



Developing Learning Theory Based on Educational Philosophy as An Effort to Improve the Quality of Learning

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Abstract

Educational philosophy serves as a conceptual foundation that plays a vital role in developing learning theories, which underpin the implementation of the learning process. The evolution of various learning theories is shaped by philosophical thought regarding the nature of learners, the process of acquiring knowledge, and the goals of education. This article aims to analyze the contribution of educational philosophy to the development of learning theories and its implications for enhancing the quality of learning. The study employs a literature review methodology, examining relevant books, scholarly articles, and documents concerning educational philosophy, learning theories, and the learning process. The findings indicate that ontological, epistemological, and axiological dimensions form the basis for developing various learning theories, such as behaviorism, cognitivism, constructivism, and humanism. These theories drive the implementation of learning strategies that are learner-centered and adaptable to technological advancements, while also enhancing the effectiveness and meaningfulness of the learning process. Furthermore, the development of learning theories faces challenges-such as shifting learner characteristics, technological progress, and the demands of 21st-century education-necessitating instructional innovations that remain grounded in the values of educational philosophy. Thus, educational philosophy remains a crucial foundation for developing learning theories to support the improvement of learning quality.

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is a process aimed at developing learners' potential through purposeful and meaningful instruction. The success of the learning process is determined not only by teaching strategies but also by the philosophical foundations that underpin the development of learning theories. Philosophy of education provides direction regarding the nature of human beings, knowledge, and the goals of education, thereby serving as a foundation for designing learning processes that meet learners' needs (Basori et al., 2025). Various learning theories-such as behaviorism, cognitivism, constructivism, and humanism-have evolved based on differing philosophical views regarding how humans acquire knowledge and construct learning experiences. The development of learning theories cannot be separated from the philosophy of

education, as the two complement each other in realizing learning that is effective, meaningful, and oriented toward learner development (Armaijn et al., 2024).

The advancement of digital technology, the utilization of artificial intelligence (AI), and the implementation of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* (Independent Curriculum) present both challenges and opportunities in the realm of education. Teachers no longer act merely as conveyors of information but also as facilitators capable of creating learner-centered instruction that fosters critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving skills. These conditions necessitate the development of learning theories that are adaptive to changing times without disregarding the philosophical values that underpin education. In this context, the philosophy of education plays a crucial role as a conceptual foundation for formulating learning theories capable of addressing 21st-century learning needs and supporting the enhancement of learning quality (Narsan & Ismail, 2025; The International Commission on the Future Education, 2021).

Various studies have examined the relationship between the philosophy of education and learning theories from diverse perspectives. Knight (2006) explains that the philosophy of education serves as the basis for determining educational goals, curricula, and instructional practices, while Schunk (2020) discusses the evolution of various learning theories and their implications for the learning process. Noddings (2018) also emphasizes the importance of value-based and humanistic dimensions in education as part of the philosophical foundation of learning. Nevertheless, the majority of studies continue to address the philosophy of education and learning theories in isolation. Studies integrating ontological, epistemological, and axiological dimensions as a foundation for analyzing the development of learning theories-and their implications for the quality of learning, particularly in the digital era-remain relatively limited. This situation represents a research gap and highlights the need for a more comprehensive study regarding the relationship between the philosophy of education and the development of learning theories.

2. METHOD

This study employs a library research method with a qualitative descriptive approach. The method aims to examine and analyze relevant literature to gain a comprehensive understanding of the development of learning theories grounded in educational philosophy and their implications for the quality of learning. Data sources include books, scholarly journal articles, conference proceedings, and official documents pertaining to educational philosophy, learning theories, and learning quality. Sources were selected based on their relevance to the research topic, publisher credibility, and the currency of information to ensure a robust scientific analysis.

Data collection was conducted through a documentary study involving a review of literature from academic databases-such as Google Scholar, ERIC, and Garuda-as well as official documents published by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology and UNESCO. The literature primarily consists of publications from the 2020-2025 period, supplemented by key reference books that serve as the conceptual foundation for the discussion on educational philosophy and learning theories.

Data analysis was performed using content analysis, involving the identification, classification, interpretation, and synthesis of concepts related to educational philosophy, learning theories, and learning quality. The analysis results were then systematically organized to elucidate the relationship between dimensions of educational philosophy and the development of learning theories, as well as their implications for enhancing the quality of learning.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Educational philosophy serves as the foundation shaping the trajectory of learning theory development and acts as a guiding framework for the implementation of instruction. Shifts in educational paradigms, scientific advancements, and technological progress necessitate the continuous evolution of learning theories to ensure they remain relevant to learners' needs and educational goals. Drawing on a literature review, this article examines the relationship between educational philosophy and learning theory across four key aspects: the nature and dimensions of educational philosophy, the development of learning theories grounded in educational philosophy, and the challenges and prospects for such development in enhancing the quality of learning. The discussion demonstrates that developing learning theories relies not only on pedagogical considerations but also requires a robust philosophical foundation to foster learning that is adaptive, meaningful, and oriented toward the holistic development of learners' potential.

