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Bridging the Gap Between Learning Theory and Classroom Practice: A Relational Framework for Sri Lankan Educators

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Abstract

According to recent studies, Sri Lanka's economic development is inextricably linked to the efficacy of its education system. Despite this, the nation faces high unemployment and low productivity in key sectors, such as production and transport, shortcomings often attributed to an exam-centric curriculum that lacks alignment with labour market demands. This research identifies a critical disconnect between theoretical pedagogical foundations and their practical application in the classroom. To address this, the study introduces a relational diagram designed to guide teachers in theory selection and application. This tool serves as a scaffold for lesson planning, aimed at reducing instructional ambiguity and increasing teacher self-efficacy. By simplifying the referencing of complex learning theories, the framework promotes continuous professional development and aligns classroom roles with specific competency goals. Ultimately, this article argues that bridging the theory-practice gap through structured pedagogical tools is essential for improving both the quality and productivity of the Sri Lankan educational environment.

Keywords: Learning theory, Conditioning, Cognitive development, Relational diagram, Conditioning process theories, Learning process influential theories, Process theory of moral development

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Introduction

Basically, there are three approaches to learning or teaching: behaviourism, cognitivism and constructivism. Accordingly, scientists have developed and adopted learning theories. However, the theories that the teacher adopts will depend on several factors, including the course type, assessment types, course goals and learners' requirements.

It has been argued that learning theories often fail to identify individual differences and diversity, and cognitive capacity overload is also possible. However, theories have been developed for these situations, but identifying a relevant theory remains difficult.

In many learning/ teaching situations, academics have highlighted the problems teachers experience. Some educators argue that the theory fails to explain learning and achievement (Dognnun, 2017). Further, they state that learning theories and research have a number of problems, including a lack of a solid explanatory framework. Scholars have identified key difficulties in learning/teaching environments when applying theories. Insufficient teaching resources, limited instructional time, overcrowded classrooms, and a non-conducive learning environment. feeling confused or hesitant due to fear of inaccuracy, and many more (Zaheer, 2025). Such situations negatively impact the teaching performance and achievement. Moreover, defective textbooks and monotonous syllabi fail to engage students, contributing to low interest and ineffective learning outcomes. Yet they face significant burdens in fostering productive student engagement. The study highlights the need for enhanced teacher training, updated curricula, and better resource allocation.

Problem Statement

According to the Institute of Development Economics (2011), the main issues in Sri Lanka's education system are a rigid, exam-centric curriculum that fails to meet labour market demands. This statement was selected as the research problem.

Methodology

It seems that primary research is impractical because the resources available for the study are limited. Further to that, designing primary research is impractical due to the significance of limited resources, time, and expertise required.

When compared to the efficiency of secondary research. It provides unique, tailored, and up-to-date data. Moreover, the question is finding the position of various theories within the research paradigm. So, designing primary research relevant to the question is also quite impossible. Therefore, considering the limited resources and research design problems, a secondary research was selected.

There are disadvantages also in carrying out primary research. It is said to be expensive, time-consuming and take a long time to complete if it involves face-to-face contact with customers. However, such expenses kept to a minimum by referring to existing literature, and already there was some information collected. It requires some prior information about the

subject, and ideally, market research skills to get the best results.

Means (2022) states that when primary research is impractical, utilising a literature-based approach in educational psychology and cognition is an academically recognised method. When primary research is impractical, it has been emphasised that synthesising existing studies aligns with the need to build on established findings to create comprehensive theoretical frameworks. Accordingly, we decided to refer to existing research literature.

Research Objectives

Main Research Objective

To develop and evaluate a relational diagram of pedagogical learning theories categorised by expected outcomes to support teaching practitioners in defining and aligning classroom strategies, job roles, and competencies.

Specific Research Objectives

To identify and categorise key learning theories (behaviourism, cognitivism, constructivism, connectivism) based on their expected learning outcomes and application in lesson planning.

To develop a relational diagram/mapping tool that visualises the connections between learning theories, instructional strategies, and pedagogical goals.

To validate the effectiveness and usability of the relational diagram as a "handheld" tool for teachers during the instructional design process and live teaching sessions.

