



Philosophy in Educational Development and Improving Critical Thinking Skills: A Scientific and Reflective Approach

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ABSTRACT (10 PT)

Contemporary education faces increasingly complex challenges, especially in forming students who are not only academically intelligent, but also able to think critically and positively in the face of information that is full of bias and uncertainty. This article aims to explore the role of philosophy in the development of contemporary education, with a focus on how philosophy can form students who have a positive and critical framework of thinking. This study uses a library research approach by analyzing relevant literature on philosophy and education. The sources used include books, journal articles, and related studies that discuss the relationship between philosophy and critical education. The results of the study show that philosophy provides a strong theoretical basis for developing more reflective and critical education. In addition, the application of philosophical principles in education can produce individuals who are more independent, critical, and reflective in facing various dynamics of life.

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INTRODUCTION

Science is the main foundation in the development of human civilization (Dana, 2023). Since the beginning of civilization, humans have tried to understand the world through the process of observation, experimentation, and reasoning. This process gave birth to various branches of science that continue to develop over time. Understanding the basics of science is not only the foundation for mastering various disciplines, but also helps humans understand the relationship between sciences, both theoretically and practically.

In its development, science is grouped into various types based on the object of study, method, and purpose (Magnis-Suseno, 1992). This grouping provides a framework for identifying the unique characteristics of each type of science, from natural sciences, social sciences, to

humanities. Each type of science has a complementary role in contributing to the advancement of human life (Waluyo et al., 1977).

For humans, science serves as a tool to improve the quality of life. In the health sector, science enables the discovery of drugs, medical technology, and disease prevention strategies. In technology, science helps create tools and systems that make everyday life easier. Meanwhile, in the social sector, science provides insight into building a more just, inclusive, and harmonious society. Learning is an integral part of human knowledge acquisition. Its function is to protect humans from various threats, both from the natural environment, such as disasters or weather changes, and from social challenges, such as conflict, injustice, and inequality (Ismunanto, 2017). Through the learning process, humans not only gain the ability to survive, but also develop creative solutions to improve the quality of life, create innovation, and build civilization.

Education, on the other hand, does not only focus on transferring knowledge, but also on character building and critical thinking skills. The importance of applying philosophy in contemporary education is also related to the paradigm shift in the way we view the teaching and learning process. Therefore, philosophy plays a very important role in designing an education system that not only produces individuals who are academically intelligent, but also able to think independently, critically, and reflectively (Rahmatullah & Kamal, 2023). Philosophy teaches us not only to receive information, but to question and analyze it, and to relate it to experiences and social contexts.

Therefore, the philosophy of education offers a new perspective, where education does not only function as a transfer of knowledge, but also as a tool to build character, moral values, and critical thinking skills (AR & Ismail, 2024). By integrating philosophical thinking into educational development, we can build a more holistic framework in forming a generation that is ready to face global challenges. This article aims to explore more deeply the role of philosophy in educational development, as well as how reflective and scientific approaches can improve students' critical thinking skills, so that they become not only consumers of information, but also active and creative thinkers in creating solutions to problems in the real world.

METHOD

The methodology used in this article is a library research approach with a focus on contemporary philosophical and educational issues. This approach aims to analyze and explore relevant philosophical concepts in the context of educational development that is oriented towards improving students' critical thinking skills. In this study, the sources used include books, journal articles, research reports, and other documents related to philosophical theory, education, and the implementation of critical education in various contexts. This article aims to develop a strong theoretical understanding of the importance of philosophy in contemporary education and how its application can help realize students who have positive, critical, and reflective thinking skills in facing the various challenges of the times.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Knowledge is the result of the human process of understanding, organizing, and internalizing information or data obtained through experience, observation, education, and reflection. Knowledge includes awareness and understanding of facts, concepts, skills, or relationships that enable individuals to judge, make decisions, and act wisely.

