

## Authentic Existence In Martin Heidegger: An Appraisal

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### ABSTRACT

Existence has been a central issue among philosophers. This could be because of the unverifiable features which becloud existence. However, martin Heidegger in his philosophical speculations thinks that we should begin with man, since man is the only being that asks question about his own existence or being. He technically called man Dasein. Hence, Dasein is a being in whose very being, being itself is in question. In order to understudy man and how he lives his life, he proposes to analyze man's existential structures. In his analysis, he discovers that man is the only being in the world that has relation to himself and as well as other beings. Man is not finished product but a possibility to become what he is not yet. Man transcends the present and lives towards the future. This however denotes that man is a free being who projects himself and chooses his own possibility and thereby decides his own mode of life, hence, authentic life. For him authentic life is a life lived in a way one has freely chosen to live. It is a life beyond what is called everydayness and following the crowd. He went further to aver that there are limitations which characterize human existence and they are: fallenness, facticity, thrownness, being-with-others, anxiety and so on. In spite of these features, he still averred that man can exist authentically. Hence, this piece adopts hermeneutical and appraisal methods, to argue that authentic existence is realizable amidst these features and structures as aforementioned.

## INTRODUCTION

It is generic to say that every foreground has a background and that every effect is a product of a cause. Lukacs would say that, "philosophical speculation is not an antenna without a mother" (213). It is also an indisputable fact that one of the major concerns of philosophy is the quest for meaning of existence. This becomes the juggernaut that spurred this researcher to undertake this topic- "Authentic Existence in Martin Heidegger: An Appraisal". The obvious is that almost everybody if not all, yearns to live; not just any kind of life but an authentic life. This could be the reason why Martin Heidegger in his ground breaking philosophical magnum opus-Being and time, (sein and zeit) has worn a global appeal. In this his work, he exhaustively labored to x-ray the meaning of being or existence, most captivating, that man can exist authentically.

Being meaning whatever that is, Heidegger beings to imagine how this being could be studied. He asks, "how do we study being?" how do we approach being? How do we being? To answer these questions, he deemed it fit to make man a paradigm of every being insofar man is the only being that asks question about his own being. For him, man is the being of beings and from this being, all others derive their being. However, what Heidegger is talking about here does not mean God. The best and the foremost approach to the question of being for Heidegger is therefore, by examining the being of man. He technically called this being Dasein. Hence, Dasein is a being in whose every being, being itself is in question. The very asking of the entity's mode of being gets to the essential character of what is enquired about, namely, being. This entity which each of us is himself and which includes inquiring as one of the possibilities of its being, we shall denote by the term Dasein (Heidegger1). Heidegger intends to study man as he is ordinarily and as he carries out his life activities. To do this, he proposes to analyze Dasein's (man) existential structures. He called man's existential structures existentialia and adopted phenomenological method for his study.

Heidegger maintains that it is only man that has relations to himself as with other beings. He is not a finished good or product or ready-made being that is fixated once and for all. His principle of being is to be undetermined, unfixed and unstable. Man for him is a possibility which implies that he can become what he is not yet. Thus dasein is a being who is more than what he is presently. He would always project himself in his possibilities and lives towards his projected self. Hence man always lives beyond what he is at any given moment since he lives towards his projected self. Heidegger maintains that man transcends the present and lives towards the future. This evinces that man is essentially a free being who decides for himself his mode of being. Man remains his own possibility and if he chooses his own possibilities and lives towards them, he hereby decides his own mode of life and this means he lives an authentic life. It is a life lived in a way one has freely chosen.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Heidegger also attempts to uncover the everydayness of man. He intelligently comes to a marveling conclusion that nearly and for most part, everyday Dasein had no self of its own. Heidegger characterizes this as, falling away from oneself and existing for "the they" (das man). This falling away from

oneself, is the tendency of man to absorb passively: culture, mores, dictates of an authority, tradition, custom or habit and behavior of the society, without analyzing them, with a critical approach. In these extreme modes, man is a reduced self, a stifled existence, a false being, who lives a depersonalized life, put differently, inauthentic life. Hence, man simultaneously falls into what Heidegger calls, frenetic busyness and an emptiness that, gives rise to a sense of uncanniness. This is guided by: gossip (idle talk), curiosity and ambiguity, which leads to a downward plunge into groundlessness and nullity, that level down all possibilities of being" (Heidegger 223). The human being is as well a being-with-others. He implies here that by nature, man is a social being who can neither live nor be conceived in isolation" (Omeregbe 73). He lives and interacts with other beings.

