

Cakrawala Social Science: Philosophical Perspectives on Social Complexity

Fitri Sania, Ris'an Rusli

Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Fatah Palembang, Indonesia

Corresponding Email: fitrisania_24052160035@radenfatah.ac.id



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Abstract: *This article discusses the philosophical relationship and horizon of social science as an integrative effort between the thoughts of philosophers and the scope of the development of social science as a structured discipline. Social science covers issues concerning society, individuals, social interactions, and institutions that shape human life. In this context, philosophical aspects provide essential ontological, epistemological, and axiological foundations in the development of social theories. This research uses a qualitative-descriptive approach with a library research method, through content analysis of various relevant literature. The purpose of this study is to explain the importance of integration between the philosophical dimension and the horizon of social science in understanding social phenomena more comprehensively. The results of the study show that the relationship between philosophy and social science involves various approaches and paradigms that enrich the perspective on social reality. Theories from structuralism to social action show the dynamics between social structures and individual behaviour. In addition, the horizons of social science are closely linked to other disciplines such as economics, politics, and psychology, making them relevant in addressing contemporary challenges. The findings confirm that philosophical approaches in social science are not only conceptual but also provide practical contributions in formulating social policies that are more humane and inclusive.*

Keywords: *Philosophy, Social Science, Ontology, Epistemology, Axiology*

Abstrak: *Artikel ini membahas hubungan filosofis dan cakrawala ilmu sosial sebagai suatu upaya integratif antara pemikiran-pemikiran filsuf dengan ruang lingkup perkembangan ilmu sosial sebagai disiplin yang terstruktur. Ilmu sosial mencakup isu-isu mengenai masyarakat, individu, interaksi sosial, serta institusi yang membentuk kehidupan manusia. Dalam konteks ini, aspek filosofis memberikan fondasi ontologis, epistemologis, dan aksiologis yang esensial dalam pengembangan teori-teori sosial. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif-deskriptif dengan metode studi pustaka (library research), melalui analisis isi terhadap berbagai literatur*

relevan. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menjelaskan pentingnya integrasi antara dimensi filosofis dan cakrawala ilmu sosial dalam memahami fenomena sosial secara lebih komprehensif. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa hubungan antara filsafat dan ilmu sosial melibatkan beragam pendekatan dan paradigma yang memperkaya cara pandang terhadap realitas sosial. Teori-teori seperti strukturalisme hingga tindakan sosial menunjukkan dinamika antara struktur sosial dan perilaku individu. Selain itu, cakrawala ilmu sosial memiliki keterkaitan erat dengan disiplin lain seperti ekonomi, politik, dan psikologi, sehingga menjadikannya relevan dalam menjawab tantangan-tantangan kontemporer. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa pendekatan filosofis dalam ilmu sosial tidak hanya bersifat konseptual, tetapi juga memberikan kontribusi praktis dalam merumuskan kebijakan sosial yang lebih manusiawi dan inklusif.

Kata Kunci: *Filsafat, Ilmu Sosial, Ontologi, Epistemologi, Aksiologi*

Introduction

Social science is a branch of science that studies human social life, including interactions between individuals, groups, institutions, and social structures that shape the dynamics of society¹. In its development, social science not only focuses on collecting empirical data, but also demands a deeper understanding of the nature of complex social reality. To achieve this understanding, a philosophical approach is needed that is able to unravel the ontological, epistemological, and axiological foundations of social phenomena. Philosophy as a scientific foundation has a crucial role in strengthening the conceptual structure of social science². The ontological dimension in philosophy helps identify what the object of social studies is, epistemology explains how social knowledge is obtained and validated, while axiology provides ethical direction and value in the process and purpose of social studies. Through philosophical approaches, social science can avoid mere positivistic

¹ Irwan Irwan, "Relevansi Paradigma Positivistik Dalam Penelitian Sosiologi Pedesaan," *JURNAL ILMU SOSIAL* 17, no. 1 (2018): 21-38, 4. <https://doi.org/10.14710/jis.17.1.2018>. (diakses tanggal 2 Desember 2024)

² Fathor Rasyid, *Teori, Metode, Dan Praktek* (Yogyakarta: IAIN Kediri Press, 2022), 120.

reductionism and open space for more inclusive hermeneutic, critical, and constructivist approaches³.

