



Insights into Shaping Secondary Classrooms: Exploring Teachers' Perceptions of Learning Theories.

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ABSTRACT

This study looks at how secondary school teachers' opinions of learning theories affect their instructional methods in shaping the atmosphere of the classroom. The study utilizes a survey method to collect data from a sample of 100 instructors from various secondary school disciplines. Stratified random sampling ensures that different specialties are adequately represented in the sample. A self-administered questionnaire is used as the major data collection instrument. The questionnaire is intended to assess teachers' acquaintance with prominent theories of learning, perceived effectiveness in secondary school settings, and incorporation into classroom practices. Data analysis will take a two-pronged approach. To begin, descriptive statistics will be utilized for determining simple percentages, offering a quantitative picture of instructors' judgments about the prevalence and usefulness of different theories of learning. Second, the qualitative data gathered via open-ended questionnaire prompts will be subjected to thematic analysis in order to find recurrent themes and patterns. This examination will go more deeply into the subtleties of educators' perspectives and examine how they convert ideas from theory to effective teaching methods. Through the use of both quantitative and qualitative data, this study attempts to offer a thorough grasp of how secondary school instructors see and incorporate learning theories into their teaching practices. In order to close the gap between academic understanding and real-world application in secondary classrooms, teacher preparation programs might be adapted greatly from the findings. The present study adds to the current discourse concerning efficacious teaching methodologies in the secondary school domain. It is important for curriculum creators, politicians, and teacher educators who want to improve student learning experiences through evidence-based approaches.

Keywords: Insights, Perception, Learning theories, Impact.

Introduction

Effective secondary education is dependent on developing exciting classroom conditions that promote deep learning. Secondary school instructors play a vital part in this process, as their instructional approaches have a substantial impact on student involvement and academic accomplishment. Learning theories are useful frameworks for comprehending how students gain knowledge and abilities. However, the distance between academic understanding and real-world application in educational settings continues to be investigated. This study investigates how secondary school instructors perceive key learning theories and how these impressions influence their instructional practices. We research how instructors perceive various learning theories to be effective in secondary school settings, as well as how they incorporate these theories into classroom design. By concentrating on teachers' opinions, this study hopes to close the theory-practice divide in secondary education. The findings will shed light on how teacher training courses might better prepare educators to transform conceptual understanding into practical teaching tactics tailored to the specific requirements of secondary school students. This study uses a survey methodology to collect information from a sample of 100 secondary school educators from various academic areas. Stratified random sampling assures a fair representation of diverse fields in the sample. The major data collection instrument is a self-administered questionnaire, which is aimed to capture teachers' acquaintance with popular learning theories, perceived efficacy, and incorporation into classroom practices.

Review of Related Literature

1. The Disconnect Between Learning Theories and Classroom Practices

Several studies within the field of education highlight the persistent disconnect between teachers' knowledge of learning theories and their application in classrooms (Mishra & Koehler, 2006; Veenman, 1984). These studies suggest that teacher training programs often focus heavily on theoretical frameworks without adequately equipping educators with the skills to translate theory into practical instructional strategies (Feiman-Nemser, 2008). This disconnect can hinder the effectiveness of teaching and limit student learning opportunities.

2. Teachers' Perceptions of Learning Theories

Research exploring teachers' perceptions of learning theories offers valuable insights into the factors that influence instructional practices. For instance, studies by Bangert-Drowns et al. (1991) and Guskey (1986) reveal that teachers often prioritize theories that align with their personal beliefs about teaching and learning. Understanding these perceptions is crucial for designing effective teacher training programs that bridge the theory-practice gap.

3. The Impact of Specific Learning Theories on Secondary Classrooms

Several studies have examined how specific learning theories influence instructional practices in secondary classrooms. For example, research on Constructivism (Brooks & Brooks, 1993) demonstrates how teachers can utilize student-centered activities and inquiry-based learning to promote deeper understanding. Similarly, studies on Social Learning Theory (Schunk, 2012) explore how teachers can leverage peer collaboration and observational learning to enhance student motivation and achievement. These studies provide valuable evidence of the potential benefits of integrating learning theories into secondary education.

