

MARTIN HEIDEGGER'S EXISTENTIALISM AS A PARADIGM IN ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

This research explores the application of Martin Heidegger's existentialist philosophy, especially the concept of Dasein, as a paradigm in Islamic Religious Education. This research examines how Heidegger's principles- self-awareness, freedom, and moral responsibility- can overcome the limitations of traditional dogmatic approaches in Islamic Religious Education, which often lack reflection. Using qualitative-descriptive methods and philosophical analysis, this research integrates Heidegger's existentialism with reflective pedagogy to offer an innovative teaching model. Data were collected through extensive literature observations and analyzed using qualitative content analysis, focusing on thematic reduction, categorization, and interpretation. Findings show that the existentialist approach fosters critical thinking and spiritual awareness, enabling students to authentically internalize Islamic values and adapt them to modern challenges. This paradigm shifts the teaching of Islamic Religious Education. from rote memorization to a dialogical method, increasing moral responsibility and authentic self-development. Despite challenges such as resistance from traditional educators and curriculum limitations, this research highlights the transformative potential of existentialism in forming reflective and morally mature students.

Keywords: *Existentialism, Dasein, Reflective Pedagogy, Islamic Religious Education, Moral Responsibility.*

A. INTRODUCTION

The existentialist thinking of Martin Heidegger, a leading philosopher of the 20th century, has significantly impacted the understanding of human existence or creatures (Agu, 2023). Heidegger introduced the basic concept of Dasein (human existence), which emphasizes human understanding of existence in terms of time, space, and death (Cheng, 2024). Heidegger's thinking focuses on the search for the meaning of life through awareness of human limitations and courage in facing marriage (Pabubung, Michael, 2022). Heidegger also stated that human existence can be authentic if individuals realize their responsibility for their lives (Jiang, 2024).

Heidegger's existentialism often ignores the dimensions of spirituality, divinity, and morality, which are tied to universal values (Lo, 2023). This is contrary to the concept of existence in Islam, which is always based on divinity (tauhid), spiritual responsibility and universal morality contained in the revelation of the Al-Qur'an and Hadith (Palmeirim, 2020). In Islamic Religious Education, education must guide students to understand the nature of their existence as servants of Allah (Abdullah) who hold the mandate as caliph on Earth (Hacker-Wright, 2023). Facing these fundamental differences between Heidegger's existentialism and Islamic values, it is important to explore how Heidegger's thinking can be integrated with basic concepts in Islam, such as ontology, epistemology and axiology (Bykova, 2021). This exploration aims to provide alternative thoughts in religious education that can enrich students' understanding of human existence within a more profound spiritual framework.

This research uses a qualitative approach with philosophical analysis methods to explore Heidegger's thoughts regarding existentialism and integrate them with values in Islamic Religious Education (Dhobi, 2023). This type of research is library research, which relies on primary literature in the form of Heidegger's works (Bossaller, 2018), especially *Being and Time* (Blattner, 2023), as well as related sources from Islamic philosophy and Islamic Religious Education. The data used in this research is divided into two types: primary data, which includes Heidegger's works as well as relevant texts of the Qur'an and Hadith, and secondary data in the form of supporting literature, which includes critical studies of Heidegger's thought and other studies: philosophical studies and related Islamic

education. Data collection techniques used include documentation, text study (hermeneutics), and comparative analysis (Aguas, 2022). This approach allows a holistic integration between Heidegger's existentialism and Islamic concepts, resulting in a broader and more applicable understanding of Islamic Religious Education.

