

Scrutinizing John Locke's Theory of Ideas, Propositions, Faculties, and Knowledge

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Abstract: This paper is geared at dissecting the essential aspects comprising Locke's theory of knowledge. Emphatically, it unveils and explores the origin, degrees, nature, extent, and limits of human knowledge. Systematically, through an analytico-critical method, it reveals the origin of knowledge, develops, and evaluates the limits of human knowledge, understanding, as well as critically examines what is knowable with more emphasis on certain and probabilistic grounds. Certainty is attainable through two principal means comprising the use of the human senses and adoption of abstract reasoning. The sources of human knowledge are significant in easing and enhancing our knowledge of God as it facilitates the justification of his existence, portraying orderliness in the world, and positing mankind as part of God's creatures expected to implement moral lifestyles through the appeal to reasoning as a law of nature, even when in a state of nature. The value of this principle is evident for self-preservation, including an essential moral obligation for the preservation of everybody. The ethical basis of the state of nature featuring both moral and natural laws, signals the natural moral nature of man as determined by a rational order designed by a rational and knowable God. The underpinnings of epistemology involve experience (sensation) as manifested through the functions of ideas, propositions, and human faculties serving as guarantors and catalysts of certainty and truth. Innate ideas are unreliable, untrue, and condemned to qualify as dependent sources of knowledge because they are void of proper demonstration for the attainment of true knowledge. Locke's theory of knowledge embodies four principal concerns which include, first, the belief that knowledge is derived from experience, focused on knowledge of the senses to unveil reality. Second, the human mind creates ideas and transforms them into propositions. Third, through perception, the mind portrays agreements or disagreements of propositions and fourth, knowledge originating from perception (Intuitive or demonstrative), is referred to as certain. The fragmentation of ideas and rigorous evaluation of various degrees of knowledge, constituting intuitive, demonstrative, and sensitive forms of knowledge, are issues of interests that contribute immensely to equip, enrich, complete, and to render Lockean theory of knowledge more influential, comprehensible, prescriptive, applicable, and valuable.

Keywords: Experience, Locke, Ideas, Propositions, Faculties, Truth, Innateness, Understanding

1. Introduction

The quest for knowledge has always been part of the perennial problems of Lockean era (and ours) due to fruitless discussions, debates, opinions, belief systems and convictions of various natures as manifested between Locke and his contemporaries in the 1670s, precisely on topics related to the peculiar principles that govern morality and determinants of good religious practices and revelation as revealed by Nde [1]. The inability to arrive at a consensual decision concerning epistemic, religious and moral matters, became incumbent and vital for Locke to focus more on

epistemological concerns such as those connected to human abilities, faculties and possibilities when he writes: "After we had for a while puzzled ourselves, without coming any nearer a resolution of those doubts which perplexed us, it came into my thoughts that we took a wrong course; and that before we set ourselves upon inquiries of that nature, it was necessary to examine our own abilities, and see what objects our understandings were or were not fitted to deal with" [2]. As an effective strategy adopted to address the problem of knowledge, Locke was obligated to draft and officially publish his *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, with the major tenets of the *Essay* consisting of what

knowledge is, and the means of attaining it. This preoccupation is evident from the opening lines of his text which emphasizes on the painstaking desire to discover true knowledge as he states: "inquire into the original certainty and extent of human knowledge, together with the grounds and degrees of beliefs, opinions, and assent" [3]. From this declaration, a closer connection is established from his rhetorical theory and epistemology, opening way for metaphysical grounds to determine certainty or probability. In other words, the reason and manner through which the mind acquires knowledge or probability, as well as indicators of probability, are highlighted. Consequently, due to the absence of epistemological basis in most cases, rhetoric is rendered futile, fragile, and void of style, form, and outcome as Gregory states [4]. Hence, it is worth stating that, following the previous source of knowledge is the exploration of the ideological origin of rhetoric, which is preoccupied by the various methods of attaining knowledge through the functions of the mind which include; ideas, propositions, faculties, and the assembling of all the previously cited three aspects geared toward knowledge possession.

