Reconstructing Moral Education considering the Ontological and Epistemological Transformations of the Digital Age: A Critical Foundational Study for Building Moral Identity in the Contemporary Educational Context

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ABSTRACT:
The goal of this study is to rebuild the moral education in the digital era by proposing a critical foundational framework that meets the ontological and epistemological changes brought about by the digital environment. The study is analytical and philosophical-educational study of literature from various sources in the field of moral education and digital identity. The results suggest that the traditional moral education is no longer effective to solve the moral issues in the modern context and learners need to have a sense of critical awareness, a sense of moral autonomy and a sense of digital responsibility to build a digital moral identity. The study also provides a framework that incorporates the philosophical and educational aspect, and offers mechanisms for its implementation in educational institutions which contribute to the promotion of ethical behaviour in digital environments and the development of responsible digital citizenship. The study strongly suggests empirical research to investigate the effectiveness of the proposed framework in developing learners' digital moral identity.

Keywords: Digital moral education, ontological transformations, epistemological transformations, critical awareness, moral autonomy, digital responsibility, digital moral identity, digital space, contemporary education, philosophy of information

1. Introduction

Digital transformation is no longer a technological or instrumental phenomenon but has penetrated the very life of the human being and a way of understanding the world. Changes of this sort have resulted in ontological and epistemological changes and have transformed the relationship between individual, others and

values that guide the behavior of human beings. In this changing reality, moral education has a new and more complex challenge in terms of its capacity to remain its blueprint for the balanced development of human personalities in a context of value fluidity, of a constantly growing production of knowledge and the ever more blurred distinction between the real and the virtual. This means that the basis for moral education needs to be rethought, or at least reconsidered, not as a rigid norm system but as a dynamic process that can engage with the changes in the world and answer the call of developing a moral identity that can adapt, evaluate critically and make informed choices in a complex digital environment. In the digital age the scope of transformation is greater than simple technological change; it is the transformation of the very nature of human life, human knowledge and human values, which generate new philosophical and ethical issues in the current societies. The introduction of technology is not only a means of execution but has become an essential component in how people interact with the world, and therefore existing ontological ideas need to be rethought (Spahn, 2020). Moreover, the digital world has also given rise to new forms of knowledge that are based on algorithmic and AI-driven processes, posing new problems of trust in knowledge and the ethical production and dissemination of it (Sabrina et al., 2025). Furthermore, value systems have been heavily impacted by these changes. Studies indicate that morality is one of the areas that is most impacted by social and technological shifts, which directly impact citizens' conduct and their ways of living in digital societies (Mansour et al., 2025). The digital environment has also created new ethical challenges, such as misinformation, cyberbullying, and identity crises, which require the establishment of a thorough epistemological framework for digital ethics that can serve as a guide for the behavior of individuals, especially of those who have known a radically different knowledge environment (Khofifah et al., 2025). In the educational field, there has been a great need to rethink what moral education should be and why it needs to be included in digital learning, as a solution to the new "ethical crisis" linked to the use of digital tools in education. But the traditional education paradigm is no longer able to deal with the complexities of current realities, and it is necessary to create new learning needs that require learners, teachers and families to build a unified value system in digital environments. Moral education is therefore no longer an option of education, but a philosophical and educational need in the digital age where ontological and epistemological changes have occurred, which is a step towards the creation of a moral and critical consciousness of a socially responsible citizenry.

1.1 Research Problem and Questions

The digital revolution is causing great changes in contemporary societies. Technology is not just a tool to support learning, but a dynamic force that creates new knowledge, values, and ways of interacting with people – all of which has raised new ethical and educational questions about privacy, digital identity, misinformation, and the ethics of artificial intelligence (Lemke et al., 2021). On the other hand, the traditional approaches to moral education have started to fail to cope with the digitalized worlds of a rapidly changing world of culture and technology, especially considering epistemological shifts resulting from algorithms and artificial intelligence (Lütge, 2022; Lemke & Brenner, 2014). Many works have focused on the problem of digital ethics, but there is little focus on the philosophical, ontological and epistemological basis of moral education in digital environments. The current study aims to answer the following main research question:

What critical foundational framework can be proposed for reconstructing moral education considering the ontological and epistemological transformations of the digital age in a manner that contributes to the development of moral identity within the contemporary educational context?