The development of social science today shows the need to integrate interdisciplinary scientific horizons. Social science cannot stand alone, but must intersect with other fields such as economics, politics, and psychology. Therefore, the relationship between philosophical aspects and social science horizons is important to study in order to enrich perspectives and deepen analyses of contemporary social issues.

This article aims to critically examine the relationship between the philosophical dimension and the horizon of social science as an effort to strengthen the theoretical foundation in understanding social reality. Through a literature review, this article illustrates how philosophical foundations contribute to the development of social science paradigms and approaches and explains the relevance of such integration in responding to complex and multidimensional social problems.

Method

This research uses a qualitative approach with a library research method. Data were collected from various relevant literature, such as philosophy books, scientific journal articles, and academic documents that discuss the relationship between philosophy and social science. The analysis technique used is content analysis, which is a systematic process to identify, categorise, and draw meaning from texts⁴. In addition, a hermeneutic approach is also used, which is a method of interpreting texts to understand the meaning contained in depth in a historical and philosophical context⁵. The analysis is done by examining the works of Eastern and Western thinkers, such as Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, Al-Ghazali, Plato, Aristotle,

³ Fitri Meliani, Nanat Fatah Natsir, and Erni Haryanti, "Sumbangan Pemikiran Ian G . Barbour Mengenai Relasi," *Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pendidikan* Vol 4, no. 11 (2021): 2614–8852, 5. <http://jiip.stkipyapisdompnu.ac.id> (diakses tanggal 2 Desember 2024).

⁴ Zakariah, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif, Kuantitatif, Action Research, Research And Development (R & D)* (Yogyakarta: PT. Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2020), 27.

⁵ Sugiyono Sugiyono, *Metodologi Penelitian Kuantitatif Kualitatif Dan R &D* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2019), 144.

and Aquinas. The interpretation is done by considering the relevance of their thoughts to contemporary social theory. This approach aims to explore the ontological, epistemological, and axiological dimensions that underpin social science⁶. The results of the analysis are expected to provide a comprehensive conceptual understanding of the dynamics of social science and its contribution to solving the problems of modern society.

Result and Discussions

Philosophy in Social Science Examining Ontology, Epistemology, and Axiology

The philosophy of social science is a branch of philosophy that discusses the philosophical foundations of social science. Social science itself encompasses various disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, social psychology, political science, and economics, which study aspects of human life in society⁷. The philosophy of social science has three important aspects that play a role in shaping this discipline: ontology, epistemology, and axiology⁸. The three are interconnected and very important in the formation and development of social theories. The three are interconnected and provide a solid foundation for the theories that develop in the social sciences.

- a) The ontology of social science seeks to answer fundamental questions about the object of study of social science, namely, social reality itself⁹. What really exists in society? Does social structure more dominantly influence individual behaviour, or do individual actions shape social structure? In this regard, various schools of thought in the social

⁶ Wahyudi, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif Studi Pustaka Dan Studi Lapangan* (Bandung: Pre-Print Digital Library UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, 2017), 87.

⁷ Niswatus Sa'idah and Abu Anwar, "Rumpun Ilmu Sosial Dalam Perspektif Islam Dan Barat," *JIIIP - Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pendidikan* Vol 7, no. 3 (2024): 2398–2403, 2401. <https://doi.org/10.54371/jiip.v7i3.3675> (diakses tanggal 2 Desember 2024)

⁸ Al Munip, "Ilmu Dalam Tinjauan Filsafat: Ontologi, Epistemologi, Dan Aksiologi," *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* Vol 10, no. 1 (2024): 49–58, 56. <https://doi.org/10.46963/aulia.v10i1.1875> (diakses tanggal 2 Desember 2024)

⁹ Bahrum Bahrum, "Ontologi, Epistemologi Dan Aksiologi," *Sulesana Jurnal Wawasan Keislaman* Vol 8, no. 2 (2013): 35–45, 38. <https://doi.org/journal.uin-alauddin.ac.id/index.php/sls/article/view/1276/1243> (diakses tanggal 2 Desember 2024)

sciences, such as structuralism, phenomenology, and individualism, offer different perspectives on the nature of the social world¹⁰.

