself" (Ding, 2008, p. 151). Cultural philosophy examines the spirit that is inherent in different cultural forms. It tries to "realize ultimate concerns about human existence through the exposition of the different possibilities of human modes of existence" (Juan 2010: 158). Cultural philosophy ensures that human practice is rooted in the cultural soil of human existence. Thus, it gives priority to human's objectified practices.

Sustainable Development in Perspective

The word development as opposed to growth is about realization of the potentials of an entity. Hence, 'to develop' is synonymous with to gradually unveil the unknown about a fact, thing, idea or situation. When we bring sustainability to bear on development, it is simply saying: the gradual unveiling of the potentials of a being is a manner that is sustainable. Sustainability is about continuity. It goes beyond long-term because a reality/thing of long-term can last but once the term is over, it seizes to exist unless an action is taken to ensure renewal. So, its sustenance is maintenance, which is not intended to seize, but is renewable. In a loose sense, one can see sustainable development as renewable development. Once we attach sustainability/renewability to development, it invokes a lot of factors through which development can be sustained. In this section, we shall examine the nitty-gritty of sustainable development and why sustaining development is necessary. Having given a literary explanation of sustainable development, how then can it be appropriated in the 21st century? Sustainable development is viewed from the point of view of reconciling real conflicts between economy and environment as well as between the present and the future.

In the Brudtland Commission captured by the Board on Sustainable Development, sustainable development deals with the ability of humanity to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without jeopardizing or compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs (Board on Sustainable Development, 2003). In this definition, one thing that is obvious is the need for continuity of development that is harmless. In other words, sustainable development is about sustainable resource management (Hale & Lachowicz, 2002) for continuity. In sustainable development, there is usually an overlap between the past, present and the future. It is also undeniable that development which is about unveiling the hidden potentials is not restricted to human but also natural resources where the environment is involved. Research has shown that sustainable development centres on how the human resources and the environment are used and sustained for developmental purposes without jeopardizing the future possibilities and opportunities of any era or epoch.

According to William and Meadowcroft (2002), sustainable development centres on differentiated responsibility where rich countries take responsibility and obligation in relation to climate change, sustainable production and consumption, provision of development assistance and environmental technology transfer. This definition simply espouses sustainable development as to be observed by developed societies with references to indiscriminate industrialization where heavy-duty engines emissions destroy the atmospheric components which inversely affect the health of the human community. Even more interesting is the fact that the predominant carbon emitters exhibit protocols that are mostly detrimental to developing countries (Najam, Youba, & Huq, 2004).

In support of the fact that sustainable development concerns the future, the present and the past is the proposition by Adam (2005) that it is a dynamic process for dynamic turbulent environment of the modern world through active adaptability, with the consciousness of permanent competitiveness in relation to the outside world. Simply put, it is a self-generating development that never jeopardizes its own preconditions but strengthens them (Adam, Makarovic, Roncevic & Tomsic, 2005). To this extent, sustainable development as the verb 'sustain' implies is a conscious concept. A distinctive process of how a society moves or progresses overtime whether planned or unplanned. In other words, it involves time as well as changes with time, need and resources at a time (Kavaliku, 2005). This paper does accept the time-relatedness of sustainable development but rejects the idea of 'unplanned' progress presented by Kavaliku because placing unplanned with sustainability on the same scale is a contradiction. In other words, if sustenance/sustainability is unplanned, it becomes something of chance and luck and not a deliberate effort. There are diverse definitions of sustainable development which includes environmental care married to development; improving and maintaining equality of human life within the carrying capacity of supporting ecosystem; preference of consumption of benign products; as well as investment shift to augmenting environmental capital. More so, it involves any style of manifesting human's higher standard of living and environmental integrity simultaneously (Barrow, 2006).

Sustainable development is about creating moderation among economic progress, environmental management, and individual well-being (Goosen, Laboy-Nieves, Schaffner, & Abdelhadi, 2009). This moderation became paramount when sustainable development became a focal point due to the discovery that beyond economic progress in terms of capitals are other factors, in essence, development beyond GDP (Talberth & Cobb, 2010). A good observation on these definitions by scholars shows that the concern of sustainable development is on health of both human and animal within the realm of economic growth and development. For the sake of this paper, sustainable development involves ideological and

practical consciousness of universal health within the realm of economic growth for the sake of universal and generational continuity. Undoubtedly, the stage of environmental degradation is informed by the activities of man. Animals and plants do not establish industries which emits substance that depletes the ozone-layer but man and as such, man is at the centre of sustainable development. Man, as a rational being is always in the habit of change both in his ways of life, values and ideology and this brings in culture into sustainable development. One may ask, what is the inter-relatedness between the two? Demonstrating the inter-relatedness is the aim of the paper whereby sustainable development is given a cultural interpretation to see how helpful it could be in achieving its aims successfully.

