

# The Role of Educational Psychology in Enhancing Teaching Effectiveness: A Case Study of Secondary School Teachers of Kathmandu Valley.

Dr. Yashodhara Bhetuwal Prasai, PhD<sup>1</sup>; Dr. Sudha Bhetuwal Sapkota, PhD<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Former Faculty: St. Xavier's College, Maitighar, Kathmandu, Nepal

<sup>1</sup>Vice President: Women in Science and Humanity (WISH), Nepal

<sup>2</sup>Former Principal of the Nepalese Army School

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.10200303>

Received: 11 February 2026; Accepted: 16 February 2026; Published: 06 March 2026

## ABSTRACT

The Kathmandu Valley, which includes the districts of Kathmandu, Lalitpur, and Bhaktapur, is the cultural and educational hub of Nepal (Dhungel, 2017). It is home to a diverse population, a blend of community (public) and private schools, and serves as a representative center for the country's educational development. In Nepal, the education system is structured as primary, secondary, and higher levels. Although education has made significant progress over the past few decades, challenges remain in teaching effectiveness, student engagement, and learning outcomes (Thompson, 2012). Because of various challenges in the education system, the application of educational psychology becomes crucial, as it provides teachers with principles and practices that directly address student motivation, classroom management, pedagogy, and assessment (Shakir & Sharma, 2017). This research examines the importance of educational psychology for enhancing teaching effectiveness in Nepalese schools, particularly in the cities of Kathmandu, Bhaktapur, and Lalitpur in the Kathmandu Valley.

A qualitative research design was utilized, with a structured interview conducted with six high school teachers from both community and private schools. The study investigated how teachers' knowledge and application of various principles of educational psychology, such as motivation strategies, classroom management techniques, teaching methodologies, and assessment practices, impact teaching effectiveness and student achievement. The findings of this study suggest that when teachers learn, think, and apply psychological principles in their practice, they not only improve classroom management and instructional delivery but also foster better student engagement and academic performance.

The study underscores the need to integrate educational psychology more systematically into teacher education and professional development programs in Nepal. The contribution of educational institutions through educational psychology initiatives, such as strengthening teachers' capacity in motivation, behavior management, cognitive learning processes, and practical assessment, can substantially enhance teaching quality, thereby advancing broader educational reforms and improving student outcomes in Nepalese schools.

**Keywords:** Educational Psychology, Effective Teaching, Nepalese schools

## INTRODUCTION

Educational psychology is taught in various educational institutions to enable teachers to describe, explain, predict, and change students' behavior and mental processes. Describing behavior or cognition is the first goal of psychology (Patrick et al., 2011). This can enable educators to develop general laws of student behavior, especially in learning. Educational Psychologists also propose theories that explain how and why certain learning behaviors occur among students (Ramirez & Olson, 2020). Furthermore, Educational Psychology aims to predict future learning behavior based on empirical research findings or teachers' teaching experience (Borich & Tombari, 2021).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Learning is the long-term change in mental representations or associations resulting from experience. Learning is the means through which people acquire not only skills and knowledge but also values, attitudes, and emotional reactions (Horn, 2005; Ormrod, 2012). Skinner (1976) said that learning is a process of adjustment through habituation and accommodation between the basic units of cognition and stimulation. In the view of psychology, behavior results from the interaction between stimulus and response (Budiman, 2017).

A learning theory is a conceptual framework for understanding how information is absorbed, processed, and retained during learning (Luis & D'Cunha, 2014). The aim is to understand how people learn, including acquiring new knowledge, developing skills, modifying attitudes and values, and adopting new behaviors. Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtle's (2006) and Budiman's (2017) theories of learning are crucial, as they help the teacher perceive the phenomenon in the world of learning. It also consists of a framework of concepts and principles. Various theories are used to facilitate learning. The following theories provide explanations of the underlying mechanisms of learning.

### **Behaviorism Learning Theory:**

Ivan Pavlov (1849-1936) and Edward Lee Thorndike (1874-1949) are recognized as the founders of behaviorist learning theory, focusing on how animals and humans acquire new behaviors. The other influential figures include Burrhus Fredric Skinner (1904-1990) and Edwin Ray Guthrie (1886-1959). Behaviorism emphasizes the study of observable behavior, excluding motivation and other mental processes.

This is originated from the theory in experimental studies with animals, such as Pavlov's work with dogs, and later expanded to include research with rats, pigeons, and other higher animals (O'Neill et al., 2005). Behavioral learning theory highlights the importance of learning and observable behavior in understanding both human and animal actions. According to Bor,k J et. al (2025) all behaviors are acquired through conditioned interactions with the environment. Consequently, behavior is viewed as a direct response to environmental stimuli.

