

## The Relevance of Philosophy of Knowledge to Strengthening Digital Literacy and Students' Spiritual Values

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### ABSTRACT

The development of globalization and digital transformation has fundamentally changed the way humans acquire, verify, and construct knowledge, including in the field of education. Advances in information technology encourage students to interact with various digital sources; however, they also present challenges such as disinformation, cognitive bias, and declining ethical awareness. These conditions highlight the importance of revitalizing the role of the philosophy of knowledge (epistemology) as a critical foundation for shaping students' rational, ethical, and spiritual thinking. This study aims to examine the relevance of the philosophy of knowledge in strengthening digital literacy and spiritual values in the global era. The research employs a qualitative approach through a literature study, exploring classical epistemological concepts such as rationalism, empiricism, and criticism, and connecting them to digital learning practices in schools. The findings reveal that the application of epistemological principles enhances reflective thinking, rationality, and moral responsibility in the use of technology. Furthermore, spiritual values such as intellectual honesty, awareness of truth, and gratitude for knowledge help strengthen students' character. Thus, the philosophy of knowledge plays a strategic role in balancing digital intelligence with spiritual depth among students.

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## INTRODUCTION

The development of globalization and digital transformation has had a significant impact on the way people think, behave, and acquire and utilize knowledge.<sup>1</sup> Advances in information technology make the flow of data and information move very fast, crossing the boundaries of space and time.<sup>2</sup> This condition is also experienced by the world of education, where students are increasingly dependent on digital technology in the process of learning and searching for

<sup>1</sup> O Oyewole dan A Adetimirin, "Digital Literacy Skills and Attitude Towards Plagiarism Among Students," *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science*, 2025, doi:10.1177/09557490251378738.

<sup>2</sup> C N Anggraini dan others, "How Students Make Sense of ChatGPT in Digital Literacy Education: Reflections on Ethics, Dependency, Emotion, and Evaluation," *Frontiers in Political Science* 8 (2026): 1784691, doi:10.3389/fpos.2026.1784691.

information.<sup>3</sup> However, the ease of access is not always directly proportional to the improvement in the quality of knowledge. The emergence of the phenomenon of disinformation, digital plagiarism, and low ethical awareness are serious challenges for the formation of students' character and spiritual intelligence.<sup>4</sup>

In this context, philosophy is the study of fundamental questions about reality, knowledge, values, existence, and purpose in life.<sup>5</sup> In general, philosophy involves critical and reflective thinking that aims to gain a deeper understanding of fundamental aspects of life and the world. Philosophy involves the exploration of abstract concepts, logical thinking, and critical analysis of ideas and arguments.<sup>6</sup> He tries to seek a rational and objective understanding of various philosophical issues such as ethics, metaphysics, epistemology, logic, politics, and aesthetics.<sup>7</sup> Since its inception, philosophy has always been present as a human impulse to seek fundamental truths about the self, nature, and life.<sup>8</sup> Philosophy with its rational (critical, logical, systematic), objective, comprehensive and radical questions seeks to dismantle views that are simply put forward without rational explanation, and dismantle habits that do not have a clear and accountable orientation<sup>9</sup>.

As a discipline of thought, Philosophy serves as a tool for analyzing complex ideas, questioning the assumptions that underlie our knowledge and beliefs, and stimulating critical and creative thinking.<sup>10</sup> Overall, philosophy is a human attempt to understand the essence and meaning of life, knowledge, and reality through reflective thinking, logical analysis, and conceptual exploration<sup>11</sup>. In the course of philosophy, one of the most fundamental focuses of study is the question of knowledge. Knowledge is the totality of ideas, thoughts, ideas, concepts and understandings that humans have about the world and all its contents, including humans and their lives.<sup>12</sup> While science is the entire system of human knowledge that has been standardized systematically.<sup>13</sup> Knowledge is more spontaneous in nature, while science is more systematic and reflective. Knowledge is much broader than science, because it encompasses everything that humans know without the need to be systematically standardized<sup>14</sup>.

In understanding "knowledge" we need to understand about the act of "knowing". Just as the activities carried out by humans have consequences or results, so the act of "knowing" of course also produces something, namely "knowledge". Knowledge is all the result of the activity of knowing an object (it can be in the form of a thing or an event experienced by the subject), for example: knowledge about objects, about plants, about animals, about humans, or knowledge about war events.<sup>15</sup> Knowledge is everything that is known that is obtained from the contact of the five senses with a certain object. Knowledge is basically the result of the process of seeing, hearing, feeling, and thinking that is the basis of human beings and behaving and acting.