Heidegger also holds that man is characterized by facticity. The facticity of man consists in the fact of his being thrown into being or existence. He is not responsible for his being, he never chose to come into the world, and instead he merely finds himself thrown into existence and in circumstances that are not of his own making. This facticity also unveils man's limitation. Another feature which characterizes man as outline by Heidegger is existentiality. This is man's possibility to make himself what he wants to be, the possibility to project himself into the future and live towards his self-project. This simply implies that despite these features that characterize human existence, man can authentically exist. This bold stand taken by Heidegger becomes the motivation factor that pushes me to explore the possibility of his claim that these ontological structures would not prevent man from achieving his authenticity.

Martin Heidegger succinctly pointed out that man is characterized by some ontological structures, namely facticity, fallenness, existentiality and so on. Facticity is the idea that man saw himself into existence. Fallenness is man's tendency to become absorbed into our situation losing ourselves in the world of impersonal anonymous "they". We experience this fallenness within our present situation (Lawhead 540) Heidegger also holds that Dasein is a being-ahead of -itself. Our orientation about the future provides part of the structure of what we are at present. Therefore, the question is, how can the Dasein exist authentically in the face of these ontological structures?

## **METHODOLOGY**

The bulk of this work is carried out through library research method. In other words relevant text-books, journals, magazines and internet materials provide key information, which significantly augments the information gotten from Martin Heidegger's *Magus Opus, Being and time*. The documentation method is that of the Modified Modern Language association (M.L.A) style. The method used in the organization and articulation of the work is hermeneutics. The reason for adopting this method is because the original work of Martin Heidegger was written in German and terms in German have no equivalent meanings in English language.

## RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Authentic Existence In Martin Heidegger

This chapter will expose in detail the terms Dasein and authentic existence according to Martin Heidegger. This encompasses the meaning of authentic existence, inauthentic existence, the intricacies of authentic existence, structures surrounding man's authentic authenticity, the modes of authentic existence, inauthentic existence, and so on. In *Being and Time*, Martin Heidegger developed two concept-authenticity and inauthenticity. According to Heidegger, these are two modes of life in which Dasein exists.

### Heidegger's Analysis of Dasein in its Generic Sense

Heidegger began by asking the question: "Do we in our time have an answer to the questions of what we mean by the word being? Not at all! So it is fitting that we should raise anew the question of the meaning of being.... our aim in this treatise is to work out the question of the meaning of being and so do so correctly." (Stumpf and Fieser, 428). Being meaning whatever that is, Heidegger begins to imagine how this could be studied; he asks, "how do we approach being? He observes the fact that the challenge with the studying of being is not necessarily the challenge of insufficient information or data rather, it is its abundance. Whatever we can come in contact with, whatever visible is unarguably a being. He therefore asks thus, where do we start? Heidegger answers this question by deeming it necessary to choose a particular being that will best represent other beings. Heidegger approached this task using the method of phenomenology. He systematically proposed to study Dasein which is the technical name for man. the term Dasein is a German name which means, "being there." We are known for "being there" in the sense that we are always found in the world in a certain manner or mode. Heidegger therefore holds that there are two levels to the being of Dasein: the ontic and ontological level. The ontic level suggests to particular, ordinary facts or Dasein's daily life experiences. For instance, I started to care about my admission into the navy since last month. On the other hand, ontological level refers to the fundamental structure of human existence that provide the framework within which mundane, ontic facts appear. The very asking of the entity's mode of being gets the essential character of what is enquired about, namely, being.

