Abstract
This paper establishes the interrelatedness of education, knowledge and indoctrination in the process of knowing. It dismisses the interpretation of indoctrination as pejorative and therefore of no use to education and Epistemology. The important role of indoctrination in education and epistemic claim is exposed. This paper defends the thesis that in all matters of knowledge in terms of its acquisition and dissemination, man has always been indoctrinated. Indoctrination therefore need not be negatively construed.

1. Introduction
One of the concepts which are closely associated with the concept of education and in fact, knowledge process is indoctrination. Most scholars believe that it is a form of education and a process of knowledge while others argue contrarily. Those who refuse to see any relationship among the three concepts of education, knowledge and indoctrination have a pejorative notion of indoctrination. In other words, for them indoctrination portends everything negative in the teaching and learning process.

This paper attempts to examine critically the nature of indoctrination in education and the process of knowing with the aim to establishing a relationship among these concepts. The position will be held that education, knowledge are closely related to indoctrination in that it is a form of education and that all men get indoctrinated in one form or another. Hence, indoctrination is not a derogatory concept in relation to education and matters of knowledge. In an attempt to achieve its stated goal, the paper begins with a clarification of the meaning of education.

2. The Concept of Education
Education has been loosely or simply defined as knowledge, enlightenment or wisdom. This definition tends to make education a synonym of science, and this is not very correct. Hence, it is grossly inadequate. Thus for Egunjobi and others, education is the process of transmitting societal lores, values and desirable attitudes from one generation to another in order to socialize individuals so as to equip them with the desired mode of behaviour that is in conformity with the way they live (2). What this definition suggests is that education aims at inculcating in individuals certain knowledge, abilities, skills or behaviour to enable them function in their immediate environment and to contribute meaningfully to the society at large.

Adiele is shown to believe that education is a desirable change in human behaviour (Egunjobi 12). Ukeje on the other hand agrees that “education occurs whenever any influence produces a change in the physical and mental behaviour” (Qtd in Egunjobi 20). What is significant about these definitions is that they point at a positive change in human
behaviour as a mark of good education. In this sense Leonard’s definition of “education as a process that changes the learner” (Quoted in Egunjobi 13) becomes very informative here. According to him, to learn is to change.

For most scholars education is a branch of deceitful ideas or processes which is used to delude the people to become stooges, servants and slaves to the ruling class. Education thus becomes a political weapon in the hands of the ruling power to foster their will on the masses by means of distortion and misrepresentation. Kevin Harris is one scholar who toe this line of thought. According to him, education is also a process that in certain political circumstances, transmits as knowledge structured, distorted, misrepresentations of the world. For him;

to find those particular political circumstances, one need not necessarily seek out totalitarianism or turn to horror regimes such as Nazism; one can look much closer to home for in any capitalist liberal democracy, education functions to transmit to each new generation a structured misrepresentation of reality (2).

Harris’ conception of education is problematic. This is so because it is politically conceived and this does not show the true nature of education. It is this type of conception that leads most scholars to confuse education with the idea of indoctrination. For such scholars, education has become indoctrination and since indoctrination has a negative connotation, education thus is conceived negatively.

This explains why Akinpelu is very critical of such conceptions of education. He describes some of them as narrow, unduly restricted and therefore, inadequate. Hence, he avers that “education is much more than the activities that take place within the four walls of a school” (174). However, if education is understood from the perspective of Hornby, then it involves a process of teaching, training and learning especially in schools or colleges, to improve knowledge and develop skills (169). This definition of education suggests two major constituents namely: teaching and learning. In other words, teaching and learning are essential part of the educational process which is geared towards the impartation of knowledge and the development of certain skills in the learner, which he originally did not possess. This means that there has been a change in the learners overall being or personhood.

The implication of the above is that a person is said to have acquired education if in addition to developing some skills, he has acquired new experiences, which must have caused certain changes in his behaviour. This explains why degrees are awarded in the universities and other tertiary institutions in “Character and learning”. That is to say that the behaviour and experience of such a person is considered of utmost importance before a degree is awarded to him as an educated person.