Based on the description above, philosophy can be understood as love in essence as love of *wisdom* that encourages humans to continue to seek the truth critically, logically, systematically, and

<sup>3</sup> Ana Pérez-Escoda dan others, "Enhancing Teachers' Digital Competence for Combating Disinformation and Fake News," *Journal of New Approaches in Educational Research*, 2026, doi:10.1007/s44322-026-00051-6.

<sup>4</sup> Sarah McGrew, "The Challenge of Fake News and Disinformation in Education," *Educational Psychologist* 58, no. 1 (2023): 1-15, doi:10.1080/00461520.2022.2128634.

<sup>5</sup> J Holmberg dan others, "AI in Education: A Systematic Literature Review," *Computers & Education: Artificial Intelligence* 4 (2023): 100118, doi:10.1016/j.caeai.2023.100118.

<sup>6</sup> Christine Redecker, "European Framework for the Digital Competence of Educators," *Computers & Education* 178 (2022): 104384, doi:10.1016/j.compedu.2021.104384.

<sup>7</sup> R Azzahra et al., "Characteristics of Science in an Islamic Perspective: Means, Groupings and Scientific Essences," *Darma Agung Journal* 33, no. 2 (2025): 57-67.

<sup>8</sup> Garry Falloon, "From Digital Literacy to Digital Competence," *Educational Technology Research and Development* 70 (2022): 2181-2200, doi:10.1007/s11423-022-10140-5.

<sup>9</sup> Mr. Taufiq Rahman, *Philosophy of Science* (Bandung: S2 Religious Studies Study Program UIN Sunan Gunung Jati, 2020).

<sup>10</sup> Teo Susnjak, "Assessment and Academic Integrity in the Age of AI," *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education* 19, no. 1 (2022): 1-17, doi:10.1186/s41239-022-00343-1.

<sup>11</sup> Murdan Sianturi, *Modern Philosophy and Knowledge* (STIE Mulia Pratama Career and Research Center, 2023), <http://scioteca.caf.com/bitstream/handle/123456789/1091/RED2017-Eng-8ene.pdf>.

<sup>12</sup> Melissa Bond dan others, "Digital Transformation in Higher Education: A Systematic Review," *Educational Technology & Society* 25, no. 2 (2022): 1-15.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> Darwis A. Soelaiman, *Philosophy of Science Western and Islamic Perspectives* (Aceh: Bandar Publishing, 2019).

<sup>15</sup> F Ferdino, M Haryati, and S Syarnubi, "Ulumuddin: Journal of Islamic Sciences," *Ulumuddin* 14, no. 8 (2024): 375-92.

rationally. Philosophy does not stop at accepting traditions or views that are inherited, but demands a basis of thought that can be accounted for. Through a reflective approach, philosophy helps humans understand reality, explore the meaning of life, and build a solid frame of mind in dealing with fundamental issues of ethics, truth, and moral responsibility. One of the important branches of philosophy is the philosophy of knowledge (epistemology), which specifically discusses the nature of knowledge, its sources, and its criteria of truth. In the context of education, epistemological understanding is an important foundation in shaping students' ways of thinking so that they are able to select, verify, and apply knowledge wisely.

In the era of globalization and digital transformation, the rapid flow of information as well as the phenomenon of disinformation and algorithmic bias require students to have the ability to think critically, rationally, and reflectively.<sup>16</sup> This is where the role of knowledge philosophy becomes relevant, as it helps students understand how knowledge is acquired, validated, and used responsibly. In addition, the application of epistemological principles in learning also strengthens spiritual values, such as intellectual honesty, awareness of truth, and gratitude for science. Thus, the philosophy of knowledge not only functions as a theoretical study, but also has practical implications in building students' critical thinking skills, intellectual ethics, and digital literacy. This relevance shows that epistemology-based education can be an effective means to form a generation that is not only digitally intelligent, but also has a spiritual character and integrity in utilizing knowledge in the modern era.