1.1. Literature Review

From this context, Locke's contributions to epistemology could neither be under rated nor considered as an exemption, especially given the fact that, his ideas as elaborated in his *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, he revealed something different from held thoughts connected to knowledge. From a sixteenth century context, following the devastating effects of the wars of Religion, secularization as a political thought system predominantly preoccupied thinkers like Machiavelli, Hobbes [5], Montesquieu [6], and Locke, whose roles influenced philosophy significantly due to their breaking of Religion and Theology, thereby paving the way for the introduction and growth of more rational ideas that contributed in paralyzing the authority of the church which characterized such an epoch. Systematically, Locke's *Essay* serves as a catalyst as it provides varied interpretations and understandings of the foundations of knowledge, including more emphasis on early modern English theistic thought systems. Therefore, the major basis of Lockean epistemology focuses on theological foundations [7], without which the realization of a clear-cut revelation of the real origins of knowledge would have either been a far-fetched venture or unattainable to a greater extent.

Unlike the classical thinkers who hold the view that nature constitutes the finality of mankind, modern thinkers on their part firmly believe that nature is closely connected to the origins of humanity. This justifies the reason for which Strauss [8] considers self-interest as a portrayal of atheism similar to the original perspectives of the state of nature, involving the situation of humanity in the pre-political or social context of existence as easily advanced and distinguished from the ideas of social contract theorists like Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Montesquieu, among others. Emphatically, Locke posits a state of nature based on

theological differences, giving room for questioning human situations, precisely on how man came into existence, the nature of humans, as well as the authentic nature of the author of creation (God). Assessing these aspects ensures a better understanding of modernity as shown through a thorough examination of Religion, Theology, Secularization, and Christianity, considered as relevant domains that facilitated the emergence of new thought provoking philosophical ideas of modernization.

The manner of knowing things in their real nature and the possibility or impossibility of attaining a certain degree of truth occupy a central position in Locke's philosophy because knowledge about humans, non-humans, including experiences of the external world can mostly be reliably guaranteed by adopting a coherent and rigorous systematic thought system that eases the possibility of knowledge attainment.

1.2. Significance of the Study

From Locke's *Essay*, being his major epistemological text, he unveils the significance of addressing pertinent issues linked to originality, truth, certainty, and the extent to which beliefs, opinions, and human knowledge as a whole can go when he writes in Book One, Chapter One of the *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*: "being my purpose to enquire into the original certainty and extent of humane knowledge; together with the grounds and degrees of belief, opinion and descent". After a total condemnation of the reliance and belief in innate ideas, Locke proceeds by stating the origin of the manner in which various things become knowable, basing on sensation, reflection, as well as on the character of things through an exploration of ideas. To further buttress this view, a clearer intention of dismissing innatism is revealed by Locke when he regards innate ideas as those "stamped" on people's minds which produce falsehood, insufficiency, and unfit to attain certainty, truth, or knowledge as he indicates: "It is an established opinion among some men, that there are in the understanding certain innate principles; some primary notions, characters, as it were stamped upon the mind of man; which the soul receives in its very first being, and brings into the world with it. It would be sufficient to convince unprejudiced readers of the falseness of the supposition, if I should only show how men, barely by the use of their natural faculties may attain all the knowledge they have, without the help of any innate impressions and may arrive at certainty, without any such original notions or principles" [9].

Moreover, the main tenet of this declaration lies in disagreeing with thinkers such as Descartes [10], who strongly believes that, a greater degree of human knowledge is inborn, or better still, that initially, humans were endowed with knowledge that is independent of human experiences. Nevertheless, Locke's rationale intended to justify that human knowledge as possessed by mankind is derived from experience and not from innatism, given that, natural faculties like senses of taste, touch, feel, smell, hear, and vision, constitute various means of experiencing and

attaining knowledge of the world as a whole. Similarly, Locke adds from Book One, Chapter Two of the *Essay* that, “if it were true in matter of fact, that there were certain truths wherein all mankind agreed; it would not prove them innate”. Hence, it follows that, no principles exist to which humans universally adhere to, since the law of identity (whatsoever is, is), coupled with the law of non-contradiction (it is impossible for the same thing to be and not to be), are revealed. Moreover, it is believed that, some categories of people such as children and mentally deranged persons do not understand the basic and universal maxims earlier highlighted. This is evident from the grounds that, children and idiots have no apprehension or understanding of such thought which disqualifies its universal character as Locke admits in Book One, Chapter Two: “it is evident that all children and idiots have not the least apprehension or thought of them. And the want of that is enough to destroy that universal assent which most needs be the necessary concomitant of all innate truths” [2].