In the work of Islamic philosopher figures "Al-Madina al-Fadila" (The Virtuous City), Al-Farabi writes: "Man is a thinking being and has the potential to achieve the highest good, which is happiness." "The essence of humanity is reason, for only through reason can one know the truth and achieve one's goals"¹¹. The quotation reflects the core of Al-Farabi's philosophy: reason is the primary means to recognize truth, achieve life's goals, and shape an ideal society. In his view, happiness is the pinnacle of intellectual and spiritual perfection. True philosophy, religion, and politics must be aligned to guide humanity toward genuine happiness. Al-Farabi emphasized that the essence of humanity lies in its intellectual capacity, which leads to knowledge and virtue. In his view, everything in the universe has an essence that determines it. Al-Farabi developed a theory about "substance" that shows that everything has an essence tied to its form and nature¹². For example, humans have an essence related to intellect (nous) that distinguishes them from other beings.

Additionally, in his work "Kitab al-Shifā' (The Book of Healing), Ibn Sina developed the concept of essence and existence. "Existence is not essence, but rather something that allows essence to exist. Every object has an essence that is more fundamental than its existence, and this essence is more universal than its being"¹³. Ibn Sina separated essence and existence, showing that essence is the nature of something, while existence is the reality that something is¹⁴. According to him, everything has an essence that makes it what it is, and this

¹⁰ Alfi Arifian, *Sejarah Lengkap Dunia Abad Pertengahan 500-1400 Masehi* (Yogyakarta: Media Press, 2020), 34.

¹¹ Al-Farabi, "Mabadi Ara' Ahl Al-Madina Al-Fadila" (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985).

¹² Asmaran As, Syadzali A, and Arni Arni, "Ajaran Mengenal Diri (Studi Naskah Tasawuf Yang Berkembang Di Kalimantan Selatan)," *Tashwir, Jurnal Penelitian Agama Dan Sosial* Vol 3, no. 6 (2016): 151–174, 156. <https://doi.org/jurnal.uin-antasari.ac.id/index.php/tashwir/article/view/591> (diakses tanggal 2 Desember 2024)

¹³ Josef Men, *Medieval Islamic Civilization an Encyclopedia* (Prancis: Taylor & Francis Group, LLC, 2006), 21.

¹⁴ Wahyu Prihanta et al., "Ontologi Dalam Ilmu Pengetahuan Mengenai Hakikat Tuhan, Manusia, Dan Alam: Sebuah Literatur Review," *Empiricism Journal* Vol 5, no. 1 (2024): 60–79, 65. <https://doi.org/10.36312/ej.v5i1.1906> (diakses tanggal 2 Desember 2024)

essence is divided into two categories: the essence that exists within the object itself and the essence that exists within God as the primary cause. The first essence can be understood through human reason, while the second can only be understood through the understanding of God as *Wajib al-Wujud* (Necessary Being). Ibnu Sina distinguished between existence and essence in his philosophy, which later influenced Western essentialist theory.

In "*Tahafut al-Falasifah*" (The Incoherence of the Philosophers), Al-Ghazali critiques the views of previous philosophers and discusses the relationship between essence and God. The truth of essence cannot be reached through reason alone, because the highest essence comes from God, which is beyond human thought¹⁵. The essence of this world is God's creation, and only through revelation can we understand it¹⁶. Al-Ghazali emphasized that the highest essence, namely the existence of the world, must ultimately be understood as the will of God, not merely the human intellect. Al-Ghazali had a perspective that was more focused on theological and spiritual aspects. Although he did not directly develop the theory of essentialism, he emphasized the importance of seeking the essence of human existence, which can be achieved through spiritual pursuit and understanding of God. For him, the essence of human life is its closeness to God.