Enough analysis has been given on what sustainable development is all about. It is about mutual recognition of biospheres' relevance in the economic contribution in the world for the sake of continuity. It is a re-evaluation of values as it affects the relationship between production, capital, the environment and man. Once, there is a re-evaluation, critical activity comes into play and philosophy becomes inevitable. With an understanding of what cultural philosophy and sustainable development are, we shall demonstrate the inter-relatedness of development (sustainable) and philosophy before we can go further to raise developmental concerns from cultural perspective. Furthermore, we shall also articulate on cultural philosophy as prima facie in fostering sustainable development.

The relationship between philosophy and development

Fundamentally, the meaning of development does not change due to the attachment of 'sustainability. It is only advanced and extended and as such nothing has changed if this paper expresses the relationship between philosophy and development without explicitly attaching 'sustainable' to it. Though the interest of this paper does not focus on conceptualizing philosophy, we shall attempt presenting some definitions as it pertains the subject in question to form a point of departure for the topic at hand. Socrates saw philosophy as the spectator of all time and existence (Ome & Amam, 2004). A spectator is one who watches over a concerned event and is disposed to understanding the event. Placing this notion of philosophy and development closely, one sees that philosophy becomes a spectator on development whereby it is disposed to understanding development and factors that affect it. We shall come back to this connection properly towards the end of this section. In this context, a spectator gets involved in a skill of understanding which supports the assertion by Cicero that philosophy is an art of life (Ome & Amam, 2004). During the moment of skill usage, another aspect of philosophy which is the activity of analysis comes in. The power of analysis of every person goes a long way to evaluate the level of enlightenment of that individual. In line with this, in the activity of philosophy is the expression of an enlightened life led with far-sight, fore-sight and insight (Ome & Amam, 2004).

Development is a gradual process of unveiling and philosophy as a human endeavour is interested in the ultimate cause of things as well as the explanations given above. Undeniably, philosophy has a role to play in development. Sustainable development came as a result of the observations of the effects of industrialization on the environment and as such the need to restore equilibrium. This is a function of fore sight that if industrialization and its associates continue with this mode, then, the environment will be unhealthy to live in very soon. In fact, the idea of sustainable development is more of an ideology which involves fore-sight as explained earlier, fore-sight of the effect and the need for preventive action as well as the insight on the measures to take in order to gradually restore the ecosystem. Philosophy of development, so to say, is about a critical inquiry into the processes of well-being and sustainable development is also about measures to enhance the continual well-being of life generationally.

Furthermore, philosophy in the words of John Randall Jr. is the criticism of the fundamental beliefs in any man's great cultural enterprises, science, art, religion, moral life, social and practical activity, when some new idea or some altered experience has impinged upon them and generated intellectual tension and maladjustment (Ome & Amam, 2004). This captures more, the nexus between philosophy and development in relation to re-interpreting development from the cultural-philosophical dimension. In development, there is an overlap and interplay of these factors mentioned above, yet the bone of contention is on sustainable development which is a need that sprang up against an already established state of affairs- industrialization. The duty of philosophy as it concerns development is not just restricted to criticizing the established belief and pressure for change but more interested in projecting ideas on how to make it a visible success. To this extent, philosophy is not a profession but an activity by any who is interested in making a critical contribution concerning development and challenges facing it. Again, philosophy scrutinizes our views to discover their foundations and evaluate their rational consistency and coherence in providing universal explanation of the world (Anyaehie & Areji, 2018).

Deducing from the above idea on philosophy in the work of scrutiny in the terrain of sustainable development, philosophy raises questions on what is meant by development and the experiences that have accompanied it so far. It also investigates into how favourable these experiences are in relation to the interactive nature of the universe. It does the function of exposing how relevant the function of man is in relation to his activity in making things easier for man. Man, as used here is a generic term craving the indulgence of feminists. It investigates more on how these activities are still rationally consistent and coherent in the present era with their antecedents and how the future will look like with the attendant implications of the activities of man in relation to development. Philosophizing is a re-evaluative activity in the words of Nietzsche and as such plays a key role in the idea of sustainable development. One may argue that in sustainable development is re-evaluation, yet it is this re-evaluation that is philosophical about sustainable development. We know that other disciplines are involved in sustainable

development in relation to their area of expertise but to the extent that they can raise fundamental questions related to development and how it can be sustainable without interrupting universal equilibrium so much is the extent they are bringing to limelight, the relationship between philosophy and development. In fact, that development is advancing to the stage of sustainable one is a philosophical position.

