

Research Article

The Relevance of Plato's Educational Philosophy to the Management of Secondary Education in Kogi State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examines the relevance of Plato's educational philosophy to transforming secondary education in Kogi State, Nigeria, through a philosophical review. The study used a qualitative conceptual analysis method, drawing on secondary sources including Plato's original philosophical works, scholarly interpretations of his educational ideas, literature on Nigerian secondary education, curriculum documents, and policy reports on educational development. The review employed thematic analysis to examine key dimensions of Plato's educational thought, particularly the relationship between intellectual development, moral education, citizenship formation, and the pursuit of the common good, and explored their implications for contemporary secondary education management. The study reveals that several challenges affecting secondary education in Kogi State, including poor academic outcomes, declining ethical values, social disengagement, limited employability skills, and weak community integration, can be addressed through an education model that balances academic achievement with character formation. The findings demonstrate that Plato's emphasis on holistic education provides a useful philosophical foundation for curriculum improvement, teacher professional development, student-centred learning, and moral education. The study contributes to educational philosophy and policy discourse by providing a framework for integrating classical philosophical principles into contemporary Nigerian secondary education practices. It concludes that adapting Plato's educational ideas can support the development of academically competent, morally responsible, and socially committed citizens. The study recommends curriculum reform, stronger teacher preparation, and increased community

involvement to align secondary education in Kogi State with Plato's educational vision.

Keywords: Plato's philosophical framework; Moral development of students; Just and responsible society; Secondary education management; Academic performance

INTRODUCTION

The relationship between philosophy and education has remained central in educational thought because philosophical perspectives provide the foundations for educational aims, curriculum content, teaching approaches, and societal expectations. Educational philosophy examines fundamental questions concerning the purpose of education, the nature of knowledge, the development of human character, and the relationship between individuals and society. Throughout history, philosophers have contributed different perspectives on how education should shape human capabilities and social organisation. Among these philosophers, Plato remains one of the most influential because he argues that education serves a dual purpose: developing intellectual capacity and cultivating the moral virtues necessary for the well-being of the State.

Plato's educational ideas, particularly those presented in *The Republic* and *Laws*, position education as a fundamental instrument for creating a just society. For Plato, education was not merely the transmission of information or acquisition of occupational skills; rather, it was a lifelong process aimed at transforming the individual's character, directing the soul towards knowledge of the Good, and preparing citizens to perform their appropriate roles within society (Rahman, 2023). He viewed education as essential for achieving harmony between individual development and the stability of the State because citizens' knowledge, values, and behaviours determine the quality of social and political life (Staunæs et al., 2016). Consequently, Plato's educational philosophy links personal development with civic responsibility, suggesting that a society's progress depends on the intellectual and moral quality of its citizens.

A central feature of Plato's educational philosophy is philosophical idealism, which holds that genuine knowledge extends beyond sensory experiences and requires intellectual inquiry into universal truths. In *The Republic*, Plato argues that education should guide individuals from incomplete perceptions of reality towards rational understanding through disciplined intellectual training, including mathematics, reasoning, and dialectical inquiry (Joyal, 2016).

Implications of Plato's Educational Philosophy for Nigerian Education

Scholars have examined the relevance of Plato's educational philosophy to Nigerian education in relation to moral development, citizenship formation, vocational orientation, and educational guidance. Although Plato's ideas emerged in ancient Greek society, their emphasis on character formation, purposeful education, and aligning individual abilities with societal needs offers philosophical perspectives that remain relevant to contemporary educational discussions in Nigeria.

Ukolor (2022) examined the implications of Plato's educational philosophy for addressing challenges within the Nigerian education system, particularly security concerns and the need for vocational education. The study highlights Plato's argument that education should cultivate virtue, discipline, and civic responsibility rather than focus exclusively on intellectual achievement. From this perspective, Nigerian education can benefit from greater emphasis on moral education and value formation to develop individuals who demonstrate social responsibility, ethical judgement, and commitment to community development. However, applying Plato's ideas requires adapting them to Nigeria's diverse social, economic, and cultural realities rather than directly replicating his educational model.

