

## **A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF CURRICULA BASED ON PLATO'S *REPUBLIC* AND THE PIRIVENA SYSTEM IN SRI LANKA**

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Curriculum is a fundamental element in an effective teaching and learning process. The design, the aim, objectives and Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) of any curriculum reflect the philosophy of the education system of a country and they also need to comply with the socio-political and socio-cultural requirements of a nation. Plato was a recognized Greek philosopher and educationist in western education. Plato proposes an outline of a curriculum for an educational system in the *Republic* where the goal is to produce able citizens who are responsible for their community. But, Plato's system was never implemented. The education system of Sri Lanka on the other hand, developed from antiquity aiming at educating mainly the Buddhist monks in monasteries. The *Pirivena* education also follows a curriculum that reflects the development of an education system that was native to ancient Sri Lanka. The curriculum proposed by Plato in his *Republic*, and the curriculum in the *Pirivena* system of education naturally adhere to the basic needs of their societies. Scholarly attention was laid on studying the Platonic system of education and its influence on the modern education in the west. Even various aspects of the *Pirivena* system of education have grabbed scholarly attention. Yet, no attempts were made to undertake a comparative study on the two curricula proposed in this study. The objective of this paper is to examine the content of the two curricula and their aims, objectives and Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) in order to understand the rationale and diverse circumstances that may have led to fashion the content, aims, objectives and the ILOs of their respective curricula. The study paid close attention to Plato's *Republic* along with commentaries on this work and secondary literature as appropriate. In studying *Pirivena* curricula, *Pirivena* Education Act of 1979, inscriptions and secondary literature were used besides visiting selected *pirivenas* in order to use the information in their archives and libraries. The gathered information on Plato's curriculum and *Pirivena* curriculum were studied closely and independently with an analytical mind prior to comparing and contrasting them. The two curricula contain some similar subject content such as literature and mathematics. In certain cases, the course content and methods are different from each other. But interestingly whether the course content is similar or not the concepts, aims, objectives and ILOs behind including those courses appear identical in the two systems of education because the course contents of these curricula attempted to comply with their socio-political and socio-cultural requirements.

*Keywords:* Curricula, *Pirivena*, Education, Plato's *Republic*, Intended learning outcomes