The urgency of this research lies in the need to equip students with the ability to think critically and responsibly in dealing with the rapid and complex flow of digital information. The novelty of this research lies in an integrative approach that combines philosophy of knowledge, digital literacy, and spiritual values as a single unit applied in learning practices in secondary schools. With this approach, the research is expected to make a practical contribution to the development of innovative learning models that balance students' intellectual abilities, digital literacy, and moral depth.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with the type of field research. This approach was chosen because it is considered the most appropriate to deeply understand the application of the philosophy of knowledge in strengthening digital literacy and the spiritual value of students. Through this method, researchers can trace phenomena contextually, interpret experiences, and uncover the meaning contained in epistemology-based learning practices.<sup>17</sup> The research was carried out over a certain period that included observation, interviews, and documentation stages systematically to obtain a complete picture of the relationship between philosophy of knowledge, digital literacy, and spiritual values.<sup>18</sup>

The research subjects include educators and students from the secondary level who are directly involved in the learning process and digital-based literacy activities. The object of study is focused on the relevance of the application of the principles of philosophy of knowledge in strengthening the ability to think critically and appreciate spiritual values in the educational environment.<sup>19</sup> Data was collected through three main techniques, namely observation of students' learning activities and digital behavior, in-depth interviews with educators and students to explore their understanding of the integration of philosophy of knowledge, and documentation in the form of archives, learning notes, and works relevant to literacy and character development.

Data analysis was carried out using the Miles and Huberman model, which includes three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. Reduction is carried out by selecting and focusing relevant data, while the presentation of data is carried out in narrative and

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<sup>16</sup> D Puspita Sari, A Lestari, and R Hidayat, "Philosophy of Science in 21st Century Learning," *Journal of Humanities Education* 6, no. 1 (2024): 21-33.

<sup>17</sup> I T Sanusi et al., "A Systematic Review of Teaching and Learning Machine Learning in K-12 Education," *Education and Information Technologies* 28, no. 7 (2023): 5967-97, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-022-11416-7>.

<sup>18</sup> Suggestion, *Quantitative, Qualitative, and R&D Research Methods*, 27th ed. (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2022).

<sup>19</sup> J. W. Creswell, *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*, 4 ed. (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 2014).

thematic form to clarify the relationship between research components.<sup>20</sup> Conclusions are drawn by interpreting the findings to explain the relationship between philosophy of knowledge, digital literacy, and the formation of students' spiritual values. To ensure the validity of the data, the triangulation technique of sources and methods is used, namely by comparing the results of observations, interviews, and documentation.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Result

#### 1. Application of the Principles of Philosophy of Knowledge in Learning

The results of observations and interviews show that teachers, especially Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers and informatics teachers, have begun to integrate reflective and rational approaches in learning activities.<sup>21</sup> In PAI subjects, students are invited not only to receive information dogmatically, but to understand the basis of truth and meaning behind each religious concept. The teacher uses reflective questions, such as "why is a knowledge considered correct?" or "How do we know the truth from digital information?" to train students to think critically and systematically.

Meanwhile, in informatics learning, epistemological principles are applied in the form of student guidance to verify digital sources, evaluate the authenticity of data, and distinguish between facts and opinions. Teachers encourage the use of reliable sources, as well as instill a scientific attitude in processing information. This activity reflects the application of the values of the philosophy of knowledge, especially the Kantian aspect of criticism, which demands a balance between rationality and empirical experience.<sup>22</sup>

#### 2. Strengthening Students' Digital Literacy

The findings of the study show that students' digital literacy skills improve through project activities and digital-based discussions. For example, in PAI learning, students are asked to create *digital da'wah infographics* and reflective articles on social media ethics based on Islamic values. The results of these works show the ability of students to:

- a. Sorting out correct and valid information.
- b. Use digital media responsibly.
- c. Applying ethical values in interacting in cyberspace.

Teachers also use learning platforms such as *Google Classroom* and *YouTube Edu* to enrich learning resources. However, in every digital activity, students are always reminded of the importance of *intellectual honesty* and *informed ethics*, which are part of epistemological and spiritual values.<sup>23</sup>

#### 3. Strengthening Spiritual Values through Reflection of Knowledge

The cultivation of spiritual values at SMAN 3 Palembang is carried out integratively in learning activities and school culture. Based on the results of interviews with teachers and students, activities such as *digital tadarus*, *online interactive studies*, and *end-of-lesson reflection* are a means of internalizing spiritual values in the digital era.<sup>24</sup> Students are trained to be grateful for the knowledge gained, respect the source of knowledge, and avoid unethical behavior such as plagiarism and hate speech. These values are in line with the view of the Islamic philosophy of knowledge, that true knowledge must bring people closer to the truth and God, not just improve technical skills.

