Analyzing the Dominant Role of Philosophy in Education: A Systematic Literature Review on Curriculum and Pedagogical Innovations

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Abstract
Educational philosophy plays a dominant role in shaping educational theory and practice by providing an epistemic and ethical foundation. This study examines recent literature (2023-2024) to analyze how philosophical concepts, such as Kuhn's paradigm shifts and culturally rooted approaches like Ubuntu and Ujamaa, influence curriculum design and teaching methods. Using the PRISMA systematic review method, this research identifies 35 relevant documents and conducts an in-depth analysis of 13 journal articles discussing the role of philosophy in education. The findings indicate that philosophy contributes to enhancing critical literacy, epistemic decolonization, and strengthening inclusive educational strategies. This study also highlights the challenges in applying philosophical principles in global education systems, which are still predominantly influenced by Western-based curricula. Through a comprehensive literature review, this research asserts that educational philosophy is not only of academic value but also has practical implications for improving the relevance and quality of education. Therefore, integrating philosophical thought into education can serve as an innovative solution for creating a more inclusive, reflective, and contextual learning system.

Keywords: Educational Philosophy, Curriculum, Epistemic, Inclusivity, Decolonization

INTRODUCTION

Educational philosophy plays a fundamental role in shaping the objectives, methods, and values of education. Throughout history, various philosophical schools have contributed to the development of educational systems, ranging from essentialism and perennialism, which emphasize education based on enduring values, to progressivism and reconstructionism, which focus on adaptability and experiential learning (Rahmawati et al., 2024; PARSAK et al., 2024). These developments demonstrate that philosophy not only forms the foundation of educational thought but also responds to social and cultural changes. In the context of modern education, the role of philosophy is becoming increasingly crucial in addressing the challenges of globalization, cultural diversity, and the integration of technology in learning (Anam et al., 2024; Kurylo et al., 2023). Several studies suggest that the inclusion of various philosophical traditions, such as Islamic education models, offers a more inclusive approach in pedagogical strategies (Jannah, 2023; Saputra et al., 2023). The integration of philosophical thought not only expands academic perspectives but also strengthens the relevance of education in an increasingly complex society.

This study provides a novel contribution to the field of educational philosophy by reviewing the latest literature (2023-2024) to explore how philosophy shapes educational theory and practice from various cultural and methodological perspectives. Most previous studies have focused on the general relationship between philosophy and pedagogy; however, this study highlights how specific philosophical concepts, such as Thomas Kuhn's paradigm shifts and culturally rooted educational philosophies like Ubuntu and Ujamaa, have a tangible impact on curriculum design and teaching practices (Matthews, 2024; Kibona & Woldegiorgis, 2023; Brás, 2024). Consequently, this study

broadens the understanding of how philosophy functions as both an epistemic and ethical foundation for education across diverse global contexts.

The purpose of this study is to examine the role of philosophy in shaping educational theory and practice, particularly in recent literature (2023-2024). The primary focus of this study is on how educational philosophy enhances the relevance, inclusivity, and ethical foundation of the education system. It also explores how philosophical perspectives contribute to educational innovation through culturally based approaches, critical epistemology, and reflective pedagogy. Through this approach, the study aims to provide a deeper understanding of how philosophical principles are applied in various aspects of contemporary education.

This study highlights key findings that demonstrate how philosophy can be used to refine curricula and teaching methods. One significant example is the application of inquiry-based learning based on Kuhn's paradigm shifts (Matthews, 2024). This paradigm emphasizes that science education is not merely about memorizing facts but also about understanding how scientific concepts evolve and change over time. Through this approach, students are encouraged to develop critical and analytical thinking skills in comprehending scientific knowledge.

Additionally, this study addresses the issue of decolonizing education through culturally rooted philosophical frameworks, such as Ubuntu and Ujamaa. Ubuntu philosophy, which emphasizes humanity and social solidarity, has been proposed as an inclusive educational model that can replace curricula still rooted in colonial epistemology (Brás, 2024; Kibona & Woldegiorgis, 2023). By applying Ubuntu principles, education can better reflect local values and provide a more relevant learning experience for students. The Ujamaa philosophy, developed by Julius Nyerere in Tanzania, offers a similar perspective in civic education by emphasizing social responsibility and community engagement (Kibona & Woldegiorgis, 2023). The implementation of these philosophies is expected to enhance student engagement in learning and strengthen their sense of responsibility towards society.