In this paper, we have attempted to demonstrate that there is a sufficient connection between philosophy and development, more so, sustainable development. During this research, we found that considerable efforts have been made by scholars to explain sustainable development with little or less effort to cultural and the philosophy behind culture. As we go further, we shall attempt seeing sustainable development from a cultural dimension and see how its tenability in contributing positively. This is because when the culture of a society is known and understood, then diverse ways of approaching it becomes easier.

Developmental concerns from cultural perspective

In times past, when we talk about issues in development, focus is usually on technology. It was not until recently that scholars began to appreciate the role of culture in development. In fact, research has shown that culture plays a significant role in fostering development. Prah (2011) argued that culture is in fact the missing link in development planning in Africa. He insists that for development to be meaningful and significant, it must appreciate the peculiarity of the peoples' culture and see it as the foundation on which every other knowledge or worldview must rest. Development has to do with the improvement or uplifting the quality of life of a people. And for this to be achieved, the culture of the people is an indispensable and dynamic factor. Therefore, it will be a crime to a people if the issues about their development are discussed without factoring the people's experience-their culture. We are aware that the sum of people's effort in solving their problems within a given period and in a given society is their culture whereas the quality of those efforts with regards to raising the human condition is their civilization.

When we talk about the impact of culture on development, we focus on culture as a social mechanism which "tends to preserve socially-desirable values and to forbid such actions which can be disruptive of an established order" (Fadahunsi 2002, p. 68). Culture has this conservative disposition which makes it possible for it to protect and preserve the human person who is at the centre of development. That is why in modelling patterns of development especially for developing countries, there is need to appreciate the place of their culture in appropriating, refuting or transferring foreign cultural items. Culture extensively maps out the path of development. The reason is that the problems, issues and agenda to be discussed are integral path of it. Because of its non-static nature, it has the capacity to generate and encourage positive ideology for qualitative change. Fadahunsi (2002) observes that the significance of culture in fostering development is strengthened "when we consider the fact that a society cannot exist harmoniously unless its people have common feelings regarding the best ways of conducting its affairs and these common feelings are expressed in an ideology"

(p.69). Fadahunsi insists on this shared experience because he believes that it is only form it that an accurate analysis upon which a reliable technology and development can emerge.

The dynamism of culture opens vistas for development. This is because it gives room for shaping and reshaping of ideology. Adapting the dynamism of culture within the African context, Oladipo (1999) believes that the appraisal of African culture does not imply that it will have an immediate effect on the peoples' worldview or ideology in such a way as to expose their defect. Rather it will open new vistas for self –understanding that would provide the ground for determining the kind of socio-cultural reconstruction that would enable Africans face the challenges of contemporary life. Ayo believes that such an appraisal will provide workable ideology for sustainable development. Wiredu (1998) accents to this when he argues that such an ideology provides the intellectual foundation for a "system of beliefs about how society should be organised and how society's members should relate to one another" (p.22). Culture is a basic and fundamental component of sustainable development. This is because it is the centre of all human activity. Knowledge, meaning and values that permeate all aspect of human life draw its source from culture. Culture is a powerful contributor to development.

The Primacy of Cultural Philosophy in Fostering Sustainable Development

Issues about sustainable development and how to make the common man understand the pressing need for it has been the concern of most scholars. The possibility of this happening lies in the role cultural philosophy will play in bringing home this urgent need. When talk about sustainable development is raised, the concern is on its three pillars of economic development, social development and environmental protection. These three pillars of sustainable development indeed need urgent attention. However, the problem is on the philosophy that informs the attainment of these goals. Sustainable development is all about the guiding principle for global long-term development. This suggests that for sustainable development to be attained, it has to follow one guiding principle, thus a universal culture. The result is that we have a society that is one dimensional, a culture that is one dimensional, a consciousness that is one dimensional and a way of solving problem that is one dimensional (Herbert Marcus in Otakpor 1991). However, we know that human beings relate and interact with their environment differently, attend to their social needs following their social context and seek for economic development according to what is available to them. This implies that notwithstanding that human beings can have a common concern yet their understanding of this concern and approach to it differs. It is as a result of neglect of this contextual appreciation and the seeming neglect of integrating culture into sustainable development that we are going to explore how appreciating the primacy of cultural philosophy will help one understand the whole talk about sustainable development.

