

**PROJECT METHOD  
(MERITS AND  
DEMERITS)**



## Merits of the Project Method

The following are the merits of the project method :

**1. Psychological Method :** The project method is based on solid psychological bases. Under this method, the learning principles and individual differences and interest, ability, nature of the students are kept in view. Under this method, the curiosity, collection, creativity, investigative attitudes are fulfilled. The students maintain their interest in the method due to the following reasons :

- (a) Definite and clear-cut objectives.
- (b) Atmosphere of freedom.
- (c) Acquiring knowledge by the student actively.
- (d) The task being useful and real for life and meant for problem-solving.

This method puts into practice the three rules of learning as propounded by Thorndike : law of readiness, law of exercise and law of effect.

**2. Experimental and Practical Method :** This method gives importance to the activism of the student. Whatever knowledge is gained by the student is not imposed upon him by the teacher. On the contrary, it is learnt by the student by practical activities and direct experiences. The following two are the chief merits of this method :

- (a) First, it is based on the maxim 'learning by doing'.
- (b) Second, in this method the project is selected keeping in view the everyday needs of the students and to know their social and natural atmosphere.

Due to the above reasons, the students use the project method to solve the real life problems as training for life, besides they learn to put science learning into practice.

**3. Interesting and Natural :** This method is based on 'learning by doing' and 'learning at play' and is interesting and natural. It signifies the importance of child-like activities.

**4. Cultivation of Various Qualities :** In the individual project, the child develops the attitudes of enterprise, self-dependence and free thinking, while in the collective project, he develops the spirit of sociality.

**5. Durable and Unambiguous Knowledge :** The knowledge gained by this method is durable because the students gain knowledge attentively and by direct experiences and activities, and not by listening or cramming the facts alone. Besides this knowledge being practical, it is also based on his own endeavours, so it is more permanent.

**6. Working with Hands :** Under this method, all students put in their whole mental and physical faculties without any distinction of high or low, rich or poor, etc. They are not indifferent to the workers, nor do they develop feelings of hatred for the labourers. We know that the greatest demerit of the modern education is that it produces feeling of indifference for the labourers.

**7. Impartial Judgement and Proper Thinking :** In order to reach the outcome of their task, the students are trained in taking impartial judgement and proper thinking. Secondly, they have to analyse the outcomes, so they are also trained in the evaluation of their task.

**8. Spirit of Education :** The project method is especially useful for training in discipline. It is essential for each student to maintain discipline while taking active part in the project until the task is complete. It cultivates the attitude of working with zeal in a responsible manner.

**9. Democratic Way of Learning :** The project method is a democratic way to teach the student, as can be seen from the following characteristics :

- (a) The child is free to work in his own way in this method.
- (b) The child is given freedom to think and take decision right from the selection of the project until its completion.
- (c) Each student contributes to the project according to his ability and capability.
- (d) The teacher and students have the common objective of completing the project. So all students and the teacher work with zeal and cooperate with one another towards the achievement of the objective.

**10. Equal Opportunity for Development :** Because each student gets to work according to his ability and interest, so no student feels neglected. Thus, all students get equal opportunity for development.

**11. Growth of Social Qualities :** The following social qualities are developed in this method :

- (a) Under this method the social attitude is made the basis for imparting education.
- (b) Teaching is used to mould the students into the society, as far as may be possible.
- (c) All activities related to the project are completed within the social environment.
- (d) The students combine to select a project which is able to fulfil their objective easily.
- (e) The selected project is acceptable to all.
- (f) The programme on the project is made after suitable mutual discussion.
- (g) All tasks are divided among the students according to the interest, ability and capability of the students for achievement of the objectives of the project.
- (h) Because of working together, the students develop different social qualities, such as spirit of responsibility, forbearance, patience, dutifulness, mutual love and cooperation, etc.

**12. Permanence of Learning :** Because the students learn the content in the natural atmosphere, the knowledge gained in this method is more permanent.

**13. Suitable for Mental Development :** The students undertake thinking and contemplation by themselves for problem-solving and attempt to establish cause-effect relationship among various aspects. As a result, there are more possibilities of their mental development.

**14. Self-Confidence :** The students self-evaluate under this method. It brings about self-confidence, self-dependence and self-publication.

**15. Ideal Method :** Under this method, the project is selected from all three important points : social, industrial and natural, and with the project at the centre, all science subjects are unified into one.

**16. Scientific Attitude :** Stevenson has opined with reference to the project method that it is a problem-solving task which is completed in the natural circumstances. So, in the project method there is a problem before the students, which they accept as a challenge. The opportunities that they get in this method of thinking freely, reasoning, using and getting direct experiences, are fully utilized by them. As a result, help is rendered to them to make their attitude scientific.

**17. Motivation :** Under this method, the students work according to their interest and capability and compare their work with those of other hard working students. It motivates them to use their intellectual and physical faculties to the maximum.

**18. Development of Various Qualities :** Under this method, there is coordination of different physical, mental and emotional qualities. Such a successful amalgamation of heart, mind and hand occurs in no other method. So it would be erroneous to say that the students get an opportunity to develop their mental faculties alone. In fact, their physical development also takes place. It is because that the students have to think, write, read and physically labour for the completion of the task.