4. Teacher Training Programs and Integration of Learning Theories

Research by Zeichner (2010) and Darling-Hammond & Bransford (2005) emphasizes the need for teacher training programs that equip educators with the skills to translate learning theories into practice. These studies suggest that programs that incorporate case studies, lesson planning exercises, and opportunities for collaboration can help teachers bridge the theory-practice gap and develop effective instructional strategies informed by sound learning principles.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Secondary school is crucial in preparing students for higher education and their future employment. Effective classrooms encourage deep learning and participation, and teachers have a significant impact on this process through their teaching strategies. Learning theories serve as helpful frameworks to explain how students gain knowledge and abilities. However, there is a gap between academic understanding and practical implementation in the classroom. This study looks at how secondary school instructors perceive important learning theories and how such beliefs influence their instructional approaches. We investigate the extent to which instructors feel different theories of learning are useful for secondary students, and how they incorporate these ideas into creating their classrooms. By concentrating on teachers' opinions, this study hopes to close the theory-practice divide in secondary education. The findings will shed light on how teacher training courses might better prepare educators to transform conceptual understanding into practical teaching tactics tailored to the specific requirements of secondary school students. This study adds to the continuing discussion concerning effective instructional approaches in secondary school. It is significant for teacher educators, curriculum creators, and policymakers who want to improve student learning experiences using evidence-based techniques.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine secondary school teachers' familiarity with prominent learning theories.
2. To explore teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of various learning theories in the secondary school context.
3. To identify how teachers integrate their understanding of learning theories into their instructional practices.
4. To know how learning theories helpful to the teachers to understand students' behavior
5. To identify how much learning theories are helpful to the teachers to deal with individual differences among students

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a survey methodology to gather data from a sample of 120 secondary school teachers from 12 schools across Balangir District. Stratified random sampling ensures balanced representation of various disciplines within the sample. A self-administered questionnaire serves as the primary data collection tool. The questionnaire was designed to capture teachers' familiarity with prominent learning theories, their perceived effectiveness in the secondary school setting, and their integration into classroom practices. Data analysis involved a two-pronged approach. First, descriptive statistics was used to calculate simple percentages, providing a quantitative understanding of teachers' perceptions regarding the prevalence and usefulness of various learning theories. Second, thematic analysis was employed to identify recurring themes and patterns within the qualitative data collected through open-ended questionnaire prompts. This analysis delves deeper into the nuances of teachers' perceptions, exploring how they translate theory into practical classroom strategies.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Descriptive statistics were employed by the investigator to analyze the data derived from the questionnaire. Utilizing frequencies and percentage ratios, the study's findings were meticulously examined. Furthermore, thematic analysis was employed to dissect and interpret the collected data.

1. Analysis of Frequencies and Percentages Based on Age

AGE GROUP	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
20-30 Years age	24	20
30-40 Years age	60	50
40-50 Years age	18	15
50+ Years age	18	15

The data shows that the majority of respondents fall within the 30-40 years age group (50%), followed by the 20-30 years age group (20%). This suggests a relatively younger population surveyed. There's a consistent percentage of respondents in the 30-40 years and 40-50 years age groups (50% and 15% respectively), indicating a stable representation across these age brackets. Only 15% of respondents are aged 50 or above, suggesting a relatively smaller representation of older individuals in the surveyed population.

2. Analysis of Frequencies and Percentages Based on Gender

AGE GROUP	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
MALE	60	50%
FEMALE	60	50%

The data shows an equal distribution of respondents among male and female secondary school teachers (50% each). This suggests gender parity in the surveyed population.

3. Analysis of Frequencies and Percentages Based on Locality

LOCATION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
RURAL	60	50%
URBAN	60	50%

The data shows an equal distribution of respondents from rural and urban locations, with each comprising 50% of the sample. This suggests a balanced representation of teachers from both settings.