The behaviorist approach focuses exclusively on observable stimulus-response behaviors, as these can be systematically studied. Whereas cognitive development encompasses the abilities to think, reason, understand, and remember the surrounding environment. It also addresses how children learn to think, reason, and use language. Furthermore, cognitive development refers to the process by which humans acquire, organize, and learn to use knowledge (Duchesne & McMaugh, 2016).

### **Cognivism Learning Theory:**

Piaget and Inhelder (1990) are among the most prominent cognitivists, arguing that knowledge is acquired through the natural development of mental structures as children respond to experience. According to O'Neill et al. (2005), the cognitive process occurs through the interaction of innate capacities and environmental events, with children progressing through a series of developmental stages (McLeod, 2019). Cognitive learning theory emphasizes on mental processes such as sensation, perception, attention, encoding, and memory (Collazo, 2017).

On the other hand, social cognitive theorists assert that most learning occurs through observing others (models) and the outcomes of their behavior, rather than through direct trial-and-error. Learning can occur without an immediate behavior change. At the same time, some of the behaviorists traditionally define learning as a change in behavior; social cognitive theorists argue that learning may not always be reflected in observable actions. Knowledge acquired at one time may be demonstrated later or may never be overtly expressed. Cognition is central to learning, and over recent decades, social cognitive theory has increasingly emphasized cognitive explanations for human learning.

Contemporary theorists highlight the importance of awareness of response–reinforcement and response–punishment contingencies, as well as expectations regarding future outcomes, in shaping learning and behavior.

Some of the social cognitive theorists also incorporate cognitive processes such as attention and retention (memory) into their explanations of learning. Furthermore, individuals can exert considerable control over their actions and environments.

While some of the behaviorists viewed that people are primarily influenced by environmental circumstances, contemporary social cognitive theory posits that individuals can actively modify their environments, either through their own actions or by seeking assistance and support from others. This capacity for conscious and intentional action is referred to as personal agency (Bandura, 2006, 2008; Schunk & Pajares, 2005).

**Social Learning Theory:** Albert Bandura (1963-1973) developed social learning theory which, states that individuals acquire new behaviors through the observation of others. This social learning theory focuses on vicarious reinforcement, imitation and the value of modeling in the process of learning. This suggests that individuals do not need to experience rewards or punishments directly to learn from them. Instead, observing the consequences of others' actions can inform behavioral adjustments (Toews, 2021).

Therefore, this theory highlights the importance of cognitive processes such as attention, memory, and motivation, demonstrating that learning involves both environmental factors and mental processes rather than solely stimulus-response conditioning.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study uses a qualitative approach in its course of conduct. This is because the collected data were in the form of words, conveying opinions, feelings, and attitudes that reflect teachers' understanding of the phenomena and do not require quantification to understand. In this study, two methods were used for data collection. First, they recorded interviews with six teachers, who provided significant insights into the role of educational psychology in secondary school education. Second, the researchers' observations were used to document teachers' classroom practice in relation to the role of psychology.

Alongside the two methods, the researchers' own experience has been important in providing data significant to the study. As experienced teachers, the researchers encountered many issues that informed their understanding of the role of educational psychology.

### **Data Analysis**

Descriptive analysis was used to analyze the data obtained. The process of analysis are as follows:

**Forming a conceptual framework:** At this stage, a thematic framework was created to be used in the analysis of the data obtained. The researchers formed themes by categorizing the questions they asked the teachers. The themes that emerged include motivation, cognitive development, teachers' personal philosophies and preferences, and cognitive and personality development in teaching and learning.

**Data processing according to the thematic framework:** At this stage, the researchers identified sub-themes by categorizing each question under the main themes and coded the answers. Then the activities shared by the teachers, which are sub-themes of the theme called motivation in learning and classroom practices environments: teachers' personal philosophies and preferences, the application of learning theories, and cognitive and personality development in teaching and learning.

**Description of findings:** In this section, data obtained according to the research questions were described. At this stage, the researchers used direct quotations to support the findings. Therefore, total teachers in the interview was given a separate code number from (T.1), (T.2), (T.3), (T.4), (T.5) and (T.6). Their opinions were given as (T.1), (T.2), (T.3), (T.4), (T.5) and (T.6) respectively.

**Interpretation of the findings:** At this stage, the findings from the end of the research were discussed by correlating them with other research or findings from different settings.