Furthermore, this study demonstrates how educational philosophy supports inclusive strategies that respect diversity and foster active civic engagement. The principles of democracy in education, as proposed by Waghid (2023), stress that education systems should prepare individuals to participate in a democratic and just society. This approach aligns with Mutanga's (2024) research, which highlights how the Unhu/Ubuntu philosophy can be applied to create a more inclusive and empathy-oriented educational environment. By integrating humanistic values into the education system, students are expected not only to acquire academic skills but also to develop greater empathy and social awareness.

This study contributes to the field of educational philosophy by providing a comprehensive analysis of how philosophical insights can be applied in various educational contexts. The integration of philosophical perspectives in curricula not only helps clarify educational concepts but also provides guidance for developing more reflective and contextual teaching methods. By emphasizing the importance of epistemic decolonization in education, this study offers new insights into how education systems can be more inclusive and appreciative of cultural diversity. Additionally, this research reinforces the argument that philosophy plays a crucial role in shaping educational policies that are more democratic and responsive to the needs of modern society.

Thus, this study asserts that educational philosophy is not merely an academic discipline but also has significant practical implications for improving the quality of education. Through this study, educators and policymakers are expected to gain a deeper understanding of how philosophical principles can be implemented in education systems to create a more just, inclusive, and human-centered learning environment. With an approach based on recent research and in-depth literature reviews, this study provides an important contribution to the development of educational philosophy as a foundation for innovation and reform in global education systems.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a systematic literature review methodology following the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines to explore and analyze the dominant role of philosophy in education. This method was chosen to ensure a structured, systematic, and consistent review, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of the latest literature in the field of

educational philosophy. The primary database used is SCOPUS, with a search limitation to the past two years (2023-2024), ensuring that this review covers the most current research trends.

The PRISMA method applied in this study consists of four key stages: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. In the identification stage, relevant articles were identified through searches in the SCOPUS database using the keyword "Philosophy in Education." This process aimed to gather all articles potentially related to the research topic, considering various relevant publication formats, such as journal articles and conference proceedings. With a focus on the past two years, this stage ensures that the collected data encompass the latest ideas and perspectives on the application of philosophy in education.

The second stage, screening, involved filtering the identified articles based on specific criteria to maintain research quality and relevance. Only journal articles written in English and directly discussing the field of educational philosophy were included in the analysis. Articles that did not meet these criteria, such as proceedings, book chapters, review articles, articles written in other languages, or those lacking direct relevance to philosophy in education, were excluded. This process ensures that the review remains focused on high-quality and relevant sources.

The third stage, eligibility, involved manually evaluating each screened article to ensure that it specifically addressed the application of philosophy in education. Articles that did not align with the core theme of this research, such as those focusing on education without connecting to philosophical principles, were removed from the analysis. This stage is crucial in refining the focus of the review, considering only articles that provide direct contributions to the research topic.

The final stage, inclusion, involved an in-depth examination of the articles that met all previous criteria. At this stage, selected articles were analyzed in detail to extract key data, including information about the authors, research objectives, methods used, and findings obtained. The findings from these articles were then synthesized and analyzed to understand how each study contributes to the broader understanding of the role of philosophy in education.

All extracted data were discussed comprehensively, considering the relevance and alignment of the findings with the main objectives of this research. This approach enables a cohesive analysis of the contributions of each article, offering in-depth insights focused on the application of philosophy in various educational contexts. This systematic approach also ensures that the analysis remains directed and relevant, highlighting key findings and drawing meaningful conclusions to strengthen the primary aim of this research: identifying and understanding the dominant role of philosophy in contemporary education.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the document analysis from 2023 to 2024, a total of 35 relevant documents were identified. Of these, 20 documents were published in 2024, while 15 documents were from 2023. The distribution of documents by publication type and subject area is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1a illustrates that the majority of the reviewed documents are journal articles (65%), indicating that research on philosophy in education is predominantly published in scholarly journals. Additionally, conference papers (20%) make a significant contribution, reflecting the frequent presentation of this topic in academic forums. Book chapters (10%) and review articles (5%) have a smaller proportion, suggesting that book-based publications and systematic reviews on this subject are still limited.