In a similar manner, Locke disagrees with the appeal to reason as a suitable tool for discovering and revealing particular truths as he considers reason as, nothing else but the act of drawing unknown truths from rules or propositions which are already discovered, coupled with the belief that, the discovery of truth about visible objects does not need to appeal to any initial or original knowledge before it is rendered possible to be perceived by it. Supporting this perspective, Locke advances in his Book One, Chapter Two of the *Essay* as follows: “But how can these men think the use of reason necessary to discover principles that are supposed innate, when reason (if we may believe them) is nothing else but the faculty of deducing unknown truths from principles or propositions that are already known?”, adding that, innate ideas are not derived from reason and do not in any way owe their existence from reason as he states in Book One Chapter Two: “unless, as I have said, we will have all the certain truths that reason ever teaches us, to be innate. We may as well think the use of reason necessary to make our eyes discover visible objects, as that there should be need of reason, or the exercise thereof, to make the understanding see what is originally engraved on it, and cannot be in the understanding before it is perceived by it. So that to make reason discover those truths thus imprinted, is to say, that the use of reason discovers to a man what he knew before; and if men have those innate impressed truths originally, and before the use of reason, and yet are always ignorant of them till they come to the use of reason, it is in effect to say, that men know and know them not at the same time” [11].

2. Exploring Ideas, Propositions, and the Role of Human Faculties

Worth pointing out is that, the belief in, and the approval of the existence of innate ideas characterized a cross section of the seventeenth century thinkers [12]. This view made it possible for Locke to deem it primordial and necessary to

first of all criticize innate ideas before tackling the origins and types of ideas subsequently. However, believers in innate ideas think that, people are born with some degree of knowledge which they believe appear to be true, real, and certain. A typical example of such innate knowledge these categories of thinkers believe in is the universal approval of the ideas like God’s existence as Gibson states “A is not non-A constitutes an aspect of universal agreement” [13]. Furthermore, another booster to innateness is the argument that, if any particular idea gains universal approval, then it is innate, consequently, it is certain and beyond doubt or far from being open for questioning as supported by Locke and Gibson, which are equally similar to syllogistic principles that result to knowledge through valid and true conclusions thereby minimizing criticisms [13]. Moreover, Locke’s refusal of innate ideas opposed those of the scholastics since it would be considered utopic and void of demonstration, so, contributing to disqualify the ancient established conception of knowledge and truth. This disqualification signaled either the early presence of certain ideas from birth or it affirmed the presence of a natural ability for man to know.

A clear cut response to this burden is the affirmation that, there exist no inborn ideas because from the onset, the human mind is described as an empty space, therefore, ideas must have originated from another source rather than that of innatism as enumerated by Nde [14]. Here, the main and only source of knowledge in Lockean terms is “Experience”, which leads to two principal types of ideas that are sensation and reflection. It is worth affirming that, sensation is the cause of knowledge of external things, whereas, ideas stemming from the mind are derived from reflection. To add, ideas of sensation emanate from the nature of material objects, meanwhile, reflections are simply representations of the manner in which the mind operates [15]. To buttress this viewpoint, Locke emphatically admits that, the real foundations of knowledge ought to rely on the observation of external objects by ourselves or the perception and reflection of internal functions of our minds so as to permit us understand all materials related to thinking as he quotes “Our observation employed, either on external sensible objects, or about the internal operations of our mind perceived and reflected on by ourselves, is that which supplies our understanding with all materials of thinking...These two are the foundations of knowledge from whence all the ideas we have, or can naturally have do spring” [15].

2.1. Analyzing the Signification of Ideas and Qualities

The full meaning of “Idea” portrays a dualistic connotation. From one hand, it is regarded as the apprehension of a particular content, on another hand; it involves both physical existence and logical meaning of existence. Better still, the term “Idea” is applied when comparing the role of a representative status. Also, an idea is appealed in cases involving understanding and because of its holistic nature, it provides comprehension by opening up to all what the mind initially apprehended as Locke adds “A term of most

comprehensive generality, embracing all that is in any way immediately apprehended by the mind of man" [14]. Thus, in simpler terms, an idea is whatsoever the mind conceives by itself and in itself, as well as the immediate material of perception, thinking, or understanding. Since visible objects or things possess the power to create ideas in the human mind, qualities could easily be derived and attributed. For instance, a ball transmits certain features in us like the ideas of roundness, whiteness, coldness, just to name these few, which constitute qualities or powers of a ball. Therefore, the ability to produce a replica of things as they are in their authentic nature, are referred to as qualities.