This main question gives rise to the following sub-questions:

1. What are the nature and characteristics of the ontological and epistemological

transformations generated by the digital age, and what are their implications for the concepts of human beings, knowledge, and values within the educational context?

2. What are the most significant ethical challenges emerging from the digital environment, and how do they influence the development of learners' moral identity?
3. What are the limitations of traditional educational models and contemporary approaches in addressing digital ethics from philosophical and educational perspectives?
4. What are the defining features of the proposed critical foundational framework for reconstructing moral education in a way that promotes the development of a conscious and responsible digital moral identity?

1.2 Significance of the Study

First: Theoretical Significance

The theoretical value of this research lies on the analysis of a complex issue at present that crosses the fields of philosophy, education and technology. It aims to offer a critical foundation to rebuild the moral education in the light of the ontological and epistemological changes that the digital age has produced. The meanings of the research can be summarized as follows:

- Contributing to the development of the philosophical foundations of moral education by linking it to the profound transformations in the concepts of existence and knowledge within the digital environment.
- Addressing a gap in the educational literature, particularly the scarcity of studies that integrate philosophical analysis (ontological and epistemological) with the educational application of digital ethics.
- Proposing a critical foundational framework that redefines concepts such as values, virtue, and responsibility within a rapidly evolving digital context.
- Enriching contemporary educational scholarship through an approach that moves beyond the procedural dimensions of digital ethics toward a deeper theoretical construction of moral identity.
- Supporting emerging research trends that advocate the integration of philosophy and education in addressing the challenges posed by digital transformation.

Second: Practical Significance

The practical significance of the study lies in its potential to generate outcomes that can be utilized to enhance educational practices and policies through the next :

- Assisting educational policymakers in developing educational policies that incorporate ethical considerations within the context of digital transformation.
- Providing a framework that educators can employ to strengthen moral education within digital learning environments.
- Contributing to the design of educational and training programs aimed at fostering students' digital moral identity.
- Supporting educational institutions in addressing ethical challenges associated with technology, such as privacy, misinformation, and digital responsibility.
- Enhancing learners' awareness of their capacity to engage in conscious, critical, and ethical conduct within digital spaces.

1.3 Definitions of Terms

Moral Education

Moral education refers to an educational process aimed at developing learners' moral reasoning and ethical behavior through progressive stages of moral development and value judgment (McLeod, 2025).

Ontological Transformations

Ontological transformations refer to changes affecting the nature of human existence and individuals' perception of the world because of digital transformation, which has reshaped the relationship between humans, reality, and technology (Floridi, 2021).

Epistemological Transformations

Epistemological transformations refer to changes in knowledge, including the ways in which knowledge is produced, disseminated, and verified within the digital environment (UNESCO, 2021).

Digital Age

The Digital Age refers to the historical period in which human life increasingly relies on digital technologies, data, and electronic communication across various domains of activity (OECD, 2023).

Moral Identity

Moral identity refers to the extent to which individuals perceive themselves as moral persons, such that moral values become a fundamental component of their self-concept and guide their behavior (Blasi, 2020).

2. Literature review

2.1 Previous Studies

Admission of moral education in the digital age has been studied from different angles, covering the ethical challenges which have come with digital transformations, or the influence of technology on values, identity and educational interaction. Some researchers have attempted to find current educational models that can respond to the needs of the digital society, and others have studied the relationship between digital ethics and the creation of a critical attitude in the learner in the context of Artificial Intelligence. However, most of these studies have been related to practical and/or educational issues on moral education and have not paid much attention to the philosophical, ontological and epistemological foundations of moral education in the modern digital world.

In this study, Muslem (2026) wanted to design an educational model for moral education for generation Z in the digital age. The literature review was conducted using an integrative literature review method on 25 scholarly sources from 2016-2025. The study analysed, using systematic approach, the difference between the traditional teaching methods and the features of digital generation. The findings revealed that the DT model of learning is an appropriate model for moral education development as design thinking is one of the learning models that focuses on collaboration, experience, and reflection. Finally, the study suggested a conceptual model of Islamic moral value and design thinking to improve the ethical awareness and behavior of the learners in the digital learning environment.

