

Plato's philosophy in education

Plato's Philosophy

- A. Every individual should devote his life to what is best fitted for him to do.
 - B. The important function of education is to determine what every individual is by nature capable and fitted of doing things.
 - C. Poor leadership will lead to wrong decision.
 - D. Social justice is giving what is due to whom it is due.
- Plato's Philosophy
- E. The physical objects are not permanent representations of unchanging ideas alone give true knowledge as they are known by mind.
 - F. Intellectual aristocracy is the rule of intellectual elite.
 - G. An individual who should be endowed with superior intelligence and possessed impeccable integrity.

INTRODUCTION

LIFE SKETCH OF PLATO

Plato was born in Athens in 427 B.C in a wealthy and influential family.

Plato began his philosophical career as a student of Socrates. When the master died, Plato travelled to Egypt and Italy, studied with students of Pythagoras, and spent several years advising the ruling family of Syracuse. Eventually, he returned to Athens and established his own school of philosophy at the Academy.

About 387 BC, Plato founded a school in Athens, in a grove sacred to the demigod Academus, called the Academy (which is where we get the word academics from today).

THE WORKS RELATED TO EDUCATION

Republic is a dialogue which discusses the education necessary to produce such a society.

It is an education of a strange sort – he called it paideia.

Nearly impossible to translate into modern idiom, paideia refers to the process whereby the physical, mental and spiritual development of the individual is of paramount importance.

It is the education of the total individual.

He discusses early education mainly in the Republic, written about 385 B.C.E., and in the Laws, his last work, on which he was still at work at the end of his life.

PLATO'S EPISTEMOLOGY

He distinguished between the reality presented to us by our senses sight, touch, taste, sound and smell and the essence or Form of that reality.

In other words, reality is always changing – knowledge of reality is individual, it is particular, it is knowledge only to the individual knower, it is not universal.

There are 3 sources of knowledge:

Knowledge obtained from senses i.e. knowledge of objects , colours, taste, touch etc. But Plato does not consider this as real knowledge.

An opinion regarding any object , but this knowledge cannot be relied upon as the views of every person differs regarding the same object.

Knowledge through mind or wisdom – it is the highest degree of knowledge which includes virtues like truth , goodness and beauty.

This knowledge is idealistic and is based on original thinking.

The characteristic of knowledge is that it is found in the form of universal truth.

The highest goal of education, Plato believed, is the knowledge of Good; to nurture a man to a better human being, it is not merely an awareness of particular benefits and pleasures.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Children enter school at six where they first learn the three Rs (reading, writing and counting) and then engage with music and sports.

THEORY OF PLATO'S IDEA

- Plato's primary philosophy is "Theory of Idea". It was intuition answer of specific question "What is truly real?".
- To answer the question, Plato made synthesis between Heraclitus Becoming and Parmenidean Being--to integrate them a new the dualistic synthesis of being and becoming. The synthesis was; there are particular idea (always change and nothing at rest) and Universal idea (full, complete, immortal and independent existence)-- required by The Ideas.

Plato's Idea is immortal or eternal.

To understand it, we need general word, e.g. "This is a cat". What do we mean by "cat?". In perception, the syllable is opinion (sensory). Obviously something different from each particular cat. Logically, Language cannot get on without general words such as "cat", and clear—the words are not evidently something which is not this or that cat, but some kind of "Universal Cattyness (knowledge)". The Cattyness has not position in space or time, it is eternal.

In the metaphysical meaning, "The Cat" means certain ideal (Ideal Cat) has created by God.

The particular cat can partake the nature of cat, but imperfectly, the imperfection that there can be many of them.

The cat is real, particular cat only apparent.

In the area of epistemology,

Plato distinguished two basic approaches: "Sense and Intellect".

Sense perception concerned in changing, relative, and particular object, which appear in different way.

He concluded that sensation only fallible opinion and can't be real knowledge. Intellect concerned in absolute, immortal, independent and universal object can only be understanding.

Understanding the highest universal object is the highest kind of knowledge, and perception of the lowest particular object is the lowest kind of opinion.

In area of metaphysical,

Plato distinguished two radically different entities; reality and phenomena.