Philosophically, knowledge is often associated with three main components, namely belief, truth, and justification. These three elements are the basis for distinguishing valid knowledge from mere opinion or belief. Belief refers to a person's belief in something, while truth refers to the conformity of that belief to objective reality or facts. Justification, on the other hand, is the reason or evidence that supports the belief so that it can be accepted as valid knowledge. Without adequate justification, belief will only be speculation, and without truth, it cannot be considered true knowledge. With the combination of these three elements, knowledge becomes something that is not only believed, but also has a strong and accountable basis. This provides a philosophical foundation for understanding how humans acquire, test, and validate knowledge in various contexts of life (Wijana et al., 2022).

Humans gain knowledge through various means involving direct experience, deep reflection, and interaction with the world around them. One of the main ways is through empirical experience, where humans gain knowledge by observing and feeling the phenomena around them. This experience can come from direct sensing such as seeing, hearing, or feeling. In addition, formal education also plays an important role in the formation of knowledge. Through a structured learning process, humans gain information and skills from teachers, books, or other learning sources (Yasin et al., 2024). Reflection and contemplation are also important ways of gaining knowledge, where one uses logic and rationality to analyze information and understand abstract concepts. In the scientific world, knowledge is gained through observation and experimentation, which allows humans to test hypotheses and gain verified understanding. Social interaction also plays a big role in broadening horizons, where discussions and collaborations allow for the exchange of ideas that enrich knowledge (Muslih, 2021). In addition, knowledge can be inherited through traditions and cultural heritage, where the values, history, and way of life of a community are learned and passed on to the next generation. Some knowledge is also gained through intuition, which is direct understanding without going through a clear logical process. Finally, in a religious context, revelation is seen as a way for humans to gain transcendental or spiritual knowledge. All of these ways complement each other, allowing humans to continue to develop their understanding of themselves, society, and the universe.

Basic and Types of Knowledge

Knowledge is something that humans know. Knowledge is something that is known, understood, and awareness of knowledge itself. Knowledge includes everything that humans acquire through experience, observation, and reflection. It becomes a bridge that connects humans with the reality around them, allowing them to identify, analyze, and give meaning to the phenomena that occur. Not only static, knowledge also develops over time, built through

interaction with the environment, tradition, and continuous innovation (Nasution, 2023a). More than just information, knowledge involves a deep understanding that influences the way humans think, behave, and make decisions, thus becoming an integral part of human civilization itself.

According to Jujun S. Suria Sumantri, basic knowledge possessed by humans covers various important aspects. includes fundamental understanding involving basic concepts in various fields. This knowledge is the foundation for individuals to develop further insights and face various challenges in everyday life. According to him, basic knowledge possessed by humans includes, as follows (Suriasumantri, 1993), the reasoning ability possessed by humans is very superior, so humans are able to learn new things, which distinguishes them from other species. The ability to think critically allows humans to distinguish between good and evil, what is interesting and what is not interesting. Reasoning can also be seen as a way of thinking that produces knowledge, more specifically as a way of thinking that shows certain characteristics when seeking the truth. The reasoning process is a mental act that produces knowledge. Information obtained through reasoning must comply with certain protocols in order to be based on truth. A new discovery can only be taken seriously if it adheres to a certain sequence of logic or reasoning.

According to philosophical theory, all human knowledge does not just appear; rather, it has a beginning that can be classified into four main categories: rational, empirical, intuitive, and authoritative. *First*, rational knowledge is rooted in the ability to think logically and analytically, where humans use reason to understand the truth through the process of deduction or induction. This process involves analyzing cause-and-effect relationships, drawing conclusions from existing premises, and developing general principles that can be applied in various contexts. Rational knowledge allows humans to build a consistent and coherent system of thought, creating theories that explain natural, social, and metaphysical phenomena. In the context of philosophy, rationality is the foundation for exploring abstract ideas, assessing the validity of arguments, and seeking logical solutions to various problems. By using rationality, humans not only understand the world more deeply, but are also able to design strategic steps to change or improve the reality around them.