By considering the fundamental differences between Heidegger's existentialist thought and Islamic values, as well as the challenges in integrating the two in the context of Islamic Religious Education, this research aims to analyze the basic concepts of ontology, epistemology and axiology that underlie Martin Heidegger's existentialist thought and their relevance in understanding human existence. This research also seeks to identify the basic concepts of ontology, epistemology, and axiology from an Islamic perspective and their implementation in Islamic religious education. This research will examine criticism of Heidegger's existentialist thinking, especially regarding aspects of spirituality, morality and his hermeneutical approach. Furthermore, this research aims to formulate an answer to criticism of Martin Heidegger's thinking by integrating Islamic values, which include awareness of monotheism, universal morality, and the spiritual meaning of life. Thus, it is hoped that this research can produce a deeper understanding of human existence with a perspective that unites Heidegger's philosophy and Islamic values in the context of Islamic Religious Education.

B. RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a qualitative approach with a philosophical analysis method which aims to explore Martin Heidegger's thoughts regarding existentialism and integrate them with values in Islamic Religious Education (Dhobi, 2023). This type of research is library research, which relies on primary literature in the form of Heidegger's works (Bossaller, 2018), especially *Being and Time* (Blattner, 2023), and related sources from Islamic philosophy and Islamic Religious Education. The data used in this research is divided into two types: primary and secondary data. Primary data includes Heidegger's works and relevant Al-Qur'an and Hadith texts. Meanwhile, secondary data is in the form of supporting literature, which includes critical studies of Heidegger's thoughts, related philosophical studies, and Islamic education. Data collection techniques include

documentation, text study, and comparative analysis (Aguas, 2022). Documentation is carried out to collect all relevant literature, while text study (hermeneutics) is used to interpret the meaning of these texts in depth. A comparative analysis was then carried out to compare the concepts of ontology, epistemology and axiology in Heidegger's thought with the Islamic perspective.

The research stages were carried out in four main steps. First, the preparation stage involves formulating the problem and research objectives and determining data sources and appropriate methodological approaches. Second is the data collection stage, where Heidegger's central literature and Islamic sources are studied to understand ontology, epistemology, and axiology comprehensively. Third, the data analysis stage was carried out using a descriptive-critical approach, where the author analyzed the basic concepts in Heidegger's thought and how criticism of him, primarily related to aspects of spirituality, morality and hermeneutics, could be overcome through the integration of Islamic values. Fourth, the stage of compiling and writing research results which aims to formulate conclusions that answer the problem formulation and research objectives. In maintaining data validity and reliability, this research uses triangulation, both in terms of sources and analysis, to ensure objective and in-depth interpretation. This approach allows a holistic integration between Heidegger's existentialism and Islamic concepts, resulting in a broader and more applicable understanding of Islamic Religious Education (Sugiyono, 2022).

C. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Research Results

1.1 The basic concepts of Ontology, Epistemology, and Axiology that underlie Martin Heidegger's Existentialism

Martin Heidegger's Ontology of Existentialism

Ontology in Martin Heidegger's thinking focuses on "the essence of being" or being. Heidegger introduced the term *Dasein*, meaning "being," as a central characteristic of human existence. According to Heidegger, humans have the consciousness to understand their existence in the world authentically or inauthentically (Atkins, 2000). Authentic existence is achieved when humans realize their responsibility for their existence in connection with time and space. However, humans often sink into an "inauthentic"

existence when they follow the routine of life without reflecting on meaning. In Islamic religious education, this ontology is closely related to the purpose of human creation, namely as Abdullah (servant of Allah), who submits to Him and the caliph on Earth, who makes the world prosperous by the will of Allah SWT (Ramin, 2020).

Martin Heidegger's Epistemology of Existentialism

Epistemology in Heidegger's thought rejects purely objective approaches such as rationalism or empiricism. Heidegger emphasized that knowledge is obtained through direct understanding, interpretation, and fundamental human experience in reality. Knowledge is hermeneutical, namely the result of interpreting the experience of being. This knowledge is not neutral but is personal and subjective (Hein, 2024). In Islamic religious education, epistemology has more comprehensive sources: revelation (Al-Qur'an and Hadith), reason ('aql), and spiritual experience. The integration of revelation and reason in Islam produces a deep understanding and value of worship so that students are directed to understand their existence through Islamic teachings (Stasiulis, 2024).