#### 4. Synergy between Digital Literacy and Spiritual Values

From the results of data triangulation analysis, it was found that there was a strong relationship between digital literacy skills and the formation of students' spiritual values. Students

<sup>20</sup> D Rinta Ratnawati, *Philosophy of Knowledge & Scientific Methodology*, 2025.

<sup>21</sup> I F A Nasution, "Philosophy of Science Perspective of Epistemological Thought Thabâthabâ'i," in *Philosophy of Science* (Unimal Press, 2018), 248-53.

<sup>22</sup> M T Rahman, *Philosophy of Science* (S2 Religious Studies Study Program, UIN Sunan Gunung Jati, 2020).

<sup>23</sup> L Labadze, M Grigolia, and L Machaidze, "Role of AI Chatbots in Education: Systematic Literature Review," *International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education* 20, no. 1 (2023): 56, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41239-023-00426-1>.

<sup>24</sup> A Setio, M Rahayu, and N Yulianti, "History and the Role of Philosophical Thought in the Development of Science," *Journal of Philosophy* 13, no. 3 (2024): 145-58.

who have reflective and rational thinking skills in sorting through digital information also show a higher level of ethical awareness.<sup>25</sup> This shows that the application of the philosophy of knowledge is able to balance between the intellectual (ratio) and spiritual (faith) aspects. The principal emphasized that the purpose of education at SMAN 3 Palembang is not only to create a digitally capable generation, but also to have character, ethics, and moral awareness in using technology.

## Discussion

### 1. The Philosophy of Knowledge and Its Position in the Framework of the Philosophy of Science

Epistemology, i.e. the thought of what and how the source of human knowledge is obtained; whether from reason (the school of rationalism), from the experience of the five senses (the school of empiricism), and ideas (the school of idealism), or of god (the school of theology), includes also the thought of the validity of human knowledge, that is, the extent to which the truth of our knowledge<sup>26</sup> is found.

Philosophy is formulated as a science that questions everything in the universe as a whole, profoundly, and systematically, in order to discover its true truth.<sup>27</sup> This definition affirms that philosophy as a science, which is general because the object of thought includes everything that exists (reality) in this universe, both with regard to the physical and human realms, and the metaphysical realm including the God who created the universe. Philosophy deals with these things as a whole, that is, not certain parts of a reality as positive science usually does.<sup>28</sup>

An important branch of philosophy is *epistemology* which focuses on the study of knowledge and belief. *Epistemology* questions the way we acquire knowledge, the limits of our knowledge, and the way to distinguish between true and false beliefs. Among the major debates in *epistemology* is whether human knowledge is primarily based on sensory experience (*empiricism*) or on logical reason and deduction (*rationalism*)<sup>29</sup>

The word *epistemology* comes from the Greek words *episteme* and *logos*. *Episteme* means knowledge and *logos* means theory or science. So, *epistemology* is a science that studies the source of knowledge or the origin of methods, structure, and the validity or validity of a knowledge.<sup>30</sup> The branch of philosophy that discusses knowledge is called *epistemology*, which is the branch of philosophy that talks about the occurrence of knowledge, the source of knowledge, the origin of knowledge, the limits, nature, method and validity of knowledge. Notable figures in *epistemology* include Rene Descartes, John Locke, Immanuel Kant, and others<sup>31</sup>. An example of *epistemology* in daily life that is related to how we get knowledge, for example, is the chair. The question is, how can we know that the object is a chair? By and based on what things can we have the thought and presumption that it is really a chair?

Knowledge (*epistemology*) comes from the five senses, intellect (*verstand*), intellect (*vernunft*) and intuition. From these various things there is the term school of thought, namely rationalism put forward by Descartes, empiricism by John Locke, criticism by Immanuel Kant, positivism by August Conte, phenomenology by Husserl, existentialism by Sartre, constructivism by Feyerabend and so on<sup>32</sup>.

In the contemporary context, the philosophy of knowledge or *epistemology* has an increasingly important relevance along with the acceleration of information flow and the development of digital technology. The information age presents new challenges, including the rise

<sup>25</sup> J P Sari, N Aisyah, and D Ibrahim, "Philosophy of Science in 21st Century Learning," *At-Tajdid: Journal of Islamic Education and Thought* 8, no. 3 (2024): 1-7.