Deductive reasoning involves starting with a broad statement and working towards a more specific conclusion. This line of reasoning is often referred to as a syllogism. A syllogism consists of a conclusion, two premises, and a statement. The major, or general, premise and the minor, or specific, premise are the two main categories. A conclusion is reached using deductive reasoning. To illustrate, consider the following; Expansion is a common property of metals when heated. To illustrate, iron is a metal (Kristiawan, 2016). So, as a final thought, iron expands due to heat. The validity of the conclusion, the truth of the major premise, and the truth of the minor premise are the three factors that determine the truth of a conclusion. If it does not meet all three criteria, it will be considered a false conclusion. An essential part of inductive reasoning is drawing broad conclusions from narrow examples. An integral aspect of inductive reasoning is drawing broad conclusions from narrow examples. Consider the fact that all three animals—chickens, goats, and lions—have eyes. In conclusion, the optic organ is present in every living creature.

Second, empirical knowledge, obtained from sensory experience, either through observation or experiments involving direct interaction with the real world. This process places experience as the main source of knowledge, where facts observed through the five senses become the basis for understanding reality. Empirical knowledge develops through systematic data collection, verification, and hypothesis testing to ensure its validity. Thus, this knowledge is concrete and reliable because it is supported by evidence that can be repeated and re-observed. In philosophy and science, the empirical approach helps humans explain natural and social phenomena objectively, enabling the creation of innovation and technology that is rooted in the needs and real conditions of human life.

Furthermore, this process begins with observation using the five senses, where individuals record phenomena or facts that exist in their surroundings. Information obtained from observations is then collected systematically, often through measurement or recording to ensure data accuracy. The next stage is an experiment or trial, which aims to test the initial hypothesis or idea by creating controlled conditions and observing the results. After the data is collected, analysis is carried out to find patterns, cause-and-effect relationships, or relevant conclusions. The knowledge generated from this process is then verified through repeated observations or experiments to ensure its reliability. Once proven valid, the knowledge is applied in a broader context and is often used as a basis for creating generalizations, theories, or models that explain certain phenomena. With this process, empirical knowledge is not only factual but also useful for decision making and innovation development.

Third, there is intuitive knowledge that arises spontaneously without going through a long logical or empirical process, usually in the form of deep insights that come suddenly or through reflection. Intuitive knowledge often arises as a result of internalized experience or deep understanding that develops over time. This process does not require systematic logical steps or structured empirical data collection, but rather occurs spontaneously when someone faces a certain situation. Intuition can arise from previously formed thought patterns, recognition of situations that are similar to past experiences, or even deep inner reflection. In many cases, intuition is also related to subconscious perceptions that process information quickly without being aware of it. Although difficult to explain scientifically, intuitive knowledge is often the basis for quick decision making, creativity, or instant understanding of a problem. Thus, intuition is a valuable form of knowledge, especially in complex situations or situations that require immediate response (Octaviana & Ramadhani, 2021).

Finally, authoritative knowledge comes from sources that are recognized as legitimate, such as religious teachings, traditions, or the views of trusted experts. These four types of knowledge complement each other and form the basis for a holistic human understanding of reality. Authoritative knowledge is acquired through the acceptance of information or views that come from sources that are recognized as legitimate or authoritative, such as holy books, educational institutions, religious leaders, or experts in a particular field. This process involves trust in the credibility of the source, which is often based on reputation, expertise, or time-tested tradition. This knowledge is usually accepted without the need for empirical evidence or in-depth rational

analysis, because the source is considered to have the authority to convey the truth. However, in modern applications, this process may include additional verification or confirmation to ensure that the information received is relevant and reliable. Authoritative knowledge plays an important role in human life, especially in shaping the values, norms, and moral frameworks that underlie individual and societal behavior. By integrating authoritative knowledge with rational, empirical, and intuitive knowledge, humans can build a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of reality.

