

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE MODERN EDUCATION SYSTEM

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Abstract: This article examines the main strengths and weaknesses of the modern education system. The study aims to analyze the accessibility, technological integration, and development of critical thinking as key advantages, while also identifying major challenges such as overemphasis on examinations, lack of flexibility, and insufficient attention to individual learning needs. The research is based on qualitative and quantitative methods, including surveys and comparative analysis. The findings show that while modern education provides broad opportunities, it still requires significant improvements to meet the diverse needs of learners.

Keywords: education system, modern education, strengths, weaknesses, technology in education, critical thinking

Introduction. Education has always been regarded as one of the most fundamental pillars of human development and social progress [2/7]. Throughout history, it has played a crucial role in shaping civilizations, transmitting cultural values, and fostering intellectual growth. In the modern world, however, the role of education has become even more complex and multifaceted. It is no longer limited to the simple transfer of knowledge from teacher to student; instead, it functions as a dynamic system that shapes individuals' personalities, critical awareness, social behavior, and professional competencies. With the rapid expansion of globalization and technological advancement, the nature and structure of education have undergone significant transformation. The traditional model of education, which was largely teacher-centered and focused on memorization, has gradually evolved into a more interactive, learner-centered approach. Modern classrooms encourage collaboration, discussion, and active participation, allowing students to become independent thinkers rather than passive recipients of information [2/12]. This shift reflects the growing recognition that education should prepare individuals not only for academic success but also for real-life challenges in an increasingly interconnected world. One of the most remarkable features of the modern education system is its unprecedented level of accessibility. In the past, access to education was often limited by

geographical, economic, or social barriers. Today, however, technological innovations such as online learning platforms, virtual classrooms, and digital libraries have made it possible for learners from diverse backgrounds to access high-quality educational resources [11/22]. This democratization of education has opened new pathways for lifelong learning, enabling individuals to continuously update their knowledge and skills in response to changing professional demands.

Moreover, contemporary education places strong emphasis on the development of essential 21st-century skills, including critical thinking, creativity, communication, and problem-solving. These competencies are increasingly valued in modern societies, where individuals are expected to analyze complex information, adapt to new situations, and make informed decisions. As a result, educational institutions are gradually shifting their focus from purely theoretical instruction to more practical, skills-based learning that reflects real-world contexts. Despite these significant advancements, the modern education system is not without its limitations and challenges. One of the most pressing concerns is the persistent overemphasis on examinations and standardized testing. In many educational contexts, academic success is still measured primarily through grades and test scores, which often encourages surface-level learning and memorization rather than deep understanding. This exam-oriented approach can create high levels of stress and anxiety among students, ultimately reducing their motivation and enthusiasm for learning. In addition, the issue of limited flexibility within the education system remains a critical problem. Learners differ in their cognitive abilities, interests, learning styles, and paces of development, yet many educational institutions continue to apply uniform teaching methods and standardized curricula. This "one-size-fits-all" approach can lead to unequal learning outcomes, as some students may struggle to keep up while others may not be sufficiently challenged. Consequently, the system may fail to fully develop the potential of every learner. Furthermore, although technology has greatly enhanced access to information, it has also introduced new challenges, such as information overload, reduced attention spans, and the digital divide between different social groups. These issues highlight the need for a more balanced and thoughtful integration of technology into education. Therefore, in light of these complexities, this article aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the modern education system. It seeks to explore both its positive contributions and its existing shortcomings, identify the key challenges faced by contemporary educational institutions, and propose possible strategies for improvement. By doing so, the study hopes to contribute to a deeper understanding of how education can be reformed to better meet the needs of individuals and society in the 21st century.

Research Methods. Many researchers focused on particular aspects such as creativity, critical thinking, student participation, and the role of schools in society while investigating this topic.

For example Ivan Illich criticized the modern education system in his book *Deschooling Society* [7/5]. According to Illich, one of the major weaknesses of modern education is excessive standardization. He argued that schools make students dependent on grades, diplomas, and formal certification rather than real knowledge and practical competence. Illich believed that students often confuse education with receiving certificates. However, he also emphasized a strength of modern education: access to organized knowledge and learning opportunities. He suggested that education should become more flexible and student-centered through independent learning and “learning webs.”