The aim of Ririn Linawati, et al. (2026) was to explore the impact of the digital transformation which has given rise to new ethical issues like misinformation, polarization, and data misuse and its repercussions on the fragile moral development of learners. Given the chosen date range of studies published between 2015 and 2025, the study employed a systematic literature review approach from different academic databases. It aims at exploring essential digital competencies such as cyber-wisdom, techno-ethical resilience, and digital agency. The results underscored the need to redefine the concept of moral education in the context of digital environments, and to move away from a normative conception of moral education to an educational model that is based on reflection, moral autonomy and digital responsibility. The research also highlighted the need for the integration of virtue ethics with the philosophy of

technology in order to create a modern educational system that could tackle the ethical issues related to the digital age.

Tantakov et al. (2026) discussed the mechanisms of introducing moral values into the educational process in the context of digital transformations in education, especially for prospective teachers. The study was based on a systematic review that included studies since 2020 up to 2025 according to PRISMA guidelines in various scientific databases. The results indicated that the most commonly used techniques to improve digital moral education were virtual simulations, structured digital discussions, and case-based learning. The study also found that there is still a strong dominance of explanations of moral development based on Rest's Model and Kohlberg's Model, with relatively few explanations based in virtue ethics and ethics of care. The authors found digital platforms can play a crucial role in achieving moral education and supporting teacher training programmes in digital learning.

Arstorp and Lund (2025) explored the potential of the "ontological turn" in educational technology to further the development of a more holistic and meaningful understanding of digital technology. From the educational literature, three perspectives have been taken that were analyzed, related to digital skills, pedagogical and societal/humanistic perspectives that all have a hidden epistemological orientation. The study was motivated by the current issues arising with the rapidly evolving developments of generative AI, which are causing different digital problems with ontological implications. The authors argued that they do not share the ontological perspective that is prevalent in computer science and ontology engineering, but that they wished to take up a perspective of the human being that could be found in psychology and anthropology. The study also highlighted that while there is little insight into how the various forms of AI produce their outputs, the use of AI in the contemporary world is mainly motivated by efficiency, interaction and learning. It creates a rudimentary question regarding what it means to be human, in this era that technology can simulate, imitate and replicate aspects of thought and consciousness. The study therefore emphasised the importance of teacher education programmes to help teachers adopt a broader understanding of technology that involves an ontological change in the conception and interpretation of technology in learning processes.

Neyla Sabrina et al. (2025) aimed to describe the concept of "Digital Neuroethics" as a conceptual framework for the reconstruction of Islamic religious education epistemology in the posthuman era, particularly due to the changes that happen in the era of artificial intelligence and digital technology. Qualitative research methodology was used, and literature review and the analysis of related studies were applied to analyse the influence of digital transformation on the educational knowledge structure and ethical issues related to the algorithmic misinformation and cognitive manipulation. The results showed that the Digital Neuroethics model plays a role in the construction of a holistic epistemological model in the form of a combination of three systems which are revelation, reason and digital experience, so that ethical awareness of learners in digital environments is enhanced. The study also revealed the importance of the development of religious education curriculum and pedagogical models that are more sensitive to the ethical and epistemological problems of digital society today.

Spahn (2020) examined from the perspective of deontological ethics (Kantian) the impact of digital technologies on the human-to-human relations and human-to-digital-technology relations from the perspective of digital behaviour-modification technology. The aim of this study is to explore the ways in which concepts of selfhood, subjectivity and moral agency are changing in the wake of the growing influence of digital technologies on human behaviors and social relations. The findings showed that digital technologies do not just play a neutral role, but that they have various modes of agency which shape human decision-making and social interaction.

The study found that classical ethics should be rethought in the light of the digital context and that there is a need for a new ethical framework to govern human–digital interactions in current digital societies.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Moral Education and Contemporary Philosophical Transformations

Moral education is considered one of the main issues in educational theory, as it does not only focus on improving the way in which the student acts in the outside world, but it also aims at enhancing the consciousness of the student, the development of the conscience and the training of the student to be able to differentiate between good and bad, right and wrong. Philosophers have always seen moral education as a way of creating rational human beings capable of a life within a rational community which is governed by the values of justice, responsibility and virtue, and this has been its close association with Philosophy since its early beginnings. From this point of view, moral education is not simply about schools' rules and regulations but about an educational project working on the cognitive, emotional and behavioural aspects of the human personality (Henderson, 2024).

Plato and Aristotle have been one of the most influential philosophical Traditions that have laid the foundations of moral education. In this tradition, the concept of morality is related to character development, not just the memorization of rules. The acquisition of virtue does not happen by itself but it is practiced, habituated, taught, and demonstrated. The current literature on virtue ethics, however, highlights that moral education must go beyond the teaching of rules to the formation of good character with a capacity for good judgment and responsible action (Fernández Espinosa, 2025).