In essence, the human process of acquiring knowledge involves various complementary approaches, namely rational, empirical, intuitive, and authoritative. Rational knowledge is obtained through logical and analytical thinking processes that allow humans to understand cause-and-effect relationships and develop theories. Empirical knowledge, on the other hand, comes from sensory experience and direct observation of the world around us, leading to evidence-based understanding that can be tested. Intuitive knowledge emerges spontaneously, often in the form of deep insights or understandings that come without a long thought process. Meanwhile, authoritative knowledge is obtained from sources that are recognized as having legitimacy, such as religious teachings, traditions, or trusted experts. These four types of knowledge work together to form a more holistic human understanding of the world and its existence. By integrating these various forms of knowledge, humans are able to gain richer, more comprehensive, and adaptive insights into the challenges of life.

With the integration of rational, empirical, intuitive, and authoritative knowledge, humans are not only able to understand the world more deeply, but are also able to respond to various problems with a more flexible and open approach. This process allows individuals to develop critical, creative, and reflective thinking patterns, which are very important in dealing with the complexities of modern life. The knowledge obtained from various sources also supports wiser decision-making, based on a comprehensive understanding and based on evidence, experience, and values accepted by society. In this context, the search for knowledge is not only an effort to obtain information, but also to build broader and deeper insights into life, self, and relationships between humans. Therefore, through this process, humans can be better prepared to adapt to change, solve existing challenges, and continue to develop in various aspects of life.

Philosophy and Development of Education

Philosophy can be considered the mother of all branches of science because it is the foundation that shapes and directs scientific thought in various disciplines. As a more fundamental branch of thought, philosophy questions the origins, nature, and purpose of all forms of knowledge, and provides a framework for understanding basic concepts such as truth, reality, ethics, and logic. Every branch of science, from natural sciences, social sciences, to formal sciences, is rooted in philosophical principles that guide its methods, approaches, and research goals. Philosophy asks the big questions that form the basis for scientific inquiry, such as "What can we know?", "How do we know?", and "What is good and right?". Thus, philosophy not only

provides the theoretical basis necessary for understanding the world, but also enriches the critical and reflective thinking used in every field of science (Mukhlis Yunus et al., 2022).

Thus, philosophy not only serves as the primary source of scientific theories, but also as a guide that helps scientists and thinkers overcome epistemological and methodological challenges in their research. Every science, although focused on different objects, still uses philosophical principles, such as logic to build valid arguments, ethics to determine the values underlying scientific actions, and ontology to understand the nature of existence and reality. Philosophy also plays an important role in evaluating the social, moral, and cultural impacts of scientific progress, so that scientists are not only fixated on technical achievements, but also consider the ethical implications of their discoveries (Nasution, 2023b). Therefore, philosophy becomes the foundation that unites all disciplines, making it not only a means to gain knowledge, but also a tool to understand the purpose and meaning behind that knowledge, and to achieve a deeper understanding of the world and human life.

Philosophy has a major influence on the development of educational science. Where philosophy functions as a basis for thinking that guides the direction of the development of the education system. This discipline provides a deep theoretical foundation regarding the goals of education, the nature of learning, and the role of teachers and students in the educational process. In this context, philosophy can form educational goals that focus not only on mastering knowledge, but also on developing character, morality, and critical thinking skills. Philosophy explores fundamental questions about what should be taught, how best to teach it, and what is the essence of education itself.

For example, educational philosophies such as pragmatism (developed by John Dewey) emphasize the importance of learning through direct experience, while existentialism focuses on individual freedom and the search for the meaning of life through education (Dewey, 2024; Hansen, 2012). Through philosophical reflection, we can develop more inclusive and democratic approaches to education, which are not only oriented towards academic results, but also on the formation of whole, critical, and responsible individuals in society. Therefore, philosophy plays an important role in determining the direction and form of educational development that is relevant to the challenges of the times and human needs.