3.1. The Nature of the Philosophy of Education in the Development of Learning Theories

Educational philosophy serves as the conceptual foundation that guides the goals, processes, and practices of education. In the context of learning theory development, educational philosophy not only addresses the nature of knowledge, learners, and the learning process but also provides the basis for determining instructional approaches that align with scientific advancements and societal needs. Consequently, every learning theory fundamentally stems from a specific philosophical perspective regarding how humans acquire knowledge and develop their potential (Malik & Subhan, 2025).

Various learning theories have evolved based on differing philosophical foundations. Behaviorism is rooted in empiricism, emphasizing that learning is a change in behavior resulting from stimulus and response. In contrast, cognitivism views learning as a mental process of information processing, whereas constructivism positions the learner as an individual who actively constructs knowledge through learning experiences. Humanism complements these developments by emphasizing the importance of developing the learner's potential, values, and self-actualization. The relationship between educational philosophy and learning theories is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. The Relationship between Philosophy of Education and Learning Theories

Philosophical Schools of Thought	Dominant Learning Theories	Implications for Instruction
Empiricism	Behaviorism	Learning oriented towards stimulus, practice, and reinforcement.
Rationalism	Cognitivism	Emphasizing the thinking process, conceptual understanding, and information processing.
Constructivism	Constructivism	Learners construct knowledge through experience and interaction.
Humanism	Humanistic	Learner-centered learning, character development, and self-actualization.

Based on Table 1, it is evident that each learning theory rests on a distinct philosophical foundation, resulting in diverse instructional approaches. This demonstrates that the development of learning theories cannot be separated from the philosophy of education, as the two complement each other in defining learning objectives, strategies, and evaluation methods. Consequently, an understanding of these philosophical foundations is crucial for educators when selecting learning theories that align with the characteristics of the learners and the

intended learning outcomes.

3.2. The Philosophical Dimension of Education as a Foundation for Developing Learning Theories

The philosophy of education provides a conceptual foundation for the development of learning theories through three primary dimensions: ontology, epistemology, and axiology. These three dimensions serve as the basis for understanding the nature of the learner, the process of acquiring knowledge, and the goals of education. Consequently, the development of learning theories is not solely oriented toward academic aspects but also comprehensively considers values, character, and educational objectives. Thus, the philosophy of education acts as a conceptual framework guiding the formulation of learning theories to align with scientific advancements and societal needs.

The ontological dimension concerns the nature of the human being as a learning subject. From this perspective, learners are viewed as individuals with the potential to develop through experience, interaction, and continuous learning processes. This view underpins constructivist and humanistic learning theories, which position the learner at the center of the educational process (student-centered learning). Accordingly, the learning process focuses not merely on the delivery of material but also on encouraging learners to actively construct their own knowledge through meaningful learning experiences (Inayati et al., 2023).

The epistemological dimension addresses how knowledge is acquired and developed. Behaviorism views knowledge as formed through stimulus and response, whereas cognitivism emphasizes mental processes in understanding information. Constructivism subsequently advanced the view that knowledge is actively constructed through learning experiences and interaction with the environment. These differing methods of knowledge acquisition demonstrate that each learning theory rests on a distinct epistemological foundation, resulting in diverse instructional approaches. This underscores the importance of understanding the epistemological dimension when determining learning strategies that align with the characteristics of the learners (Fitriani et al., 2025).

Meanwhile, the axiological dimension emphasizes the values and goals of education. Education aims not only to enhance knowledge mastery but also to shape students' character, sense of responsibility, critical thinking skills, and social attitudes. Consequently, learning theories developed upon an axiological foundation are expected to foster a learning process that is not merely effective but also meaningful for the students' lives (Isval Maulana & Khobir, 2025; Khairun Nisa et al., 2025).

These three dimensions of the philosophy of education are inseparable in the development of learning theories. Ontology provides an understanding of the nature of the learner as a subject of learning; epistemology explains the processes of acquiring and developing knowledge; and axiology guides the goals and values to be achieved through learning. The integration of these three dimensions yields learning theories that are oriented not only toward academic achievement but also toward character building, critical thinking skills, creativity, and the competencies required in the 21st century (Sadiyah et al., 2025; Yusnia Herman et al., 2025). Table 2 illustrates the relationship between these three dimensions of the philosophy of education and the development of learning theories.

