

Explain plato's theory of justice. How he tries to implement it through the education system  
CSS (2001)- (2006)

## Introduction

"The object of education is to turn the soul towards the light, not to put knowledge into it but to direct it rightly"

(The Republic, Book VII)

Plato (427 - 347 BCE) was a Greek philosopher, a student of Socrates and the teacher of Aristotle. He founded the Academy in Athens, one of the earliest institutions of higher learning. His philosophy deeply influenced western thought, especially in politics, ethics and justice. One of his most famous works, "The Republic", presents his vision of the ideal state and the concept of justice. To implement this ideal of justice in society, Plato proposed a carefully designed education system. This system aimed to cultivate individual's natural abilities, ensure the proper division of classes and create philosopher kings. According to scholar Barker, Plato saw education as a kind of mental medicine that could cure

many social problems. plato believes that many evils in the society comes from ignorance and can be solved through proper education

## Plato's Education

### System Education Methods:

relate your headings and arguments to the qs statement.

During the time of plato, education system was entirely reverse trend they were Athenian and spartan types. In Athens, education was mostly in private hands, and it was the responsibility of parents to educate their children in whatever way

they thought best. In contrast, the Spartan system was controlled by the state. Parents handed over their children to the state at <sup>the</sup> age of four and state officials, called perfects, were responsible for their education, parents had little to no involvement after that. The state provide education according to its specific needs and condition.

Plato's education system, however, was designed both to promote social welfare and to help individuals understand the true nature of reality.

## Features of Platonic System of Education.

- (1) Plato emphasized that education must be openly communicated to everyone, because justice demands that all citizens understand their role and duties in the state.
- (2) He believed education is a positive tool to mould the character of individuals as justice in Plato's view requires citizens to develop virtues necessary for fulfilling their proper functions.
- (3) Plato rejected the idea of keeping education in private hands and insisted it should be under state control, since justice can only prevail when education is fair, standardized, and directed towards common good rather than personal interests.
- (4) He stressed that education should be compulsory for all citizens, because justice means ensuring that every individual, regardless of background receives the necessary training to contribute to the harmony of the state.

(5) Plato argued that women should be given same education as men, as Justice requires that individuals be treated equally according to their natural abilities, not their gender.

(6) He proposed that education should be extended to artisans and peasants as well, since Justice demands that every class of society be trained properly to perform its specific role in maintaining balance and order.