Philosophy plays an important role in carrying out reconstruction and deconstruction in educational design, which allows the education system to continue to develop and adapt to the needs of the times. Reconstructing education through philosophy means redesigning the goals, methods, and curriculum of education to be more relevant and effective in shaping the character and skills of students in accordance with future challenges. Meanwhile, deconstruction in this context means criticizing and dismantling existing educational structures or practices, and then replacing them with more progressive and democratic concepts. This process opens up space for new, more inclusive ideas, encourages more creative learning, and reduces inequalities that may exist in the education system (Tishana et al., 2023). Thus, philosophy not only provides a theoretical foundation, but also becomes a tool for building higher quality education. Through this reconstruction and deconstruction, education can continue to innovate, both in terms of

quantity (number of accesses and facilities) and quality (depth and relevance of learning), ensuring the sustainability and suitability of education with social, cultural, and technological developments.

The critical-reflective framework that characterizes philosophy is very useful in ensuring the quality and quantity of education in this nation. With a reflective approach, philosophy encourages us to always question, analyze, and evaluate various aspects of the education system—from goals, methods, to the implementation of education policies. Through reflection, we can identify weaknesses and strengths in existing education, and formulate more effective and relevant solutions to overcome the challenges faced. In addition, philosophy also teaches the importance of critical thinking, which can prevent us from accepting information or ideas that are not based on evidence and deep thought. This approach ensures that education policies and practices do not only prioritize quantity, such as the number of schools or students enrolled, but also quality, such as mastery of in-depth knowledge, character development, and critical thinking skills in each individual. Thus, philosophy plays an important role in designing sustainable, equitable education that is able to produce a generation that is intelligent, ethical, and ready to face global change.

Reflection and Contemplation between Contemporary Philosophy and Education: Improving Critical Thinking Skills

In the world of contemporary education, critical thinking skills are becoming increasingly important. Facing the challenges of an increasingly complex era, where information is easily accessible but often full of bias or uncertainty, the ability to think reflectively and contemplatively becomes a basic need. In this context, philosophy and education have a close relationship, especially in terms of how reflection and contemplation can encourage the development of critical thinking skills. Philosophy, as a discipline that encourages deep questions and sharp analysis, teaches the importance of not simply accepting existing information, but instead, to dig deeper, criticize underlying assumptions, and consider various perspectives (Shagena & Syarifuddin, 2022). Through a philosophical approach, education not only functions to transfer knowledge, but also to form individuals who are able to think independently and rationally, and are able to make decisions based on mature thinking. Education that focuses on developing critical thinking skills will prepare students to become individuals who are not only academically intelligent, but also wise in dealing with various social, political, and moral problems in society. Therefore, philosophy has a central role in forming the foundation of education that prioritizes holistic intellectual development, where reflection and contemplation become essential tools for training critical thinking skills.

Philosophy as a branch of science that focuses on deep thinking and fundamental questions about existence, knowledge, ethics, and reality, highly emphasizes reflection. In the philosophical tradition, reflection is a process that allows one to evaluate one's own ideas, actions, and understanding. Philosophy teaches how to think systematically, identify assumptions, and question what is considered true. In contemporary education, this reflection becomes very

important because it encourages students not only to receive information passively, but also to test it, question it, and ultimately form a deeper understanding. This reflective approach encourages students to understand the context, pay attention to various points of view, and seek the truth behind each phenomenon (Faiz, 2021). Thus, reflection in education not only forms cognitive skills, but also helps students to develop a critical attitude, empathy, and a sense of responsibility for the decisions they make. This process enriches the learning experience, because it allows students to connect the knowledge learned with real life and the social challenges they face. In the long run, education that focuses on philosophical reflection equips students with thinking skills that are not only relevant in the academic world, but also in everyday life, preparing them to become independent, responsible thinkers who are able to contribute positively to society.