Worth stating is the fact that, progressively, qualities take the form of primary qualities being the powers which any object maintains in any given situation like those that are inseparable from an object when sub-divided. So, primary qualities of things are noted for creating ideas that are deemed to be very similar to the particular thing in question. Secondary qualities, on their part, produce ideas which do not resemble the object in view as Locke maintains that, there is nothing like ideas portraying existence in the bodies themselves, adding that, secondary qualities comprise those which in reality are nothing in the objects they represent in themselves. Aside the manifestations of primary and secondary qualities, the mind also functions through the appeal to simple and complex ideas. By simple ideas, I refer to undiluted sense knowledge gotten from human experience and which according to Locke, are not supposed to be open for descriptions of any sort, given that they solely emanate from experience. To support this view, a typical justification is the inability to describe a particular color for a blind boy because the blind boy needs to have initially experienced the real picture of colors before knowing their real identity. But, thanks to experience, through the use of the senses, the mind easily grasps and manifests simple ideas such as pain, pleasure, motion, solidity, extension, and perception, underscoring the significances of powers or qualities of objects that produce representations in the mind.

That notwithstanding, there are three main actions carried out by the mind on simple ideas which are: First, through a combination of simple and compound ideas; Second, by comparing both ideas, and third, by separation, that is, the act of disuniting them from their original nature or through abstraction. Concerning the source of complex ideas, they derive from the combination of many simple ideas into beauty, gratitude, man, universe, society, etc., especially when they experience reality. Beyond the realization of complex ideas is the birth of a combination involving attribution of names considered vital because; it ensures clarity, precision, and distinction, especially as far as numerous units are concerned. In support of the value of names, Locke concurs that, "names or marks for each distinct combination seems more necessary than in any other sort of ideas. For, without such names or marks, we can hardly well make use of numbers in reckoning, especially where the combination is made up of any great multitude of units; which, put together without a mark or name to distinguish that precise collection will hardly be kept from

being a heap of confusion" [14].

Moreover, complex ideas which further divide into simple and mixed modes, into substance and relations, are highlighted and rigorously addressed in Locke's theory of knowledge. From this context, simple ideas generate general ideas which are valuable in simplifying the manner in which a particular idea leads to a general or universal one, precisely in terms of meaning as well as representation. In fact, universality is rendered possible in a case where the mind takes into account the generalized meaning of a thing through abstraction in the absence of experience and the recognition of a general idea as replica of all other existing entities belonging to the same class or specie. From this perspective, Locke concurs that, an idea is fit for generality based on its meaning, since all ideas are obligated to reserve their peculiarity, even if they represent the universal. Emphatically, from a proper sense, an idea ought not to possess confusion, given that it is regarded as simply being "what it is, and nothing short of it". The justification is evident because sensation establishes a boundary between an idea and other ideas, underscoring the necessity to distinguish clear and confused ideas as defended by Locke when he defines a clear idea as, "that whereof the mind has such a full and evident perception, as it does receive from an outward object operating duly on a well-disposed organ, as a distinct idea is that wherein the mind perceives a difference from all others; and a confused idea is such one as it is not sufficiently distinguishable from another, from which it ought to be different" [15]. Worth pointing out is that, the names are significant and worth attributing as a remedy to doubts and confusion, especially from a mental context. Major cause of confusion occurs in a situation involving each time a complex idea contains very few particular ideas, preventing the idea from being identified from other complex ideas. Also, the juxtaposition of too many simple ideas rendering it practically difficult to distinguish a complex idea from others is evident.

2.2. *Characteristics of Ideas, Propositions, and Truths*

Identifiable features of ideas range from the fact that, either they reflect reality, or they are fantasies, either they are sufficient, or insufficient. To an extent, they can equally either be true or false. Real ideas here, are those that match up with the external real thing while fantastical ideas are baseless in reality as they do not conform to the reality of being to which they are supposed to be referred. Sufficient ideas, on their part, constitute a perfect copy of an object or reality which it stands to represent, just as insufficient ideas concern incomplete pictures of what a thing stands for. The truth or falsity of ideas is revealed under the subsequent situations: In the first place, a true idea is that which conforms to those of other people, especially in domains such as temperance, religion, and justice, as judged by the mind. In the second place, truth or falsity of ideas is dictated by their relation to reality. In the last place, an idea is confirmed true only when in conformity to the real nature and essence of a thing. In other words, when the mind concurs with the real nature of something upon which its features rely.