Al-Ghazali's critique in *Tahafut al-Falasifah* represents a significant shift from purely rationalist philosophy toward a more theologically grounded understanding of essence and existence. Unlike earlier Islamic philosophers who emphasized reason as the primary path to truth, Al-Ghazali argues that human intellect alone is insufficient to grasp the highest essence, which is ultimately rooted in God. This perspective highlights the limitations of reason and elevates divine revelation and spiritual insight as essential means for understanding reality. By framing the essence of the world as God's creation and emphasizing that the existence of all things is contingent upon God's will, Al-Ghazali redirects philosophical inquiry from abstract metaphysics to spiritual theology. His view implies that

¹⁵ Al-Ghazali, *Tahafut Al-Falasifah* (Pakistan: Kongres Filsafat Pakistan, 1963), <https://doi.org/www.ghazali.org/incoherence-of-the-philosophers-s-kamali/> (diakses tanggal 2 Desember 2024), 12.

¹⁶ Imam Al-Ghazali, *Kerancuan Filsafat (Tahafut Al-Falasifah)* (Yogyakarta: Grup Relasi Inti Media, 2015), 23.

actual knowledge of essence cannot be separated from the relationship between the human soul and the divine, marking a foundational role for mysticism and faith.

Furthermore, although Al-Ghazali does not systematize a theory of essentialism in the traditional philosophical sense, he profoundly underscores the search for human essence as a spiritual journey. For him, the essence of human life is defined by its closeness to God, making the pursuit of God-consciousness central to understanding human existence. This theological emphasis paved the way for later Islamic thinkers who integrated philosophy with spirituality, influencing Islamic epistemology and metaphysics profoundly.

In the works of Western philosophers such as Plato, in his work *The Republic*, Plato explains that forms (or ideas) are the essence of all things in the material world. Socrates said, "The objects in this world are merely shadows of the perfect forms." The world of ideas is a world more real than the physical world. The essence of everything in the physical world is an invisible yet eternal form"¹⁷. Here, Plato considers that these forms are essences that do not depend on the experience of the physical world. What we see in this world is merely a representation of a more perfect and unchanging form.

Meanwhile, Aristotle developed the concept of substance in his work *Metaphysics*, where he distinguished between form and matter, and explained how the two unite in an object that has a particular essence. "Substance is the essence of everything that exists." Every object in this world has an essence that combines form and matter, which together constitute a tangible existence"¹⁸. Aristotle emphasized that the essence of an object is its fundamental nature that makes it what it is, which is a combination of form and matter. In *Summa Theologica*, Thomas Aquinas discusses essence and existence in the context of Christian theology, where God is the creator of the essence of all things, and God grants existence: "The essence of all created beings depends on God." Without God's participation, no essence can exist. Essence and existence in created beings are two separate things, but in God, they

¹⁷ Ibn Rusyd, *Republic Plato* (Jakarta: Sadra Press, 2016), 167.

¹⁸ Aristotle, *The Metaphysics of Aristotle* (Inggris: G. Bell and Sons, 1896), 77.

are one and inseparable¹⁹". Aquinas explains that God is the source of all essence and that essence only exists with the existence granted by God. According to Muhammad Alif, God is always thought of as the most perfect being, so perfect that people are unable to conceive of how perfect it is. So if the most perfect being with incomprehensible perfection only exists in imagination, then God is no different from something that is the most perfect, whose perfection can be thought of or estimated, and that is impossible, as God²⁰.

In *Summa Theologica*, Thomas Aquinas presents a profound synthesis of Aristotelian metaphysics and Christian theology by distinguishing between essence (what a thing is) and existence (that a thing is). Aquinas argues that essence and existence are fundamentally distinct in created beings, and it is only through God's creative act that essence is actualized into existence. It means that essence alone, without God's participation, cannot bring a being into reality. By emphasizing that "the essence of all created beings depends on God," Aquinas underscores the contingent nature of all creatures—their being is not self-sufficient but wholly dependent on the divine source. This dependency illustrates the theological conviction that God is the necessary being, the only one whose essence and existence are identical and self-sustaining. Aquinas's view also highlights the intimate relationship between metaphysics and theology, where philosophical concepts of being serve to articulate and deepen the understanding of divine omnipotence and creation. His framework affirms that all existence is a continuous act of God's will, situating human and cosmic existence within a divinely ordered reality. Thus, for Aquinas, essence and existence are united only through God, making Him the ultimate foundation of all reality.

b) The epistemology of social science concerns the question of how we can know the social world; research methods, whether quantitative or qualitative, heavily depend on the

¹⁹ Brian Davies, *Aquinas's Summa Theologiae Critical Essays* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc, 2006), 102.