"This entity which each of us is and which includes inquiring as one of the possibilities of its being, we shall denote as Dasein (Lawhead 536). Heidegger however intends to study man as he ordinarily and as he carries out his activities. To do this, he proposes to analyze Dasein's (Man) existential structures. Authentic existence: it is a life lived in a way one has deliberately and freely chosen to live. According to Heidegger himself, Dasein's (human) existence is authentic when it can, in its very being, choose itself and win itself. It also suggests the extent to which one is true to oneself, the spirit or character irrespective of external pressure one encounters in the world. Simply, authenticity means my own or personal. Authentic Dasein is contextually the one that reflects about itself and changes itself. Authenticity is not an attempt to be a recluse or a beast that lives alone, rather it is the choice of not allowing oneself to be swallowed up by the public or "the they" as one relates with others. An

inauthentic Dasein lives a life that is not his own, he acts because others act. According to Heidegger, there are two ways of categorizing things: when we engage with things in terms of its use, it is called "ready-to-hand which means what we can use an object to do and when entities become disengaged from our use with them, then they are termed: present-at-hand" (Cavalier: overview of being and time as a whole). When dasein is able to realize his possibilities through the use of object around, then it gears towards authenticity.

This implies that man is intrinsically a social being who can never live or be conceived in isolation. It has in its nature the tendency to relate. Despite the fact that others can mislead him into inauthenticity, he cannot escape being with others for it is part of him. Hence, "man is a being who is set towards the realization of his possibilities, not as an isolated ego, but as who is necessarily interrelated with the world of things and the world of persons" (Copleston 180). Facticity (Befindlichkeit): The facticity of Dasein consists in its being 'thrown' into existence. He is not responsible for its being or existence. However, this facticity shows man's limitations. Man is unchangeably what it is and there is nothing he can do to change it essentially. Therefore, as man's facticity bears testimony about his past and limitations, his existentiality talks of his future.

The fallenness (verfallen): This is Dasein's tendency to let himself go, making himself an object in the world, thereby diminishing his personality. It is the tendency of the Dasein to alienate itself from his original true self and lives a life that is inauthentic. It is the tendency to become engulfed in the daily routine of mechanical or conventional life thoughtlessly (Omeregbe 73). This unity of these three structures is known as care in the view of Heidegger. He also holds that care is the being of Dasein, the nature of human existence (a main structure that is embedded in each and every human existence or being).

"The being of Dasein (that is, care) is: ahead-of-itself refers to the structural moment of possibility (Verstehen), it expresses Dasein's comportment towards possibilities. The being-already-in-the-world refers to the structural moment of facticity and indicates the factual situation that always surrounds a human being. Dasein is always thrown into a situation that is, in some sense, already there. And this means that Dasein is not the ground (or cause) of the situation-in-fact, the situation becomes the ground upon which Dasein finds itself. Now, these two 'moments' in Dasein's Being are for the most part, imperceptibly 'at work' in Dasein's everyday activities and concerns. They are acted in the presence of one's being-alongside-entities (and caring for others). And this Heidegger called the structural moment of verfallen-fallenness" (Cavalier overview of being and time as a whole).

### **Authenticity and possibility**

In Heidegger's view, possibility "as a model category of present-at-hand, signifies what is not yet actual and what is not at any time necessary, it characterizes what is merely possible". Thus Dasein is a being who is more than what is presently. He would always project himself in his possibilities and lives towards his projected self. Heidegger maintains that man transcends the present

and lives towards his future. Heidegger therefore concludes that possibility is one of the phenomenal bases for realizing authenticity.

### **Authenticity and Resoluteness**

According to Heidegger, resoluteness is the authentic mode of disclosedness (of *dasein*). Since the disclosedness of *dasein* is the primordial truth and the way in which *Dasein* is in truth. As a distinctive mode of *dasein*'s disclosedness, resoluteness is the truth of *Dasein*'s authenticity as "Being-one's-self. Thus, the call of conscience, listen to in resoluteness, recalls *Dasein* from its inauthentic everyday preoccupation to an authentic disclosedness. This does not change *dasein*'s world, but rather transforms *Dasein*'s awareness of his world and others. Hence in resoluteness, *dasein* does not stop taking care in his environmental world, nor does he stop his dealings with the community to which he belongs, but only changes his attitude towards these, from one of inauthenticity to that of authenticity. The reason for this change in attitude is that in resoluteness *dasein* gets an authentic grasp of himself and comes to grip with things as they are. It also frees *Dasein* in his relationship with others in the sense that resoluteness enables him to allow them to be themselves.