## RESULTS

The researchers investigated how educational psychology might improve the efficacy of instruction in secondary schools in the Kathmandu Valley. Six community teachers and six private school instructors participated in qualitative interviews. Five interconnected topics emerged from the analysis.

### Teachers' Conceptual Knowledge of Educational Psychology

This study discovered disparities in the conceptual knowledge of educational psychology among high school instructors. Teachers participating in professional development programs or formal training demonstrated a better understanding of psychological concepts related to learner diversity, motivation, and cognition.

In their classroom practice, the instructors who took part in professional development acknowledged using learning-by-doing techniques. Those with less exposure, on the other hand, mostly used conventional, teacher-centered methods. This discrepancy points to an inconsistent implementation of educational psychology in Nepal's ongoing professional development and teacher preparation programs.

### Pedagogical Practices Informed by Psychological Principles

Improved instructional effectiveness was reported by teachers who used the concepts of educational psychology. Differentiated instruction, scaffolding, and consideration of individual learning variations were common techniques. These techniques improved instructional clarity and student comprehension by allowing teachers to modify lessons to students' cognitive abilities and learning requirements. The results imply that more adaptable and successful teaching methods are supported by psychologically informed pedagogy.

### Motivation of Students and Classroom Participation

One important element affecting the efficacy of instruction is motivation. As motivational techniques, participants emphasized the value of goal-setting, encouragement, positive reinforcement, and content contextualization. Instructors saw that these methods improved students' engagement, focus, and willingness to participate in educational activities. These results suggest that educational psychology-based motivational techniques are important for encouraging active learning and maintaining student engagement.

### Classroom Organization and the Educational Setting:

Healthy and suitable classroom management was closely linked to the use of psychological concepts. Instructors who placed a strong emphasis on comprehending the emotional and behavioral needs of their students reported fewer disciplinary problems and more organized classrooms. Clear expectations and sympathetic communication are examples of non-punitive behavior management strategies that promote a positive learning environment that supports efficient teaching and learning.

### Evaluation Methods and Perceived Student Performance

Participants stated that their capacity to track students' development and solve learning challenges was improved by assessment procedures influenced by educational psychology, especially formative assessment and ongoing feedback. Teachers believed that these behaviors and students' academic achievement were positively correlated. The results showed that psychologically informed evaluation enhances instructional decision-making and learning outcomes, even though the study does not prove causation.

### Conversation

The study's conclusions highlight the value of educational psychology in resolving enduring issues with student learning outcomes and the efficacy of instruction in Nepalese classrooms. In keeping with past studies that pointed out shortcomings in Nepal's educational system's instructional quality and student engagement

(Thompson, 2012), this study shows that educational psychology offers useful frameworks for enhancing teaching methods.

Gaps in pre-service and in-service teacher educations are reflected in the differences in teachers' comprehension of educational psychology. In line with earlier research that highlights the importance of psychological knowledge in effective teaching, teachers who had a stronger theoretical foundation were more likely to use learner-centered and adaptive pedagogical practices (Shakir & Sharma, 2017). This result emphasizes the necessity of methodically integrating educational psychology into professional development programs and teacher education curriculum in Nepal.

One of the main ways that educational psychology improves the efficacy of instruction is through student motivation. The application of psychologically informed motivational techniques by educators is consistent with well-established theories of motivation that link better learning outcomes to student involvement.

Such solutions seem especially pertinent for managing heterogeneity in student needs and learning settings in the Kathmandu Valley, which is known for its diverse student populations and heterogeneous school systems.

The results also highlight how educational psychology might promote effective classroom management. Modern psychological viewpoints on behavior management are reflected in teachers' transition from harsh disciplinary methods to compassionate, preventive ones. These methods helped create a more welcoming and encouraging learning atmosphere in addition to lowering interruptions in the classroom.

Moreover, the study emphasizes the importance of psychological procedures related assignments. Teachers were able to better understand and analyze students' cognitive processes. So that they can modify instruction by using formative assessment and ongoing feedback. This is consistent with constructivist learning perspectives, which highlight assessment as an essential part of the teaching-learning process rather than just a tool for evaluation.

All the above considered, the study adds to the expanding corpus of research highlighting the usefulness of educational psychology in educational settings.

The results indicate that improving instructors' psychological knowledge and abilities can improve teaching efficacy and student engagement, despite the study's limitations due to its small sample size and qualitative approach.

Therefore, more systematic integration of educational psychology into professional development and teacher education programs may help to improve learning outcomes in Nepalese schools and support more extensive educational reforms.

## CONCLUSION

This study looked at how educational psychology might improve the efficacy of instruction in secondary schools in Nepal's Kathmandu Valley. The results show that the implementation of educational psychology concepts significantly improves pedagogical practices, classroom management, student motivation, and assessment procedures.

