

## Collaborations 2023

**Q.2. Has Indian education raised the ceiling or lowered the floor with regard to children and their learning these days? Explain.**

Ans. The previous question made me conscious of the fact that change is inevitable. So if we talk about the teaching-learning process then, I do think that we have progressed. Hands-on activities, debates, discussions, sense training, nature walks etc. are some of the processes that we consciously use in everyday teaching and learning as opposed to sitting in the classroom, reading and completing written work, which used to be a norm earlier. So, in this sense Indian education has raised the ceiling but my opinion cannot be generalized as there are so many types of schools these days, each with its own vision. However, this opinion is based on those several private schools and public schools and educators who are working hard to raise the ceiling and make teaching and learning fun. Now, let's talk about another aspect of our education system which is "assessment". If we look at the pen and paper tests that our children have to go through then I feel we are at a standstill. I very clearly remember the time when I was in class 12, my Principal used to visit each section of class 12 almost every day, just to talk to us and motivate us. Just before our board exams, she came to our class and told us "work hard and try to put your best foot forward but do keep in mind that this 3 hour pen and paper test can never map your entire potential. So, whatever the result is, stay true to yourself..... and never stop believing in yourself", these words will always stay with me but do the children of this day and age also need to hear this? the answer is YES, so we are, where we were 10 years back!

Same is the case with our textbooks, which have not been changed since forever. The other day, I saw my cousin (she is in class 8) reading the same Science book which I was prescribed when I was in class 8, back in 2008....15 years ago! So, with regard to children and their learning, Indian education has not lowered the floor but in majority of the aspects we are at a standstill.

**Ms. Aastha Dureja**

**Q.2. Has Indian education raised the ceiling or lowered the floor with regard to children and their learning these days? Explain.**

Ans. With the change in times and more cut-throat competitions and lesser job opportunities as provisioned for students, many families feel the need to send their children to coaching and tuitions. The Indian Education system upon paper does mention an integrated approach to education, focusing on “child’s all-round development (as mentioned in the most recent NEP, 2020) but seeing it in practice has become a rare sight.

While education should focus on creating morally-abiding and critically thinking individuals, who uplift each other and better the environment, it has not been able to produce the results at large. The execution seems lacking as even the youngest of learners have been pushed into a race to be the best by their parents’ aspirations for them. The tuition focuses on rote learning and memorizing the facts, repetitions, drills and completion of syllabus – the end goal being to score full marks, not to become empathetic and enlightened individuals. The spirit of scientific enquiry, innovation, reflection, problem-solving, culture of care and appreciation have been put on the back – burner in this race towards scoring well. The floor for sure has lowered when it comes to children’ learning in the Indian education system.

It no longer is an enjoyable and empowering process, the end-goal being to become a machine that earns well and finds a job in the highly competitive world.

**Ms. Mansi Sharma**

**Q.2. Has Indian education raised the ceiling or lowered the floor with regard to children and their learning these days? Explain.**

Ans. As far as I know, the Indian education system has been stagnant for quite a long time. It has neither raised the ceiling nor lowered, it is just there! Time has changed, people have evolved, certain concepts are outdated but we are still constant and that is the problem.

Considering Mathematics, NCERT Maths textbook, what I read during my school days is exactly the same as what I am teaching today, not even a single value has changed. One of the reasons, we have to opt for reference books for our students.

Coming to the teaching and learning methods, it completely depends on the institution you are working with. If there is flexibility in exploration of these processes, then you can always re-define the standard teaching - learning process.

Talking about the problems in our current education system, some are listed below:

1. **Old curriculum of study and lack of practical knowledge:** As discussed above, there is a need to re-design our curriculum to meet the needs of our growing society and make our teaching-learning process more realistic and interdisciplinary.
2. **Obsessed with English language:** Though English is a global language, we don't have to start the foundational years of our students with a foreign language. Education at least in the initial years should be imparted in regional language.
3. **Zero functional literacy and market knowledge:** Again as discussed, since there have been negligible changes in the syllabus from the past two decades, students lack current market knowledge (awareness, and understanding of business, economics and environment.) There is emphasis on completing 12 chapters of a subject rather than focusing on the functional concepts of a particular discipline.
4. **Obsession with Maths and Science:** We have been pioneers of Mathematics and Science, but that is not the only thing we can do. There has to be emphasis given to other social and literary subjects. In fact, add creative subjects along with Maths and Science to help students understand the bigger picture right from the beginning. My brother hates Maths, probably remembers nothing about it and not even using it. He is far better than me when it comes to functional mathematics (basic arithmetic operations) and earns much more than me:) though I am a Maths postgraduate:)

**Ms. Yashasvi Verma**