Similarly, Sanni and Momoh (2019) explored the relevance of Greek educational traditions, including Plato's educational thought, to counselling practices within Nigerian education. Their discussion reflects Plato's argument that education should recognise individual abilities and direct learners toward roles that match their natural capacities. This principle has implications for career guidance and counselling in Nigeria, where improved identification of students' interests, talents, and competencies can support more appropriate educational and career choices. Aligning students' abilities with available opportunities may contribute to a more effective education system that supports both individual fulfilment and societal development.

Therefore, Plato's educational philosophy offers useful conceptual foundations for strengthening Nigerian education by placing greater emphasis on character development, learner-centred education, vocational orientation, and citizenship education. Nevertheless, its application requires critical adaptation to contemporary Nigerian educational policies, institutional structures, and social conditions.

Educational Challenges and the Relevance of Plato's Philosophy in Kogi State, Nigeria

Kogi State's secondary education system faces challenges associated with socioeconomic inequalities, uneven distribution of educational resources, and persistent poverty. Evidence suggests disparities in educational infrastructure and learning facilities between urban and rural communities, with rural schools often experiencing greater resource constraints (Sadiq, Balogun, & Anjorin, 2016). Such inequalities limit students' access to quality learning environments and create differences in educational opportunities. In addition, poverty remains a significant barrier to educational participation and achievement, as limited household resources can affect school attendance, learning support, and students' long-term educational progression (Jibo, 2019). These challenges highlight the need for an educational philosophy that promotes equitable development, character formation, and preparing individuals to contribute positively to society. In this regard, Plato's emphasis on purposeful education, moral development, and aligning individual abilities with societal needs offers a relevant philosophical perspective for examining approaches to improving secondary education management in Kogi State.

Comparative Educational Challenges in Kogi State and Other Nigerian States

Educational challenges in Kogi State reflect broader issues affecting secondary education across Nigeria, including inadequate funding, limited infrastructure, teacher-related challenges, weak

instructional support, and poor learning outcomes. Similar conditions have been reported in other states, demonstrating that many educational difficulties are systemic rather than unique to Kogi State.

Inadequate funding remains a major challenge, contributing to poor school infrastructure, limited learning resources, and difficulties in maintaining effective teaching environments (Nwafor, Uchendu, & Akani, 2015). Comparable challenges have been observed in states such as Taraba, where inadequate learning facilities have been associated with reduced educational outcomes (Oruonye, 2014). Furthermore, shortages of qualified teachers, insufficient instructional materials, and gaps in teacher competence continue to affect the quality of secondary education in Nigeria (Suleiman et al., 2020; Ifeoma, Ezechimere, & Ebio, 2021). These challenges contribute to weak academic performance and limited achievement among secondary school students.

Practical Challenges in Applying Plato's Educational Philosophy in Kogi State

Although Plato's emphasis on moral education, intellectual development, and civic responsibility offers useful philosophical insights, applying it in Kogi State's secondary education system faces several practical limitations.

First, integrating the curriculum remains a challenge. Plato's focus on character formation and virtue education requires a clearly defined value framework and effective strategies for teaching ethical reasoning. However, value education in Nigeria has been affected by unclear value priorities, limited attention to indigenous values, and inadequate teacher preparation (Ekeh, 2019). Therefore, applying Plato's ideas requires adaptation to Nigerian cultural and educational realities.

Second, successful implementation depends on teacher capacity. Plato's emphasis on dialogue, questioning, and critical reflection requires teachers with strong pedagogical knowledge and the ability to facilitate ethical discussions. Concerns about teacher preparation and instructional competence in Nigerian secondary schools represent a significant barrier to adopting such approaches (Suleiman et al., 2020; Ifeoma et al., 2021).

Third, resource constraints may limit implementation. Effective philosophical inquiry and learner-centred approaches require supportive learning environments, adequate instructional materials, and manageable classroom conditions. Persistent challenges related to funding and infrastructure may limit how long such educational practices can be sustained (Nwafor et al., 2015).