**19. Free from the Problems of Indiscipline and Homework :** Under this method, the students keep busy in carrying out their responsibility in accordance with their interest and zeal. As a result, there is an atmosphere of creative discipline. The students keep thinking about the problems they face in the project. So there is no need to assign homework to them. Thus, the teacher is free from some problems.

**20. Related to Home and Society :** Under this method, the school forms lively contact with the society, because the acquired knowledge at school is according to the social circumstances. The school becomes a mini-society.

### **Demerits of the Project Method**

The following are the demerits and shortcomings of the project method :

**1. Too Expensive :** Completion of a project under the project method requires sufficient amount of money. For example :

- (a) It needs fully equipped laboratories, library and other essential tools and aids.
- (b) The students have also to bear expenses to buy essential materials and to make effort to acquire knowledge.
- (c) Much material and money is wastefully spent in the absence of experience and skill.
- (d) The benefit accruing from the project is less as compared to the expenditure.

It shows that the project method is an expensive method.

**2. Time Consuming :** Completion of a project needs much time. For example, the project related to the planting of a garden at school takes a long time. So the

task is completed at a slow rate. Each project takes much time while only partial knowledge is acquired.

**3. Non-systematic Teaching Method :** It is difficult to complete the content in an organized way under this method.

**4. Appropriate Evaluation not Possible :** It is difficult to use the contemporary techniques under this teaching method.

**5. Too Much Expectation from the Teacher :** The responsibility of the teacher increases several folds :

- (a) The teacher has to work much right from the selection of the project to its completion.
- (b) The teacher has to study the students psychologically.
- (c) The teacher has to acquaint himself with the abilities, individual differences, interests and needs of the students.
- (d) The teacher has to inspect their work from time to time.
- (e) The teacher has to provide guidance to the students from time to time.
- (f) It is well known that it is an easy task to get a task done by the students by order, but it is very difficult to make them work after making them experience their needs and utility of the project, but this method expects this very methodology to be followed.
- (g) Under this method, the teacher is expected to gain mastery over all subjects equally and also skillful in all professional and practical tasks, which is extremely impractical. It is not only imaginary but also impractical to expect from the teacher to be in the know of all project-related tasks and also be able to impart the knowledge to the students.

**6. Impracticable :** It is not possible to teach the whole of curriculum with this method, nor can it be used to impart clear and effective knowledge about it.

**7. Facing Difficulties :** Several difficulties are faced while using this method, the important of which are as follows :

- (a) If teaching work is started using this method, it becomes difficult to impart the knowledge of the subject properly, so the teacher has to tell much in between the method. Besides, the teacher has to fill in the knowledge pertaining to the fields for which knowledge in the method is not complete.
- (b) In order to use this method, school time table is changed. If a student changes school due to one or the other reason, he has to face much loss of study.
- (c) It is not possible to arrange for sufficient money for this method due to paucity of resources.
- (d) The schools face the problem of having excessive number of students and shortage of resources. Besides, the ratio of teachers to students is not proper.
- (e) The method requires well qualified, trained, able and experienced teachers, which is a difficult task. So, proper guidance to run this method is not available.



- (f) Proper textbooks which have been written with this method in view, are not available. So it becomes difficult to impart theoretical knowledge.
- (g) The curriculum is very extensive. This method is not kept in view while constructing and organising the curriculum.
- (h) This method has no place in the contemporary educational system.

**8. Deep Study of Subject not Possible :** Under this method, the subject matter is selected from different places. So, the intensive study of any subject in a proper order is not possible.

**9. Not Applicable to Every School :** The tools and equipment required for this method are generally not available in all schools. Moreover, the teachers are not so efficient, nor are there well-equipped laboratories in schools besides other needed resources.

**10. Lack of Order and Completeness :** Under the project method, the teaching work is completed in reference to different topics. The chief task of the teachers and students under it is to complete the project. Whatever knowledge is needed while working on the project, it is made available to the students whatever stage of study it might belong to, or to whichever subject it might pertain to. Due to these hindrances, the whole teaching-learning programme is disturbed and becomes disordered. The students receive the knowledge of different subjects in small amount which is completely disordered. Thus, knowledge is not imparted in a proper order, nor it is able to make the students practical and skillful.

**11. Blending of Different Subjects :** Under some projects, some subjects are not blended properly, so the teacher has to undertake blending of different subjects, which may cause the whole curriculum out of context.

**12. Project Becoming the Goal :** Under this method, the teachers and students involve themselves in the project and forget that the project is only a means and not the goal.

**13. Limited Utility :** This method is not logical and useful for the higher classes. Those classes need to impart knowledge of the curriculum in an order and in a logical way, so this method is not suitable for them.

Despite the presence of the above mentioned shortcomings and defects, the project method is a meaningful, natural, purposeful and interesting method. It can provide great help in the adjustment and utility of the curriculum in their practical life due to the qualities of its having purposefulness, aim, activity, experience, reality, freedom and utility.