Table 2. Dimensions of the Philosophy of Education and Their Contribution to the Development of Learning Theories

Dimension	Essence	Contribution to the Development of Learning Theory	Impact on the Quality of Learning
Ontology	Looking at the nature of humans and students.	Determining a teacher-centered or student-centered learning paradigm.	Instruction is better aligned with the characteristics and needs of the learners.
Epistemology	Explaining how to acquire and develop knowledge.	It serves as the foundation for the development of behaviorism, cognitivism, constructivism, and other learning theories.	Encourage the use of more effective, active and meaningful learning strategies. To shape students who possess strong character, think critically and creatively, and are capable of applying their knowledge in real-life situations.
Axiology	Determining the values and goals of education.	Directing learning theory to develop cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects in a balanced manner.	

Based on Table 2, it is evident that the development of learning theories is influenced not only by pedagogical aspects but also by philosophical foundations encompassing ontological, epistemological, and axiological dimensions. These three dimensions are interconnected in shaping perspectives on learners, the process of knowledge acquisition, and the goals to be achieved through learning. This indicates that the successful development of learning theories depends not merely on the choice of teaching methods but also on the strength of the underlying philosophical foundations. Educators need to understand these three dimensions in an integrated manner to design learning experiences that are effective, adaptive, and relevant to the demands of 21st-century education (Muthmainnah & Ismail, 2025).

3.3. Development of Learning Theory Based on Educational Philosophy

The development of learning theories cannot be separated from the philosophical foundations of education, which serve as the basis for understanding the nature of learners, the process of acquiring knowledge, and the goals of learning. Each learning theory emerges from a distinct philosophical perspective, thereby influencing the instructional approaches, strategies, and methods employed. Consequently, the philosophy of education acts not only as a conceptual foundation but also as a reference point for developing learning theories that are relevant to learners' needs and the advancement of science and technology (Nuraeni & Carsiwan, 2024). Over time, various learning theories have demonstrated close links to specific schools of educational philosophy. Behaviorism, influenced by empiricism, views learning as a change in behavior resulting from stimuli and responses. Meanwhile, cognitivism emphasizes the mental processes involved in acquiring knowledge, whereas constructivism posits that knowledge is actively constructed through experience and interaction with the environment. On the other hand, humanistic learning theory focuses on the development of learners' potential, motivation, and self-actualization; thus, the learning process is not solely oriented toward cognitive aspects but also encompasses affective and psychomotor development (Sartika et al., 2025).

The application of these learning theories has significant implications for the quality of instruction. Teachers no longer act merely as transmitters of information but also as facilitators

capable of selecting instructional approaches that align with learners' characteristics and learning objectives. Strategies such as Problem-Based Learning, Project-Based Learning, Inquiry Learning, and collaborative learning represent practical implementations of learning theories grounded in educational philosophy. These approaches encourage learners to think critically and creatively, collaborate effectively, and actively construct knowledge through meaningful learning experiences (Fauzi & Hidayat, 2021). However, no single learning theory can be universally applied to every instructional situation; each theory possesses strengths and limitations that must be adapted to the specific characteristics of the learners, the learning objectives, and the educational context. For instance, the behaviorist approach remains relevant for establishing habits and foundational skills, whereas constructivism is better suited for developing critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and creativity. Therefore, teachers are required to flexibly integrate various learning theories to ensure the learning process becomes more effective and contextual (Putu Laksmi Ari Dewi et al., 2025).

Furthermore, advancements in information technology have influenced the development of modern learning theories. The integration of digital technology into instruction has fostered approaches that are more adaptive, personalized, and learner-centered. In this context, information processing theory has gained relevance by emphasizing how learners receive, process, store, and utilize information during the learning process. These developments demonstrate that learning theories continue to evolve in response to changing educational needs and technological progress (Fatah & Risfina, 2023). The development of learning theories grounded in educational philosophy also plays a crucial role in enhancing the quality of instruction. Integrating philosophical foundations with learning theories enables a learning process that is more adaptive, innovative, and learner-centered. This indicates that the development of learning theories is not intended to replace earlier theories, but rather to combine complementary approaches to meet specific learning needs (Khairun Nisa et al., 2025).

3.4. Challenges and Prospects for Developing Learning Theories Based on the Philosophy of Education

The development of learning theories grounded in educational philosophy faces various challenges amidst shifting educational paradigms and technological advancements. Diverse learner characteristics, the rapid evolution of knowledge, and the increasing use of digital technology necessitate the continuous evolution of learning theories to ensure their ongoing relevance to learning needs. Furthermore, the practical application of these theories in schools is influenced by teacher competence, the availability of learning resources, and the ability to effectively integrate diverse instructional approaches. Conversely, 21st-century educational developments offer significant opportunities for advancing learning theories rooted in educational philosophy. Practices such as the use of digital technology, Project-Based Learning, Problem-Based Learning, and differentiated instruction demonstrate that learning theories are evolving to meet the needs of learners. In this context, educational philosophy remains the foundation for defining the goals, values, and direction of learning development—ensuring a focus not merely on knowledge acquisition, but also on character building, creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration (Kemendikbudristek, 2022).