Indeed, Nwagwu’s definition of education as quoted by Egunjobi and others seems to serve our purpose here. According to him, education is the process by which every society attempts to preserve and upgrade the accumulated knowledge, skills and attitudes in cultural setting and heritage in order to foster continuously the well being of mankind and guarantee its survival against the unpredictable, a times hostile and destructive elements and forces of man and nature (2). Orji corroborates this definition when he asserts that it is not only as many people think of as what goes on within the four walls of a school; education would be the sum total of all the experiences whether formal or informal, which a man comes across in his journey of life. It is the continuous development of the physical, mental and
spiritual potentialities of man . . . to enable him live efficiently and effectively not only for his own benefit but also for that of the society in which the finds himself (3). What then is indoctrination?

3. The Concept of Knowledge

Knowledge has been described as the understanding of or the information about a subject which has been obtained by experience or study, and which is in a person’s mind or possessed by people generally (Hornby, 705). In other words, knowledge is the totality of the mind’s content in terms of experience and, or study. This definition brings to mind the concept of epistemology which concerns itself with the question of how one acquires knowledge, and the extent and limitations of such knowledge. In fact, Unah equates epistemology with knowledge. According to him, epistemology is derived from the Greek word “episteme”, meaning “knowledge”. It is, therefore the theory of knowledge concerned with the nature, origin, scope, reliability and limits of human knowledge (22).

Omoregbe agrees with Unah’s disposition, but adds that, “epistemology is knowledge taking a critical look at itself to justify itself” (vi). Agreeing with this view, Ekarika avers that, the totality of the data of one’s experience constitute his knowledge; and philosophy (Epistemology) performs the primary task of determining man’s knowledge or experience in relation to all other things in the universe (7–8). Similarly, Ljiomah believes that a discussion of epistemology as a theory of knowledge without first identifying the whatness of knowledge would yield no result. Hence, he defines knowledge as “the disposition demonstrated behaviorally in a manner that is favourable to human welfare or to the solution of human problem” (22). This definition stems from his belief that knowledge has everything to do with human action. Howbeit, in this paper, the term knowledge shall be used interchangeably with epistemology.

As a theory of knowledge, epistemology is a philosophical inquiry into the nature of knowledge in terms of its sources, extent and process. What can we know? How can we know? and how much can we know?, several epistemic schools and theories have emerged in an attempt to respond to these fundamental epistemic questions. For instance, the empiricists posit that the much we can know depends on our senses which for them are the ultimate source of knowledge (Locke 105). Other empiricists who subscribe to this view, though, with some modifications here and there include Berkeley, Hume etc. The rationalists of the likes of Descartes Spinoza and Leibniz, held an opposite view. For them, the human mind can acquire knowledge of the truth only through reason for the senses are not reliable enough to give men adequate knowledge (Descartes 40).

In other words, the scope of human senses and reason respectively determines how much man can know. Kant on his own part came with the view that only a combination of senses and reasoning can present us with genuine knowledge. The reason for this position is his belief that “there is nothing in the mind which was not originally in the senses” (41). Following this, we submit that the entire discussion on epistemology, nature of knowledge and the subject-object problem in an epistemic situation centers on the mind and its nature. It is in this connection, that we perceive a relationship between education and epistemology. Education is a source of knowledge in that it serves as a means of transmitting knowledge from one person to another and from one generation to another. Such knowledge may be experiential, intellectual, cultural, societal values or all of these.
Harry Schofield appears to agree with the above assertion on the nature of education and knowledge. According to him, “we can accept that education does pass worthwhile things on, from one generation to the next. When we ask what is worthwhile?, we think of what is valuable, of values and of culture,” (36). Education is cognitive in nature such that it deals with the process of understanding. The process of understanding involves the process of knowledge acquisition and dissemination. The process of knowledge acquisition and dissemination is an epistemic process. Hence, if education necessarily involves some form of indoctrination as we have been trying to argue in the preceding pages, then it follows that it is very fundamental to knowledge acquisition and as such to epistemic situation.

4. The Concept of Indoctrination

The problematic nature of this concept stems from the fact that it is open to diverse meanings and interpretations even lexically. For instance, Webster’s New International Dictionary (2nd ed) attributes to the concept two different connotations. Accordingly, “to indoctrinate means to instruct in the rudiments or principles of learning” (31). This implies that indoctrination is a part of teaching and could be used in similar sense as teaching. On the other hand, the second lexical meaning of the concept appears to be derogatory and negative in perception. Thus, it states that indoctrination is the attempt to “imbue with an opinion or with a partisan or sectarian point of view” (31).