Moral education was raised to a new level by Immanuel Kant who associated moral education with duty, reason and moral autonomy. Kant's view is that an action is not moral simply because it ultimately, or sometimes immediately, leads to good consequences, but only because it is the result of a conscious decision to act otherwise that would be disrespectful to duty and human dignity. The link between moral education and personal responsibility is especially significant for the current study as it is a key moral development concept for the digital age where learners often face ethical dilemmas that they are not directly supervised on by families or schools (Prendergast, 2025).

In the current educational discourse, moral education has shifted from moral transmission and obedience to moral judgment and critical thinking. This can be seen in the transition from one stage to another of Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development, where the transition from fear-motivated obedience to conforming to social standards, to principled moral reasoning is clear. In this way, moral education is no longer a matter of "rules" and "don't's", but rather it is an experience of awareness, judgment, and responsibility.

In the digital age, ontological and epistemological shifts are occurring.

The digital age has ushered in a significant shift in the way that human beings think about their existence and relationship with the world. Technology is no longer just a gadget that is employed when necessary; it is now a part of the daily lives of people, influencing their thoughts, communication, learning, and self-construction. Digital transformation can therefore be seen as an ontological change since it alters the nature of human life and transforms the interactions between human and machine, between reality and virtuality and between self and other (Floridi, 2024).

Floridi's contributions seem to indicate that people of today exist in the "infosphere", an environment in which the physical and digital worlds are becoming increasingly intertwined. Human life has thus become indistinguishable from the flow of data, digital platforms and algorithmic systems. It is now no longer possible to consider learners only as beings living in the real world, but to consider them as digital beings whose experiences, values and identities are

shaped through various digital contexts (Floridi, 2013).

On the epistemological level, digitalization has revolutionized knowledge itself. The traditional education system is designed upon rather stable assumptions about production, validation and transmission of knowledge. With the advent of AI, big data, digital platforms, and algorithmic recommendation systems, however, the processes of knowledge production, dissemination and consumption have changed. Algorithms are growing in influence to determine what information people are offered, prioritize it, and generate it, which impacts people's conceptions of reality and of truth.

UNESCO has identified that although AI can be used to improve learning, it creates ethical and educational issues concerning equity, privacy, and algorithmic bias, as well as the roles of teachers and learners and the safeguarding of learners. The digital transformation cannot therefore be understood only as a technological transformation, rather, it is also an epistemological and value shift which calls for reinterpreting the purpose and functions of education, in particular moral education.

Ethical Challenges and Moral Identity in the Digital Environment

The digital environment has created many new ethical dilemmas not experienced to the same extent in the old-fashioned classroom. Some of these challenges are digital privacy, online bullying, misinformation, misuse of data, algorithmic manipulation, and reduced accountability in online environments. The importance of these difficulties is not just for their effect on pupils' behaviour, but also for their effect on self-awareness, views of others and values of right and wrong.

The past few years, there has been a growing body of scholarship on digital ethics, in which digitalisation has altered the nature of the relationship between humans and technologies. The influence of technology has grown exponentially over time in the context of human decision, action and choice. Spahn (2020) contends that digitalization influences the relationship between humans and digital objects and digital communities, and that "Kantian ethics in the digital age" needs to be re-interpreted, taking into account the current concepts of cognition, motivation and reflective agency.

In this regard, moral identity is an integral theme that stands out, as it represents the degree of perception that people have of themselves as moral individuals and the incorporation of moral values into their self-concept and conduct. Digital environments require more than just knowledge about moral values—these values must become part of the learner's identity and inform their digital decisions about what they share online, how they relate to others, how they respect others' privacy and how they interact with digital knowledge (Hardy & Carlo, 2005).

Studies of moral identity have shown that it is a very important link between moral reasoning and moral conduct. People can know what they think is the right thing to do but still not do it because morality is not part of their identity. This means that there is a need for educational strategies that promote critical thinking, responsibility, empathy and ethical judgment in complex digital environments to develop digital moral identity.