### **Authenticity and Fallenness**

Fallenness is a state in which one fails to grasp one's being with transparency and clarity. It is an entanglement with life-world (*Lebenswelt*), so much so that *Dasein* loses sight of his roots. That is, a state in which *Dasein* not only has lost his vision about himself, but understands him-self in terms of others. In fact, *Dasein* begins to guide his life in full conformity with every-thing the other expects of him.

### **An Appraisal**

It is apt and congruent to point out that we have systematically exposed and explored Heidegger's view on authenticity. Indeed, Martin Heidegger deserves an enormous commendation for his courage to break into a new ground in philosophy. He defied the tradition and took up a fresh dimension in Philosophy. Heidegger in his work has to a credible degree, shown that every individual has got some power within to be whatever he or she wants to be irrespective of the external oppositions from fellow individuals and the society at large. This idea looks towards self realization and actualization. Joseph Omeregbe following the line of thought of Heidegger holds that authentic life is a life lived in a way one has freely chosen to live (Omeregbe 72). Authentic *Dasein* is contextually the one that reflects about itself and changes itself. It is not always easy to give a philosophical appraisal or critique of Heidegger. This is owing to the meticulous path he took in his analysis and argument. However, this chapter aims at appraising what we have exposed so far.

Heidegger in his work holds that our past and present do not give comprehensive account of what we are, for we are a bag of possibilities that offers us choices of in each moment of our existence. *Dasein* is a being-ahead-of-itself. Our orientation about the future provides part of the structure of what we are at present. It is embedded in *Dasein*, the ability to choose the best for itself

even in the face of dilemma. This implicitly points at the reason why Dasein should have moral obligation and be judged if not fulfilled.

Despite how flawless Heidegger's thought appears to be it is philosophical and important to show that there are reservations for him. Following the explanations of the ontological structures as given by Martin Heidegger, we can, without doubt, see that facticity itself points at the limitations man finds himself in. *ipso facto*, it is so much possible that man born blind may love to be a footballer or medical doctor, but because of the condition in which he exists, he is unable to be any of these. He may end up being a street beggar which he would not have ordinarily undertaken. In this kind of life, authentic existence is not said to be achieved.

Heidegger also argued that, 'the -being-with-one-another' dissolves one's being completely into the kind of being of others. That is, falling away from oneself, and existing for the "they" (Cerbone 92). Meaning that, our relations to others and things in the world, will somewhat affect our ability to relate to ourselves. Consequently, we belong to what Heidegger calls *Das Man*. Thus, man's relationship with *das man* is generally spoken of as a state of inauthenticity (Cerbone 93). Therefore, it is evident that man as a -being-with-one-another reduces his authenticity. In other words, for the fact that man is a being-with-another, that will unarguably depreciate his authenticity as it is in the mind of Heidegger.

According to Heidegger, "in the inauthentic mode we are constantly absorbed in the demands of the present. Heidegger argues that "being authentic does not imply running away from the society or the social world. His treatment of inter-subjectivity, to some degree, belongs to Dasein's everydayness, which is often seen as fallenness (inauthentic). So, in *Being and Time*, the analysis of Dasein's inter-subject relationship is deficient and fraught with problem. Rigorously examining Heidegger's explanation of Dasein, one can adduce that Dasein's authenticity is seen as being alone, without genuine inter-subjective communication, dialogue and reciprocity which is in contrast to Dasein as a being-with-one-another. It is always a big tussle in our day to day experience to assert and uniquely project ourselves. We are often caught in the web of misunderstanding. This is owing to the fact that we are unique and as well as social animals. We are unique in the sense that we have our peculiarities. Also, we are social beings in the sense that we cannot be without the other.