²⁰ Muhammad Alif, "Eksistensi Tuhan Dan Problem Epistemologi Dalam Filsafat Agama," *Aqlania* Vol 12, no. 2 (2021): 209–234, 218. <https://doi.org/10.32678/aqlania.v12i2.2108> (Diakses tanggal 2 Desember 2024).

epistemological perspective adopted²¹. Several theories emphasize the importance of objective observation of social data, while others, such as interpretive theory, focus on the subjective understanding of the meanings contained in social actions²².

The excerpt highlights a fundamental debate in the epistemology of social science regarding how knowledge about the social world is obtained and validated. The division between objective observation and subjective interpretation reflects two major epistemological paradigms: positivism and interpretivism. Positivist approaches prioritize quantitative methods and seek to uncover generalizable laws through systematic, empirical observation, mirroring the natural sciences' model of knowledge. This perspective assumes that social reality exists independently of the observer and can be measured objectively. In contrast, interpretive theories argue that the social world is constructed through meanings and interactions, which require qualitative methods to understand. Here, knowledge is not just about external behaviors but about grasping the subjective experiences and intentions of social actors. This approach recognizes that social phenomena are embedded in cultural and historical contexts, making objective detachment challenging. The choice between these epistemological perspectives directly influences research design, data collection, and analysis, underscoring the importance of theoretical grounding in social science research. Ultimately, this analysis shows that knowledge of the social world is multifaceted, and a comprehensive understanding may require integrating both objective and subjective approaches.

c) Axiology, on the other hand, relates to the values contained in social sciences. What should social science aim to achieve? What is the role of social sciences in addressing social issues such as inequality, justice, or social change? The axiology of social sciences also raises

²¹ Abdul Basit, "Konstruksi Ilmu Komunikasi Islam," *Jurnal Penelitian Agama* Vol 17, no. 1 (2016): 73–85, 75. <https://doi.org/10.24090/jpa.v17i1.2016> (Diakses tanggal 2 Desember 2024).

²² Gusmira Wita and Fansuri Mursal, "Phenomenology in Social Study a Study of Meaning Construction Universitas Negeri Padang , 2 Masyarakat Sejarawan Indonesia (MSI)," *Jurnal Ilmu Humaniora* Vol 6, no. 2 (2022): 325–338, 328. <https://online-journal.unja.ac.id/index.php/titian%0AP> (Diakses tanggal 2 Desember 2024).

questions about research ethics, such as how researchers treat their subjects and the social impact of their findings²³.

The excerpt emphasizes the critical role of axiology in shaping the purpose and ethical framework of social sciences. Axiology, as the study of values, directs attention to what social science ought to achieve, not merely the accumulation of knowledge, but its application toward addressing pressing social issues like inequality, justice, and social change. These value-oriented perspective challenges researchers to reflect on the moral implications and social responsibilities inherent in their work. It pushes social scientists to consider how their findings can either reinforce existing power structures or contribute to societal transformation. Therefore, axiology in social science is inseparable from questions of research ethics, including the treatment of participants, respect for human dignity, and the potential consequences of disseminated knowledge. By foregrounding values, axiology bridges the gap between theory and praxis, encouraging a socially conscious science that aims to produce not only understanding but also positive impact. This approach underlines that social research is inherently normative and that ethical considerations must guide every stage of the research process.

Horizon Social Science Approaches and Methods

Social science as a scientific discipline has never been singular in its perspective. Since its inception, approaches in social science have shown a broad spectrum of theories and methods, reflecting the complexity of the object of study, namely society. The horizon of social science that includes theories, paradigms, and methods becomes a conceptual field that allows re-reading of social reality through philosophical and practical frameworks.