As we earlier pointed out, cultural philosophy is concerned with underscoring the importance of the cultural worldview of a people. This point should not be neglected. The way a people conceive and

understand reality is very significant, especially when issues about development and sustainable development is been discussed. This is because each human society has its peculiar way of doing things and it guides the way they respond to issues. If sustainable development is going to be attainable in African countries for example, it has to take into cognisance the African way (cultural philosophy) of responding to the sustainable development goals. Thus, cultural philosophy is self-promoting and supportive. It is self-promoting and supportive in the sense that it presents the way the people can preserve and evenly distribute what is theirs. What this means is that it provides people with the reasons for fostering and promoting sustainable development.

Cultural philosophy will help the people to frame, contextualize, mediate and balance the pillars of sustainable development so that it will be more meaningful to them. Thus, cultural philosophy will go beyond itself to foster self-appropriation and a better understanding of the need to work for sustainable development. Why cultural philosophy is necessary is because culture is an intermediary or a go-between that links together various dimensions of sustainable development. Therefore, cultural philosophy opens in a unique way an approach to sustainable development which is not alien to the people. In other words, the guiding principle for sustainable development should emanate from the cultural worldview of the people. By taking this into consideration, it should be able to integrate, coordinate and guide sustainable development actions.

The cultural philosophy of a people represents the product of the ideological effort at solving problems and resolving issues that confront them as a people. It also presents their overall framework and mechanism for interpreting situations. As Fadahunsi (2002) rightly observes, there is need for a re-evaluation and reassessment of the principles that informs the sustainable development goals so that it can become meaningful and concrete to a people within a cultural context. This is because issues about sustainable development are first and foremost a mental phenomenon. Since cultural philosophy is basically a mental phenomenon, there is need for the development of the human person who occupies a central position in every talk about sustainable development. Hence issues about economic development, social development and environmental protection are discussed simply because the human person is involved. Therefore, cultural philosophy acknowledges the need to invest in human beings in order to develop a complementary and creative mentality needed to achieve the sustainable development goals. Thus, if the philosophy behind sustainable development is to be viewed only from the Western perspective then the attainment of sustainable development in Africa for example, will certainly be a mirage. Thus, a people's way of reacting to issues and solving problems should be given a primary concern. This takes our mind back to the role of philosophy in providing answers to the perplexing questions that confront human beings in their attempt to interpret reality.

As we earlier pointed out, cultural philosophy is all about the self-conscious expression of the cultural spirit of the nature of human existence (Juan, 2010) and as such it is concerned with the activities of human life. Cultural philosophy probes not just into the past activities of human beings but also concerns itself with the possibility of human's future existence. As such it is critical, reflective, analytical, introspective, self-critical and rational (Juan, 2010). It is this critical character of cultural philosophy that gives rise to cultural spirit which provides the intrinsic mechanism of human existence and progress. Therefore, for sustainable development to be meaningful and achievable, it must rely on the tool of cultural philosophy. This is because since the main interest of sustainable development is about maintenance of human existence whether economic, social or environmental, cultural philosophy provides the foundation for these through the evolution of cultural spirit that ensures the generation of meaning, values, cultural patterns and self-conscious cultural criticism.

Conclusion

So far, we have tried to explore the whole idea of cultural philosophy and why it should enjoy a pride of place in issues of sustainable development. From the study, we have seen that for sustainable development to be achievable, its principles must be rooted in the people's cultural worldview or philosophy otherwise it will be counterproductive. The common man (the uneducated inclusive) should understand the urgency and need to meet these sustainable development goals, otherwise human existence may be meaningless. Thus, there is need to incarnate the discussion on sustainable development in the cultural philosophy of the people. This can be done by aligning the beliefs, values and custom of the people to the sustainable development goals so that it becomes not only meaningful but also useful to them. Scholars in developmental studies should see to it that each cultural community adapt the sustainable development goals to their cultural spirit in order to enhance steady development and progress. This, therefore, means that the search for sustainable development formula should as a matter of urgency begin with the cultural philosophy of the people.

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