Therefore, Heidegger's account of inter-subjectivity, fails to appreciate the essential role dialogue plays in self-understanding and thus authenticity. This essentially becomes the reason why Gadamer opines that, "we exist in dialogue with one another." For Gadamer, "it is through this dialogue that we fully come to realize our limitations" he pushed further by arguing that, dialogue is an irreplaceable means for self-understanding. In other words, there are insights and understanding about ourselves that are only attainable through dialogue. For this reason, he genuinely suggests that we should always enter into relation with the presumption that our interlocutor or follow has something to teach us. However, in Gadamer's own words:

The way Heidegger had developed the preparation of the question of being and the way he had worked out the understanding of the most authentic existential structure of Dasein, the other could only show itself in its own existence as a limiting factor.... Heidegger's answer seemed to me to give short shrift to the phenomenon I was concerned with. It is not only that everyone is in principle limited. What I was concerned with was why I experience my own limitation through the encounter with the other, and why must I always learn to experience anew if I am ever to be in a position to surpass my limits.(8)

According to Gadamer, other subjects do not mark the limits of our understanding. They are necessary means for understanding our limits. It is also by elucidated that Martin Heidegger in his inter-subjective relationship does not consider the possibility of God to whom man can have genuine relationship. Existence of God and our relationship with him is part of our everyday experiences but Heidegger gave little or no attention to it. In the early phase, Heidegger is totally indifferent to the question, while in the latter phase the notion of God was considered in a different name, viz, the Divine. Some are of the view that the notion of the other, in the sense of communal existence, is absent, so also the notion of the other, as the Absolute and Eternal Thou, is absent in Heidegger's thought. This statement is clearer when we say that there is no authentic Dasein, neither is there any place for Dasein's relationship with God in Heidegger's thought.

Besides, even though there are thinkers who claim that there is an ethical system in Heidegger's inter-subjective relationship, it is rather difficult to accept their point view. The absence of the other, both in vertical and horizontal dimensions, gives way to the absence of a moral and value system in Heidegger. Since he does not envisage an inter-subjective community, morality becomes something superfluous. Though there are ethical ideas in Heidegger's thought, such as: the call of conscience, call of being, resoluteness and call to authenticity. He did not spell out practical way of giving guidance to moral life relating to Dasein's concrete situation. Thus, in some sense we agree with Camele in saying that, "Heidegger has precluded a socially and situational oriented ethical system (Gadamer 16).

From this exposition and analysis, it seems that Heidegger does not give a better view of Dasein's existence and destiny in his theory of authenticity. In the state of authenticity, we can see Dasein's inability to be the master of himself and totally independent. Authenticity makes Dasein an entity devoid of social and communitarian person. This could imply that an authentic Dasein has no genuine and reciprocal relationship with the other, as there is no place for love, togetherness, genuine friendship, fellowship with the other, cooperation and one-to-one concern.

Therefore, Dasein is presented as a being that is incapable of any committed relationship, while he is only capable of anxiety in the face of death, guilt and existential limitations and a tranquil waiting. The absence of genuine relationship in the totality of Dasein's existence makes Dasein's finitude more

acute as he has, always, to face life alone, having no word of encouragement and support from others. Thus, Heidegger's philosophy of the radical finitude leaves Dasein with an unhappy and solitary existence.

Indubitably, Heidegger's way to authentic human destiny lacks a sense of hope for future. Against this backdrop, Gabriel Marcel argues that, "Hope is for the soul what breathing is for the living organism" (Gadermer 2). He further argues that, "Where hope is lacking, the soul dries and withers" (Gadermer 22). Hence, both in early and later Heidegger, Dasein's life end with death. There is nothing to hope for in the future after death. Not only that Dasein finds himself in a particular state-of-being, as factual and thrown, having no idea about his origin and no idea as to what is after death. All that Dasein can do is to cultivate the genuine attitude of being-towards-death by anticipation of death and to open himself to the giving of being in re-collecting and thanksgiving, without ever knowing where such an authentic state is leading. This kind of life must be chaotic.

If this is all, in the last analysis, what is human existence? What is the worth of human living? What is the purpose and meaning of human existence? Why at all should Dasein live such a lonely and enclosed existence? Why should he toil and suffer to live? Heidegger does not seem to have answers to these questions. Therefore, Heidegger's philosophy of finite Dasein, presents a human existence whose life is nasty and lacks ultimate purpose, meaning and happiness. One has to prudently reflect on what would be the meaning of existence if life ends with the bodily death.