Reconstructing Moral Education in the Digital Age: A Critical Foundational Framework

Implementing moral education in the digital age requires to shift the moral education paradigm from the paradigm of transmission and external moral control to the paradigm of critical moral education that can be used to create awareness, responsibility, and autonomous moral decision-making. The challenge is not just the lack of values, but the change of the context, in which values are implemented. Today's learners live in open, dynamic and rapidly changing digital environments where influences can stretch beyond the powers of schools and families (Webster, 2025).

This new educational base must be connected to moral education of the ontological and epistemological changes that have occurred in the digital era. An ontological perspective of

education should acknowledge that learners exist in two spaces – the physical and the virtual. Epistemologically, it is essential to arm learners to critically analyze the information they ingest, to determine the credibility of the sources, to identify misinformation, and to understand how algorithms affect opinions and actions. Moral education is therefore an education for awareness rather than education for obedience (Farag et al., 2022).

The core principles that should underpin the proposed critical foundational framework should include critical awareness, digital responsibility, human dignity, justice, empathy, moral autonomy and ethical decision making in digital contexts. Research and discussion about digital citizenship often focuses on the need for students in the digital age to have more than technical skills, also to have critical thinking skills, ethical behaviours, and responsible participation in digital communities (Webster, 2025).

Thus, the purpose of modern moral education goes beyond the challenge of keeping learners safe from the dangers of digital environments. It also means giving them the power to form moral self that is conscious, active, and reflective. The goal must be realised through the development of curriculum, professional development of teachers, the incorporation of digital ethics in the school curriculum and the shift of the school into a place of dialogue, reflection and critical inquiry. In this manner, the reconstruction of moral education is an educational and philosophical need that can develop digitally engaged individuals who have an understanding, choice, responsibility, and ethic in interacting in the modern world.

3. Research Methodology and Procedures

3.1 Research Methodology

For the subject matter and central problem of this study, the critical foundational approach is being followed, which is deemed to be the most suitable methodology in addressing the study. The study is not an attempt to quantify attitudes, by means of field investigation or testing of any quantitative hypotheses. Instead, it seeks to make sense of the ontological and epistemological shifts that the digital age has wrought on the philosophical and educational underpinnings of moral education and to create a critical theoretical basis for theorizing moral education for the modern educational landscape.

The critical foundational approach is not only in terms of presenting ideas and theories that can be found in the literature. Rather, it is a questioning of those theories, a careful examination of the limitations in them, and an identification of the strengths and weaknesses of such theories, especially as they relate to the realities of moral education in the rapidly changing digital environment marked by the convergence of physical and virtual realities, rapid knowledge production, and the impact of algorithms and artificial intelligence on awareness, behavior, and values.

3.2 The Critical Foundational Approach is chosen for the following reasons:

The critical foundational approach has been chosen for several reasons concerning the nature of the research problem and the aim of the research. The superficial procedural analyses are not enough to discuss the reconstruction of moral education in the digital age because they fail to discuss the core issues about the meaning of being human, nature of knowledge, source of value and the scope of moral responsibility in the continuously changing digital environment.

This facilitates the analysis of the study to bring together the philosophical and educational aspects. It can help to facilitate an understanding of ontological transformations as changes in human existence and relationships with digital realities, as well as epistemological transformations as changes in the nature of knowledge and the way in which knowledge is created, shared and justified. By this integration, moral education can be re-thought to be an educational and philosophical answer to the current change.

3.3 Sources of the Study

The study uses a variety of sources from scholarly and intellectual sources appropriate to the study. These encompass philosophical texts on man and technology, as well as philosophical reflection on the changes in notions of selfhood and existence in the digital age. The study also draws on epistemological works on the nature of digital knowledge, credibility and misinformation issues, and AI in knowledge production.

Moreover, the research is based on education literature related to moral education, moral identity and values education, as well as reports and policy documents from special education and scientific institutions related to digital learning and ethics of artificial intelligence.

3.4 Research Procedures

The study starts by defining the concepts, such as moral education, ontological transformation, epistemological transformation and digital moral identity, in order to give them meaning so that they will be limited in the use of the concepts in the study.

Then, philosophical and educational literature is analyzed to examine the bases of moral education and to evaluate its ability to adjust to digital transformations. It then explores how technology, digital platforms and artificial intelligence affect knowledge, identity and values, along with the key digital issues, including privacy issues, cyberbullying, misinformation and misuse of data.

The study also condemns the traditional moral education model and proposes a critical model for re-constructing digital moral education with the themes of critical awareness, autonomy and digital responsibility.