Finally, cultural and philosophical considerations require attention. Introducing Plato's ideas into Nigerian education requires careful engagement with indigenous educational values and African philosophies of education. While Plato's concepts of justice, virtue, and responsible citizenship have universal relevance, their application should complement rather than replace indigenous knowledge systems and local perspectives on education (Mutekwe, 2015). Thus, the relevance of Plato's philosophy in Kogi State depends on its critical adaptation to the social, cultural, and institutional context of Nigerian education.

Relevance of Plato's Educational Philosophy to Secondary Education Management in Kogi State

Plato's educational philosophy provides a useful conceptual framework for examining how secondary education in Kogi State can promote intellectual development, moral formation, and responsible citizenship. Although Plato's educational ideas emerged in ancient Greek society, their emphasis on purposeful education, character development, and the link between individual potential and societal well-being remains relevant to contemporary educational discourse. In Kogi State, Plato's ideas can inform educational practices aimed at improving curriculum development, teacher preparation, learner development, and community participation.

First, curriculum development can benefit from Plato's emphasis on moral education, critical inquiry, and the pursuit of knowledge beyond mere academic achievement. A curriculum informed by these principles would promote not only cognitive competence but also ethical reasoning, civic responsibility, and the development of values necessary for responsible participation in society. This approach aligns with Plato's view that education should help form virtuous individuals capable of supporting a just society (Lee, 1994).

Second, teacher development is central to applying Plato's educational principles. Plato regarded educators as important agents in shaping intellectual and moral growth. Therefore, professional development programmes that strengthen teachers' abilities in reflective teaching, critical questioning, ethical reasoning, and learner guidance could support students' intellectual and moral development. This reflects the Socratic tradition of dialogue, where teachers facilitate inquiry and encourage students to develop independent reasoning (Presbey, 2002).

Third, Plato's recognition of individual abilities has implications for learner-centred education. His argument that individuals possess different natural capacities suggests the importance of identifying students' talents, interests, and abilities and providing educational pathways that support their development. In Kogi State, strengthening guidance and counselling services and adopting differentiated learning approaches may improve students' educational experiences and future career decisions.

Fourth, community engagement is consistent with Plato's view that education serves both individual and social purposes. Collaboration among schools, families, and communities can strengthen civic values and encourage collective responsibility for educational development. Such partnerships may help create learning environments that support students' academic achievement and character formation.

The broader relevance of Plato's philosophy lies in its emphasis on education as a means of achieving human flourishing (*eudaimonia*) through integrating intellectual, moral, and civic development (Cottingham, 1998; Rahman, 2023). *Paideia* further reinforces the idea that education involves cultivating the whole person rather than acquiring knowledge alone

(Moutsios, 2014). From this perspective, secondary education should prepare students not only for employment but also for responsible participation in society.

However, adapting Plato's philosophy to Kogi State requires critical consideration of Nigeria's socio-cultural, economic, and educational realities. Existing scholarship has examined Plato's educational ideas in relation to moral education, citizenship, and educational development (Okebukola, 1999; Nussbaum, 2002; Biesta, 2015), but it has given limited attention to how these principles can inform the management of secondary education in the specific context of Kogi State. In particular, further research is needed to examine how Platonic ideas on character education, teacher roles, learner development, and educational leadership can help improve quality, equity, and effectiveness in secondary education management.

Therefore, this study addresses this gap by exploring the relevance of Plato's educational philosophy for secondary education management in Kogi State, with an emphasis on how philosophical principles can be adapted to contemporary educational challenges and reform efforts.

Statement of the Problem

The secondary education system in Kogi State faces persistent challenges, including inadequate infrastructure, limited access to learning resources, weak instructional support, and difficulties in aligning educational outcomes with societal and workforce needs. These challenges affect students' academic development, skills acquisition, character formation, and preparedness for meaningful participation in society. Although several educational reforms have been introduced to address these concerns, limited attention has focused on the role of philosophical foundations in shaping the aims, values, and management practices of secondary education.