It is crystal clear that in spite of the short comings found in Heidegger's philosophical reflection, he aimed to effect destruction of metaphysical thinking and in the process paves way for a fresh and novel attitude towards existence. It follows that Heidegger, as a creative thinker aims to rectify the fragmentation in a man as a result of over reliance on metaphysics or metaphysical speculations. As an existentialist, he also believes that the discovery or realization of one's inauthentic modes of being necessitates if not commands a dialectical movement towards the fulfillment of one's authentic possibilities in the endless search of true self.

Therefore, Heidegger by his philosophical reflection intended to call man, who is fragmented, to authenticity of his existence. It involves a calling back to their roots, men who are caught up in the fragmented way of living that is characteristic of everyday existence and opening them to the call of destiny. It is a summon to run away from aimless living and an invitation to turn to a purposeful life. Thus Heidegger's philosophy, beyond any doubt, is a call to an authentic human existence and to genuine human living.

He has given a new vent to philosophizing by the novelty of his approach and by his unorthodox methodology. He has let in new air and has inaugurated new thinking, which in some ways can supplement the traditional metaphysical thinking. Here lies Heidegger's significance. Any original thinker, due to the novelty of his thinking, tends to commit errors in his thinking. Heidegger himself states as follows: "he who thinks greatly must err greatly". Therefore, the errors found in Heidegger's thinking do not make him less a thinker. Though there

could be a few drawbacks in Heidegger's thought, the negative elements of his philosophy are subdued by the positive. In addition to Heidegger's solution, the researcher also submits his contribution by saying that authentic existence is possible, especially for Nigerians if they would in their freedom, will-power, understanding and resoluteness learn to imbibe the attitude of courage and disciplinship. It is purely an act of inauthenticity to divert public funds, to rob people of their property; to kill advertently, to rig election, tell lies, forge certificates, indulge in examination malpractices and so on. Thus, Nigerian citizens must endeavour to refrain and desist from modes of inauthenticity. More to this, Nigerians should also learn to rely on he who is responsible for their thrownness or existence especially in those moments when their projected possibilities seem not to come true. This will immensely help to engender serenity of heart and happiness of living. Besides, from the research's painstaking examination, it is important to be left with awareness that authenticity as projected by Martin Heidegger can be achieved within some limits. It is not a task that can be accomplished in totality. Authenticity can be achieved to some degree or extend in a given confinement.

### **Evaluation**

In the view of some philosophers, it is not necessary to evaluate Martin Heidegger's work. Personality like William F. Lawhead holds thus: "it is difficult to give philosophical critique of Heidegger, for where no arguments have been provided, none can be refuted" (545). This implies for Lawhead that there is no need evaluating Heidegger's work. But from researcher's exposition and appraisal, handfuls of unsatisfactory submissions by Martin Heidegger have been point out. One of these unsatisfactory submissions is detected in his analysis of "the call of conscience".

Critically going through Heidegger's work, one can firmly say that Heidegger simply projected Dasein or man as an ethical being. This was buttressed in his analysis of the call of conscience. In his view, he holds that the conscience calls Dasein from inauthenticity to authenticity. Heidegger failed to ask the question whether every conscience is correctly formed. It is clear that every conscience is not correctly formed. For instance, we have some religious adherents who hold killing of infidels is a necessary senequanon to achieve heaven. In these people's conscience, their actions are right, but to majority out there, such act is a dastardly sort and can never be put up with. Therefore, this kind of situation arouses moral conflicts since there is no objective way to the formation of conscience. Conscience therefore does not suffice as a means to call man back to authentic existence. There is a need for dialogue since reliance on conscience alone is insufficient. This becomes the reason why Gadamer says that, "it is through this dialogue that we fully come to realize our limitations" (21). He further maintains that, dialogue is an irreplaceable means for self-understanding. In order words, there are insights about ourselves that is only attainable through dialogue. For this reason, he suggests that we should always enter into relation with the presumption that our interlocutor has something to teach us. It is the obvious that Heidegger can also be criticized for enthroning individualism. Authenticity sometimes presents one as self-centered, selfish and

individualistic. This kind of life is always frowned upon in the society. More to that, if one avoids every influence from the environment in which one exists, one must cease to be human. Therefore, there is a great need for one to exist in response to existential situation surrounding one.