To evaluate the impact of continuous reference to the diagram on the mapping process, specifically in aligning classroom job roles with learning objectives

Literature Review

Usually, difficulties in learning are a common complaint in societies. Learning components, such as reading, spelling and arithmetic disorders. As a consequence, many different denotations exist between general and specific forms, or point out the stability of the learning. Lenhard (2013) states that the term learning disability usually highlights general and long-lasting learning difficulties linked to the field of special education.

Obviously, many individual matters may contribute in this context. There are genetic and neurobiological correlates as well as cognitive, motivational, affective and socio-economic determinants of learning difficulties, some of which are easier to modulate (prior knowledge, motivation) than others (Lenhard, 2013). Memory span and socio-economic background may also contribute. The diagnosis and intervention have to address the individual problems of the affected person.

The curricula of general education and tertiary education have distinctive differences since the tertiary education system usually doesn't expel failures, but encourage to repeat tests. distinguish between general and specific learning. With the change of the social status, educational policies may vary considerably within different areas. Some countries practice segregation of poor-performing children and teenagers. There is currently a strong trend towards inclusive education, especially since the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

As a remedy for improving the learning process, academics do their best to find answers. Policy makers, it is expected, try to find solutions through a structured, often political process that combines evidence-based analysis. While libraries are filled with research reports, the problems remain as they were. Therefore, a question remains: "Why do the educators neglect these researchers' findings (Najim, 2013). Therefore, the available literature and research studies were referred to for the conceptualisation purpose.

Every generation bears the burden of transferring existing knowledge and skills to the next generation. To fulfil this requirement, *gurus* and followers played an important role and constituted an essential part of each society. They continuously engaged in the never-ending struggle of transferring knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Concurrently, academics defined and developed learning-related concepts. Today, the concept of learning has matured considerably, and some theories have evolved; however, critics (Illeris, 1999) say many of these learning models compete, thus limiting them to a particular model. Therefore, it is evident that the existing theories, models, and concepts are sufficient for the requirement, due to some reasons, the problems remain as usual.

In many situations, learners face numerous difficulties in understanding the subject matter, but keep silent in the classroom. Reigeluth (2011) states that people learn at different rates and have diverse learning needs, but our educators typically teach a predetermined, fixed amount of content in a set amount of time, which distances slow learners. This problem requires applying a different theoretical approach, such as a practice-based method.

Johnson (1992) states that, "Academics have not devoted enough to the development of learning theory." This is quite an incorrect explanation since there are many theories that have been developed by educators. However, a problem may remain somewhere else, as the teacher is not aware of the relevant theory. Such a situation could be minimised by introducing a relational diagram.

Illeris (1999) stresses the need to develop a holistic conception of learning. Therefore, a meaningful process diagram to visualise the learning mechanism could be useful to educators and other stakeholders. In his own words, Illeris (2007, p.2) says, "I tried to develop a framework that could cover the whole field of learning structurally." In his studies, Illeris focused on a combination of a variety of learning theories into a comprehensive framework, but it does not fill the need for a relational diagram.

Since one can observe that learning theories are scattered, finding a suitable theory for a particular occasion is not an easy job. It may discourage educators from applying a scientific solution to a problem. This situation has a tendency to cause anxiety. This situation may cause a teacher to deviate from using a modern learning method and become anxious. So, the teacher may be compelled to use a traditional teaching method, which often may result in not getting the expected result. This situation has been observable in moral development lessons within a classroom. One cannot find a theory relevant to moral development. Moral development as a subject has been taught in the school environment for a considerable period, but still, the teachers blame the ineffectiveness (Wickramasinghe, 2017) of the curriculum. The society blames the school authorities and politicians for the society's anti-social behaviour.

Poorly hypothesised learning theories, as well as duplicated versions, usually lead a person astray in a given teaching situation. Research indicates that several critical situations compel the instructors to identify, revise, or abandon existing theories in a given situation. Some educators state that the criteria for choosing teaching methods that suit students' skills and levels of knowledge must be tailored based on multiple factors, including the students' level of education, their professional or academic background, and the subject being taught. The efficiency of processing each new piece of information is also important. However, it is questionable whether the practicability of applying such approaches is possible in a crowded classroom with 40-50 students with very limited resources. It is visible that some countries operate school premises with poor environmental conditions, such as poor ventilation, high humidity, etc., where the ability to maintain students' concentration is highly questionable. So, such situations demand effective learning/teaching theories readily available.