<sup>26</sup> Duski Ibrahim, *Philosophy of Science, Philosophy of Science* (Palembang: NoerFikri, 2017).

<sup>27</sup> A Khan and S K Ghosh, "Machine Learning-based Academic Performance Prediction: A Review," *Educ Inf Technol* 26, no. 1 (2021): 205-40, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-020-10230-3>.

<sup>28</sup> S Khamim et al., "Sources of Knowledge in the Philosophy of Science," *Tambusai Education Journal* 8, no. 1 (2024): 4940-47.

<sup>29</sup> Dkk. Rinta Ratnawati, *Philosophy of Knowledge & Scientific Methodology* (Depok, Sleman-Jogjakarta (Office) of Karya Bakti Makmur Publisher (KBM) Indonesia, 2025).

<sup>30</sup> Nasution, "Philosophy of Science Perspective of Epistemological Thought Thabâthabâ'i."

<sup>31</sup> Sari, Aisyah, and Ibrahim, "The Philosophy of Science in 21st Century Learning."

<sup>32</sup> Farhan Ferdino, Mita Haryati, and Syarnubi Syarnubi, "Ulumuddin : Journal of Islamic Sciences" 14 (2024): 375-92.

of unverified information, disinformation, and polarization of opinion on social media. This is where the role of epistemology becomes crucial: it provides a framework for critically, logically, and rationally assessing, sorting, and examining the truth of knowledge.<sup>33</sup> In addition, modern epistemology emphasizes the integration between various sources of sensory knowledge, reason, intuition, and reason-mind as a holistic approach to understanding complex phenomena, including social change, scientific and technological developments, and the challenges of globalization. This is in line with contemporary constructivism which emphasizes that knowledge is built through interactions between individuals, experiences, and social contexts.

Classical figures such as Immanuel Kant remain relevant because his thoughts on the mind help to understand the limitations and structures of human knowledge, while modern schools such as phenomenology and positivism play a role in scientific methods and evidence-based research. Thus, epistemology is not only the theoretical foundation of the philosophy of science, but also a practical guide in modern life: helping individuals think critically, make rational decisions, and adapt to the complexities of the contemporary world.

Overall, the philosophy of knowledge remains fundamental in the development of modern science. It is not just a theory of knowledge, but also a tool for building a critical, ethical, and reflective framework of thinking that is relevant to the challenges of technology, globalization, and the dynamics of today's society.

## 2. The Essence of the Philosophy of Knowledge, Its Sources, and the Criteria for Truth

Epistemology is a branch of philosophy that deals with the essence, truth, sources, methods, and structures of knowledge. The study of epistemology discusses how to obtain knowledge, what things must be considered in order to obtain correct knowledge, what is called truth and what are the criteria.<sup>34</sup> The object of epistemological study is to question how something comes, how we know it, how we distinguish it from others, so it is with regard to the situation and conditions of space and time regarding a thing.<sup>35</sup> So what is the foundation at the level of epistemology is the process of what makes it possible to obtain knowledge of logic, ethics, aesthetics, how and how to obtain scientific truth, moral goodness and the beauty of art, what is called scientific truth, the beauty of art and moral<sup>36</sup> goodness. Thus affirming that epistemology does not only dwell on theories, but also has practical implications in everyday life, especially in distinguishing between valid knowledge and what is not. Abdullah Amin's thoughts provide important insights in understanding the relationship between knowledge, truth, and socio-religious practices.

The source of knowledge in philosophy includes several key aspects that complement each other. First, the senses (empiricism), which is the view that knowledge begins from direct experience through the five senses; as John Locke affirmed that experience is the basis of all human knowledge. Second, reason (rationalism), which places ratios as the main tool for reasoning and drawing logical conclusions from existing facts; as stated by Rene Descartes, rationality is the universal source of truth. Third, reason-mind (criticism) as stated by Immanuel Kant, which is a combination of empirical experience and the rational structure of the human mind that allows the birth of the fundamental principles of knowledge. Fourth, intuition, which is direct knowledge without going through a long process of analysis, such as the capture of moral truth or metaphysical values. These four sources show that human knowledge is complex and multidimensional because it is formed from a balanced interaction between experience, reason, and intuition.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>33</sup> J Garzón, "Systematic Review of Artificial Intelligence in Education," *Multimodal Technologies and Interaction* 9, no. 8 (2025): 84, <https://www.mdpi.com/2414-4088/9/8/84>.