Analytical Tools

In addition to theoretical synthesis, conceptual, critical and foundational analysis are used to build a whole picture of re-envisioning digital moral education.

The Study is bound by the following definitions.

In this study, the moral education reconstruction research is carried out considering the digital transformation. It is restricted to critical and theoretical analysis only and not uses empirical research methods. The analysis is drawn mainly from the literatures and studies that are related to education and moral education, digital ethics and moral identity.

4. Critical Foundational Analysis of Philosophy, Knowledge, and Behavior in the Digital Age

4.1 Ontological Transformations in the Digital Age

The ontological transformations constitute one of the most profound shifts brought on to human beings' self-concept and their connection with the world by the digital era. Living is not just in physical reality and material space, but also in digital reality and virtual space, where it is determined by data, platforms, algorithms and virtual interactions. This has led to a transformation of the human being, increasingly fluid, complex and shaped by a constant evolution in the digital experience of individuals.

Heidegger's philosophical position is that technology is not just a tool that is used by the individual, but is a construct that aids the individual to understand the world and himself. In the modern digital world, people experience environments which shape their perception of reality and direct their decisions and actions, both directly and indirectly. This change calls for a rethinking of the foundations of moral education, for an education that goes beyond the transmission of values, to the cultivation of critical thinking and independent moral judgment.

Such changes also signal the emergence of new actors that have the potential to define the human experience, like algorithms and Artificial Intelligence systems that now play a central part in the production of knowledge, in guiding behaviours and decisions. The implications of these changes are very ethically charged, however, in terms of how far the human can be held responsible for the consequences and keep

moral freedom in increasingly complex digital environments.

Therefore, current digital contexts call for education that fosters learners' awareness of their digital selves, boosts their capacity for ethical reflection on digital interactions, and enables them to engage in responsible actions in digital environments that combine physical and virtual conditions. Therefore, the ontological transformation should not be regarded as a mere technological shift, but as a change in the nature of human existence, and the digital moral education should be regarded as a vital need when educating people who are able to respond consciously and responsibly to the demands of the digital age.

4.2 The epistemological transformations in the knowledge of digital information.

Epistemological transformations in the digital age are the dramatic shifts that impact the nature and ways of knowledge production, dissemination and validation. Conventional education was based on the traditional philosophy of a limited number of stable sources for knowledge, which no longer applies. Rather, it comes out of immense flows of information and data that flow and are remixed by algorithmic systems. Consequently, the access to knowledge has been increasingly shaped by technological mechanisms which determine the kind of things people will see and the information, in turn, will be given to them, thus posing new issues of credibility, objectivity and intellectual independence.

These changes raise philosophical questions of what it means to 'be true' and the extent of what can be known of the digital world. Information no longer just mirrors reality, but is the result of a process of selection, prioritization, and direction, through algorithms that are based on commercial, technical or behavioral criteria. This is a reality that requires learners to need to be critical and reflective, being able to evaluate and analyse, rather than take in information.

Furthermore, the current context adds to the complexity of the knowledge landscape with a high prevalence of misinformation, targeted content and generative artificial intelligence. Thus, students should be taught to assess information sources and to recognize valid information from invalid information, and to be taught the algorithmic processes that shape opinions/attitudes. In this context, moral autonomy is of particular significance. Kant contended that there is a moral quality to an action because it results from a person's conscious and independent will, based on reason and good judgment.

The need for change in the way teaching and learning is approached, from the learning to the learning, from the educator to the learner, from the passive to the active, and from the formal to the informal, requires a shift in thinking and in teaching and learning with regard to critical thinking, information literacy and digital ethical responsibility. The learner needs to be able to evaluate information prior to sharing and receiving it and be aware of the social and ethical ramifications of activities in digital environments. As well, education should contribute to creating a culture of learning based on verification of knowledge, respect for truth and advocacy for justice, transparency and responsibility in the digital environment.

Therefore, epistemological transformations go beyond the mere change of access to information and they are a fundamental change in the notion of knowledge and the relation between people and information. The above reality further highlights the importance of the digital moral education as an ‘educational model’ that can assist the students to grow their thinking and make responsible decisions in the rapidly evolving knowledge world.

4.3 Digital Ethical Challenges

The widespread use of technology and digital spaces has introduced a range of new moral dilemmas for us all to be more conscious of and how to deal with digital spaces. One of the biggest of these challenges is misinformation and inaccurate information, so verifying information sources and critically taking and sharing information is important.