One of the earliest and most influential approaches was the functionalism theory developed by Emile Durkheim. Durkheim (1895) in his work *The Rules of Sociological Method* stated that society consists of social institutions that function to maintain integration

²³ Muhammad Nasir, "Aksiologi Ilmu Pengetahuan Dan Manfaatnya Bagi Manusia," *Syntax Idea* Vol 3, no. 11 (2021): 2457–2467, 2465. <https://doi.org/10.36418/syntax-idea.v3i11.1571> (Diakses tanggal 2 Desember 2024).

and order. He emphasised that social facts should be treated as 'things' that are objective and can be studied scientifically. This theory is relevant in explaining how the education system, law, and religion work as social mechanisms to create stability. For example, the school system is organised in such a way as to train individuals to obey rules, be punctual, and to structure values that are important for the survival of industrialised societies. This argument shows that Durkheim's theory helps to understand how social institutions shape people's behaviour patterns.

However, the functionalist approach is considered too conservative in viewing social reality, as it does not consider the dimensions of conflict and inequality. For this reason, the conflict theory proposed by Karl Marx provides a counter perspective. Marx in *Das Kapital*, as quoted by Diva Raya, emphasised that the history of society is the history of class struggle, where relations of production and ownership of the means of production shape social structures²⁴. Economic inequality between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat creates tension that fuels social change. In the contemporary context, digital inequality is a new form of conflict. Access to technology and information creates a new digital class of those who are connected and those who are marginalised. It can be seen in the online education access gap between urban and rural students during the COVID-19 pandemic. This argument proves that conflict theory remains relevant in reading modern structures of injustice.

On the other hand, Max Weber offers a more subjective approach through the theory of social action²⁵. In *Economy and Society*, Weber, as quoted by Muhammad Supraja, stated that social action is behaviour that contains subjective meaning and is directed towards others. It means that social reality is not simply understood structurally, but also through individual meaning. For example, the emergence of digital social movements such as the Black Lives Matter campaign or Climate Strike shows that individuals act not only because

²⁴ Diva Raya et al., "Sumber Kekuasaan Dalam Negara: Analisis Berdasarkan Teori Konflik Karl Marx," *PUBLIC SPHARE: Jurnal Sosial Politik, Pemerintahan Dan Hukum* 3, no. 2 (2024): 34–39, 37, <https://doi.org/10.59818/jps.v3i2.810>. (Diakses tanggal 31 Mei 2025)

²⁵ Muhammad Supraja, "Alfred Schutz: Rekonstruksi Teori Tindakan Max Weber," *Jurnal Pemikiran Sosiologi* 1, no. 2 (2015): 81–90, 86. <https://doi.org/10.22146/jps.v1i2.23447> (Diakses tanggal 31 Mei 2025).

of structures, but also because of the impetus of personal values, beliefs, and interpretations of social justice. Such actions cannot be explained by an objective approach alone, but must be interpreted hermeneutically to understand the meaning behind them²⁶. In this context, social knowledge must be able to bridge between subjective meaning and macro structure.

In addition to these three major theories, Claude Levi-Strauss, through structuralism, states that the invisible structures behind language, myths, and culture shape human thought patterns²⁷. According to him, social reality is composed of binary oppositions such as good-bad, male-female, and so on, which construct the way humans understand their world. In modern society, media constructions also play a role in structuring social reality. For example, gender representations in television adverts or social media reflect specific symbolic structures that can influence society's views on the roles of men and women²⁸. It shows that social structures are not only material, but also symbolic.

The approach in social science is also largely determined by the methodology used. Quantitative methods, based on the positivistic paradigm, seek to measure social phenomena through numbers, statistics, and generalisations²⁹. In contrast, qualitative methods emphasise an in-depth understanding of individuals' subjective experiences through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document study. In this study, content analysis of

²⁶ Made Marthana Yusa, *Pengantar Ilmu Sosial* (Jawa Barat: Aina Media, 2024), 67.

²⁷ Nurul Hidayah et al., "Filsafat Ilmu: Epistemologi Post-Strukturalisme Dalam Menjelajahi Kekuasaan, Pengetahuan Dan Kebenaran," *Jurnal Multidisiplin West Science* Vol 2, no. 6 (2023): 422–432, 429. <https://doi.org/10.58812/jmws.v2i6.398> (Diakses tanggal 1 Januari 2025)

²⁸ Nasarudin, *Pengantar Pendidikan* (Sumatera Barat: Tri Edukasi Ilmiah, 2024), 54.