In this literature review, many learning-related complaints were observed. Even though there are many learning theories suitable for every occasion, practitioners widely use cognitive development methods. This is the widely used method among every parent, reverent, and undertrained teachers. Societies rarely think of methods such as conditioning and its variants, operant conditioning, classical conditioning and differential conditioning, where there are many advantages.

Definition of Learning

Illeris (2007) argues that a generally accepted definition is not available for learning. He defines learning as “any process that in living organisms leads to permanent capacity change, and which is not solely due to biological reasons” (Illeris, 2007, p.3). Driscoll (2000, p.11) defines learning as “a persisting change in human performance.” These definitions suggest that the outcome of learning is a behaviour change paradigm suggested by early educators such as Piaget, Vygotsky, and Pavlov. These definitions do not explain why an individual acquires information and stores it, but does not behave accordingly. As an example, a person may be aware that stealing is legally and morally not acceptable, but he may steal or may not steal in the same environment. This unpredictable behaviour cannot be explained with the definitions put forward by Driscoll (2000) and Illeris (2007). Mayer (1982) agrees with Illeris (2007), but he uses the term ‘relatively permanent change’. Shuell (1986) also agrees with this

definition of behaviour change. Mackintosh (1986) disagrees with this definition and states that learning can take place without any immediate behavioural change.

It should be noted that a theory-based definition has little value, but a definition-based theory is pragmatic. Rotter (1989) declares that a good definition of a cognitive variable stated in a language lead to a common understanding. Mazur (2008) avers that learning is acquiring knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Only a limited number of educators are of this definition, but it fulfils the prerequisite for a 'theory' put forward by Rotter (1989). Therefore, to be clear in terms of process and practicability, the definition of learning could be aligned to historically proven concepts of learning, which are demarcated as the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. This definition helps to isolate many learning-related problems and promote the efficient application of learning-related theories. If a definition successfully demonstrates its adaptability to the process, a need does not arise for definitions that are more complicated.

Concepts/theories of Learning

Learning, according to Farrant (1980), is the process by which children acquire and retain attitudes, knowledge, understanding, skills, and capabilities. Learning may also be defined as a behavioural change in living organisms. However, there no unified agreement related to this process.

On the other hand, a person with a learning difficulty may be described as having specific problems processing certain forms of information (Karunanayaka et al., 2020). According to Guilford and Hoepfner (1971), outstanding examples of learning difficulties cited are: Severe difficulties in reading, writing, spelling, and arithmetic, etc. It has been reported by some researchers (Karunanayaka et al., 2020) that, during research, the teachers were not able to tell which type of learning difficulty a pupil is experiencing. This fact repeatedly proves the ineffectiveness of the application process of theories to practice.

Learning, as an important activity that humans engage in, occupies the nucleus of the educational process. One's ability to influence the learning of another person has been prioritised in the agenda among religious leaders and philosophers for thousands of years. They have devoted their lives to understanding the nature of learning and practising transferring techniques. In recent history, academics have developed various hypotheses and, based on these hypotheses, established many methodologies. Modern knowledge advancements could be the result of such developments. Hanushek and Woessmann (2010) state that the cognitive skills development of the population is powerfully related to long-run economic growth. In parallel to the development of learning theories, scholars have developed measuring techniques to determine the progress of learning, the factors that influence learning, and the factors that induce learning.

It is difficult to assume concepts for any subject matter will fit every situation and environment. There are limitations and boundaries of concepts that should be identified to facilitate the transfer of theory into practice.

Learning is considered the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Laird, 1985). Occasionally, this process includes the deliberate assumption of predictable behaviour change. Traditionally, learning has been viewed as something that occurs within an individual. Early learning theories fit this model despite moral and ethical issues. Learning and teaching techniques based on this concept were widely practised in every society, even if they were conceptualised in the 20th century. Illeris (2009) concluded that learning is a very complicated matter and studies must consider the entire field.

