Ancient Greek Education versus Present Day Education

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# **Introduction**

People nowadays believe the fact that the present-day school system is not the best. The main reason behind is that this school system was established in the industrialist era. So, the core purpose of education was to prepare the children for work in the industrial revolution. This platform is being followed even today. The educational system, in general, is quite mechanical today. Things were quite different in the past. If a comparison is done with Ancient Greece, stark differences can be interpreted. For starters, the way the Ancient Greeks taught their children was quite different. In their set up the boys were sent to school at the age of six to seven, while girls were taught how to manage the household. The education system carried out till the boys turned twenty years old. They were taught various arts inclusive of poetry and music. However, Sparta was much more different as both the girls and boys were sent to military schools at the age of six to seven. Nonetheless, in this educational setup, the boys were pushed harder than the girls. The training for boys was so robust that they were given a beating if the teacher caught them crying. Since the Spartans took war very seriously, the boys were given a more robust education and no emphasis was put on arts. This paper will discuss in-depth the differences amid classical Greek education and modern-day teaching methods.

**Discussion**

“*The first step in education's long road to respectability lay in the ability of its proponents to demonstrate that it was worthy of collaborating with traditional disciplines in the syllabus of higher learning*[[1]](#footnote-1)." The modern-day education and curricula have made schooling more complicated. Both the students and the teachers have to suffer the same amount of pressure. The schooling of a child starts at the average age of 4-5. There are three levels of schooling: elementary, middle and high school. Every individual starts in elementary school, and in that setup, the children are put together in one classroom where a teacher comes and teaches them a variety of subjects. The education becomes more advanced when the child reaches middle school. The syllabuses’ difficulty level increases and students have to go to multiple classes. They are taught various new subjects and techniques[[2]](#footnote-2). They are introduced to different subjects of science. The teachers that are appointed to the students are specialized in one specific field. Students are also given the leisure to choose some of the classes that they take as building interest is encouraged. Lastly, there is high school, in which the students get to have optional classes. However, there are certain subject classes that stay constant: Science, PE, English, Math and Social Studies.

Furthermore, if having complex curricula is not enough there is also a grading system. In order to pass and move to the next level of education, a student has to achieve at least 59% each semester. If a student has this percentile they are given the grade D. The educational systems all around the world either use grading, percentile or GPA system. The F grade is the worst, it means that the student has underperformed and failed the class. When this happens a person has to repeat a class or a whole educational level all over again till they clear the subjects with at least a D. In contradiction Ancient Greece had a much simpler education system. There are certain similarities, for instance, students are taught arts and PE the same as the Greek did. Nonetheless, the main focus of the Ancient Greece educational system was to teach the students discipline, which today’s education system lacks.

Education can be seen from various perspectives. As per Aristotle, education is the diffusion of the accumulated knowledge of a particular society. Children are not born with knowledge, they are molded and taught as per the societal standards and roles. When people mention the word classical it means relating to or in accordance with the Greek and Roman models. The Greeks believe the notion that we have immortal souls from the time of Socrates. They believe that if the soul is nurtured only then can the person get enlightened. Physical education is given less importance than soul education. "A sound mind in a sound body" was one of their most sought after educational ideologies. So, in accordance with Socrates, in order to get a sound mind and body, one should strive for goodness. *“As understood here, moral education is a multi-dimensional endeavor which draws on the domains of moral philosophy, psychology and education*[[3]](#footnote-3).” In modern education, the soul altogether is ignored and a mechanical curriculum is followed. Every child is raised to function in a robust environment. The creativity level has decreased over time.

It has been the Athenian custom to homeschool children till the age of six to seven. It is interesting that scientific research of the present day has proved that homeschooling is much better than public or private school systems. The children are taught in a manner that they grasp every fragment of knowledge before they enter school. On the other hand, the modern education system pushes parents to send their children to school at a younger age. That is where the problem mainly resides because in the most critical age of a child they are pushed to leave their home and go to school. On the other hand, classical Greek education is all about teaching the children in a poetic manner. “*Another movement in values education which has recently gained considerable prominence, especially in the USA, is that of social and emotional learning*[[4]](#footnote-4).” The education is transmitted to the youngsters with the help of emotions, intuitions and most importantly the senses.

In Ancient Greek, the boys were mainly given an education so they can be prepared for the future. The main goal was to make them a better part of society. The academia involved politics and fights as well. Today, after following a uniform pedagogy, the students are given the chance to select what they want to study in the future. The choices that the students make help depict what they will be doing in the future[[5]](#footnote-5). Putting the Spartans aside, in Ancient Greece the students were taught various types of arts and music. Today, the students are taught a cocktail of different subjects.

In Ancient Greece, the people were given a rounded education by various teachers. Today schools are based on the writing aspects, practical application is not present as much as it was in classical academia. The classical academia was based on the students having close relations with their teachers. Today there is no such concept of students and teachers having a friendly relationship, things are kept professional. If the students want to talk to anyone they have the option to discuss their issues with the school counselors. As far as the state involvement is concerned, it only occurred at the end of a student's education in Ancient Greece. However, today in countries like New Zealand the government has a significant role and involvement in the educational system.

The Ancient Greece education might follow the patriarchy but it is quite effective even today given that the education is made inclusive for all the genders. The present-day education is trying to incorporate older techniques and elements of teaching via senses and emotions. Further, extracurricular activities are getting incorporated more than before as they have proven to develop the motor skills of children. The teachers are trying to bond with the students more than before so that an understanding can be formed. By doing this the learning process is enhanced and the students tend to grasp the various concepts even more[[6]](#footnote-6). Furthermore, the schools are trying to give the students the option to customize the subjects in accordance with their interests. This is one of the best features in modern education as it is helping students stay creative.

**Conclusion**

Both Ancient Greek and present-day education are quite different from one another. The present-day education has proven to be more mechanical. There is less involvement of arts and PE making the system completely curricula based. However, over time researchers have proven the fact that the children who are taught arts, music and PE in school perform better than those pupils who are not. This element is taken from Ancient Greece and school systems are now trying to incorporate these fundamentals in their structure. Moreover, many parents have started to homeschool their children till the age of 6-7. They believe that doing this is helping them have a stronger bond with their children and additionally, the children are brought up with more discipline. Yes, the present-day education is based on technology, great research and advancement, but the old-school methods have substantial standing as well. That is why the mixture of both types of the education system can form the best structure. Going forward is good but one should never forget their roots.

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