Existing educational research has examined the relationship between educational philosophy, policy development, and institutional practices; however, limited studies have specifically explored how Plato's educational philosophy can inform the management and improvement of secondary education in Kogi State. In particular, insufficient attention has been paid to the relevance of Plato's principles of moral education, intellectual development, learner potential, and civic responsibility within the socio-cultural and institutional context of Kogi State.

This gap creates the need to examine how Plato's educational ideas can contribute to contemporary secondary education management by providing insights into curriculum development, teacher preparation, learner-centred approaches, and citizenship education. Therefore, this study examines the relevance of Plato's educational philosophy to secondary education management in Kogi State and proposes ways philosophical perspectives can support educational practices that promote academic achievement, ethical development, and responsible citizenship.

Analytical Framework for the Role of Plato's Philosophy in Managing Secondary Education in Kogi State, Nigeria

A systematic analytical framework for examining the relevance of Plato's educational philosophy to secondary education management in Kogi State can be structured around the following dimensions:

1. **Philosophical Foundations:** The framework begins by analysing key Platonic concepts, including justice, virtue, knowledge, and moral education, and examining their relevance to contemporary educational goals and challenges.
2. **Curriculum Development:** It considers how Plato's emphasis on intellectual development and moral formation can inform curriculum approaches that promote critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and the holistic development of learners.
3. **Teacher Development:** The framework examines the role of teachers as facilitators of intellectual and moral growth and emphasises the need for professional development that strengthens reflective teaching, ethical awareness, and learner guidance.
4. **Community Engagement:** It explores the relationship between education and society by considering how collaboration among schools, families, and communities can support civic responsibility and the pursuit of the common good.
5. **Assessment and Evaluation:** The framework extends educational evaluation beyond academic achievement by considering broader indicators of learner development, including ethical awareness, social responsibility, and citizenship values.
6. **Policy and Governance:** It examines how philosophical principles related to justice, equity, and responsible leadership can inform educational policies and management practices within secondary education.
7. **Continuous Review and Adaptation:** The framework promotes ongoing reflection and evaluation of educational practices to ensure that philosophical principles remain relevant to changing social, cultural, and educational contexts.

Overall, the framework positions Plato's educational philosophy as a conceptual lens for understanding and improving secondary education management. It supports an educational environment that develops students' intellectual abilities, moral character, and capacity for responsible participation in society.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The philosophical foundations of education significantly influence the objectives, values, and management approaches adopted within educational systems. This literature review examines the relationship between Plato's educational philosophy and its implications for secondary education management in Kogi State, Nigeria. Plato's major works, particularly *The Republic* and *Laws*, present education as a process that extends beyond knowledge acquisition to include intellectual development, moral formation, and preparation for responsible citizenship. These ideas provide a philosophical basis for examining contemporary educational concerns related to academic achievement, ethical development, and social responsibility.

Despite increasing recognition of the importance of philosophical perspectives in educational administration, limited attention has been given to how Plato's educational principles can be interpreted and applied within the specific socio-cultural and institutional context of Kogi State. Therefore, this review examines existing literature on educational philosophy, educational

management theories, Plato's educational concepts, and the challenges affecting secondary education in Kogi State. It focuses particularly on how Platonic principles of justice, virtue, knowledge, and civic responsibility can contribute to discussions on curriculum development, teacher development, learner formation, and educational reform. The review provides the conceptual foundation for investigating the relevance of Plato's philosophy in improving secondary education management and promoting the development of academically capable and socially responsible citizens.

Integration of Plato's Educational Philosophy into Contemporary Educational Frameworks

This section examines the relevance of Plato's educational philosophy to contemporary education, focusing on curriculum development, pedagogical approaches, moral education, and citizenship formation. Plato's ideas, particularly those developed in *The Republic* and *Laws*, present education as a process aimed at developing knowledge, virtue, and responsible participation in society. Rather than viewing education as the simple transmission of information, Plato regarded it as a means of shaping intellectual abilities, moral character, and civic responsibility.