²⁹ Azalia Zahra Hazairin et al., "Persepsi Mahasiswa Ilmu Komunikasi Terhadap Kesenjangan Gender," *Prosiding Seminar Nasional* Vol 1, no. 2 (2023): 1194–1204, 1197. <https://proceeding.unesa.ac.id/index.php/sniis/article/download/896/349/3160> (Diakses tanggal 2 Desember 2024).

²⁹ Mohammad Mahmud and Ninuk Riswandari, "Konstruksi Konsep Diri Dalam Realitas Sosial Pada Anggota Komunitas Stand-Up Indo Pasuruan," *Ilmu Komunikasi* Vol 3, no. 3 (2024): 250–263, 255. <https://doi.org/jurnalprisanicendekia.com/index.php/jbc/article/download/311/339> (Diakses tanggal 1 Januari 2025)

philosophical texts and social theories is used, as well as a hermeneutic approach to interpreting meaning in historical and social contexts. This approach is important to understand that social theory does not exist in a vacuum, but rather exists to answer the concrete challenges of society³⁰. Thus, the horizon of social science not only offers a diversity of theories and methods but also opens space for critical and reflective thinking in understanding reality³¹. Social knowledge is not only about what happens, but also why and how it happens, and for whom it is developed.³² Therefore, linking theory with contemporary reality through argumentative analysis is an important step in making social science more meaningful and transformative.

Social Sciences in the Contemporary Context

Along with the times, social science continues to adapt to understand and respond to increasingly complex social issues, such as social inequality, globalisation, climate change, and political tensions. In facing these challenges, social philosophy plays an important role as a theoretical foundation for the development of social science. Social philosophy, which includes the principles of ontology, epistemology, and axiology, provides the basis for social scientists to develop theories that can explain and provide solutions to existing social problems.

One important contribution of Western social theory is the theory of social critique and hegemony, as developed by Karl Marx and Antonio Gramsci. Marx saw inequality in

³⁰ L A Lubis et al., “Sosiologi Pendidikan Dalam Membentuk Karakter (Sudut Pandang Islam),” *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai* Vol 7, no. 3 (2023): 29509–29514, 29511. <https://doi.org/jptam.org/index.php/jptam/article/download/11729/9060/21573> (Diakses tanggal 2 Desember 2024).

³¹ Anis Chariri, “Landasan Filsafat Dan Metode Penelitian Kualitatif,” *Laboratorium Pengembangan Akuntansi (LPA)* Vol 3, no. 4 (2009): 1–17, 2. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/11702260.pdf> (Diakses tanggal 1 Januari 2025)

³² Mohammad Mahmud and Ninuk Riswandari, “Konstruksi Konsep Diri Dalam Realitas Sosial Pada Anggota Komunitas Stand-Up Indo Pasuruan,” *Ilmu Komunikasi* Vol 3, no. 3 (2024): 250–263, 253. <https://doi.org/jurnalprisanicendekia.com/index.php/jbc/article/download/311/339> (Diakses tanggal 1 Januari 2025)

capitalist society as a result of the exploitative relations of production. In *Das Kapital*, he asserted that economic structures underlie all social and cultural structures. Gramsci later developed the theory of cultural hegemony, where the ruling class dominates not only through economic power, but also through the control of ideology, culture, and values that are accepted as 'general truths' by society. These theories are important in understanding how injustice is systemically maintained, as well as in formulating forms of resistance to such inequality.

However, these Western theories of social criticism do not escape their limitations. Critiques from the perspective of Islamic philosophy, such as those put forward by Al-Ghazali, Al-Farabi, and Ibn Sina, provide a transcendental and ethical dimension that is often absent in Western theories that tend to be secular and materialistic. Al-Ghazali, in *Tahafut al-Falasifah*, emphasised that human reason has limitations in understanding the ultimate truth without the guidance of revelation. According to him, social reality cannot be fully explained by rational or materialistic approaches alone, but must be seen in the context of man's relationship with God and the higher purpose of life. In this context, an understanding of social justice is not solely based on material redistribution, but must also include spiritual and moral justice.