In addition, cyberbullying brings up serious ethical questions which can inflict serious psychological and social impacts on people. This challenge needs to be met by encouraging values in the digital world like respect, empathy and responsibility. Likewise, concerns about digital identity have come to the fore as ethical issues - individuals can hide their identity or project an inaccurate image of themselves online, impacting on levels of accountability and ethical responsibility towards others.

Misuse of personal data and breaches of privacy are also a major problem. Emphasis on how to protect information and respect others' privacy is important when learning about their digital rights and responsibilities. From this perspective, digital moral education has become a vital necessity to help students face these challenges proactively and responsibly, and improve their moral judgment in the digital era.

4.4 Limitations of Traditional Moral Education

Traditional moral education, that mainly consist of teaching, memorizing and following rules, has proven to be inadequate in the face of the digital age challenges. Today's students work in an information-rich and constantly changing world, surrounded by an array of information and diverse tasks that demand critical thinking, analysis and decision-making based on information, rather than memorization of information and instructions.

A major weakness of traditional moral education lies in its failure to equip learners with the necessary skills to be able to critically evaluate and identify reliable information and misinformation in digital settings. Moreover, it rarely provides students with the capacity to handle problems like cyberbullying, misinformation and privacy protection violations. Obedience and conforming to group norms can also impair learners' ability to make moral choices in new and challenging contexts.

It is, then, urgent to change the situation of moral education by focusing on the development of critical consciousness, autonomy and responsibility. It is important for learners to be able to assess information and make decisions about it ethically in digital environments. This enables moral education to better equip individuals to deal with emerging moral issues in the digital era.

4.5 Building Digital Moral Identity

Digital moral identity is one of the most important aims of moral education in the digital era. It is defined as a person's ability to follow ethical rules and values in online environments. Digital moral identity is not just knowing ethical values, but also applying ethical values in various digital situations and interactions.

Digital moral identity has a few important elements. One of these is digital critical awareness, which helps a learner to consider, think and reflect on digital information and situations in a thoughtful manner. A second dimension is digital responsibility which develops an understanding of this impact on others. Moral autonomy refers to the ability to make moral choices based on personal moral convictions and empathy and digital citizenship refers to respecting others and interacting positively in digital communities are also part of a digital moral identity. Besides, the concepts of digital dignity and digital justice strengthen the respect of privacy and digital rights for everyone.

Development of these dimensions enables learners to be more prepared to face ethical issues in the digital era, like misinformation, cyberbullying, and misuse of data. Therefore, digital moral education helps develop people who are ethical and have digital responsibility so that they can play a role in digital society in a safe and constructive manner.

4.6 Results of the Study Theories

The analysis of the critical theory revealed a deep transformation of the notion of the moral agency of the learners in the context of digital transformations and the significant role of digital transformations in moral education. Moral awareness is not confined to "real-world" actions in a real-world setting, but is extended to dealing

with data, understanding algorithms, and virtual platforms. Digital learners are then expected to learn how to use analytical skills to analyze ethical risks and make informed decisions when faced with multiple contexts and conditions that are dynamic and complex in the digital world.

Furthermore, the literature emphasized that the existing moral teaching approach was not effective in fulfilling the changes. Methods that worked in the physical world such as instructive and obedience-based approaches may not be successful in the dual world of physical and virtual reality. The traditional education mode does not teach students critical thinking and problem solving ability to improve their ability to solve complex problems in the digital environment, and it does not give students sufficient space for independent moral judgment and responsible decision making.

As far as moral identity is concerned, the findings of the study showed that the digital identity is beginning to be part of the development of one's moral identity. Learners' digital interactions and decisions every day have an effect on their moral sense of self. Thus, digital moral education is needed to cultivate integrated internal awareness that is capable of guiding digital behaviors based on moral values and principles. In this manner, digital moral education does not just teach rules and become a moral education process in the narrow sense.

The results also showed the algorithms and digital knowledge have a decisive effect on the moral behavior of learners. Algorithms determine the information that learners are exposed to, and so influence their choices, by filtering content and prioritising information. It has become more than ever crucial to instill the critical awareness and develop the skills with respect to digital ethics so that students can better understand how mechanisms in technology affect behavior and act responsibly in digital environments.