4. Analysis of Frequencies and Percentages Based on Familiarity

Learning Theory	Frequency (Familiar)	Frequency (Unfamiliar)	Percentage (Familiar)	Percentage (Unfamiliar)
Behaviorism	102	18	85%	15%
Constructivism	36	84	30%	70%
Social Learning Theory	72	48	60%	40%

Behaviorism is the most familiar learning theory among secondary school teachers, with 85% of respondents indicating familiarity. This suggests that behaviorism may be widely taught or utilized in educational settings. In contrast, constructivism appears to be less familiar among teachers, with only 30% indicating familiarity. This indicates a potential gap in understanding or implementation of constructivist principles in teaching practices. Social learning theory falls between behaviorism and constructivism in terms of familiarity, with 60% of teachers indicating familiarity. This suggests that while not as widely known as behaviorism, social learning theory still has a relatively moderate level of recognition among teachers.

5. Analysis of Frequencies and Percentages Based on Effectiveness

Learning Theory	Strongly Effective (%)	Effective (%)	Neutral (%)	Somewhat Effective (%)	Not Effective (%)
Behaviorism	15% (18)	30% (36)	25% (30)	20% (24)	10% (12)
Constructivism	20% (24)	45% (54)	20% (24)	10% (12)	5% (6)
Social Learning Theory	10% (12)	35% (42)	30% (36)	15% (18)	10% (12)

Behaviorism is perceived as relatively effective, with a combined percentage of 45% of teachers considering it either strongly effective or effective. However, there is a notable proportion (35%) who are neutral or perceive it as somewhat or not effective. Constructivism receives higher ratings in terms of effectiveness compared to behaviorism, with a combined percentage of 65% of teachers considering it either strongly effective or effective.

There is a smaller proportion (15%) who perceive it as neutral or somewhat/not effective. Social learning theory receives mixed ratings, with a combined percentage of 45% of teachers considering it either strongly effective or effective. However, there is a relatively high proportion (40%) who are neutral or perceive it as somewhat or not effective.

6. Analysis of Frequencies and Percentages Based Integration of Learning Theories.

Instructional Practice	Consistent Integration (%)	Partial Integration (%)	Limited Integration (%)	No Integration (%)	Frequency (Consistent)	Frequency (Partial)	Frequency (Limited)	Frequency (No)
Student-centered activities (Constructivism)	30%	45%	15%	10%	36	54	18	12
Peer collaboration tasks (Social Learning Theory)	20%	30%	35%	15%	24	36	42	18
Direct instruction with real-world examples (Behaviorism)	40%	35%	20%	5%	48	42	24	6

Constructivist approaches, such as student-centered activities, are moderately integrated into instructional practices, with 30% of teachers consistently integrating them and 45% partially integrating them. However, there is still a notable proportion (25%) of teachers with limited or no integration of constructivist strategies. Social learning theory, particularly peer collaboration tasks, is less consistently integrated compared to constructivist approaches, with only 20% of teachers consistently integrating them. A larger proportion (50%) partially integrate or have limited integration, indicating room for improvement in leveraging social learning principles. Behaviorist strategies, such as direct instruction with real-world examples, are relatively well-integrated into instructional practices, with 40% of teachers consistently integrating them. However, there is still a notable proportion (25%) of teachers with limited or no integration of behaviorist approaches. The data suggests varying levels of integration of different learning theories into instructional practices, highlighting opportunities for professional development and support to enhance teachers' ability to effectively integrate theory into practice across different domains.