Figure 1b displays the distribution of documents based on subject areas. Education (35%) and philosophy (30%) emerge as the primary domains of this research, highlighting the strong focus on philosophical aspects within education. Furthermore, social sciences (20%) play a significant role, indicating that educational philosophy is often examined within broader social contexts. Meanwhile, research related to healthcare (10%) and environmental studies (5%) demonstrates the interdisciplinary connections of educational philosophy with other fields, albeit to a lesser extent.
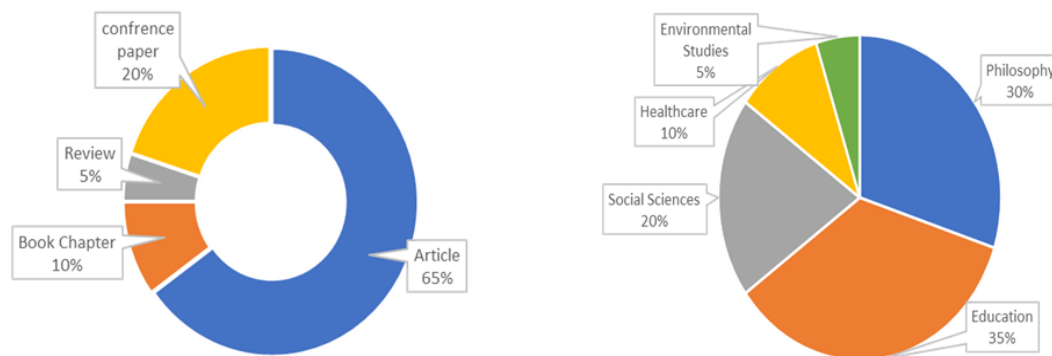
Figure 1. Distribution of documents: (a) by type, and (b) by subject area.

From the 35 identified documents, further selection was conducted, focusing solely on journal articles that specifically address education and philosophy. After this filtering process, 13 documents met the final criteria and were included in this systematic review. These selected documents were chosen for their high relevance and quality, as they provide key insights into the role of philosophy in education.

This review ensures that only the most significant and impactful studies are analyzed in depth, allowing for more comprehensive and reliable conclusions. Further details on the key findings from the selected studies are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Educational philosophy documents that meet the criteria

Author & Year	Research Title	Research Objective	Research Findings
Barreira, F. & de Paiva, J.M. (2024)	*Becoming-guitar: a childlike challenge (to philosophy and education)*	To explore the challenges posed by childhood to philosophical and educational thought.	Highlights the influence of childhood in reshaping philosophical and educational concepts.
Alcalá, F.J. (2024)	*A pedagogy of generosity: On the topicality of Deleuze and Guattari's thought in the philosophy of education*	To examine the relevance of Deleuze and Guattari's ideas in modern educational philosophy.	Demonstrates the potential of their philosophy in fostering generosity and alternative pedagogical approaches.
Farieta, A. & Delprato, M. (2024)	*The effect of philosophy on critical reading: Evidence from initial teacher education in Colombia*	To investigate how philosophy education influences critical reading skills among pre-service teachers.	Shows improvement in critical reading skills when philosophy is integrated into teacher education.
Meucci, S. & Freitas, S.C. (2023)	*Citizenship Learning: Justifications for human rights education, religion education,*	To provide a historical analysis of the justification for various subjects in Brazilian education (1987–2006).	Concludes that these subjects are fundamental for shaping citizenship and democratic values.

Author & Year	Research Title	Research Objective	Research Findings
	philosophy, and sociology		
Chan, T.M., Sherbino, J., & Sockalingam, S. (2023)	*Blueprints for Connection: A Meta-Organizational Framework for Layering Theory, Philosophy, and Praxis Within Continuing Education in the Health Professions*	To propose a framework for integrating theoretical and practical education in health professions.	Provides a framework that promotes connected learning among health professionals.
Castro-Ibáñez, C. (2023)	*The Education of Students in Hospital Schools: A View from Philosophy, Economics, and Technology*	To analyze educational practices for students in hospital schools from various disciplinary perspectives.	Recommends a multidisciplinary approach to support the unique needs of hospital-based students.
Norefalk, C. & Papastephanou, M. (2023)	*Analytic philosophy of education: Some suggested questions and directions*	To propose critical questions and future directions for analytic philosophy in education.	Identifies key areas in education where analytic philosophy can be applied for deeper insights.
Chimakonam, J.O. & Ogbonnaya, L.U. (2024)	*Can Conversational Thinking serve as a suitable pedagogical approach for philosophy education in African schools?*	To explore the feasibility of using conversational thinking in philosophy education in Africa.	Suggests that conversational thinking is a culturally appropriate approach in African education.
Gatley, J. (2023)	*Ameliorating educational concepts and the value of analytic philosophy of education*	To examine how analytic philosophy can clarify and refine educational concepts.	Supports the role of analytic philosophy in improving educational terminology and practices.

