The Crossroads of Philosophy: A Critical Reflection

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Abstract.

Philosophy enriches and dynamizes a science in its development. The choice of a good philosophical system becomes an unproductive debate but is essential in gaining an understanding of the importance of developing a coherent and comprehensive framework of thought to understand social phenomena. This research is a scientific reflection on the question of the best choice of philosophical systems and the belief in the existence of absolute and relativistic philosophy. This scientific reflection uses a qualitative narrative method in a literature review to answer the research question. Based on the research results, the author sees that a philosophical system has a specificity in contributing to the field of life and science independently. The author also provides a review of answers to the choice of a philosophical system that is suitable for the Doctoral program in Computer Science, namely Information Systems. The answer to the existence of a coherent philosophical system that underlies human wisdom is presented by the author in this paper. This scientific reflection is expected to contribute to the science of knowledge, especially the philosophy of science and the application of research stages in the field of Computer Science. Further research needs to be done to obtain the accuracy of a philosophical system that is suitable for the research topic and other fields of science.

Keywords: *Epistemology, ontology, philosophical system, pragmatism and science reflection.*

I. INTRODUCTION

A philosophical reflection, as a systematic process of deep thinking about basic questions related to life, existence, knowledge, values, and reality, can involve critical analysis to human beliefs, assumptions, and human-experiences, also comparisons with previous and existing philosophical views. Reflection can be considered as important that it can help individuals develop a personal understanding of their values and how their perspective to the world. Utilizing a personal reflection can help individuals increase their critical thinking, analyze information in depth, and propose several questions also assumptions that are often taken for granted [1]. Apart from this, reflection can open the human mind to various perspectives and views that are different and even contradictory to one another. So that humans can appreciate the diversity of thought among each other. By contemplating fundamental questions about life, humans can find deeper meaning and purpose in life, so that this can train humans in building strong and coherent justifications, as well as responding to criticism constructively. From these several things, the author can conclude that philosophical reflection is an intellectual journey that allows humans to grow as individuals who are wiser, more reflective, and open to various possibilities. This paper explores the question of whether one philosophical system is inherently superior to others. Specifically, it examines the following research questions:

RQ1: Is one system or belief of philosophy better than another?

RQ2: Which philosophical system do you believe is the best?

RQ3: Does a person have a personal problem if they like both absolute philosophy (idealism or realism) and relativistic philosophy (pragmatism or existentialism

II. METHODS

This paper was written as a deeper understanding of several philosophical systems by testing the consistency of one's own thinking and appreciating the diversity of philosophical thinking from various philosophers. This research uses qualitative methods through narrative-based self-reflection in a literature review [2]. This research went through stages based on the author's personal experience in understanding and

practicing scientific methods according to the context of the philosophy of science. The author developed a documentation study in the form of research on scientific journal articles (papers) and books that discuss relevant topics in the research focus. Narratively, the author explains whether there are advantages to philosophical systems, discusses why philosophical systems need to be considered, provides justification for why qualitative researchers are suitable for that particular philosophical system [3]. Apart from that, this research also involves a review of relevant philosophy of science literature to enrich the analysis and provide a broader perspective. The data obtained will be analyzed using thematic analysis techniques to identify the main themes that emerge, such as understanding objectivity, verification and generalization in scientific methods.The focus of the research is on two important areas, namely the superiority of philosophical systems, the relevance of philosophical systems and opinions on one's belief paradigm in two opposing philosophical systems.

From here the author carries out an interpretation and critical analysis of two philosophical thoughts that have significant differences. The design of this research consisted of the process of collecting data from scientific journal articles from Scopus, Emerald Insight, JSTOR, and Google Scholar as well as several books for reading with a focus on topics about reflection, philosophy of science, philosophical systems, followed by interpretation of the data, writing, and conclusions. As the final tool in providing the final touch, the author uses the hermeneutical-critical method by carrying out a more detailed interpretation of the thought data of the philosophers found and obtaining values that are relevant and appropriate to the topic of discussion.From the research questions the author determines the source of the academic database in preparing the SLR (Systematic Literature Review). Some of the sources used by the author are Scopus, JSTOR, Emerald Insight and Google Scholar. Specifically for the use of Google Scholar, various scientific journal articles are obtained from several academic database sources, such as SAGE, Willey and other sources.The use of search keywords is determined and applied to search for scientific research papers that are relevant to the research question. The use of these keywords is enabled by adding Boolean operators such as: AND, and OR. Not all academic databases have better search and filtering features than Scopus. However, this is not an obstacle except for the longer search time.