Understanding knows reality, sense perception grasp phenomena.

The validity of true knowledge requires intelligible realities or ideas to which universal concept objectively refer.

The phenomenal object of the senses are real and rational in so far as they participate in the fully real and truly intelligible idea.

In the area of ethic,

Plato distinguished duality; "Ideal value and phenomenal value"

Plato's speculative find their practical application and extension in his theory of individual and social values.

The more One strive's to make his conduct participate in ethical Ideas; The more he actualizes in his own life real values such as justice and courage.

The more he pursues the irrational passions of the appetitive parts of the soul, bodily pleasures, and riches; the more his life is unreal and untrue.

Method:

- Empirical starting-Point: Beginning from definite situation or sense observation of particular fact to see reality (sense perception / opinion).
- Conversion; from sensible to intelligible. Dissatisfied with shadowy sense particular to higher realities only by intellectual and moral conversion (purification).

- Hypothesis: to transcend and explain sense phenomena to higher realities. He focused in mathematic—by deduction to demonstrate the truth to be valid-with the real object of his thought.
- Myth: Urged on by Eros (love) toward the true and good, Plato found in myth an intelligible that very mysterious in human being, so human must focus to morally responsible for conduct, thereby strongly motivating him to lead good life.
- Dialectic: still drawn by Eros toward a vision of the most sublime intelligible realities, conversion, hypothesis and intuitive power of myth. Its mean dialectic method.

TEACHING METHODS

Plato recommended play method at elementary level; student should learn by doing.

And when he/she reaches the higher level of education, his reason would be trained in the processes of thinking and abstracting.

Plato wanted motivation and interest in learning.

He was against the use of force in education.

"Knowledge which is acquired under compulsion obtains no hold on the mind."
According to Plato "Do not then train youths by force and harshness, but direct them to it by what amuses their minds so that you may be better able to discover with accuracy the peculiar bent of the genius of each."

TEACHING METHODS

Plato wanted a place where children love to go and stay there and they play with things which enhance their education by playing.

Plato gave importance to nursery education, as nursery education plays a vital role in the education of man and it helps to build his moral character and state of mind
"The most important part of education is proper training in the nursery."

ROLE OF THE TEACHER

- The educator is considered to have greatest importance.
 - He is like torch bearer who leads a man lying in the dark cave, out of the darkness into the bright light of the outside world.
 - The teacher is thus the constant guide of the students.
 - The teacher must be a person of high integrity and must possess high self-worth.
 - He must have pleasing personality, in depth knowledge and professional training.
 - He should be deeply committed to his profession, have high sense of responsibility and a true role model.
- Teachers should lead a true moral life. They should practice what they preach.

PLATO'S CONTRIBUTION TO EDUCATION

For Plato, education is a matter of leading a person from mere belief to true knowledge.

This education is of primary importance in the case of those who are to be statesmen, and leaders.

Plato's educational theories have the practical aim of training for citizenship and leadership; his chief interest is education for character.

An important maxim proposed by Plato is, "The quality of the State depends on the kind of education that the members (groups) of the state receive" and so again he would be in favor of the American federal government promoting the various states adoption of the common core standards Plato followed the question-answer method employed by Socrates, especially at the advanced levels of education.

By using penetrating questions, the teacher can go beneath the surface of the things which the sense perceive and arrive at a purely intellectual understanding of the essence behind the objects of sense.

The good teacher must become a dialectician who does not permit students to accept the appearances of things, but makes them use the eyes of the soul to perceive their real meaning.

The teacher thus brings out the truth which is in the mind of the student, taking him out of the realm of sense experience.

This dialectical method forces the student to leave the realm of sense knowledge with practical applications to life and soar to the heights of pure reason.
In a nutshell,

Plato's polis (state) is essentially an educational community.

It is created by education.

It can survive only on condition that all its citizens receive an education that enables them to make rational political decisions.

It is up to education to preserve the state intact and to defend it against all harmful innovations.

The aim of education is not personal growth but service of the state, which is the guarantor of the happiness of its citizens for as long as they allow it to be the embodiment of justice.

Education must be compulsory for all.

THANK YOU