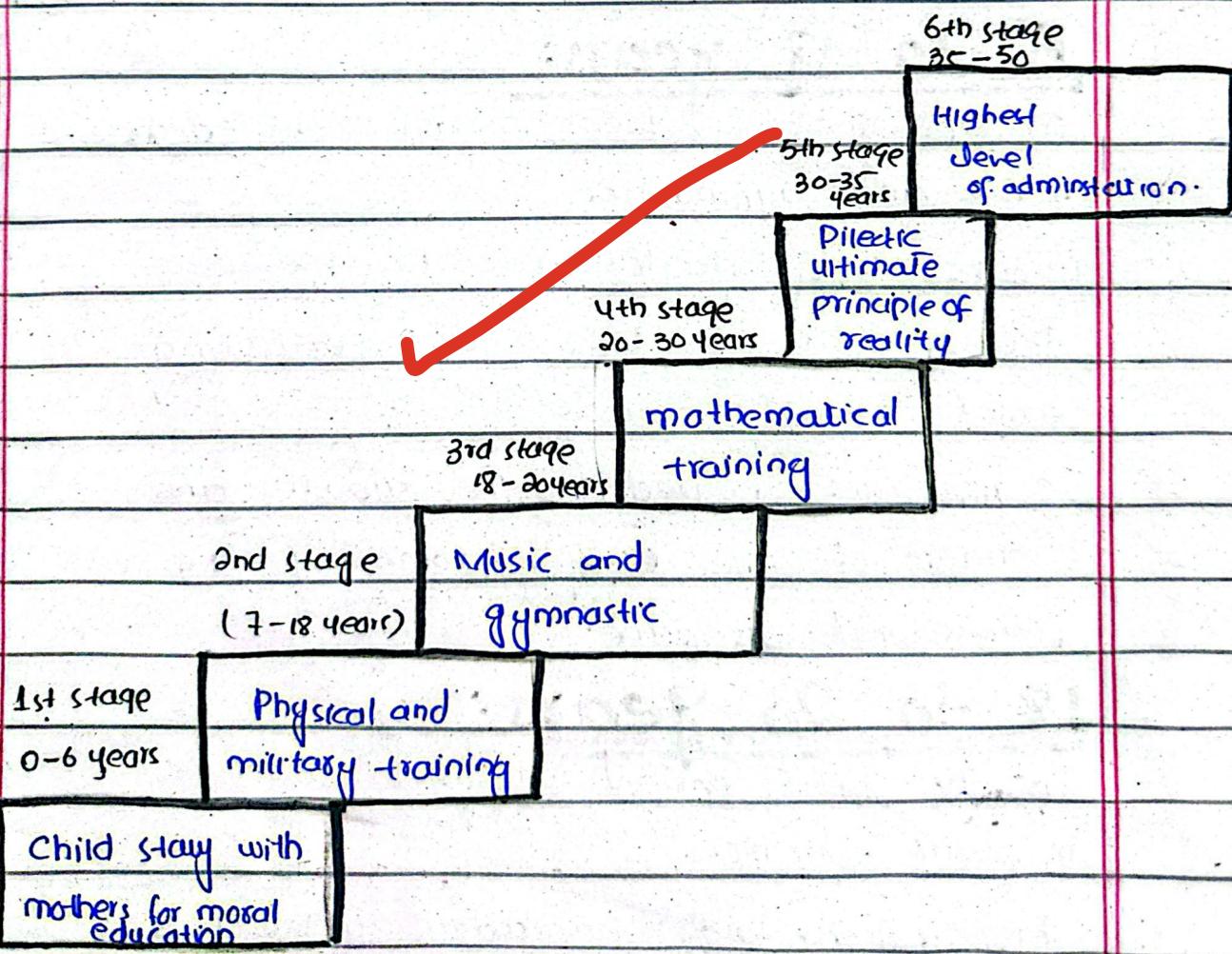
(7) Plato believed that individuals of lower nature ("men of copper") could, through education, rise to higher ranks ("men of silver" or "gold") if they possessed the qualities needed because justice is based on merit, not birth or class.

(8) Plato insisted that education must develop the physical fitness of children alongside mental training, since justice is only possible when citizens are strong in both body and mind, enabling them to serve the state effectively.

A central aim of Plato's education was to prepare philosopher-king as ~~King~~ Justice in the state can only be ensured when rulers are wise, virtuous, and trained to govern according to the true principles of good and fairness.

## Education Plan

According to Plato there are different stages of education.



Plato's educational curriculum consists of two stages, Elementary Stage and the Higher stage, each covering different phases of life and focusing on different kinds of training.

## Elementary stage:

During this early period, both boys and girls received basic education.

- The focus was on teaching language skills. Basic religious education was also given to build moral values from a young age.

## 6 to 18 years:

At this stage, education was centered around music and gymnastics.

- Music was considered essential for the development of the soul, nurturing emotions and character.
- Gymnastics helped in the growth and strength of the body, promoting physical fitness and discipline.

## 18 to 20 years:

In this brief period students underwent military education.

- This training was necessary to prepare

citizens to defend the state and develop courage and loyalty

## Higher Education Stage:

### 20- to 30 years:

After military education, selected students entered the higher education stage, meant for those capable of deeper learning. This stage was again divided into two parts:

#### First Sub-Stage (20 to 30 years)

During this decade students studied mathematics, astronomy, logic and geometry. Plato emphasized geometry as critical for the development of rational thinking and abstract reasoning.

#### Second Sub-stage (30 to 35 years)

The focus shifted to dialectics - the art of philosophical discussion and reasoning. This stage meant to sharpen the mind and prepare individuals to become true philosophers.

# Leadership and later life

## 35 to 50 years:

Those who successfully completed the higher education and proved themselves wise and virtuous were to rule as philosopher-kings. They were expected to apply their knowledge and wisdom in governing the state.

## After 50 years:

After a lifetime of service, the kings would retire from ruling. Their final stage of life was to be dedicated to the study and contemplation of God, seeking ultimate truth and wisdom.

# Criticism of Plato's Education System:

## Positive Aspects:

### foundation of Modern Education philosophy:

Plato was among the first thinkers to link education with moral and social development. According to Alfred North Whitehead ("Process and Reality", 1929), the safest general

characterization of the European philosophical tradition is that it consists of a series of footnotes to Plato", emphasizing Plato's major influence.