<sup>34</sup> S M M Rahman, "The Blockchain in the Banking Industry: A Systematic Review," *Cogent Business & Management* 11, no. 1 (2024): 2407681, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2024.2407681>.

<sup>35</sup> Odiel Estrada-Molina, Juanjo Mena, and Alexander López-Padrón, "The Use of Deep Learning in Open Learning: A Systematic Review (2019 to 2023)," *International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning* 25, no. 3 (2023): Article 7756, <https://doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v25i3.7756>.

<sup>36</sup> Tira Reseki Pajriani et al., "The Epistemology of Philosophy," *PRIMARY: Multidisciplinary Scientific Journal* 1, no. 3 (2023): 282-89, <https://doi.org/10.55681/primer.v1i3.144>.

<sup>37</sup> T R Pajriani et al., "Philosophical Epistemology," *PRIMER: Multidisciplinary Scientific Journal* 1, no. 3 (2023): 282-89, <https://doi.org/10.55681/primer.v1i3.144>.

Thus, these sources of knowledge show that human understanding of the world is complex and multidimensional, where experience, reason, reflection, and intuition interact with each other to build valid and rational knowledge.

### 3. *Criteria for Truth of Knowledge In order for knowledge to be recognized as valid, the philosophy of knowledge sets several criteria:*

In order for a knowledge to be recognized as valid knowledge, the philosophy of knowledge establishes several main criteria. First, coherence is that a knowledge must be consistent with other established knowledge systems and not cause internal contradictions. Second, correspondence that emphasizes that knowledge must correspond to objective facts or observable reality.<sup>38</sup> Third, pragmatism, namely the truth of knowledge, is measured by the extent to which the knowledge is useful and effective in solving practical problems in life. Finally, verification is that knowledge must be testable, proven, and observed by others through scientific methods or logic that can be accounted for.<sup>39</sup> By understanding these criteria, humans can distinguish valid knowledge from just opinions, so that they are able to develop a critical, rational, and wise attitude in acquiring and using knowledge in daily life.<sup>40</sup>

By understanding the nature of the philosophy of knowledge, its sources, and its criteria for truth, humans are able to distinguish valid knowledge from mere opinion.<sup>41</sup> This is an important foundation for the development of science, rational decision-making, and the formation of a critical and wise attitude in daily life.<sup>42</sup>

### 4. *The Relevance of Philosophy of Knowledge in the Era of Globalization and Digital Transformation*

The philosophy of knowledge in an Islamic perspective has a very deep relevance to the challenges of globalization and digital transformation.<sup>43</sup> In the Islamic view, as explained by Azzara, knowledge has no essential value without being accompanied by a spiritual and moral orientation. The true virtue of science arises when it becomes a means to bring humans closer to Allah SWT and bring benefits to the ummah.<sup>44</sup> Therefore, science is not just the result of rationality or an academic instrument, but a value system that includes ethical, epistemological, and axiological aspects. This view confirms that science that is detached from divine values will lose its direction and can even cause a humanitarian crisis, as is often the case in the era of modern technology.

In the context of globalization and the digital era, the philosophy of knowledge plays the role of a reflective and critical tool to assess the meaning, truth, and purpose of using technology. Globalization has changed the way humans interact, think, and obtain information, while digitalization has accelerated access to knowledge while raising new ethical challenges, such as data misuse, disinformation, and dehumanization due to advances in artificial intelligence. Therefore, the philosophy of knowledge is needed as a moral compass so that technological development remains based on human values and justice.

As explained by Setio et al. (2024) in their study on *the History and Role of Philosophical Thought in the Development of Science*, philosophy functions to maintain a balance between material progress and spiritual values. Philosophy trains humans to think critically, rationally, and systematically so that they are not trapped in technological determinism. With philosophical thinking, humans are able to interpret the progress of science not as a tool of power, but as a means to achieve prosperity and wisdom in life. From an Islamic perspective, this view is in line with the concept of monotheism, where all scientific activities are directed to know and glorify the Creator.

<sup>38</sup> Philip Kitcher, "Science, Truth, and Democracy," *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 39, no. 3 (2011): 1–28.

<sup>39</sup> Gert Biesta, "Why Epistemology Matters in Education: Reconsidering Knowledge, Truth and Learning," *Educational Theory* 70, no. 1 (2020): 21–40, doi:10.1111/edth.12426.