Reflection and contemplation rooted in philosophy provide a strong foundation for enhancing students' critical thinking skills in contemporary education. Critical thinking is not just about analyzing information, but also about the ability to question, doubt, and evaluate ideas with objectivity. Through reflection, students learn to examine their own and others' views, identify biases, and seek evidence that supports or refutes a claim. Contemplation, on the other hand, encourages students to think more deeply and broadly, avoids hasty conclusions, and gives them space to develop more mature and holistic arguments. These critical thinking skills are essential in a world full of information and uncertainty. By understanding the process of reflective and contemplative thinking, students can hone their ability to approach problems creatively and innovatively. They will be better able to solve problems with an approach that is not only pragmatic, but also ethical and based on a deep understanding of the various dimensions of the problem (Al Asadullah & Nurhalin, 2021).

In addition to reflection, contemplation in philosophy serves as a way to reflect more deeply on abstract or complex concepts. Contemplation is a mental activity that involves very focused and unhurried thinking in order to achieve deeper understanding. In philosophy, it often relates to the search for the meaning of life, existence, morality, and the ultimate goal of knowledge. In an educational context, contemplation invites students to reflect on larger issues, such as social issues, ethics, and diversity, without jumping to conclusions. This gives students space to process their thoughts more deeply, avoid shallow thinking, and formulate more complex and wise solutions.

Contemporary education needs to include elements of reflection and contemplation in its curriculum to prepare students to face the dynamic global challenges. Problem-solving and project-based learning approaches can provide opportunities for students to engage in active critical thinking. Group discussions, debates, and in-depth research on relevant topics can stimulate deeper reflection and contemplation. In addition, an educational philosophy-based approach that emphasizes the development of morals, ethics, and systematic thinking can strengthen a holistic learning process, where students are not only taught to understand the world, but also to assess, question, and contribute to the improvement of the world (Mansur, 2019).

Reflection and contemplation are two important elements derived from the philosophical tradition that can enrich contemporary education. Through the application of these two elements,

education can help students develop sharper and wiser critical thinking skills. Philosophy, with its deep and reflective approach, provides a foundation for education to form individuals who are not only academically intelligent, but also have wisdom in facing the complexities of life (Faiz, 2021). Thus, the integration of philosophy, reflection, and contemplation in contemporary education can produce a generation that is able to think critically, responsibly, and ethically in facing the challenges of the times.

CONCLUSION

The process of human knowledge acquisition is rooted in the natural urge to understand the world, which begins with deep contemplation and reflection. In this endeavor, humans often isolate themselves from the influence of other cultures, using the power of their minds to explore ideas independently. However, the ability to collect, research, and apply knowledge is not something that happens automatically. It requires a systematic approach supported by the clarification of concepts and the development of new methodologies. Thus, the acquisition of knowledge is a complex journey that combines critical thinking, methodological exploration, and an insatiable desire for knowledge.

In this journey, humans do not simply collect facts, but also construct deep meaning from the information obtained. The knowledge generated through this process becomes the foundation for innovation, problem solving, and the development of civilization. In addition, the continuously evolving methodological approach allows humans to continuously evaluate, verify, and expand their knowledge. However, it is important to remember that intellectual isolation, although useful in the initial stages of reflection, should not be a barrier to intercultural dialogue and collaboration. Interaction with other perspectives can actually enrich and broaden the horizons of knowledge. Thus, the process of acquiring knowledge ideally includes a balance between independent contemplation and openness to external views. Thus, the knowledge gained through this process becomes not only a tool for understanding the world, but also a means for creating positive change, strengthening universal values, and building a better life for all humanity.

philosophy has a very significant role in contemporary education, especially in shaping critical thinking skills through the process of reflection and contemplation. Education that integrates philosophy can create individuals who are more critical, wise, and able to make responsible decisions, both in their personal lives and in their contributions to society. Therefore, philosophy not only enriches the world of education, but also becomes a pillar in building a society that is smarter, fairer, and aware of their roles and responsibilities in this world.

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