Learning was theorised based on three dimensions: behaviouristic, cognitive, and observational. The behaviouristic approach to learning was developed by Thorndike (1898), Pavlov (1927), and Skinner (1938); they were known as behavioural theories. These theories attempted to explain the effect of a stimulus on the learning processes. Pavlov's studies focused on environmental factors in behaviour change, known as classical conditioning. Skinner (1938) theorised the process of behaviour change by the application of reinforcement, applied after the desired response. This process has been named operant conditioning and used in many societies in the world. Even though behavioural theories do not provide a perfect explanation of the learning process, they provide a single component, a part of a solid foundation, which is clear and visible enough to develop a learning mechanism. However, these behavioural theories do not satisfactorily explain how individuals come to understand/develop/originate complex ideas and phenomena.

Cognition development- based learning theories, such as Piaget's (1936) concern with how cognitive development occurs, which is consistent with the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes perspective. Modern learning concepts, based on observational learning approaches such as constructivism, socio-constructivism, experimental learning, situated learning theory, and community of practice, also recognise the cognitive development concept. Bandura (1977), while agreeing with conditioning theories, suggests that behaviour is learned from the environment through observation. This theory is more meaningful and more comprehensive if the word "observation" replaces the word "senses", because human senses other than vision also provide information to enhance learning. Therefore, these observational learning-oriented theories could also be described under the cognitive development concept.

Illeris (2007) states that traditional behaviourist theories and cognitive learning theories focus only on the internal psychological process. He argues that external interaction and an internal psychological process must be actively involved for learning to take place. However, learning could happen solely as an internal psychological process as opined by Piaget (1952), irrespective of the environment, although this process may require a catalyst to improve its effectiveness. This is the situation where learning process development theories become useful.

Literature reveals conditioning is the response that is generated as a result of learning or as a behaviour change. According to Rescorla (1988), definitions of conditioning seem to vary widely in their precision and sophistication. At present, both cognitive development and conditioning are considered in a single domain of learning. Both cognitive development and

conditioning are psychological processes induced by external factors. In the case of conditioning, these factors are controlled as pre-planned, specific, and targeted factors, which have been crafted to achieve a predefined behaviour change. However, in the case of cognitive development, these factors seem to be loosely associated with the process, rather than deliberately expecting cognitive development. Therefore, enough reasons prevail to consider cognitive development and conditioning as two distinctive processes, which provide a basic understanding of the application of existing learning theories.

This article will not evaluate numerous theories related to these learning processes. However, most of these theories operate as individual process theories and do not reveal the relationship to other theories or to the process, which distances practitioners from theories. Whenever there are multiple theories for a single process, a mechanism should be available to evaluate one theory over the others or the interrelationship of theories, if any; however, I was not able to find literature related to this concept. I argue that stray theories have a value if the process is direct and limited to a distinctive process. To be meaningful, a complex process theory should be typical, and should be clear of where and when a theory fits into a given situation/process/system or to other related theories. The present ambiguity of selecting a learning theory is a result of the non-availability of a related mechanism, and could be answered by a meaningful categorisation of learning theories and identifying their position in a relation diagram.

There is no general agreement on the types of learning. Referring to works of Piaget (1952) and Flavell (1963), Illeris (2007) identifies four types of learning, activated in different contexts. Accordingly, he identifies the first type of learning as conditioning, where “learning result is characterised by a type of automation that means, it can only be recalled and applied in situations mentally similar to the learning context” (Illeris, 2007). Secondly, he identifies learning based on an assimilative process, which involves learning by addition. This is the most common type of learning, and the new information is linked as an addition to a scheme that is already established. The third type he identified as accommodative (or transcendent) learning, which implies that one breaks down existing schema and reconstructs it. The fourth type, according to his categorisation, involves transformative learning, which is characterised by simultaneous restructuring of a whole cluster of schemes and patterns that resulted from previous learning.

Learning processes: Assimilation, accommodation (Piaget, 1936), and transformative (Engeström, 1987) have similar characteristics of absorbing information, and differ in their processing and storing. The whole process involves cognitive development, which is by addition or restructuring. However, conditioning has dissimilar characteristics compared to the cognitive development process. Therefore, it is reasonable to separate existing learning theories as ‘conditioning theories’ and ‘cognitive development theories’.