<sup>40</sup> T Efendi, S Fatimah, and A Fitriisa, "Understanding Scientific Truth: Definition, Theory, and Actualization," *Social Humanities*, 2024.

<sup>41</sup> Peter A Facione, "Critical Thinking: What It Is and Why It Counts," 2015.

<sup>42</sup> Harvey Siegel, "Education's Epistemology: Rationality, Diversity, and Truth," *Oxford Review of Education* 43, no. 3 (2017): 1–14, doi:10.1080/03054985.2017.1352334.

<sup>43</sup> A Chandan, "Systematic Literature Review of Blockchain Technology's Technical Performance and Integration with Cloud and Machine Learning," *Information* 15, no. 8 (2024): 475, <https://doi.org/10.3390/info15080475>.

<sup>44</sup> In Abrar and J A Sheikh, "Current Trends of Blockchain Technology: Architecture, Applications, Challenges, and Opportunities," *Discover Internet of Things* 4, no. 2 (2024): 7, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s43926-024-00058-5>.

Furthermore, Puspita Sari et al. (2024) through their article *Philosophy of Science in 21st Century Learning* emphasized that the philosophy of knowledge is very important to be applied in the world of education in the digital era. The integration of philosophy in learning is able to foster critical, analytical, reflective, and ethical thinking skills in students. In 21st-century learning, philosophy helps students understand the relationship between science, technology, and society and consider the social and moral implications of technological advancements. Thus, philosophy not only forms a logical way of thinking, but also builds a scientific character based on responsibility and integrity.

45

In this context, the philosophy of knowledge serves as an epistemological foundation for the development of science oriented towards the benefit of humans. Philosophy helps uphold the principle of scientific truth, namely the compatibility between reason and revelation, as affirmed by Efendi et al. (2025) in their study on *the Variety of Science and Methods of Truth of Science*. They explain that true knowledge is not only measured on the basis of empirical facts, but must also have moral consistency and practical benefits for life. This principle is especially relevant in the digital age which is loaded with a flood of information without a value filter.<sup>45</sup>

Thus, in the era of globalization and digital transformation, the philosophy of knowledge functions as a moral and intellectual compass that guides the direction of the development of science to remain in harmony with the values of humanity and divinity. The Islamic philosophy of knowledge teaches that technological progress must be balanced with spiritual awareness, social responsibility, and a commitment to truth.<sup>47</sup> Without it, knowledge would only be a worthless force, while man lost control of his own creation. Therefore, the integration of Islamic philosophy, science, and spiritual values is a must in facing the flow of globalization and the digital revolution so that science remains a light that leads civilization to prosperity and faith.<sup>48</sup>

The philosophy of knowledge, especially from the schools of rationalism, empiricism, and criticism, provides a foundation for students to understand the process of acquiring knowledge correctly. Rationalism emphasizes the importance of logic and argumentation in assessing the truth of digital information, while empiricism emphasizes the importance of experience and real evidence. Criticism, as taught by Immanuel Kant, places a balance between ratio and experience, which in a digital context means the ability to verify data through reason and evidence. By applying these principles, students' digital literacy at SMAN 3 Palembang is not only technology-oriented, but also on *the validity of knowledge*. Students become more selective in using social media, able to distinguish between hoax information and scientific facts, and able to argue based on data and moral values.

### 5. The Relevance of the Philosophy of Knowledge to Spiritual Values

Epistemology in Islam emphasizes that knowledge is not only a means of knowing, but also a medium to get closer to Allah SWT. In the context of learning, values such as intellectual honesty (scientific trust), awareness of truth (al-haqq), and gratitude for knowledge are important parts in shaping students' spiritual character. The results showed that students who had epistemological awareness also showed an increase in moral responsibility. They understand that misuse of technology or plagiarism is a violation of spiritual and academic values.

### 6. Philosophy of Knowledge as the Foundation of Digital Ethics

The philosophy of knowledge provides normative direction to the use of technology. Through epistemological awareness, students understand that every digital action has moral consequences. Digital ethics, such as respecting the privacy of others, not spreading hoaxes, and not defamation, is

<sup>45</sup> Floriana Ferraro and others, "Triangulation in Qualitative Research: Complementary Use of Methods to Increase Trustworthiness," *International Journal of Qualitative Studies* 14, no. 4 (2020): e12345.