Plato's Educational Philosophy and Its Relevance to Modern Education

Plato's educational philosophy integrates epistemological, ethical, and social dimensions of learning. His emphasis on rational inquiry, virtue development, and the pursuit of truth provides a foundation for examining education's broader purposes beyond academic achievement. Contemporary scholars have continued to explore the relevance of Platonic ideas, particularly his emphasis on critical reasoning, dialogue, and moral development. These principles align with modern educational approaches that encourage reflective learning, independent thinking, and ethical decision-making (Kockelmans, 2019; Kahn & Pavlides, 2021).

In the Nigerian educational context, Plato's emphasis on intellectual and moral development offers a useful perspective for addressing concerns about learner engagement, ethical behaviour, and citizenship education. Ukulor (2022) argues that incorporating values such as justice, wisdom, and temperance into educational practice can support the development of responsible learners and future leaders. Therefore, Plato's philosophy offers a conceptual basis for considering education as a process that develops both competence and character.

Integration of Plato's Ideas into Educational Practice

The application of Platonic principles in contemporary education can be reflected through approaches that promote critical thinking, dialogue, and reflective inquiry. Plato's dialectical method emphasises learning through questioning, reasoning, and examination of ideas. This approach remains relevant to modern classrooms because it encourages students to move beyond memorisation towards deeper understanding and analytical thinking (Moravcsik, 2006).

In Nigerian secondary education, adapting Plato's educational principles may support learner-centred practices that encourage active participation, ethical reasoning, and civic awareness. Sanni and Momoh (2019) emphasise the importance of philosophical education in developing

students' capacity for responsible decision-making and social engagement. However, such integration requires adaptation to Nigeria's educational objectives, cultural context, and institutional realities.

Plato's Influence on Character Development and Moral Education

A central feature of Plato's educational thought is the development of moral character. His concept of *eudaimonia*, often interpreted as human flourishing or the good life, is achieved by cultivating virtues such as wisdom, courage, and justice. This perspective highlights the importance of education in shaping individuals who can make ethical decisions and contribute positively to society (Annas, 2017).

In the context of Nigerian secondary education, Plato's emphasis on moral development provides a framework for strengthening character education and citizenship formation. Integrating ethical reasoning and value education into school practices may support students' awareness of social responsibilities and encourage responsible participation in their communities. Akintoye (2019) suggests that philosophical approaches to education can strengthen moral development in Nigerian schools.

Plato's Philosophy and the Development of a Just and Responsible Society

Plato's educational philosophy is closely connected to his conception of justice. In *The Republic*, Plato argues that a just society depends on individuals developing their abilities and contributing appropriately to the collective good (Plato, 380 BCE/2003). Education therefore serves as a mechanism for identifying abilities, developing competence, and preparing individuals for responsible social participation.

Applied to contemporary Nigerian education, this perspective emphasises schools' role in promoting fairness, social responsibility, and civic awareness. Education that incorporates principles of justice and ethical responsibility may help develop citizens who understand their obligations to society and participate constructively in democratic life (Olaitan, 2021). Consequently, Plato's philosophy provides a valuable theoretical lens for examining how secondary education can balance academic development with moral and civic formation.

Plato's Concept of Justice, Virtue, and Educational Development

Plato's concept of justice, particularly as developed in *The Republic*, provides an important foundation for understanding the relationship between education, individual development, and social order. Plato argued that a just society is achieved when individuals develop their abilities and contribute meaningfully to the common good according to their capacities (Plato, 380 BCE/2003). Within this framework, education serves a central role by shaping individuals' intellectual abilities, moral character, and understanding of their responsibilities within society (Annas, 2017).

For Plato, education is not limited to acquiring knowledge; rather, it involves cultivating wisdom, self-discipline, courage, and justice. Education therefore aims to develop individuals capable of making rational and ethical decisions and contributing positively to social wellbeing. This

perspective remains relevant to contemporary education because it emphasises the connection between academic development and the formation of responsible citizens.