## Structured and stage-wise Development:

Plato's system organized education according to age and mental maturity, providing a clear developmental path.

John Dewey in "Democracy and Education" (1916) appreciated such stage wise approaches as necessary for sound psychological development.

## Promotion of critical Thinking (Dialectics)

By stressing dialectics in the higher stages, Plato encouraged reasoning, analysis and questioning assumptions.

Karl Popper, despite his criticism acknowledged in "The Open Society and its Enemies" (1945) that Plato's dialectical training influenced the growth of rational inquiry.

## Negative Aspects

## Overemphasis on state control:

Plato's education system left little room for personal freedom or family influence.

R.L. Archer (Introduction to Plato's) criticizes this excessive control, saying it might create mechanical citizens.

## Lack of practical/vocational Education:

Plato focused heavily on philosophical mathematics and military training, ignoring technical or craft education.

Bertrand Russell in "History of Western Philosophy" notes that this focus would make society dependent on an untrained working class.

## Unrealistic Idealism

Plato's vision was based on the assumption that philosopher-king could exist and would be incorruptible, which is difficult in practice.

Ernest Barker in "The Political Thought of Plato and Aristotle" points out that Plato's theory ignores the complexities of human nature.

qs was about plato's

## Conclusion:

Plato's Justice system emphasize harmony by assigning roles based on ability, ensuring stability and order. Plato believes that justice starts within the individual and is reflected in the society when each class-rulers, soldiers and workers carries out own function without interfering with others. To achieve this Plato proposed a detailed education system that would train individuals according to their abilities. His educational plan focused on the development of character, physical strength, and intellectual skills and was designed to prepare the best individuals to become philosopher kings. Although his system has been criticized for being too idealistic and rigid.

02

qs was about platos concept of justice and its implementation via education.

you have not understood the qs and hence most of the answer is irrelevant.

attempt and upload a single qs at a time for evaluation.

Plato's communism was is and will remain impracticable critically examine this statement (ESS 2003)

## Introduction

"The best guardian is he who neither has too much nor too little of worldly possessions," Plato, Republic (Book III)

Plato (427 - 347 BCE) was a Greek philosopher, a student of Socrates and the teacher of Aristotle. He founded the Academy in Athens of the earliest institutions of higher learning. His philosophy deeply influenced western thought, especially in politics, ethics and justice. One of his most famous work "The Republic" presents his vision of an ideal state and the concept of justice. In order to achieve justice he introduced the concept of communism for the ruling class - the guardian. According to Plato rulers and soldiers should not own private property or have private families so that their loyalty remains only to the state and not to personal interests.

## Two Aspects of Plato's Communism

Communism in  
Property

Communism in  
Families

Plato believed that in order to prevent greed, corruption and political conflict, the ruling class should not own private property. By removing personal financial interests - the rulers could concentrate only on governing and working for the good of the entire society.

Plato also abolished traditional family structures for the ruling class. Marriage were arranged by the state and the reproduction process was controlled to ensure that children were not raised by their biological parents, instead children were brought up collectively by the state, creating a strong sense of unity and collective responsibility among the Guardians.

## Selective breeding (eugenics)

Selective breeding (eugenics) in Plato's republic means that state controls reproduction to ensure only the best individuals produce children. The goal is to improve the population's quality by allowing only the strongest, most intelligent and morally superior people to have eliminating weaknesses and ensuring that future generation <sup>will be</sup> ~~were~~ physically and mentally fit.

## Role of Women:

Plato believed that men and women had similar intellectual abilities except for physical strength.

Women in the upper class were required to participate in government and military duties alongside men. However, they had no role of raising children.

## Elimination of Individualism

By removing family ties and private wealth, Plato aimed to ensure complete loyalty to the state. There will be