Furthermore, to be more meaningful, the existing cognitive development theories, including observational theories, should be categorised as three main streams such as cognitive development theories, cognitive development process influential theories, and cognitive development transformation theories. The table on page seven was constructed

considering this concept, which simplifies the understanding of the learning concept and identifies related theories relevant to the learning process.

Illeris (2009), in his “The Contemporary Theories of Learning,” has selected 17 authors as the most important learning theorists: This includes theoretical contributions of Knud Illeris, Peter Jarvis, Robert Kegan, YrjöEngeström, Bente Elkjaer, Jack Mezirow, Howard Gardner, Peter Alheit, John Heron, Mark Tennant, Jerome Bruner, Robin Usher, Thomas Ziehe, Jean Lave, Etienne Wenger, Danny Wildemeersch, and Veerle Stroobants. These theories have a cognitive development approach and can be considered as learning development theories. The present studies of learning and modern learning theories seem to be within the basic concepts of early learning theories of Thorndike (1898), Pavlov (1927), Piaget (1936), Skinner (1938), Bandura (1977), and Kohlberg (1984). Johnson (1992) states that academics have not worked sufficiently towards the development of learning theory. Hardly any contribution to the development of learning theories is visible in the last two decades, which suggests two things: hypothesising the subject has reached its full maturity, or its complexity keeps away prospective researchers.

Practical Implication for Classroom Teachers

A teacher, before entering the classroom, should be reasonably equipped with teaching strategies other than subject knowledge. The strategies are backed by learning theory, which usually varies with the classroom situation, and the classroom environment may differ substantially, requiring diverse teaching means. Further to that, the teacher must have the skill of identifying the correct teaching method and switching from one method to another in no time, since an ordinary classroom is occupied with a diverse mixture of students with different capacities. As such, the relational diagram of learning provides the teacher with immense support.

This article attempts to simplify the perception of the sequential learning process and propose a relational diagram. A comprehensive and sequential flow of the learning process improves the instructional development process. This panoptic view helps the instructional designer by offering the freedom to identify a suitable theory for the intended process. Furthermore, future researchers will be able to visualise this complex learning process with minimum effort and develop their studies. However, more research is needed in the area of the knowledge transfer process,

The American Association for the Advancement of Science defines a theory as “a well-substantiated explanation of some aspect of the natural world”-it could be proved or disproved with the emerging new facts. The education theories proposed by Skinner, Kohlberg, Piaget, and Bandura have proved their validity in many occasions, and their theories have been repeatedly proven true. As such, some of the proposed modern theories need critical conceptualisation to satisfy these fundamental requirements.