Paulo Freire presented his ideas in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Freire strongly criticized the “banking model” of education, where teachers only transfer information and students passively memorize it. According to him, this system limits creativity, critical thinking, and freedom of expression. Freire considered this one of the main weaknesses of modern education. At the same time, he believed that education becomes powerful when students actively participate in discussions, problem-solving, and dialogue. Therefore, he viewed critical thinking and interactive learning as the greatest strengths of an effective education system [4/72].

John Dewey focused on the relationship between education and real-life experience in his book *Democracy and Education*. Dewey argued that traditional education systems rely too much on memorization and passive classroom learning. According to him, this prevents students from developing creativity and practical problem-solving skills. However, Dewey saw important strengths in modern education as well, especially collaborative learning, communication, and experiential learning. He believed students learn more effectively through practice, teamwork, and active classroom participation rather than only listening to lectures [2/20].

Ken Robinson discussed the weaknesses of modern schooling in *Creative Schools* [10/23]. Robinson argued that many education systems are based on industrial models that prioritize exams, discipline, and standardization over creativity and individuality. According to him, this approach suppresses students’ natural talents and imagination. He considered the overuse of standardized testing one of the biggest weaknesses of modern education. Nevertheless, Robinson highlighted several strengths, including the increasing use of technology, global access to education, and opportunities for personalized learning. He believed schools should focus more on creativity, arts, and critical thinking to meet the needs of the modern world.

In my opinion one of the weak sides of the modern education system is over usage of technology. Nowadays many students and teachers also are highly relying

on artificial intelligence and digital devices for fulfilling their responsibility. As a result it leads to compromising their critical thinking skills. In this study both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to analyze the modern education system. First, a survey was conducted among 100 university students. The questionnaire included simple questions about their opinions on education, such as teaching methods, exams, and the use of technology. The answers were collected and analyzed using percentages. Second, a comparative method was used to compare traditional and modern education systems. This helped to clearly see the main differences between old and new teaching approaches. Finally, a literature review was done by studying books, articles, and online sources related to education. This helped to support the ideas in the research. Overall, these methods made it possible to understand both the positive and negative sides of the modern education system in a clear and reliable way.

Results. The results of this study highlight both the strengths and weaknesses of the modern education system, based on survey data, interviews, and comparative analysis.

Strengths: Accessibility: 78% of students reported that modern education is more accessible than traditional systems. Online courses, digital libraries, and international programs allow students to learn from anywhere, which greatly expands learning opportunities.

Technology Integration: 72% of respondents stated that technology makes learning more engaging and effective. Tools such as interactive boards, online platforms, and multimedia materials help students understand complex topics more easily [5/53].

Critical Thinking and Skills Development: 65% of students agreed that modern education encourages critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills. Students highlighted that group discussions, projects, and interactive lessons help them think independently and develop practical skills for real life.

Weaknesses: Exam Pressure: 81% of students felt that exams and grades are still the main focus in education, which often leads to memorization instead of true understanding. Many students reported experiencing stress and anxiety because of this pressure. **Lack of Flexibility:** 69% of respondents mentioned that the system does not consider individual learning styles and needs. Standardized teaching methods can make it hard for some students to keep up or feel engaged.

Focus on Memorization: 60% of students said that they spend more time memorizing information for exams than learning concepts deeply. This reduces creativity and limits the development of independent thinking. **Additional Observations:** Students who had access to online resources reported 30% higher

satisfaction with their learning compared to those who relied mainly on traditional classroom methods.

Interviewed students emphasized that practical activities, such as group projects and presentations, were the most effective for understanding topics, compared to lectures alone. In summary, the results show that modern education provides significant advantages in accessibility, technology use, and skill development. However, traditional challenges, such as exam pressure and rigid teaching methods, still affect student experience and learning outcomes. These findings suggest that while modern education has progressed, there is still room for improvement to fully meet the needs of students.

Discussion. The findings of this study demonstrate that the modern education system contains both important strengths and significant weaknesses. The results revealed that technological integration, accessibility to information, and interactive learning methods positively influence students' learning experiences. Modern educational approaches encourage critical thinking, communication, creativity, and practical problem-solving skills, which help students adapt to the rapidly changing demands of the 21st century. At the same time, the study identified several weaknesses, including excessive exam pressure, overdependence on grades, standardized teaching methods, and the limited consideration of students' individual abilities and interests. These factors may reduce students' intrinsic motivation and create stress and anxiety in the learning process.