The author used the search string "TITLE-ABS-KEY(crossroads OR of AND philosophy AND thinking OR reflection)" to find 201 scientific research papers. Next, to get relevant candidate papers, the author adds the several filters resulting in 10 potential papers. Searches in other academic databases using the same keyword string without advanced filter yielded the results shown in Figure 1. After entering keywords into the academic database, scientific journal articles related to the specified keywords and a total summary of all these scientific journal articles are displayed as "paper findings". The next step is for the writer to read the title of the scientific journal article and if the title is not enough to determine whether the scientific journal article should be included as a candidate, then the writer reads the abstract of the scientific journal article. If the title and abstract match the previously defined research questions, then this scientific journal article will be downloaded for further investigation. The number of scientific journal articles downloaded is called "candidate papers". All "candidate paper" results will be read thoroughly to find answers to research questions. These scientific journal articles will be used in research as "selected papers".This literature study began at the end of September 2024 and examined 797 scientific journal articles. The number of papers per academic database can be found in Figure 1. Among the 1607 scientific journal articles examined, there were 100 scientific journal articles that had titles and abstracts related to research questions. However, after further study, there were only 21 scientific journal articles that could be included in the basis of this research.

Data Source	Paper finding	Candidate papers	Selected Papers
Scopus	*201*	10	4
Emerald Insight	*300*	20	2
JSTOR	*95*	10	4
Google Scholar	*1011*	60	11

Fig 1. Number of Papers from Research Databases

III.   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Philosophers have long debated the nature of truth, whether it is objective or subjective. Aristotle, Descartes, and Leibniz tended to believe in a universal truth that can be achieved through reason and observation [4]. On the contrary, Hume and Kant, albeit from different perspectives, emphasized the role of subjectivity in the formation of knowledge [5]. Nietzsche and the postmodernists went further by doubting the existence of objective truth altogether, claiming that truth is a social construct relative to context and individual perspectives [6]. This highlights the divergent views among philosophers regarding the nature of truth, ranging from those who believe in objective truth to those who doubt its existence.Philosophers have long strived to make their thoughts relevant to human life. Pragmatist philosophers such as William James and John Dewey emphasized the practical utility of philosophical ideas [7]. Meanwhile, existentialists such as Sartre and Kierkegaard connected philosophy with the individual's lived experience [8]. Socio-political philosophers such as Marx, Engels, and Foucault linked philosophy with social change [9].

On the other hand, philosophers such as Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Kant, Hume, Wittgenstein, Heidegger, and Beauvoir have consistently explored fundamental questions about existence, knowledge, and value, which remain relevant in human intellectual struggles to this day [5]. This will illuminate the twofold relevance of philosophy, both in terms of its engagement with specific social and historical contexts and its exploration of timeless questions about human existence.Since ancient times, philosophers have recognized the profound benefits of philosophy in human life. Socrates, Aristotle, and pragmatists such as William James and John Dewey emphasized that philosophy can help us live better lives by understanding ourselves, our moral values, and by solving practical problems [10]. On the other hand, philosophers such as Descartes, Kant, and Russell highlighted the cognitive benefits of philosophy in developing critical thinking skills, analyzing problems, and achieving a deeper understanding of the world [5]. Therefore, philosophy is not merely a theoretical study, but also a useful tool for improving the quality of life for individuals and society.What is meant by 'better' in philosophy actually depends on the criteria we use. There is no absolutely right or wrong answer. Each philosopher has different preferences and emphases. Factors that influence the assessment of "better" in philosophy include the goals of philosophy itself, the methodology used, and the historical and cultural context targeted.