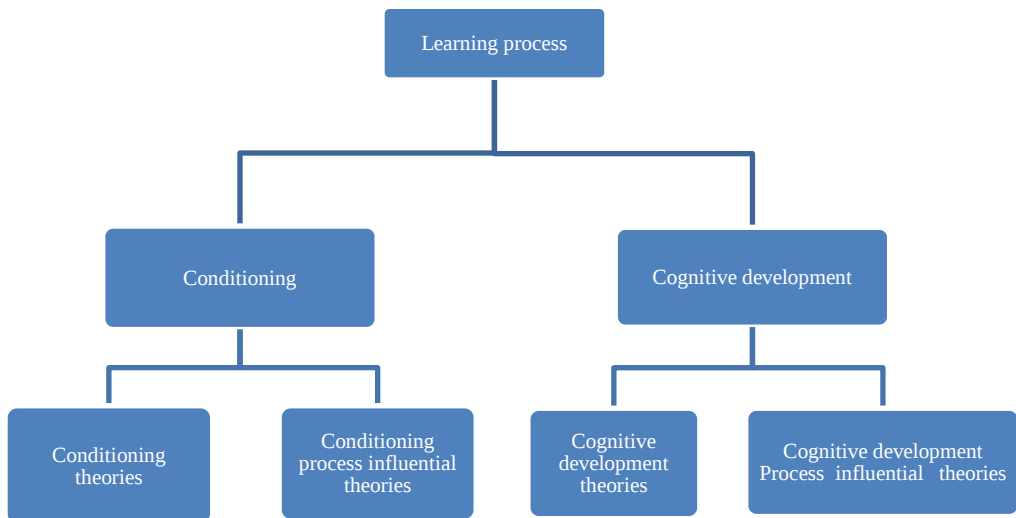
Application of Theory to Practice

Successful bridging of learning research with educational practices is essential to ensure effective learning within an instructional environment. Tyler (1978) identified a need to create a negotiating position, which, in other terms, was suggested by Dewey (1900), to develop a linking science. Lynch (1945) suggested a mechanism using technical jargon as an “engineering analogy” as a tool for combining theory into practice. Therefore, an instructional designer has to be aware of all the learning processes and their potential use in different situations, which is highly impractical. Instructional designers have the responsibility of translating principles of learning and instructions into specifications for instructional materials and activities (Smith & Ragan, 1993). Therefore, to facilitate the process, the instructional designer needs a reference tool, which has not been invented yet; the specific objective of this article is to develop such a tool.

Many literatures categorise theories of learning as behaviourist theories, cognitive psychology, constructivism, social constructivism, experiential learning, multiple intelligences, situated learning theory and community of practice. However, careful analysis of these processes reveals that some theories could be better explained as learning process influential theories. Confusions of understanding learning theories could be minimised by considering that some learning theories directly involve cognitive development processes, while others behave as a process-influential perspective. The following chart visualises a comprehensive model for the learning process:

Figure 01

Comprehensive Model for the Learning Process



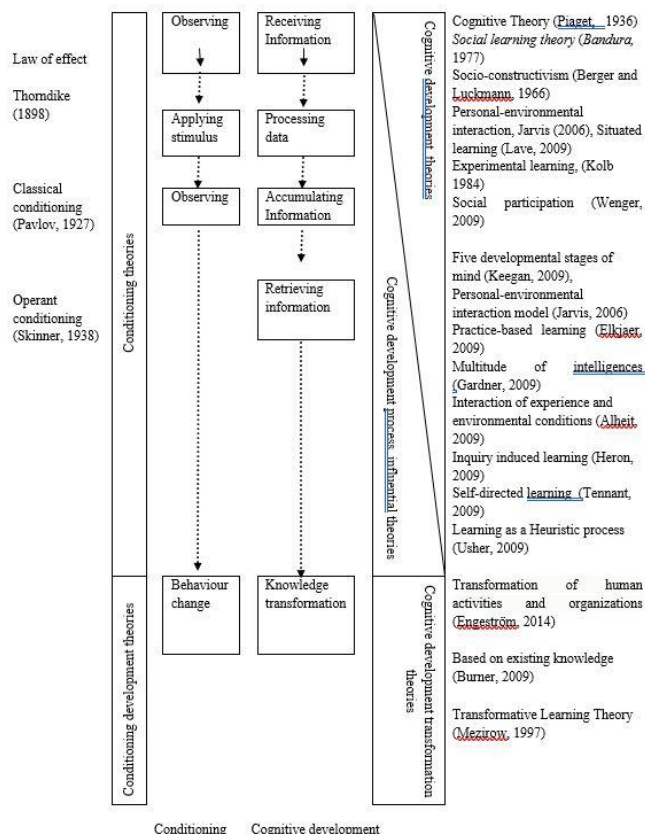
Source: Comprehensive model for the learning process, (Wickramasinghe 2026),
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The concept of the learning process is dichotomous; i.e., conditioning and cognitive development. The conditioning concept could be further categorised as conditioning theories and conditioning influential theories. Likewise, the cognitive development concept could be further categorised as cognitive development theories and the cognitive development process, influential theories. This categorisation helps to identify learning theories in four streams and facilitates visualising the conditioning and learning processes and relevant development theories in a single platform.

Behavioural theories (Pavlov, 1927; Skinner, 1938; Thorndike, 1898) explain how conditioning happens, and the cognitive theory of Piaget (1936) explains how cognitive development happens, and clearly serving as conditioning/cognitive development process theories. However, later developed theories explain how to influence conditioning and cognitive development processes, and more meaningful naming, such as conditioning/cognitive development process influence theories.