Many scholars have previously discussed similar issues from different perspectives. Ivan Illich in *Deschooling Society* [5/1-5] argued that modern schools often make students dependent on diplomas and formal certification rather than real competence and independent learning. According to Illich, one of the major weaknesses of modern education is excessive institutionalization and standardization. The findings of the present study partially support Illich's arguments because many participants stated that modern schools focus heavily on examinations and memorization. However, unlike Illich's mainly theoretical criticism of schooling systems, this study provides practical evidence from students' real experiences and perceptions in contemporary classrooms.

Similarly, Paulo Freire in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* [4/ 72-80] criticized the "banking model" of education, where students passively receive information from teachers without active participation or critical reflection. Freire emphasized that education should promote dialogue, critical thinking, and student participation. The findings of this research strongly align with Freire's ideas because participants expressed greater interest and engagement when learning became interactive and discussion-based rather than lecture-centered. Nevertheless, this study differs from Freire's work because it specifically examines how modern educational practices

influence students' psychological attitudes, motivation, and adaptability within current technology-supported learning environments.

Another important scholar, John Dewey in *Democracy and Education* [2/7-15], emphasized that education should connect classroom learning with real-life experiences. Dewey believed that practical learning, communication, and collaboration are essential strengths of an effective educational system. The present study supports Dewey's perspective since many students reported that project-based learning, technological tools, and collaborative classroom activities improved their understanding and participation. However, while Dewey mainly focused on experiential learning as a philosophy of education, this study additionally highlights how modern digital technologies influence students' learning experiences in contemporary education systems.

Furthermore, Ken Robinson in *Creative Schools* [11/23-40] argued that standardized testing and rigid educational structures suppress creativity and individuality. Robinson considered creativity one of the most essential skills for modern learners, yet he believed that many schools prioritize exams over innovation and self-expression. The findings of this study strongly support Robinson's arguments because several participants mentioned that constant testing and academic pressure negatively affect students' confidence, motivation, and creativity. However, unlike Robinson's broader global critique of education systems, this research specifically investigates how students themselves perceive both the advantages and disadvantages of modern education in their daily academic lives.

The originality of this study lies in its balanced and experience-based analysis of both strengths and weaknesses of the modern education system from students' perspectives. While many previous researchers focused mainly on theoretical criticism or philosophical interpretations of education, this research combines those theoretical ideas with practical observations and student experiences. In addition, unlike earlier studies that primarily concentrated on educational policies or institutional structures, this study emphasizes students' emotional responses, learning motivation, adaptability, and classroom experiences in modern educational environments.

Another unique contribution of this research is that it explores the dual influence of technology in education. Previous studies often discussed technology either as a positive innovation or as a challenge. In contrast, this study demonstrates that technology can simultaneously increase accessibility and engagement while also creating distractions, dependence, and reduced face-to-face interaction among students. Therefore, the findings suggest that educational reforms should not only focus on academic achievement but also consider students' creativity, individuality, mental well-being, and active participation in the learning process.

Overall, the results indicate that although the modern education system offers valuable opportunities through technology, accessibility, and innovative teaching methods, important reforms are still necessary. More student-centered approaches, flexible learning models, reduced exam pressure, and greater attention to creativity and critical thinking may help create a more balanced and effective educational system for future generations.

Conclusion. This study demonstrates that the modern education system possesses both notable strengths and significant weaknesses. On the positive side, modern education has greatly improved accessibility, allowing students from diverse backgrounds to reach learning opportunities that were previously limited. The integration of technology has transformed traditional classrooms into interactive learning environments, making education more engaging and effective. Additionally, the modern system emphasizes the development of critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills, which are essential for success in the rapidly changing global environment. Despite these advantages, several challenges remain. The persistent emphasis on exams and grades often encourages memorization rather than deep understanding, which can negatively affect students' motivation, mental health, and overall learning outcomes. Furthermore, the lack of flexibility in teaching methods does not adequately address individual learning needs, resulting in inequality and disengagement among students. These weaknesses highlight the necessity for educational reforms that focus on student-centered approaches, personalized learning, and practical skill development.

Overall, while the modern education system has made substantial progress compared to traditional models, it is clear that there is still room for improvement. By addressing the identified weaknesses, educational institutions can create a more balanced and effective system that not only transfers knowledge but also fosters personal growth, creativity, and lifelong learning. Future research and policy efforts should focus on developing flexible curricula, reducing exam-related pressures, and integrating technology in a way that enhances learning rather than overwhelms students.

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