Author & Year	Research Title	Research Objective	Research Findings
Waghid, Y. (2023)	*Democratic citizenship education reimagined: Implications for a renewed African philosophy of higher education*	To reconsider higher education in Africa through the lens of democratic citizenship.	Emphasizes the importance of a renewed focus on democratic principles in African higher education.
Ariff, S.N.B.M., Awang Deng, P.A.L., & Yaakub, Y. (2024)	*The Element of 'Self-Actualization' In Malay Poems Educates the Personality of Superior Teenagers According to the National Philosophy of Education*	To examine how Malay poetry reflecting self-actualization contributes to teenage character education.	Finds that Malay poetry is a valuable medium for instilling self-actualization and personal growth in teenagers.
Brás, J.G.V. (2024)	*For an epistemic decolonisation of education from the ubuntu philosophy*	To propose epistemic decolonization in education through ubuntu principles.	Argues that ubuntu can serve as a foundation for inclusive and decolonized educational practices.
Mutanga, O. (2024)	*Perceptions and experiences of teachers in Zimbabwe on inclusive education and teacher training: The value of Unhu/Ubuntu philosophy*	To assess Zimbabwean teachers' perspectives on inclusive education and the role of Unhu/Ubuntu philosophy.	Highlights the role of Unhu/Ubuntu in fostering inclusive and empathetic education.

Table 1 summarizes various studies in the field of philosophy of education, focusing on the objectives and findings of research conducted by scholars from different countries and perspectives. Several studies examine the role and relationship of philosophy in education from critical and analytical viewpoints. Based on Table 1, some key aspects we can learn include: the role of philosophy in education in the modern era, whether philosophy aligns with education or contradicts it, and the challenges of applying philosophical principles in education.

The Role of Philosophy in Education

Philosophy plays a crucial role in education, helping to clarify and refine educational concepts so that their implementation in practice becomes more effective. Gatley (2023) highlights that analytic philosophy enables a deeper understanding of educational terminology, ensuring that these concepts are applied more accurately across different contexts. Additionally, Farieta and Delprato (2024) found that philosophical education contributes to improving critical reading skills among prospective teachers in Colombia. The philosophical framework taught in teacher training helps educators become more analytical and critical in interpreting academic texts, which is essential for developing literacy skills.

Furthermore, philosophy plays a key role in shaping inclusive and empathetic education. Mutanga (2024) illustrates how the Unhu/Ubuntu philosophy, which emphasizes humanity, solidarity, and mutual understanding, fosters a more inclusive and welcoming educational environment in Zimbabwe. In Africa, Chimakonam and Ogbonnaya (2024) propose the "conversational thinking" approach as an effective method in philosophy education. This approach is not only culturally relevant but also encourages reflective interactions between students and teachers, reinforcing values of cooperation and mutual respect in education.

Additionally, philosophy contributes to the development of democratic citizenship education. Waghid (2023) advocates for the application of democratic principles in higher education in Africa to instill awareness of human rights and a commitment to democracy among students. This aligns with Dewey's (1916) perspective that education should prepare individuals to become active, responsible members of society with a commitment to social well-being. Similarly, Brás (2024) underscores the importance of epistemic decolonization through Ubuntu philosophy, which can serve as a foundation for more inclusive educational practices free from colonial biases. In this way, Ubuntu is not only a humanistic value but also a profound tool for decolonization.

The study by Ariff et al. (2024) highlights that the concept of "self-actualization" in Malay poetry can be utilized as a medium for shaping the character and personality of youth in accordance with Malaysia's National Educational Philosophy. This demonstrates that philosophy is not merely theoretical but can be embodied in literary works to shape the identity of future generations. Ultimately, philosophy in education provides a strong foundation for developing individuals who think critically, exhibit empathy, and are prepared to participate in an inclusive and democratic society.