Following the forming of ideas in the mind are

propositions comprising mental propositions (the formation of mental propositions using ideas only), and verbal propositions (words or signs of ideas logically derived from mental propositions). To Locke, verbal propositions involve the words and signs of our ideas either merged together or separated, by affirming or denying one another. In simpler terms, propositions mean putting together or separating signs which agree or disagree. However, it is important to state that, the demarcation uncovered about mental and verbal propositions, plays a pivotal role in Locke's philosophy of discourse, owing to the fact that, propositions are necessary prerequisites for attaining knowledge and truth. This essential revelation is evident through Locke's definition of truth in page 245 of the *Essay* as "the joining or separating of signs, as the things signified by them do agree or disagree one with another" [16]. Therefore, following this Lockean perspective, truth is simply the relation of signs, words, or ideas to what they represent. In other words, it refers to the correspondence of ideas to what they signify. Moreover, truth is unique and opposed to falsehood since it reveals the agreement or disagreement of ideas in their real form, contrarily, falsehood portrays otherwise. Here, the relation between propositions and truth become more visible as terms concur to their real nature of ideas. Conversely, verbal truth occurs when ideas are not in conformity with reality.

Locke equally advanced a difference between moral truth and metaphysical truth in order to render his theory more comprehensible and practical. Moral truth refers to the declarations derived from the convictions as portrayed by the mind, even if what is stated does not tie with the real nature of things as Locke reveals in page 249 of his *Essay*, "speaking of things according to the persuasion of our own minds, even if the propositions we speak do not concur with the real nature of things". Metaphysical truth, on its part, centers on situations by which ideas relate to reality. For emphasis, it is incumbent addressing the different types of propositions such as trifling propositions (involves identical propositions, a situation in which a term predicates itself) and general propositions (those that indicate certainty because the terms applied correspond to ideas and are also easily discovered and expressed). However, it is worth revealing that, identical propositions are limited in enhancing knowledge since they lack instruction within them, teach nothing new than what was initially there, thereby rendering its sources and nature valueless as Locke enumerates in page 292 of his *Essay* "These obviously and at first blush appear to contain no instruction in them; for when we affirm the said term of itself, whether it be barely verbal, or whether it contains any clear and real idea, it shows us nothing but what we must certainly know before whether such a proposition is either made by, or proposed to us" [14].

3. The Indispensability of Human Faculties

Before the final stage of knowledge attainment, the appeal

to faculties such as perception and retention are necessary, given that, perception is understood as the complete operations of the mind as connected to understanding. Gibson holds the view according to which perception is a specific manner of thinking that eases knowledge of objects or contents, meanwhile, sensation and reflection are merely passive activities. Thus, understanding perception needs introspection as Locke states: "what perception is, everyone will know better by reflecting on what he does himself when he thinks...Whoever reflects on what passes in his own mind cannot miss it and if he does not reflect, all the words in the world cannot make him have any notion of it" [16]. Worth noting is that, three types of perception exists being a) simple apprehension b) perceiving the meaning of words and c) the perception of the relation between ideas, which are all means to clearly show the agreement or disagreement between ideas because, unless the mind shows a unique conception of varied objects and their features, it would not be able to achieve more knowledge. Added to the values of faculties is the comparison of ideas based on their bounds, degrees, time, situations or place. To add more flesh, Locke cites two other forms of operations of the mind which are composition (the act of understanding, evident through the merging of simple and complex ideas) and abstraction (the act of attributing general features to particular ideas).

The examined types of perception are valuable ingredients for language, knowledge, and in the process of reasoning as a whole. Again, retention, defined as the storing of simple ideas earlier received by the mind, equally constitutes another faculty of the mind. Through the process of retention, there is the possibility of contemplating the retained ideas of the conscious mind, closely followed by memory, understood as the ability to resurrect in our minds, ideas that disappeared earlier or kept beyond human view, related to Locke's version of memory as "the storehouse of ideas". Moreover, improving on the functions of memory requires attention and repetition, given that, ideas usually expire, and often evaporate from our understanding, leaving only shadows of them as if they never existed before. A possible remedy that attempts to store memories in the mind could be constant appeal to actions, fixed clearly in the memory so that it should result to ideas, as well as extend its stay in the mind. An example of ideas that live longer and more profound impressions are the ideas of pain and pleasure which contribute immensely to enhance knowledge.

4. Discussion

Nonetheless, to ensure a smooth and successful attainment of knowledge, after evaluating the types of ideas, propositions, and faculties, the basis, degrees and truth about human knowledge are issues of wide interests mostly because, forms of agreement and disagreement take four different forms being: a) identity or diversity b) relations c) coexistence or necessary connection and d) real existence. Identity in this context highlights the real nature of the content in a given idea as distinct from another idea. That is,

referring to the exact signification of an idea as demonstrated by Locke in the following lines: "it is the first act of the mind, when it has any sentiments or ideas at all, to perceive its ideas; and so far as it perceives them, to know each what it is, and thereby also to perceive their difference, and that one isn't another. This is so absolutely necessary because without it there could be no knowledge, no reasoning, no imagination, no distinct thoughts at all" [16].