Last but by no means least, the results highlighted the need for moving towards new educational methods based on critical consciousness and independent analysis. Digital age moral education needs to be centered on enabling pupils to think morally and to make informed and responsible decisions in a complex and changing digital world and in response to the moral issues it raises.

4.7 Discussion of Findings

The results show that the process of moral education not only involves the dissemination of values and The results indicate that moral education is not just about spreading the values and rule of action, but it is also about comprehensive training for the students to confront the digital space in a conscious and responsible way. The results reveal that the digital transformations have had an impact on the concepts of identity, knowledge and moral behavior.

From the ontological perspective, the world in which today's learners live would be described as a physical space that is intermingled with a digital space, and where many of their encounters and daily life activities happen in a digital world. In this regard, moral education needs to educate learners to be morally responsible in physical life as well as in digital life.

Epistemologically speaking the results show that knowledge in the digital age is fluid, constantly changing and more and more intertwined with digital platforms and algorithmic systems. In this sense, the learner needs to think critically, question and assess information before believing and disseminating it in order to increase his/her independence in the ethical process of decision making.

The study has also found that new ethical challenges have emerged with the digital environments, including misinformation, cyberbullying, digital identity crisis, and privacy violation. The challenges emphasise the importance of fostering a sense of digital responsibility, moral autonomy and empathy in the student, helping them to make informed moral decisions in different digital contexts.

Therefore, the results show that the reconstruction of moral education in the era of digital information is built on an integrated vision

of education which involves the construction of moral knowledge, the development of critical thinking and the promotion of digital responsibility. Such an approach is conducive to developing a digital moral sense that can interact positively and responsibly with the demands of the digital world of today.

4.8 A Critical Foundational Framework for Reconstructing Digital Moral Education

The proposed recommendations model for digital moral education aims to develop lerner's digital ones awareness , so that they can navigate the digital environment consciously and responsibility . the 3 pillars of the framework are philosophical principles educational and mechanisms for implementation .

The philosophical foundations are principles that inform moral education in the digital age: the cultivation of ethical values and virtues; the enhancement of the capacity of learners to make moral decisions independently; and the development of awareness of the impact of technology, data and algorithms on human life and behaviour.

Teaching approaches are based on the following educational principles: critical thinking, digital responsibility, value-based and autonomous ethical decision making, and ethical practice in physical and digital worlds.

For these principles to have the greatest impact, teachers need to be responsible digital users and demonstrate responsible behaviors. Digital ethics issues such as the ethics of AI, digital privacy, and misinformation should be integrated into curricula. Learning activities and learning experiences should also allow for learners to apply ethical reasoning and decision making in real or simulated digital contexts.

The framework also focuses on the importance of developing key skills such as critical thinking, analyzing digital information, the ability to differentiate between accurate information and misinformation, responsibility, respect for others and digital citizenship. These skills help to build a digital moral identity that is based on awareness, responsibility, autonomy, empathy, and respect for human dignity and digital rights.

The proposed framework aims to develop learners with the moral understanding needed to support them to respond to digital challenges positively and responsibly, and be active, safe, and aware citizens of digital society through these components.

4.9 Conclusion and Recommendations

The study revealed that moral education is not just about controlling what people do, but also involves the ability to think fully about digital data, algorithms and virtual platforms, the ability to analyse and make highly independent decisions. The results also showed that the conventional methods of teaching and disobeying morals are no longer effective and that Digital moral identity is a major part of today's self-development.

The study emphasises the need to reconstruct the digital moral education in the integrated foundations of the philosophy and education, namely the foundations of virtue ethics of Aristotle, deontological ethics of Kant, and philosophy of information of Floridi. They must be supported by the development of critical awareness, autonomy and digital responsibility, as well as practical aspects like teacher roles and functions, curriculum construction and digital learning environment, and competencies.

Practical Recommendations

1. **Develop digital educational programs** that incorporate topics such as artificial intelligence ethics, digital misinformation, and the rights and responsibilities of digital learners, accompanied by virtual activities that simulate real-life situations.
2. **Prepare and train teachers** to serve as facilitators of critical thinking and ethical analysis by equipping them with appropriate tools, resources, and instructional strategies.

3. **Establish safe and interactive digital environments** that allow learners to practice ethical decision-making and explore virtual scenarios while ensuring the protection of privacy and personal data.
4. **Integrate digital moral education into formal curricula** through progressively structured activities and conduct regular evaluations of their impact to ensure sustainable and meaningful outcomes.

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