The researcher also gleaned that Heidegger described *dasein* as a being-with-others. The mind-boggling question is: can *Dasein* always project its uniqueness amidst others? Being with others suggests that *Dasein* has to consider and care for others as it goes about its daily activities. It is also a common saying that where one's freedom stops, there begins another's. The implication is that *Dasein* cannot always exercise his individual freedom and thus cannot achieve authenticity in its strict sense.

Despite some of the flaws sieved out from Martin Heidegger's work, it is important to remark that Heidegger's work remains a society builder sine it succinctly spells out how one can live a creative, ingenuous, purposeful, meaningful and fulfilled life amidst influences from the environment. Heidegger's work is a call to a courageous and positive living. However, as mentioned earlier, authentic existence is achievable but not in a strict sense of it.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It will be a foul against philosophy if Heidegger's philosophical reflection is not commended. His work on authentic existence in general disperses the mist and frost that becloud man's existence. He unveiled the ontological structures in which man finds himself. These structures include facticity, fallenness, existential or possibility and so on. He is of the view that it is in the ability of *Dasein* or man to choose the kind of life he would want to live. This means authentic existence. He also maintains that man's absorption in "they" (*das man*) has plunged him into groundlessness and nullity, that level down his possibilities of being. This will finally cause his inauthenticity. How does man come back to authenticity? Heidegger says by call of conscience. Heidegger says that conscience is not a present-at-hand fact or event which occasionally occurs, to the justification of which inductive empirical proofs might be given; but it is a structural mode of *Dasein's* being, which is manifested in *Dasein's* factual existence. Conscience is revealed as a call which (*Ruf*) has the character of an appeal (*Anruf*) to *Dasein*, to be his own innermost potentiality-for-being. To this call of conscience, there is a corresponding hearing and listening. Losing himself in the publicness and idle-talk of the 'they', *Dasein* fails to listen to his own self, but listens rather to "the they". Therefore, the only way of freeing oneself from the self-forgetful giving of *Dasein* to "the they" is to listen to the voice of one's own conscience. The call of conscience, by its appeal, breaks *Dasein's* listening to the "they" and calls him out of this anonymous mode of existence. The call of conscience has the mode of dialogue. Heidegger in his own time field that we have given up on creating ourselves and creating an authentic existence out of the circumstances we find ourselves. For him this is a syndrome of self-alienation.

Sequel to the above, Heidegger in his philosophical reflection of *Dasein's* authenticity is concerned about helping people to come in touch with the deeper dimensions of their lives, in order to live centered on self-actualization. In order

words, it is an eye opener to people not to be swallowed up in the anonymous crowd of “the they”. Owing to this fact, it has awakened us once more to the conscience of our individual responsibilities; by offering us some tips that will help us to actively resist the forces that haul into *das man* and to independently and authentically “take hold” of our being in our own way.

Thus, instead of seeing our existence in the world from the point of view of a member of “the one” absorbed in our social functions, Heidegger tries to make us see our existence in the world from the point of view of the individual subject who finds himself as a pilgrim in the world, who strives after the realization of ideals and values. This will enable each person to be conscious of his individuality and uniqueness. In other words, this philosophical reflection makes effort to let us stand back from our absorption in the world, our absorption in our social care and preoccupations and to make us take hold of our position as an individual.

Therefore, it suffices to affirm that, Heidegger in his philosophical reflection on authenticity of *Dasein*, proves to Nigerians that authentic existence is realizable and therefore summons humanity especially Nigerians to run away from their aimless living to wholeness and authentic mode of existence. Deductively, this research work, beyond any doubt is a call for active, congruent, contemplative, dynamic, unique, authentic, mature and genuine human existence which is achievable. This will consequently go a long way to promote our human development indices.

#### **ADVANCED RESEARCH**

In writing this article the researcher realizes that there are still many shortcomings in terms of language, writing, and form of presentation considering the limited knowledge and abilities of the researchers themselves. Therefore, for the perfection of the article, the researcher expects constructive criticism and suggestions from various parties.

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