Exploring the Standards of Excellence in Philosophy

Philosophy answers serious questions that no other science has previously considered. Thus, various thoughts with categories and concepts underlying the practice and principles of political life are diverse. Furthermore, philosophy is a complete package of diverse discourses, both epistemological and ontological. Each philosopher can highlight different elements of philosophy as its strength. This makes the "best philosophical system" an idea with many meanings and is relatively influenced by epistemic, pragmatic, and logical perspectives. Philosophers have long disagreed about what criteria make one philosophical system more or less "good" than another; while some rationalists like Rene Descartes argued that the system that most closely approximates the truth of an object is the best [11]. Pragmatist philosophers such as James and John Dewey argued that what matters is whether a system can solve real-world problems [10]. Internal consistency and completeness are also important; for example, Aristotle emphasized the suggestiveness of logic in building a valid philosophical system [12]. As cultural relativists, Ritualists like Franz Boas and Edward Burnett Tylor argued that truth is culturally and historically situated [13]. This results in no philosophy being considered absolutely true. It can be inferred that a philosophical system useful in Aristotle's time might not be useful in Descartes' time. Ultimately, the focus of each source of knowledge is difficult to compare. For example, Plato focused on the world of ideas, while Aristotle was more interested in material reality. Therefore, it is premature and does not take into account the complexity of philosophy to say that a particular philosophical system is definitively "better" than another.

The Most Relevant Philosophy: Computer Science

Debates about which philosophical system is "best" often overlook the diversity and complexity of philosophical thought. Each philosophical system is a product of its time and culture, making direct comparisons between systems often irrelevant. For example, ancient Greek philosophy, with its focus on metaphysical questions, is vastly different from contemporary philosophy, which is more influenced by

scientific developments [14]. Furthermore, philosophy is not a competition to find the "correct" answer. As Wittgenstein put it, philosophy is a "logical analysis of the forms of language" [15]. In other words, philosophy is more of a tool for clarifying concepts and arguments than providing definitive answers. Thus, rather than searching for the "best" philosophical system, we should appreciate the diversity of philosophical thought and use it as a source of inspiration to develop our understanding of the world and ourselves.Through this paper, the author attempts to justify the 'best' philosophical system based on the relevance of the focus of the author's educational program.

This is in line with previous research findings that definitions or reflections will provide different dimensions of subjectivity for individuals or certain parties with different fields, and ultimately, a reflection on the philosophy of science will adjust to the core axiology of a specific field [16]. As a doctoral student in Computer Science with a specialization in Information Systems, the author frequently interacts with various abstract concepts such as data, information, knowledge, systems, and human-computer interaction. Therefore, the author proposes several philosophical systems that can provide a useful framework for research focused on Information Systems.Epistemology and its three subsystems, such as Empiricism, which focuses on knowledge acquired through experience and observation, are highly relevant in the context of developing data-driven information systems. Meanwhile, Rationalism, which emphasizes the role of reason in acquiring knowledge, is particularly useful in designing systems based on logic and rules. Social Constructivism, on the other hand, views knowledge as a social construct influenced by culture and context [17]. This is relevant in understanding how information systems influence and are influenced by organizations and society. Formal Ontology, which examines the nature of being of entities in the world, is very useful in designing data models and database systems. This also includes Social Ontology, which analyzes how social entities (such as organizations, institutions) are constructed and represented in information systems.

Pragmatism is worth proposing as one of the philosophical systems considered relevant to Information Systems. This is because pragmatism focuses on the practical consequences of ideas such as a person's life experiences [18]. Therefore, pragmatism is highly relevant in the development of user-oriented and problem-solving information systems. Another philosophical system, Phenomenology, which analyzes conscious experience and human interaction with technology, is useful in designing intuitive and natural user interfaces. This strongly supports the design of User Interface and User Experience (UI/UX). Equally important is Hermeneutics, a philosophical system that studies the interpretation of meaning, which is relevant in analyzing qualitative data and understanding how users interpret information systems.For now, it can be concluded that there is a priority of philosophical systems considered better than others when linked to the subjective relevance of its users; in this case, the author uses philosophical systems in the field of Information Systems.