Basing on this analysis, the real nature and distinctness of ideas constitute the bedrock of human knowledge. Following this view is the revelation of relations with other ideas, clearly noted as relations between two ideas. However, ideas ought to be regarded as unique because, if they are universally disapproved, then, there would be no guarantee for discovering positive knowledge. Too, it is worth signaling that, the act of affirming or negating the link between ideas comprises judgments through a revelation of similarities and dissimilarities. The conception of coexistence or non-coexistence as a form of agreement or disagreement respectively, involves the perception of particular features of ideas. A typical example enumerated by Locke on coexistence follows that: "When we pronounce concerning gold, that its fixed, our knowledge of this truth amounts to no more but this, that fixedness, or the power to remain in the fire unconsumed, is the idea that accompanies and joined with that particular sort of yellowness, weight, fusibility, malleableness and solubility..." [16].

5. Exploring Intuitive and Demonstrative Degrees of Knowledge

Locke propounds two degrees of knowledge. First, intuitive knowledge (self-evidence), referred to as the act in which the mind immediately recognizes a thing without the interference of other ideas. For example, the view that blue is not red, that black is not white, etc. The truth revealed by the mind under this category is simple intuition, a form of irresistible knowledge, which does not pave way for hesitation, doubts or scrutiny, but guarantees the attainment of truth. That notwithstanding, intuition is not linked to innate knowledge, since innate ideas are limited to the mind. The second degree of knowledge embodies demonstrative knowledge, which depends on proofs of merged ideas revealing the agreements and disagreements that the mind is incapable of showing directly. Similarly, it is also a connected chain of intuitions through which the mind easily exposes the agreement or disagreement of propositions in an orderly manner by connecting the first and last propositions. To Locke, demonstration means, "the bear showing of the things or proposing them to our sense or understanding so as to make us take note of them just as it exists in mathematical demonstrations". From this premise, demonstrative knowledge shares similar objective truth with intuitive form of knowledge, though demonstrative form is more complicated and difficult to attain than intuitive. The principal difference between these two forms are that, proofs are evident through demonstrative

but absent in intuitive type, requiring a common mean to posit their agreement or disagreement.

6. Conclusion

Finally, following the systematic analysis of Lockean theory of knowledge, consisting mainly of an evaluation of various types and degrees of ideas and knowledge, it can be concluded that, knowledge mostly relies on ideas, that is, ideas consist of the sole foundations of knowledge. Similarly, having proper knowledge of agreements and disagreements between ideas can effectively guarantee better understanding of things. Moreover, the mind is incapable of detecting all forms of intuitive, rational, sensitive, and demonstrative knowledge about inherent ideas. In addition, sensitive knowledge is limited to sense experience as perceived by the human mind, same as the limits of human abilities to determine the real nature of things in terms of their strengths and functions of their ideas. Consequently, certainty as equivalent to knowledge could also be noticed from the highest level of probability, given that, it is disqualified from being equal to knowledge. Nonetheless, regardless of certainty, knowledge embodies a real and instructive character. The instructive feature is distinct from mere verbal aspects of certainty; meanwhile, real knowledge is identified when the mind recognizes ideas in terms of their connection to the reality which they represent [17, 18, 19]. Such a relation renders knowledge absolutely real, instructive, certain, and synthetic. However, philosophy, being a better tool for understanding the world and human life better, equally serves as a means of serving the world in order to reflect God's goal for humanity as advanced by Gillespie [20]. Though Laslett thinks that, Locke's political thought is incoherent as a result of his incorrect claims about human nature and the natural world [21], similar to Dunn's questioning of Locke's proofs of God's existence especially based on the pluralistic and present Christian society perspective [22]. It is worth pointing out that, placing false certainty on beliefs is uncalled for, since many opinions usually become uncertain and untrue. The wars, violence, persecutions, and destructions that characterized Locke's era were partly due to the varied opposing belief systems of various parties, sweeping across Europe, linked to the justification of truth which hampered peace, preservation of humanity, friendship, human rights, and even the diversity of opinions [23-25]. Nevertheless, the far-reaching implications of Locke's thinking process of the nature, limits, extents, and requirements of authentic knowledge, prescribe more rigorous standards for deriving truth beyond opinions, probability, belief, among others.

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