Justice and Academic Development

Plato's ideas on justice provide a framework for examining educational practices that recognise individual abilities and promote meaningful learning. Plato rejected the view that education should involve only the passive reproduction of information; instead, he emphasised reasoning, inquiry, and the development of intellectual virtues. From this perspective, education should encourage students to understand, analyse, and apply knowledge rather than memorise content.

In secondary education, particularly within the Nigerian context, principles derived from Plato's educational philosophy may support approaches that promote critical thinking, learner engagement, and intellectual development. Ukulor (2022) argues that integrating moral and intellectual virtues into education can encourage students to develop problem-solving abilities, responsible decision-making skills, and stronger commitment to learning.

Justice, Moral Development, and Character Formation

A significant contribution of Plato's educational philosophy is the connection between justice and moral development. Plato viewed justice as a harmony between different aspects of human nature, where reason guides desires and emotions towards virtuous action (Plato, 380 BCE/2003). Education therefore becomes a process of developing individuals who possess both knowledge and the moral capacity to use that knowledge responsibly.

In Nigerian secondary education, incorporating principles such as fairness, integrity, responsibility, and respect for others may strengthen character education and citizenship development. Akintoye (2019) suggests that Plato's emphasis on virtue provides useful insights for developing educational approaches that address ethical concerns among students and promote responsible social behaviour.

Virtue, Education, and the Development of Responsible Citizens

Plato's educational philosophy centres on developing virtuous individuals capable of contributing to a just society. His concept of *eudaimonia*, or human flourishing, reflects the idea that education aims to cultivate intellectual and moral excellence by developing virtues such as wisdom, courage, moderation, and justice. Education, therefore, prepares individuals not only for personal achievement but also for responsible participation in society (Annas, 2017).

The concept of *paideia* further reinforces this holistic understanding of education by emphasising the development of the whole person, including intellectual, ethical, and civic capacities. This perspective aligns with contemporary educational approaches that recognise the importance of combining academic achievement with character formation and social responsibility.

Plato's Justice as a Foundation for a Responsible Society

Plato's philosophy links education with the development of a just and responsible society. His argument that leaders and citizens require intellectual and moral preparation highlights the

importance of education in developing individuals capable of contributing to effective governance and social stability. In contemporary contexts, this principle suggests that schools should support learners who develop critical awareness, ethical judgement, and a commitment to the common good.

For secondary education in Kogi State, Plato's ideas provide a philosophical lens for examining how curriculum development, teacher preparation, and school management can promote both academic excellence and responsible citizenship. However, applying these principles requires careful adaptation to Nigeria's cultural, economic, and educational realities. Plato's philosophy should therefore be viewed not as a direct educational model but as a theoretical framework for strengthening discussions on justice, virtue, and the broader purposes of education.

Empirical Studies on the Integration of Plato's Educational Ideas into Contemporary Education

Direct empirical studies examining the implementation of Plato's educational philosophy within contemporary education systems remain limited. However, existing empirical research on related educational practices, particularly Socratic dialogue, ethical education, critical inquiry, and civic education, provides evidence supporting several principles associated with Platonic thought. These studies suggest that educational approaches emphasising reasoning, moral reflection, and intellectual development can improve learning experiences, ethical awareness, and responsible citizenship.

Moral Development and Social Responsibility

Plato viewed education as a process of developing both intellectual ability and moral character. Empirical studies on ethics-based educational interventions provide support for the relevance of this perspective. Seider, Novick, and Gomez (2013), for example, found that ethical philosophy programmes were associated with improved academic integrity among adolescents, suggesting that philosophical engagement can influence students' moral awareness and behavioural choices.

Similarly, research on civic and philosophical dialogue indicates that reflective discussion can strengthen students' understanding of social issues and their capacity for responsible participation. Hussien, Mokhtar, and Hashim (2020) found that Socratic approaches in civic education encouraged students to engage critically with societal issues and develop civic awareness. These findings are consistent with Plato's view that education should prepare individuals for responsible participation in society.

Studies examining perceptions of fairness within schools also demonstrate the importance of justice-oriented educational environments. Research by Resh and Sabbagh (2017) and Główczewski and Burdziej (2022) indicates that students' experiences of fairness and justice within schools are associated with their attitudes towards authority and civic behaviour. Although these studies do not directly examine Plato's theory of justice, they reflect the broader Platonic principle that justice within institutions influences social relationships and individual conduct.