Al-Farabi, through his work *Al-Madina al-Fadila*, also provides a model of an ideal society rooted in the goodness of reason and moral virtue. In his view, a just society is one led by a wise figure (philosopher-king), who places wisdom and divine values as the basis for public policy-making. It is in contrast to Marx's thinking, which negates the role of religion in the social structure and considers it the 'opium of society'. On the other hand, Al-Farabi's approach is more integrative as it makes spiritual ethics the framework for realising social welfare.

Meanwhile, Ibn Sina in *al-Shifā'* separates between *mahyah* (essence) and *wujud* (existence), which can be translated in a social framework as the difference between the fundamental values of society and its empirical reality³³. This concept can be used to criticise

³³ Esa Nur Wahyuni Ali Maksum, *Filsafat Ilmu Sosial* (Malang: UB Press, 2023), 21.

contemporary social structures that appear to be formally just, but morally inessential. In this regard, Ibn Sina's theory encourages a deeper analysis of the discrepancy between the values claimed by a social system and its actual practices.

By integrating the views of Western and Islamic philosophers, social science studies become richer and more profound. Marx and Gramsci's theories are effective in explaining the relations of power and domination in capitalist societies, but the contributions of Islamic thinkers add the spiritual, ethical, and transcendental dimensions needed to understand humans as rational and spiritual beings fully.

Furthermore, a transdisciplinary approach that combines the social sciences with philosophy, economics, politics, and psychology, as referred to in modern interdisciplinary theory, is increasingly important for developing effective public policies³⁴. However, in the Islamic context, such interdisciplinary collaboration is insufficient if it does not involve the dimension of *maqashid al-shariah*, which are the objectives of sharia that include the protection of religion, soul, mind, offspring, and property. This approach can provide a philosophical and normative basis for social solutions that are not only effective, but also ethical and civilised.³⁵

Thus, enriching social science through dialogue between Western and Islamic thought is an urgent need in formulating a more holistic scientific paradigm. The author's argument asserts that only by building collaborations between critical rationality and spiritual values can social science contribute significantly to shaping a more just, inclusive, and dignified society.

Conclusion

³⁴ Hairuddin Arsyad and Sofyan Sauri, "Landasan Filosofi Pendidikan Dan Konsep Mendidik," *Jurnal Ilmiah Profesi Pendidikan* Vol 9, no. 3 (2024): 1585–1596, 1587. <https://doi.org/10.29303/jipp.v9i3.2579> (Diakses tanggal 1 Januari 2025)

³⁵ Syokron Jazil, "Menembus Batas Membuka Horison Baru Melalui Pengembangan Pemikiran Filsafat Hukum," *SEIKAT: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial, Politik Dan Hukum* Vol. 2, no. 14 (2023): 277–284, 280. <https://doi.org/ejournal.45mataram.ac.id/index.php/seikat/article/view/558/484> (Diakses tanggal 2 Januari 2025)

The relationship between philosophy and social science forms a solid conceptual foundation for understanding the complexities and multidimensional nature of social reality. The ontological, epistemological, and axiological dimensions of philosophy offer profound theoretical bases for social science, encompassing the nature of its objects, the process of knowledge acquisition, and the ethical direction of research. The interdisciplinary horizon of social science enables more comprehensive and integrative approaches to social phenomena, enriched by the contributions of both Western and Islamic philosophers such as Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, Al-Ghazali, Plato, Aristotle, and Thomas Aquinas. The integration of philosophical thought with contemporary social theories such as functionalism, conflict theory, social action, and structuralism demonstrates that a thorough understanding of society must involve considerations of values, meanings, and power structures. In this context, Islamic philosophical perspectives are particularly valuable in balancing Western rationality with spiritual and transcendental ethics. Therefore, a social science grounded in strong philosophical foundations and open to intercultural and interdisciplinary dialogue holds significant potential for addressing modern social challenges. Strengthening the synergism between knowledge, values, and social policy is essential for shaping a more humane, just, and civilized society.

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