Figure 02

Relational Diagram of Learning (Conditioning/ Cognitive Development) Theories



Source: Relational Diagram of the Learning Theories (Wickramasinghe, 2025)

Emergence of New Concepts in Learning

As with any other concept, the learning concept is also subject to change, hypothetically towards its development. Accordingly, with the development of society in technological and social life, new learning concepts have emerged. As such, it may be useful to see whether they satisfy the basic requirements of theory building. Nevertheless, some educators complain that some of the existing theories are becoming obsolete (Meglino, 2026) due to their lack of empirical support or their inability to address the complexities of modern learning environments, particularly in the digital age.

Fundamental theories are integral to the development of new theories. To build new theories, fundamental theories provide the limitations that help demarcate the theoretical framework explaining the basic principles or underlying mechanisms, and develop logical arguments about how and why a phenomenon occurs. The fundamental concepts in learning are Cognitive development and Conditioning. Every instance of learning depends on these concepts. These principles or axioms can universally help derive the underlying learning concept. However, the claim of a new theory is distinct from traditional epistemological paradigms and can be questioned unless proper attention is paid to basic principles.

Cognitive development processes are the most common learning/teaching technique. Most societies and family units practised this technique. Elders in the family delivered their knowledge to the younger generation. It is the most widely practised teaching technique throughout history. Piaget, who pioneered this theory, proposed a stage-based learning model, suggesting that children's cognition develops through distinct stages. These stages are categorised depending on his identification: sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational, and formal operational.

Experiential Learning Theory, proposed by Kolb (1984), highlights that learning occurs through a cycle of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation, and active experimentation. This approach, according to Kolb, is well-suited for practical learning environments such as internships and simulations (Kolb, 1984).

Early theories related to the learning process, such as Piaget's, Skinner's and Bandura's, fulfil these conditions in theory building. Undoubtedly, those theories are "Theories of Learning". However, the later developments in learning theories have paid less attention to these conditions, perhaps as a result of secondary effects of the basic principles of learning.

In modern times, some educators have incorporated new theories into their classrooms. The term has no precise definition, but it is associated with the digital boom. With the emergence of new technologies, especially information technology, scientists have had the opportunity to view education theories and information in a practical way. Accordingly, they enjoyed the advantage of gaining access to a vast amount of knowledge and separating the literature and data relevant to a subject to analyse efficiently. Furthermore, they could observe processes from various angles. As a result, complex learning theories related to Behaviourism emerged.

Constructivism views learning as an individual actively building knowledge through experience and reflection. Some educators state that constructivism is not a theory of teaching. Constructivism is fundamentally a theory of learning and understanding, but not a theory of teaching itself. This theory is a fundamental learning theory because, from birth, children learn by observing their environment. It explains how individuals construct their understanding and knowledge by actively building on prior experiences and context; it neither prescribes specific teaching methods (or strategies) nor explains learning methods. However, Piaget's theories elaborate more on the situation, since they suggest employing a radically different approach to instruction. However, both Piaget's theory and Lew Vygotsky's theories broadly contribute to this learning concept, particularly emphasised in vocational training.

While foundational theories such as Behaviourism and Constructivism remain influential, new and emerging learning theories often emphasise the impact of digital technologies and collaborative environments, with Connectivism being a prominent example. Other newer theories include Social Learning Theory, Experiential Learning Theory, and variations of Constructivism that incorporate elements such as multiple intelligences and situated cognition.

Connectivism suggests students should personally join with their thoughts, theories, and general information to ease the burden of learning. Connectivism is one of the most prominent network learning theories developed for e-learning environments. It sees learning as the 'process of forming and maintaining connections within a network of information, emphasising collective and digital-age learning'. This concept invites educators and researchers to conduct more research.

Siemens (2005) states the following as the principles of Connectivism. He explains, Learning and Knowledge happen when opinions collide. He further states that Learning and Knowledge rest on the diversity of views. It is evident that in the present digital age, knowledge is primarily stored in digital format. This situation demonstrates that the typical understanding of the association of knowledge with the human brain is greatly underestimated. It is noteworthy that people nowadays use a calculator to add even a couple of single digits. Usually, connections are a fundamental aspect of everyday life, in fact, a part of life, which leads to information analysis. People never considered or used it in a classroom as a learning tool to induce learning. Further, his opinions suggest that Decision-making is also a learning process. However, suggesting modifications to the existing theories is not always a good practice.