The above ambiguous use of the concept explains, the divide among scholars, on the nature of indoctrination and its place in education. While some align with the first meaning and as such regard it as synonymous with teaching, others reject it as a misnomer in teaching and learning process and therefore must be discouraged. For instance, Dewey vehemently rejects indoctrination. According to him, as quoted by Nagai, “instead of recommending . . . indoctrination, we are striving to challenge all the indoctrination of conscious dogma and of the unconscious bias of tradition and vested interest which already exist” (10).

Barrow contrarily believes that indoctrination is closely related to teaching and as such, all men in one way or the other get indoctrinated. Thus, he says, “on almost any view, however, the philosopher-kins in the republic are being indoctrinated and on literally any view the mass of the people are” (74). Egunjobi and others see indoctrination as involving non-rational means in an attempt to impart unquestioning commitment to the truth of certain improvable claims with the intention of making them sick” (5). What this definition suggests is that indoctrination involves some element of coercion. This is so because indoctrination occurs in the teaching of absolute moral values, example truth, justice, purity, religious beliefs, political ideologies, etc.

Akinpelu agrees with the above conception of indoctrination. For him, to indoctrinate a person is to make a person accept certain types of beliefs (doctrines and dogmas) in a way that shuts out the learner’s ability or freedom to ask questions or raise doubts about it (198). In the same vein, Kevin Harris, conceives education in certain spheres as simply indoctrination and hence is disprovable. According to him, “education is a process that in certain political circumstances transmits as knowledge structured distorted misrepresentations of the World” (2). In other words, indoctrination misrepresents reality and hence, any education or teaching and learning involving ele-
ments of indoctrination misrepresents reality and must therefore be rejected.

Uche quotes White as referring to indoctrination as the same with teaching, according to which he states that, “to indoctrinate” and “to teach” has similar meaning with “to instruct”. Thus to indoctrinate an individual meant essentially to get the individual to acquire some learning” (253). At the same time Wolman is quoted as saying that “indoctrination is the art of providing or imparting an instruction”. Primarily designed to gain complete and uncritical control or acceptance, rather than critical consideration (Uche, 253).

In all these controversies emanating from diverse interpretation of the meaning of indoctrination, there is yet a point of convergence. In a very general sense, and with careful scrutiny, one would perceive the agreement on the basic point that to indoctrinate involves implanting beliefs. The nature of the belief here is immaterial. Thus we refer to indoctrination as that aspect of education or teaching and learning which involves the impartation of a body of beliefs to the learner in order to influence his character and behaviour. Following this, there is a thin line between education (teaching and learning) and indoctrination such that without strict discipline or care one may slip into the other while exercising one. Thus, while teaching or education is not synonymous with indoctrination, it however necessarily involves elements of indoctrination.

This is why it is argued that, in one way or the other, men have always been indoctrinated and will continue to indoctrinate each other. Perhaps, a critical examination of the relationship between education and indoctrination will further illuminate the nature of indoctrination.

5. The Place of Indoctrination in Education

Is there any relationship between indoctrination, knowledge and education? What is the role of indoctrination in education or in the process of (knowledge acquisition) teaching and learning?

Indeed there is a relationship between indoctrination and education such that indoctrination plays important role in the education of the learner, and in the process of knowing and by mankind generally. One basic fact that presents itself very strongly, irrespective of whatever any philosopher or scholar may construe is that education is so closely related to indoctrination that most times and in most circles they are used interchangeably. The first definition given in this essay from Webster dictionary attests to this fact. It was simply defined as a form of teaching or instruction in the rudiments of learning. This definition speaks for itself concerning the relationship between the two concepts or the place of indoctrination in education.

Again, there are some levels or stages in the educational or learning process of a child or learner, when he/she has not yet developed the capability for independent thinking or critical mindedness, yet there are basic concepts, ideas or views that he needs to acquire open-mindedly. It is in such cases that indoctrination presents itself as the only available vehicle of teaching such fundamentals with the view that in due course when the learner develops criticality, he/she will be able to re-examine these ideas whether to continue holding them or to discard them.