Philosophy Aligns with Education

Based on the studies reviewed, philosophy appears to be highly aligned with the goals of education, which aim to develop individuals who not only possess intellectual skills but also strong character and social values. For example, Gatley (2023) asserts that analytic philosophy helps refine educational concepts, making their implementation more relevant and effective. This supports education's objective of fostering deeper understanding and knowledge application.

Moreover, Farieta and Delprato (2024) demonstrate that philosophical education enhances critical reading skills, aligning with the educational goal of cultivating individuals who think critically and evaluate information in depth. This reinforces the importance of literacy and critical thinking skills as key educational outcomes.

Philosophy also fosters inclusive and empathetic education, as highlighted in Mutanga's (2024) study on the Unhu/Ubuntu philosophy. This philosophy emphasizes human values and solidarity, which are essential for creating an educational environment that accommodates all individuals without discrimination.

The integration of democratic values in education, as discussed by Waghid (2023), further illustrates how philosophy contributes to shaping democratic citizens who are aware of their rights and responsibilities. This strongly aligns with education's goal of building a just and democratic society. Philosophy emphasizes the importance of education that not only focuses on academic achievement but also on social ethics and civic engagement.

Philosophy not only aligns with but also enriches the objectives of education by introducing frameworks for critical thinking, humanistic values, and responsible citizenship. Through this approach, education becomes a more comprehensive means of shaping knowledgeable, ethical, and socially engaged individuals.

Challenges of Philosophy in Education

A review of the existing studies suggests that there is no fundamental contradiction between philosophy and education. Instead, philosophy serves to strengthen, clarify, and enrich educational objectives. However, several differing approaches and challenges may create tensions or complexities in integrating philosophy into education.

For instance, Gatley (2023) notes that applying philosophical analysis in education often requires deep comprehension and can be perceived as abstract or complex. This poses a challenge for educators accustomed to more practical and direct educational approaches. The depth of philosophical inquiry sometimes necessitates adaptations to fit simpler, skill-based learning contexts.

Additionally, Brás (2024) emphasizes the importance of epistemic decolonization through Ubuntu philosophy, which promotes inclusive education free from colonial biases. However, this concept may create tension within established educational structures, particularly in regions where Western-based curricula and ideologies remain dominant. The process of decolonizing education requires a fundamental paradigm shift, which may face resistance or challenges in implementation.

Similarly, Chimakonam and Ogbonnaya (2024) discuss "conversational thinking" in African philosophical education, highlighting how locally-rooted philosophical approaches are sometimes underappreciated in globally standardized education systems. This underscores the challenge of balancing indigenous values with widely accepted educational models, demonstrating the need for adaptability in philosophical education.

Despite these tensions and differing approaches, they do not constitute fundamental contradictions between philosophy and education but rather challenges that necessitate careful adaptation. Philosophy continues to make essential contributions by broadening perspectives, fostering critical thinking, and promoting inclusivity in education.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the significant role of educational philosophy in shaping contemporary education by providing epistemic, ethical, and methodological foundations. The findings suggest that philosophical perspectives enhance curriculum development, promote critical literacy, and support inclusive and culturally responsive teaching methods. The integration of concepts such as Kuhn's paradigm shifts, Ubuntu, and Ujamaa demonstrates that education can benefit from diverse philosophical traditions. However, challenges such as the dominance of Western-centered curricula and the complexity of philosophical applications in practical teaching require further exploration. Overall, this study affirms that educational philosophy is not merely theoretical but has tangible implications for improving learning environments, fostering democratic values, and ensuring a more equitable education system.

RECOMMENDATION

1. Curriculum Development: Policymakers should integrate diverse philosophical perspectives into education curricula to promote inclusivity and cultural responsiveness.
2. Teacher Training: Educational institutions should incorporate philosophy-based pedagogical approaches to enhance critical thinking and reflective teaching practices.
3. Decolonization of Education: Further efforts should be made to decolonize curricula by including non-Western educational philosophies such as Ubuntu and Ujamaa.
4. Interdisciplinary Research: Scholars should conduct further research on the intersection of philosophy, education, and technology to address modern educational challenges.
5. Policy Implementation: Governments and stakeholders should ensure that philosophical insights are applied in educational policies to create a more democratic and just learning system.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

Sukainil Ahzan was responsible for conceptualization, methodology, formal analysis, drafting the initial manuscript, editing according to the template, and submitting the article. Wayan Suastra, Ananta Wikrama Tungga Atmaja, and I Nyoman Tika contributed to validation and final review of the manuscript

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