Epistemological Coherence

Generally, there is no inherent problem for someone to appreciate both absolutist philosophies (like idealism or realism) and relativist philosophies (like pragmatism or existentialism). In fact, many great philosophers' thoughts encompass elements from various philosophical schools. This is because humans are complex beings who cannot be fully understood without divine revelation [19]. Humans often perceive various aspects of life from diverse perspectives. It is only natural for individuals to be interested in multiple viewpoints, even those that seem contradictory. Moreover, people often apply different perspectives to different contexts. For instance, one might adopt a more realistic approach in scientific endeavors but employ a more existentialist perspective when contemplating the meaning of life. Furthermore, individual thought is dynamic and can evolve over time. A person might start with a more absolutist viewpoint, only to later become interested in a more relativistic perspective. However, in one dimension, we as humans seek logical consistency. When individuals attempt to reconcile vastly different viewpoints, they must strive for logical coherence. It is undeniable that tensions can arise between absolutist and relativist perspectives. Practically speaking, humans often need to make decisions in daily life. Adopting too many conflicting perspectives without a clear framework can make decision-making difficult.Therefore, several philosophical schools share the view that an excess of conflicting perspectives can lead to confusion and decision-making difficulties.

Rationalist philosophers such as René Descartes believed that reason is the most reliable source of knowledge, and they were often skeptical of knowledge derived from the senses or personal experience [11]. Consequently, these philosophers believed that a multiplicity of conflicting viewpoints could obscure rational understanding. This stands in contrast to the empiricist John Locke, who highlighted the significance of experience in acquiring knowledge [20], they also acknowledged the limitations of human knowledge. Similar to rationalist philosophers, skeptics such as David Hume argue that an excess of conflicting experiences can hinder our ability to form coherent generalizations. Hume doubted the possibility of attaining certain knowledge, suggesting that human knowledge is probabilistic. An overabundance of conflicting perspectives can reinforce these doubts. Postmodern philosophers like Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida challenged the notion of a single, objective truth [21].

They argue that knowledge is always influenced by power and social interests. In this context, an abundance of conflicting perspectives can reflect a plurality of power, making consensus and collective decision-making difficult to achieve. Other philosophers have taken a markedly different stance from rationalists, empiricists, skeptics, and postmodernists. Pragmatists such as John Dewey and William James emphasize the importance of experience and context in shaping knowledge. Postmodernists like Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida, who doubt the existence of a single, absolute truth, and existentialists such as Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir, who emphasize human freedom to choose and create meaning in their lives, argue that individuals can still manage multiple perspectives and use them contextually, guided by personal experience, a belief in the absence of absolutes, and a commitment to free expression [1]. Ultimately, embracing diverse philosophical perspectives can enrich our understanding of truth and the nature of reality. However, it is essential to be able to integrate these various viewpoints in a coherent and functional manner. As long as an individual possesses an open mind, a moral compass, and a foundational understanding of laws and ethics, a seemingly contradictory philosophical framework within oneself will not hinder the acceptance of truth or the ability to make sound decisions and judgments.

IV. CONCLUSION

This research indicates that the choice of a philosophical system in the context of computer science is more relative and contextual. No single philosophical system is inherently superior to others. Each philosophical system offers its own perspective and can be beneficial in understanding computer systems. Developing the ability to integrate various perspectives into a comprehensive framework becomes crucial. Although there may be contradictions between different philosophical systems, with the right approach, the strengths of each school can be used to build a richer understanding of the topic of discussion.For example, when developing information systems, a pragmatic orientation can help focus on utility and solutions, while a phenomenological approach can aid in understanding user experiences. Therefore, a deeper understanding of each philosophical system would benefit computer science practitioners. Additionally, future research could involve exploring the application of philosophy in specific areas of computer science, such as Artificial Intelligence, technology ethics, Technology Infrastructure, Data Science, and Computer System Interface. Comparative studies of philosophical schools in the context of use cases and best practices for information system development could also form the basis for more interesting future research.

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