

## MERITS AND DEMERITS OF MONTESSORI SCHOOLS

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**Abstract:** *In this article some abnormal methods which other educators consider like this will be mentioned and merits and demerits of Montessori schools will be high-lightened with the help of exact examples and reliable sources.*

**Key words:** *Freedom with responsibility, Self-discipline, Decision-making, Mixed-age grouping, Whole child development, Academic skills, Social skills, Emotional skills, Physical abilities*

## INTRODUCTION

The teaching methodology created by Italian physician and educator Maria Montessori is implemented in Montessori schools. The tenets and understandings Maria Montessori acquired via her observations of children form the foundation of the Montessori educational approach. Dr. Maria Montessori created the educational system known as the Montessori method, which places a strong emphasis on respecting a child's natural psychological, physical, and social development as well as independence and freedom within reasonable bounds. Montessori education places a strong emphasis on a child-centered method of instruction that takes into account each child's unique needs, interests, and skills. Encouraging the natural development of the complete child—intellectually, socially, emotionally, and physically—is the primary objective of Montessori education.

Some positives of Montessori schools include:

1. Mixed-age classrooms: Montessori classrooms typically include children of different ages, ranging from three to six years in early childhood programs and six to twelve years in elementary programs. This multi-age environment allows younger children to learn from older peers and older children to reinforce their knowledge by teaching others.

2. Prepared environment: Montessori classrooms are carefully designed to provide a supportive and engaging environment for learning. They are equipped with a wide range of educational materials and activities that are accessible to

children on low shelves, allowing them to independently choose and work with materials that interest them.

3. Hands-on learning: Montessori education emphasizes hands-on, experiential learning. Children are encouraged to actively explore and manipulate materials to develop their understanding of concepts. The materials are designed to be self-correcting, allowing children to learn through trial and error.<sup>39</sup>

4. Freedom within limits: Montessori schools provide children with a high degree of freedom and independence within a structured framework. Children are encouraged to make choices and pursue their interests, while also learning to respect the needs and rights of others.

5. Emphasis on practical life skills: Practical life activities, such as pouring, dressing, or cleaning, are an integral part of the Montessori curriculum. These activities help children develop coordination, concentration, and independence, while also fostering a sense of responsibility and care for their environment.

6. Individualized instruction: Montessori education recognizes that children have different learning styles and paces. Teachers in Montessori schools observe each child's progress and provide individualized guidance and support accordingly.<sup>40</sup>

Montessori schools are educational establishments that follow the technique and philosophy of Maria Montessori. They provide a special learning atmosphere that encourages independent play, practical learning, and group projects. In order to support peer learning and mentoring, Montessori schools are usually set up to house kids of different ages in a single classroom.

Naturally, this does not imply that a Montessori education will always result in virtue. Educators, fellow students, and the administration can all have a positive or negative impact on your experience. However, some people may have misgivings about certain aspects of the Montessori teachings. The following are a few drawbacks of Montessori education:

1. Limited structure: Some children may struggle with the lack of structure in a Montessori classroom, as they may prefer more guidance and direction from teachers.

2. Limited standardized testing preparation: Montessori schools focus on individualized learning rather than preparing students for standardized tests, which may be a disadvantage for students who need to take such exams.

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<sup>39</sup> Montessori, Maria. (1946/1963). *Education for a New World*. Oxford: Clio Press Ltd.

<sup>40</sup> Montessori, Maria. (1949/2007). *Education and Peace*. Oxford: Clio Press Ltd.

3. Potential for inconsistency: The quality of Montessori education can vary depending on the school and teachers, leading to inconsistencies in the implementation of the Montessori method.

4. Limited availability: Montessori schools may not be as widely available as traditional schools, making it difficult for some families to access this type of education.

5. Cost: Montessori schools can be more expensive than traditional schools due to smaller class sizes, specialized materials, and teacher training requirements.<sup>41</sup>

1. Expensive: For Montessori schools, it is very hard to keep their prices low. The acquisition of many long-lasting and first-class learning materials along with lengthy and thorough training in the use of such items for young children is an expensive undertaking. That is why the programs of Montessori education are so expensive.

2. Independence is not always helpful: Montessori education is very strong in developing a sense of freedom and self-guided work. But the situations are not always like that. The mindset it provides can be valuable in some ways but on the other hand, it can also make it tough to cooperate in groups and work under a severe authority.<sup>42</sup>

3. There isn't enough opportunity: It is clear that the interaction in Montessori classrooms is different from the traditional classrooms. However, the interaction it provides is far more meaningful. The learning environment used in the classroom allows kids to interact more freely in comparison to traditional classrooms. But in contrast, interaction is far less structured and spontaneous.

4. Small Student Community: In Montessori classroom environment students are in a small community and spend their time with the same peers. This can translate to kids to develop amazing friendships or it can be an obstacle to the development of the social skills. Students have a limited reach to the social activities in the Montessori education system. Montessori is a lifestyle and it is not only a method of education. Before decide to go for Montessori, make sure you will completely embrace the lifestyle and are willing to make changes to the environment.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Helfrich, M. Shannon. (2011). *Montessori Learning in the 21st Century: A Guide for Parents and Teachers*. Troutdale, Oregon: New Sage Press.

<sup>42</sup> Meyer, J. Francisco Ramirez and Yasemin Nuhoglu Soysal. (1992, April). World expansion of mass education, 1870-1980. *Sociology and Education*. Vo. 65, No. 2, pp. 128-149.

<sup>43</sup> Montessori, Maria. (1966). *Dr. Montessori's Own Handbook*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Robert Bentley, Inc.

Choosing a Montessori setting requires careful consideration and dedication, but in the end, both the children and the parents will benefit from it. After weighing the benefits and drawbacks of a Montessori education, parents should decide. Selecting the appropriate school is crucial as they differ in many ways. Be careful to conduct thorough study before choosing the best school for your child's academic performance.

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