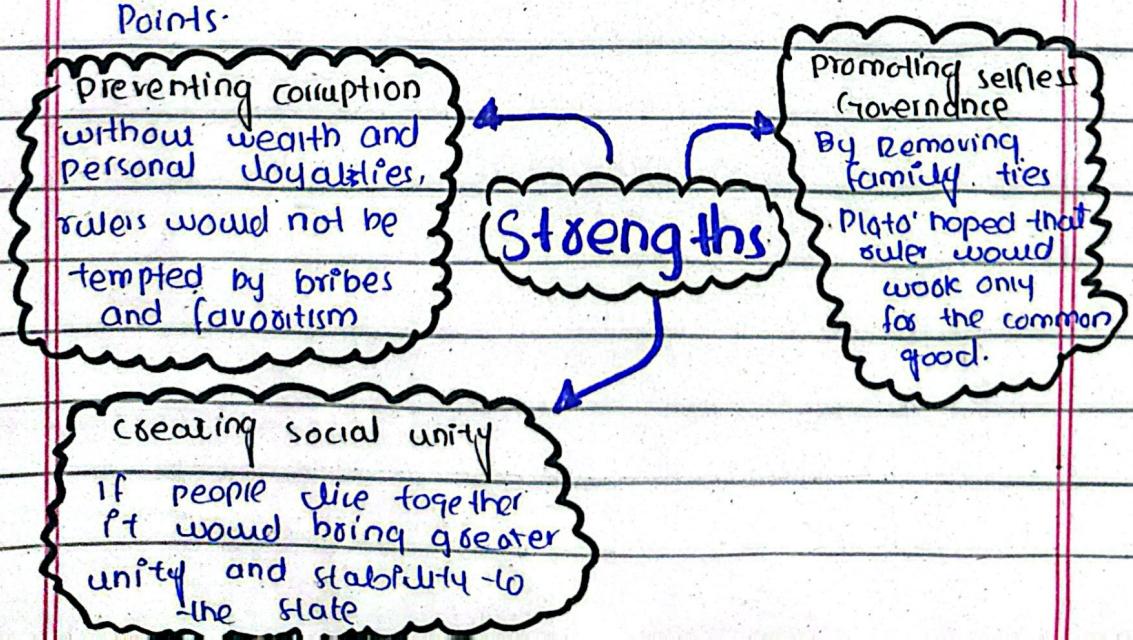
no competition for wealth or political power  
ensuring stability.

## Opposition to luxury and materialism:

Plato believed that Athens had become weak due to excessive luxury, greed and corruption. He wanted to return to a disciplined simple life focused on duty and morality.

## Strengths of Plato's Communism

Although difficult to achieve, Plato's communism had some important positive points.



## Weaknesses and Criticism of Plato's Communism:

### Against Human Nature

Aristotle argued that people naturally love their own families and possessions. Taking these away would destroy natural emotions like love and responsibility.

### Suppression of individual freedom

Karl Popper in his book "The Open Society and its Enemies (1945)" said that Plato's idea would lead to a strict totalitarian system where personal freedom would be lost.

### Historical failure of communism

Attempts to apply communism in modern times like in the Soviet Union, resulted in economic failure, dictatorship and suffering instead of equality. This shows that Plato's communism is not practical even today.

### Relevance to Modern world

Today, most societies protect private property, family life and personal freedom instead of removing these, modern

governments focus on making leaders accountable and fair through laws and democratic systems. Plato's dream of having rulers who are honest and selfless is still respected, but the method he suggested - communism - is seen as too extreme and unrealistic.

## Elitist Nature of Plato's Communism

Plato's communism applied only to the Guardian and Auxiliary classes (rulers and soldiers), while the common people (Farmers, craftsmen, traders) were allowed to keep private property and families. Thus Plato's communism was selective, not universal. If divided society into rulers who had no property and common people who lived a normal life. This selective nature make it impractical for achieving complete equality.

## Denial of Emotional Bonds:

Plato abolished family ties among Guardians, thinking it would create unity. However, emotional bonds between

parents and children are natural and necessary for healthy development. Modern psychology (such as John Bowlby's Attachment theory (1958)) shows that children need emotional security to develop loyalty, trust, and social behaviour. Without family love, children may grow up feeling emotionally unstable leading to a weak society instead of a strong one.

## Unclear Practical Mechanisms

Plato did not clearly explain how his communism would work in real life. Without clear system or methods, Plato's communism remained theoretical and unrealistic.

Ernest Barker "The political thought of Plato and Aristotle (1906) Barker notes that Plato's theories lacked practical details needed for real world application.

# Conclusion:

Plato's idea of communism was a sincere effort to built a society based on justice, unity and equality. He believed that removing private property and family ties among the ruling class would prevent greed and selfishness. However, his plan was too idealistic and did not match the real nature of human beings, who naturally seek emotional bonds and personal ownership. History and modern examples show that complete communism of property and family has never worked successfully. Therefore the statement that "Plato's communism was is and will remain impractical" is correct.

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