Focusing on how learning occurs through networks and digital resources, other contemporary theories include Adult Learning, Action Learning, Experiential Learning, Facilitative Learning, and Social Learning, emphasising aspects such as self-direction, goal orientation, and the importance of experience and social interaction in the learning process. Some new terms have entered these newer views of learning. Artificial Intelligence is the most popular. However, it will be more practical if there were two conceptual paradigms, such as Artificial Intelligence and Biological Intelligence; however, this idea is subject to an argument.

Adult Learning (Andragogy): Focuses on the unique characteristics of adult learners, emphasising self-direction, experience-based learning, goal-orientation, relevance, problem-centred approaches, and internal motivation.

Action Learning: Studying a real-world problem; a Real environment, if possible.

Experiential Learning: Proposed by David Kolb, suggests that learning is a cyclic process, emphasising hands-on learning.

Transformational Learning: Focuses on how individuals critically re-evaluate their beliefs, values, and perspectives.

However, we cannot observe the development of new theories, especially those related to social sciences. The probable reason is the shortage of researchers in education research. Education is not limited to a single discipline but a combination of all subjects in the universe. Therefore, a researcher with limited subject knowledge cannot visualise a research problem and develop universal theories.

Recently, an educator unearthed a new learning theory and published “The Process theory of Moral Development” (Wickramasinghe, 2017), which helped to address a long-standing gap in moral concepts. The majority of moral development theories, including those by Piaget and Kohlberg, explain the stages and measuring methods of moral development. However, they do not describe the real moral development process. This same reason has hindered societal progress. Being oneself is inseparable from engaging with moral issues, and the immediate benefit of moral development is the ability to reduce conflicts within societies, ultimately helping to lessen human suffering. Human rights can be achieved by raising moral standards among individuals and ensuring justice, fairness, and human welfare within institutions. Although societies have recognised the importance of moral development for thousands of years, a practical solution to this gap has to be studied (Wickramasinghe, 2017).

It is a common practice that search engine findings are copied and pasted by school students for their assignments, as these search engines empower educators and students to find resources quickly. Still, it is doubtful that they gain the necessary knowledge, even though this is a time-saving process. Furthermore, the quality of the knowledge they collect may be unsatisfactory, and the information exodus may cause difficulty in understanding an issue and misinterpretation, which occasionally leads the researcher towards misleading decisions.

There are a few theories developed to address issues related to social learning and learning related to Artificial Intelligence. The modern world lacks arguments for the benefits of Artificial Intelligence. However, the clash between Human intelligence and Artificial intelligence cannot be underestimated. The A Relational Framework for Sri Lankan Educators view can accommodate Artificial Intelligence under cognitive development theories, for the time being. However, these areas should be developed quickly, since the path is clear.

Development of a new theory is necessary only when the existing theories no longer explain a concept fully or partially. In these contexts, these may build on existing theories without discarding or replacing them

Conclusion

Knowledge develops exponentially and accumulates remotely. The whole process requires more and more learners to learn various knowledge bases. In this situation, the teachers have the challenge of transferring knowledge effectively, and the learners have the burden of absorbing various types of knowledge successfully. In this context, to facilitate the process, many tools have been invented, such as lesson plans. However, the process of knowledge transfer is not progressing properly, and neither the learners nor the teachers are happy.

Many learning theories have been invented to facilitate the learning process, but the success is not satisfactory. To meet this situation, it was decided to introduce a user-friendly mental framework. This will enable the end user to visualise the whole learning and teaching process easily. The picture on page twelve, A Relational Framework for Sri Lankan Educators, fills this gap.

A user-friendly mental framework allows practitioners to visualise the entire teaching and learning process. This article addresses this need through the "Relational Framework for Sri Lankan Educators" (illustrated on page 12). This framework can accommodate all of the existing theories and can visualise the gaps, and assume the type of theoretical needs, which provides clarity where current theories may feel insufficient or overly complex. By offering a simplified relational diagram, the proposed model helps teachers, students, and instructional designers overcome the challenges of translating abstract theory into effective classroom practice. Ultimately, this framework serves as a vital tool for educational institutions and designers to revitalise stagnant theoretical development and enhance the systematic transfer of knowledge

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