Addressing this challenge requires synergy among the development of learning theories, the enhancement of educator competence, and innovation in instructional practices. Teachers need the ability to select and combine various learning theories based on the characteristics of their students and the learning objectives. Developing learning theories grounded in educational philosophy not only strengthens the conceptual foundation of education but also supports the realization of learning that is adaptive, innovative, and focused on improving the

quality of instruction (Ngadani et al., 2026).

Synthesizing the literature review, Figure 3 presents a conceptual framework illustrating the challenges and prospects for developing learning theories based on the philosophy of education. This framework serves to illustrate the relationships between the factors influencing the development of learning theories and the quality of learning.

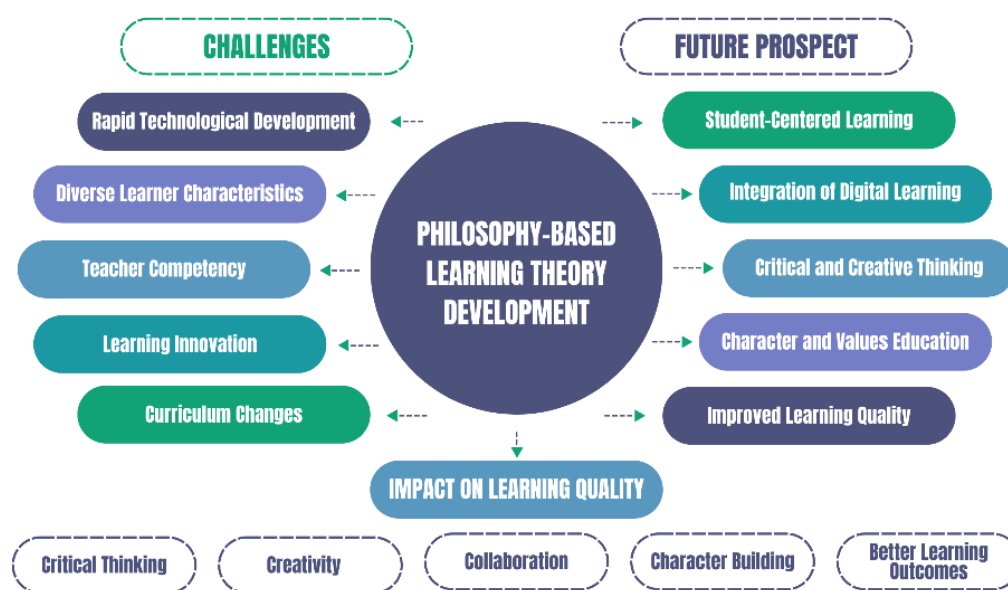


Figure 1. Challenges and Prospects for Developing Learning Theories Based on Educational Philosophy

As illustrated in Figure 1, the development of learning theories grounded in educational philosophy is influenced by various challenges, such as technological advancements, diverse learner characteristics, educator competence, instructional innovations, and curricular changes. Conversely, these challenges also create opportunities to foster more learner-centered instruction, integrate digital technology, and cultivate critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and character education. Developing learning theories based on educational philosophy not only strengthens the conceptual foundation of education but also serves as a strategy to enhance the quality of learning in a manner relevant to 21st-century needs.

4. CONCLUSION

Research indicates that the philosophy of education plays a crucial role as a foundation for the development of learning theories. The dimensions of ontology, epistemology, and axiology provide direction for understanding the nature of learners, the process of acquiring knowledge, and the goals of learning. This philosophical foundation underpins the emergence of various learning theories—such as behaviorism, cognitivism, constructivism, and humanism—which continue to evolve in response to educational needs. Consequently, the development of learning theories is not merely conceptually oriented; it also fosters the creation of learning processes that are more effective, meaningful, and learner-centered. In the era of 21st-century education, the development of learning theories grounded in educational philosophy must continually adapt to technological advancements, learner characteristics, and the increasingly dynamic demands of learning. Integrating philosophical foundations with instructional innovation is a vital step toward enhancing the quality of learning while cultivating learners who are critical thinkers, creative, possess strong character, and are capable of adapting to change. The findings

of this study are intended to serve as a reference for educators, academics, and researchers in developing learning approaches that are more innovative and relevant to contemporary educational needs.

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