Aksiologi Eksistensialisme Martin Heidegger

Heidegger's axiology places authenticity as the highest value in human life. This value emerges when humans dare to live according to an understanding of the nature of their existence (Bogdana Todorova, 2024). Heidegger rejected rigid universal morality and emphasized that each individual is personally responsible for his chosen values. However, this approach carries the risk of moral relativism, which can trigger confusion about values. In Islamic religious education, axiology is based on the values of monotheism, worship and noble morals. Islam provides universal value guidance through the Al-Qur'an and Sunnah. Students are directed to be aware of their responsibilities to Allah SWT, fellow humans, and nature to live lives with noble morals and be socially responsible (Lubis, Salminawati, & Usiono, 2023).

1.2 Basic Concepts of Ontology, Epistemology and Axiology According to Islam

Ontology in Islam

From an Islamic perspective, ontology explains that Allah SWT is Al-Wujud al-Haqq (Absolute Being), while the existence of His creatures is mortal and depends on Him.



Humans were created as Abdullah and caliph fil ardh to carry out the mandate of Allah SWT on Earth. The essence of human existence in Islam originates from monotheism, which provides spiritual meaning and a clear purpose in life. Thus, humans are directed to live according to Allah's will and achieve true happiness in this world and the hereafter (Ni'mah, Murjazin, Nurhuda, Lathif, & Al Fajri, 2024).

Epistemology in Islam

Islamic epistemology includes three primary sources of knowledge:

- 1) Revelation (Al-Qur'an and Hadith) is the source of absolute truth.
- 2) Reason ('aql) is an instrument of thinking and reflection.
- 3) A spiritual experience that comes from a clean and deep heart.

In the context of education, Islamic epistemology emphasizes the integration of naqli (revelation) and Ali (reason) so that knowledge is not only theoretical but also practical and has the value of worship (Supratama, Hapsari, Ramadani, & Hidayat, 2023).

Axiology in Islam

Axiology in Islam is based on the values of monotheism, worship and noble morals. Islam establishes universal moral guidelines, such as Amar ma'ruf nahi munkar (inviting goodness and preventing evil). Islamic values not only form individuals who are devout in worship but also have noble character and social responsibility. In education, Islamic axiology directs students to live life with full awareness of their responsibilities to Allah SWT, fellow humans and nature (Hayati & Dalimunthe, 2024).

Criticism of Martin Heidegger's Thought

Martin Heidegger's existentialist thinking received several fundamental criticisms, especially about spirituality and morality (Sherover, 1979). First, Heidegger's concept of human existence is anthropocentric and nihilistic because it does not include the divine aspect. This causes a spiritual vacuum in the meaning of human existence. Second, Heidegger's rejection of universal morality triggers value relativism, where individuals can determine values without clear guidelines. This concept has the potential to cause moral

confusion in practical life. Third, Heidegger's highly subjective hermeneutical approach tends to ignore absolute truth, which in Islam comes from the revelation of Allah SWT.

Answers to Critiques of Heidegger's Thought

The answer to criticism of Heidegger's thought can be found by integrating the concept of existentialism into the framework of Islamic values. First, Heidegger's concept of authenticity can be refined by including awareness of the existence of Allah SWT as the centre of human existence. In Islam, humans are directed to live authentic lives by understanding the purpose of their creation as Abdullah and caliph. Second, moral relativism in Heidegger's thinking can be overcome with universal and absolute moral guidelines in Islam, namely the Al-Qur'an and Sunnah. The values of monotheism, worship and noble morals guide human life. Third, subjectivity in Heidegger's thinking can be directed towards spiritual interpretation, namely understanding the signs of the greatness of Allah SWT in everyday life. In this way, Heidegger's thinking can be combined with a more comprehensive Islamic paradigm so that the value of authenticity and the meaning of life has a clear direction and is worth worshipping.