In this regard, Schofield quotes Ducasse thus, “education takes place through instruction, training and indoctrination” (32). These points to the point
Earlier made, that education involves elements of indoctrination, while indoctrination itself is a means of education. In collaboration to the point being made in this section, Brubacher states that:

_Every education makes use of indoctrination: children are indoctrinated with the multiplication table . . . love of country . . . the principles of chemistry and physics and mathematics and biology and nobody finds fault with indoctrination in these fields (77)._ 

Furthermore, a good teacher cannot help incorporating some elements of indoctrination in the teaching process, since education itself is normative in nature and the teacher is a communicator of values to the students. Thus, as Kneller rightly observed, “indoctrination is not at variance with good teaching” (53). Bertrand Russell seems to agree with Kneller by maintaining that “education must of necessity contain some elements of indoctrination and insists that the ill effects of indoctrination can only be adequately handled by a process of education through the act of equipping learners with skills needed for making impartial judgment (197).

In all, indoctrination plays more significant role in school education than in the university education. This is so considering the differences between school education (elementary and secondary education) and university education. In the former, there are varieties of subjects which are to be taught to the learner most times by one teacher. This makes indoctrination necessary if all of these must be taught and the syllabus completed. While in the later, there are rooms for specialization and for choice making on what course or the other to do. This fundamental difference between the two systems makes it possible for indoctrination to form the major process of teaching in the school education with less difficulty or problems. This is what Nagai appears to be saying in the chapter two of his education and indoctrination (45–49).

6. Critical Conclusion

In criticizing indoctrination in education, it must be noted that education has always been cut in the web of ideological conflicts and political dogmatism in the society. And this has had negative effects on education. More so, considering the differences between education and indoctrination, one may be tempted to join the crusade against indoctrination in education. One readily identifiable difference between the two concepts is that “education leads to open mindedness on certain issues while indoctrination closes the mind on some issues” (Uka 144). Again, education inculcates facts whereas indoctrination inculcates beliefs.

These differences notwithstanding, much similarities abound between education and indoctrination that makes it rather difficult to dismiss indoctrination as unacceptable. For instance, the three essential elements of education also constitute indoctrination, namely, teacher, learner and content. “The role of the teacher, the learner and what is taught are central in every education process” (Akpan, 129). It must be noted that none of these is more important than the other. The moment we place the teacher as primary or more important, we brand such education indoctrination. This ought not to be so.

Besides, is it truly correct that, education inculcates facts alone and indoctrination inculcates beliefs alone? This is arguable. The definition of education by Nwagwu quoted earlier in this paper proves otherwise. Education has been described as “a process that involves the training to acquire skills and attitudes and seeks to communicate facts and
beliefs” (Uka, 144). Similarly, does education a times not close the minds of the learner on some fundamental issues that is believed to be true, absolute and sacrosanct? Does this not involve indoctrination? If indoctrination merely thrives on closing the mind of the learner on these issues?

Infact, Fafunwa’s definition of education quoted by Egbai shows clearly the relationship between education and indoctrination and as such does not give room for the dismissal of indoctrination. According to him, education is the intentional transmission of something worthwhile in a morally acceptable manner" (Egbai 99). Following this definition, in indoctrination like in education, the teacher or instructor intentionally transmits something – be it knowledge, skills, facts or beliefs which they consider worth the while and morally right to the learners. From this analysis it becomes clear that the two concepts are closely related such that we cannot dismiss indoctrination, for doing so will amount to dismissing of education also as acceptable.

It is in this sense, that we argue that men has always been indoctrinated and will continue to be indoctrinated. This is so in our thinking because we perceive education and indoctrination as two sides of a given coin, in the sense that, while both are not exactly the same, they are so closely related that in educating, some form of indoctrination takes place and indoctrinating some form of education occurs. Thus, we must not dismiss indoctrination, for rejecting it implies a rejection of a substantial aspect of our education system. And as Edmund rightly puts it;

Indoctrination need not be a bad thing. To say that a person has been indoctrinated is according to the OED, to say that he has been imbued with a doctrine, idea or opinion. Indoctrination, if this definition be accepted, need not be a bad thing, because it is sometimes morally justifiable to become imbued with a doctrine (61).

References

4. Descartes, Rene “Meditations of first Philosophy”.