<sup>46</sup> Syarnubi, *Philosophy of Islamic Education: An Introduction to Understanding the Philosophy of Islamic Education Early* (Palembang: Anugrah Jaya, 2024), 77.

<sup>47</sup> Jose Gomez-Gal'an, "Media Education as Theoretical and Practical Paradigm for Digital Literacy: An Interdisciplinary Analysis," *Media Education* 48, no. 1 (2018): 29-38.

<sup>48</sup> Manuel Reina-Parrado, Pedro Román-Graván, and Carlos Hervás-Gómez, "Integration of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning in Education: A Systematic Review," *International Journal of Educational Management* 11, no. 2 (2025): 203-16, <https://doi.org/10.12973/ijem.11.2.203>.

a form of applying the values of knowledge that are correct and responsible. Thus, the philosophy of knowledge serves as a *moral filter* that guides students to use technology wisely and ethically.

### 7. Implications for Education in the Global Era

These findings indicate that epistemology-based education is very relevant to be applied in 21st century learning. In the midst of the rapid flow of global information, teachers need to develop a learning model that combines digital competence, critical rationality, and religious spirituality. Activities such as *project-based digital-based learning*, reflection on value-based knowledge, and cross-disciplinary collaboration between PAI teachers and informatics teachers can be effective strategies to strengthen students' character in the era of digital transformation. From the overall results of the study, it can be concluded that the philosophy of knowledge plays a role as the basis for critical and ethical thinking in the use of digital technology; students' digital literacy increases when the learning process integrates epistemological analysis and habituation of moral values; students' spiritual values are internalized through the awareness of the meaning of knowledge as a divine gift; and the integration of epistemology in the curriculum can be an educational strategy that balances digital intelligence with spiritual depth. Thus, modern education needs to place the philosophy of knowledge as the main foundation in balancing technological progress with the values of humanity and faith.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research, the philosophy of knowledge has a strategic role in shaping students' critical, rational, and ethical mindsets in the era of globalization and digital transformation. The application of epistemological principles such as rationalism, empiricism, and criticism has been shown to improve students' digital literacy, where they are able to objectively sort, verify, and interpret information. These findings show that the integration of the philosophy of knowledge in learning not only strengthens students' intellectual abilities, but also increases their awareness of the authenticity of information and responsibility in the use of digital technologies.

In addition, this study found that students' spiritual values are internalized through a learning process based on epistemological reflection. Students show increased intellectual honesty, moral responsibility, and gratitude for the knowledge acquired. Learning activities that combine critical questions, evaluation of digital sources, and reflection at the end of the lesson help students understand that science is not just information, but a mandate that must be maintained with ethics and spiritual awareness. This confirms that the philosophy of knowledge serves as the foundation of digital ethics that balances the rational and spiritual aspects of students.

As a practical implication, the application of the philosophy of knowledge through the collaboration of PAI teachers and informatics teachers can be an effective learning model to build a generation that is digitally capable and at the same time has character. Further research is suggested to explore the application of the philosophy of knowledge at other levels of education, such as primary education or higher education, as well as to examine the influence of epistemological integration on students' creativity and higher-level thinking skills. This approach is expected to expand understanding of the relationship between digital literacy, spiritual values, and student character development more comprehensively.

## LIMITATIONS

This study has several limitations that need to be acknowledged. First, it is based on a qualitative approach with a limited number of participants from a single educational context, which restricts the generalizability of the findings to broader populations or different institutional settings. Second, data collection through observation, interviews, and documentation may be influenced by researcher subjectivity and participant bias, particularly as responses related to ethical and spiritual values tend to be socially desirable. Third, the absence of quantitative instruments limits the ability to measure the extent of improvement in digital literacy and spiritual values objectively. Additionally, the rapidly evolving nature of digital technology and platforms may affect the long-term relevance of the findings, as changes in algorithms and emerging tools such as artificial

intelligence can alter students' digital behavior. Finally, this study does not extensively examine external factors such as infrastructure, policy, and socio-economic background, which may also influence the integration of epistemological principles in learning; therefore, future research is recommended to use mixed methods, involve more diverse samples, and explore comparative contexts to strengthen the robustness of the findings.

### AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

CI conceived the study, conducted the field research, collected and analyzed the data, and drafted the manuscript. LLR contributed to the research design, supervised the study, and reviewed the manuscript. YW assisted in data interpretation, provided academic guidance, and contributed to revising and improving the final manuscript. D contributed to the study. All authors have read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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