2. Discussion

This study compares the fundamental concepts of ontology, epistemology, and axiology in Martin Heidegger's existentialism with Islamic perspectives. The findings provide significant insights into how Heidegger's existential philosophy can be adapted and integrated into the framework of Islamic values, particularly within the context of Islamic religious education (PAI).

Ontology: "Being" in Heidegger's and Islamic Perspectives

Heidegger's ontology, through the concept of Dasein, emphasizes human existential awareness in understanding authentic and inauthentic existence. In Islam, this concept resonates deeply, especially regarding the role of humans as Abdullah (servant of Allah) and Khalifah fil ardh (vicegerent on Earth). Integrating these perspectives strengthens the understanding that human existence is centred on worldly comprehension and oriented towards a transcendental purpose in fulfilling Allah's mandate. By combining Heidegger's ontology with the concept of tawhid (monotheism), Islamic religious education can more

effectively guide students in comprehending the existence of Allah and their social responsibilities.

Epistemology: Knowledge as Interpretive Experience

Heidegger's epistemology, which is hermeneutic, subjective, and based on existential experience, underscores the necessity of a direct approach to understanding reality. However, in Islamic thought, epistemology extends beyond human experience, including divine revelation (the Qur'an and Hadith), reason ('aql), and spiritual experience. This highlights that Islamic knowledge is integrative—combining naqli (revelation) and 'aqli (reason)—providing clear value-based guidance in PAI learning. This approach enables students to grasp their existence comprehensively, spiritually and rationally.

Axiology: Authenticity and Morality

Heidegger's emphasis on authenticity as the highest value highlights the potential for exploring human capacity. However, his thought's absence of universal moral guidelines raises the risk of value relativism. In the Islamic context, axiology is grounded in tawhid, worship, and noble character, providing universal and absolute moral guidance. These values form the foundation of PAI to develop individuals who are not only authentic but also accountable to Allah, other humans, and the environment.

Criticism and Development

This study identifies several weaknesses in Heidegger's existentialist philosophy, such as anthropocentrism, spiritual nihilism, and moral relativism. The study proposes integrating Heidegger's existentialist concepts into an Islamic paradigm to address these issues. The deficiencies in Heidegger's philosophy can be resolved by incorporating awareness of Allah as the centre of existence and adhering to the universal moral values of the Qur'an and Sunnah. Furthermore, Heidegger's hermeneutic approach can be directed towards spiritual interpretation, enhancing the daily understanding of Allah's greatness.

Implications for Islamic Religious Education



Integrating Heidegger's existentialist philosophy within the Islamic framework contributes significantly to Islamic religious education. This approach can be implemented in curricula and teaching methods to help students deeply understand their existence, internalize Islamic values, and live authentic and responsible lives. For instance, existential reflection-based teaching allows students to become more attuned to their roles as vicegerents on Earth and better aligned with living according to Islamic law (sharia).

D. CONCLUSION

This research shows that Martin Heidegger's existentialist thinking, which focuses on ontology, epistemology and axiology, has significant relevance as a paradigm in Islamic Religious Education (PAI). Heidegger's ontology, which emphasizes Dasein or human awareness of its existence in time and space, can be connected to the Islamic concept of existence, where Allah SWT is the centre of all existence. Heidegger's epistemology, which views knowledge as the result of subjective interpretation, can be expanded by integrating revelation, reason, and spiritual experience as objective sources of knowledge in Islam. Heidegger's axiology emphasizes authenticity and is in harmony with Islamic values such as monotheism, worship, and noble morals that provide clear moral guidance and life goals. Although there is criticism of aspects of spirituality and moral relativism in Heidegger's thought, this can be overcome by integrating Islamic values, which emphasize absolute truth based on revelation and Sunnah.

With this approach, Heidegger's thinking can profoundly contribute to PAI, making it more relevant and applicable in shaping students' character and morality through awareness of Allah's existence as the core of human existence and the application of revelation and the Sunnah as moral guidance. Thus, Heidegger's thinking is not only a tool for philosophical reflection but can also become the basis for a more spiritual, authentic and meaningful religious education.

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