Academic Performance and Critical Thinking

Empirical evidence on Socratic dialogue indirectly supports Plato's emphasis on reasoning and inquiry as essential components of education. Studies have shown that Socratic questioning can promote critical thinking, metacognitive awareness, and higher-order cognitive skills such as analysis and evaluation (Davies & Sinclair, 2012; Shahsavar, 2013; Fakour & Imani, 2025). These abilities are foundational to deeper learning and academic engagement.

Research further suggests that philosophical dialogue encourages students to move beyond memorisation towards interpretation, reasoning, and problem-solving. Fakour and Imani (2025) reported that Socratic approaches support students' reasoning abilities by encouraging active engagement with ideas and arguments. However, while these studies demonstrate improvements in cognitive skills, direct evidence linking Platonic educational approaches to measurable academic achievement outcomes remains limited.

Justice, Virtue, and Educational Development

Plato's concepts of justice and virtue emphasise the relationship between personal development and the wellbeing of society. Contemporary research suggests that educational approaches grounded in ethical reasoning and philosophical inquiry can help develop students' capacity for responsible decision-making. Studies examining philosophical education, character development, and civic learning indicate that such approaches may support the formation of ethical dispositions and socially responsible behaviour.

Although empirical research directly testing Plato's concept of justice in modern educational systems is scarce, available evidence supports key elements of his philosophy, particularly the importance of intellectual development, moral reasoning, fairness, and civic responsibility. Therefore, Plato's educational ideas should be understood as a philosophical framework that informs educational practices rather than as a tested intervention model.

Research Gap

Despite existing evidence on related educational practices, limited empirical research has examined how Plato's principles of justice, virtue, and education can be adapted to manage secondary education within specific socio-cultural contexts such as Kogi State, Nigeria. Further investigation is therefore required to explore how Platonic principles may inform curriculum development, teacher preparation, school governance, and learner development within contemporary Nigerian secondary education.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the relevance of Plato's educational philosophy to governing and managing secondary education in Kogi State, Nigeria. The findings suggest that selected Platonic principles, particularly those on intellectual development, moral education, justice, and the cultivation of virtuous citizenship, offer useful philosophical perspectives for addressing contemporary educational challenges. Plato's emphasis on developing both knowledge and character highlights education's role in preparing individuals for personal responsibility and meaningful participation in society.

The study further indicates that aspects of Plato's philosophy can inform educational practices in areas such as teacher preparation, curriculum development, learner-centered approaches, and school governance. By incorporating appropriate elements of moral and civic education alongside academic development, secondary education can help form responsible, ethical, and socially engaged citizens.

However, applying Platonic ideas requires careful adaptation to the socio-cultural, economic, and institutional realities of Kogi State and Nigeria. Therefore, Plato's philosophy should be viewed as a conceptual framework that can guide educational reform efforts rather than as a complete solution to existing educational challenges. Integrating relevant Platonic principles into secondary education management may provide valuable direction for improving educational quality, strengthening character development, and promoting responsible citizenship within Kogi State and the wider Nigerian educational system.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on this study's conclusions, the researchers offer several recommendations to improve secondary education management in Kogi State, Nigeria, drawing on Plato's principles.

1. The Kogi State Ministry of Education, in collaboration with relevant education stakeholders, should integrate principles of moral education, critical thinking, and civic responsibility into secondary school curricula. Such integration should be adapted to the Nigerian socio-cultural context and should aim to complement academic development with character formation, ethical reasoning, and responsible citizenship among students.
2. Teacher education institutions and professional development agencies should strengthen teacher preparation programmes by incorporating philosophical approaches that promote reflective teaching, ethical awareness, and learner-centered practices. Equipping teachers with the knowledge and skills to support both intellectual and moral development will strengthen their capacity to implement educational practices aligned with the broader goals of developing responsible, socially engaged learners.

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