7. Analysis of Frequencies and Percentages Based on Uses of learning theories to understand students' behavior.

Teacher Perception	Frequency (Behaviorism)	Frequency (Constructivism)	Frequency (Social Learning Theory)	Percentage (Behaviorism)	Percentage (Constructivism)	Percentage (Social Learning Theory)
Explains student motivation for learning activities	30	48	42	25%	40%	35%
Helps identify reasons for student disengagement	54	24	42	45%	20%	35%
Provides insights into common student misconceptions	36	60	24	30%	50%	20%

Teachers perceive constructivism as the most effective in explaining student motivation for learning activities, followed by social learning theory and behaviorism. This suggests that teachers believe that understanding students' active involvement in constructing their own knowledge is crucial for motivating them in learning activities. Behaviorism is perceived as the most effective in identifying reasons for student disengagement, followed by social learning theory and constructivism. This indicates that teachers may rely on behaviorist principles, such as reinforcement and punishment, to address student disengagement issues. Constructivism is perceived as the most effective in providing insights into common student misconceptions, followed by behaviorism and social learning theory. This suggests that teachers believe that understanding how students construct their own knowledge and meaning helps in addressing and correcting misconceptions effectively. Constructivism appears to be highly valued by teachers across all three aspects analyzed, indicating its perceived importance in understanding and addressing students' behavior, motivation, disengagement, and misconceptions.

8. Analysis Frequencies and Percentages Based on Challenges faced by Teachers in Integrating Learning Theories

CHALLENGES	FREQUENCY (YES)	FREQUENCY (NO)	PERCENTAGE (YES)	PERCENTAGE (NO)
Lack of time for lesson planning that incorporates different learning theories	48	72	40%	60%
Difficulty finding resources that align with various learning theories	30	90	25%	75%
Feeling inadequately prepared in applying learning theories during teacher training	84	36	70%	30%
Difficulty in differentiating instruction based on diverse student needs and learning styles	60	60	50%	50%
Concerns about student resistance to new instructional approaches based on learning theories	18	102	15%	75%

40% of teachers perceive a lack of time for lesson planning that incorporates different learning theories as a challenge. This suggests that time constraints may hinder teachers' ability to effectively integrate diverse instructional approaches into their lessons. 25% of teachers indicate difficulty finding resources that align with various learning theories. This indicates a need for more accessible and comprehensive resources to support teachers in implementing theory-based instructional practices. A significant majority (70%) of teachers feel inadequately prepared in applying learning theories during teacher training. This highlights the importance of

enhancing teacher training programs to better equip educators with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively integrate theory into practice. Half of the teachers perceive difficulty in differentiating instruction based on diverse student needs and learning styles. This underscores the importance of providing support and strategies for teachers to address the individualized needs of their students effectively. Only 15% of teachers express concerns about student resistance to new instructional approaches based on learning theories. While this concern is relatively low, it's still essential for teachers to consider strategies for effectively introducing and implementing theory-based practices in the classroom.

CONCLUSION AND FINDINGS

The findings show a sophisticated awareness of theories regarding learning among secondary school teachers, with behaviorism being the most recognized theory and constructivism emerging as the most successful in their opinion. Despite this awareness, teachers confront substantial obstacles in incorporating learning theories into their teaching methods, such as time limits, insufficient preparation, and trouble locating materials. These problems highlight the importance of comprehensive professional development activities to help instructors effectively integrate theory into practice. While resistance from learners to new educational approaches is a worry, it looks small in comparison to other problems. Overall, overcoming these difficulties will necessitate coordinated efforts by educational stakeholders to support teachers in developing student-centered, successful learning experiences.

Behaviorism is the most familiar learning theory among secondary school teachers, but constructivism is perceived as the most effective in understanding and addressing students' behavior and learning needs. Teachers face significant challenges in integrating learning theories into their instructional practices, including time constraints, inadequate preparation, and difficulty in finding resources. Despite challenges, there's a generally positive perception of the effectiveness of learning theories in promoting student motivation, addressing misconceptions, and enhancing student engagement. Concerns about student resistance to new instructional approaches based on learning theories are relatively low compared to other challenges faced by teachers. Addressing challenges requires comprehensive professional development initiatives, improved access to resources, and support for differentiated instruction to meet diverse student needs effectively

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