These findings are based on qualitative data from teachers in both community and private schools. Higher levels of student engagement and perceived academic accomplishment were supported by teachers with greater instructional adaptability and more pleasant classroom settings, which were reported by those with stronger theoretical and practical knowledge of educational psychology.

In Nepali educational systems, specifically in schools, educational psychology is a crucial yet underappreciated aspect of teacher efficacy, according to the study. Even though Nepal's educational system has advanced significantly, issues with student learning outcomes and instructional quality still exist. According to the research, including psychological concepts into regular instruction can help teachers better meet the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral needs of their pupils.

The study provides important insights into how educational psychology might support ongoing educational reforms, despite its limitations stemming from a small sample size and a qualitative focus.

The findings highlight the need to place greater institutional focus on the psychological underpinnings of instruction to enhance instruction and raise student achievement across Nepal's various educational environments. The study's conclusions lead to the following suggestions for future research, policy, and practice:

### **1. Initiating Teacher Education Programs**

Curricula for pre-service teacher education should systematically incorporate educational psychology. To ensure that teachers are prepared to put psychological theories of motivation, learning processes, classroom management, and assessment into practice, a strong emphasis should be placed on their practical application.

### **2. Enhancing Professional Development in Service**

Regular, targeted professional development programs should be implemented to enhance teachers' psychological competencies. Continuous improvement in teaching effectiveness can be supported by workshops and training sessions that concentrate on learner variety, behavior management, formative evaluation, and student motivation.

### **3. Encouragement of Learner-Centered Teaching Methods**

Educational psychology-informed learner-centered teaching approaches should be promoted in schools. For classroom environments to prioritize student engagement, active learning, and emotional well-being, administrative support and instructional leadership are crucial.

### **4. Reforming Assessment and Feedback Procedures**

In particular, formative and diagnostic examinations should be supported by legislators and school officials. These techniques help educators spot learning gaps early and offer constructive feedback to enhance students' learning.

### **5. Further Prospects of the Research**

It is advised that more studies could be conducted using mixed-methods through longitudinal designs and larger sample sizes to investigate the long-term effects of educational psychology on student achievement and teaching efficacy. A deeper understanding of contextual differences within Nepal's educational system would also be possible through comparative research across regions and school types.

Stakeholders can contribute to improved instructional quality and long-term educational growth in Nepal by implementing these suggestions and enhancing the role of educational psychology in teaching and learning.

## **REFERENCES**

1. An Introduction to Theories of Learning – CTL <https://commons.hostos.cuny.edu/ctl/an-introduction-to-theories-of-learning/>
2. Bayoud, R. M. Training in Libyan Hotels: A case study analysis. <https://core.ac.uk/download/30665644.pdf>
3. Behaviorism lärandeteori <https://hurmanblirrikyibg.web.app/93134/50104.html>
4. Bor, K. J., Magut, A., & Chumba, S. (2025). To find out the challenges facing prevention education programmes targeting management of alcohol and substance abuse among primary school pupils in Nandi Central Sub-County, Kenya. <https://doi.org/10.46827/ejes.v12i6.6011>
5. Borich, G. D., & Tombari, M. L. (2021). *Educational psychology: A contemporary approach*.
6. Budiman, A. (2017). Behaviorism and Foreign Language Teaching Methodology. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/230671145>

7. Collazo, M. E. (2017). Exploring Nursing Care for Heart Failure Through High-Fidelity Simulation. <https://core.ac.uk/download/232743188.pdf>
8. Dhungel, A. (2017). Introduction to Kathmandu Valley. *no. December*.
9. Duchesne S, & Mc Maugh A. (2016). Educational Psychology for Learning and Teaching 5ed, Cengage Learning Australia Pty Limited.
10. Gass, S. M., & Selinker, L. (2008). Second language acquisition An introductory course (3rd ed.). New York, NY Routledge.
11. Horn, T. W. (2005). Developmental Processes Critical to the Formation of Servant Leaders in China.
12. Kids 'R' Kids Learning Academy of Valrico - Kids 'R' Kids Discusses the Cognitive Development of Preschoolers <https://kidskidsvalrico.mediaroom.app/media-room/104688-kids-r-kids-discusses-the-cognitive-development-of-preschoolers>
13. McLeod, S. A. (2019). What is psychology? Retrieved from [https : // www . simply psychology .org/whatispsychology.html](https://www.simplypsychology.org/whatispsychology.html)
14. Patrick, H., Anderman, L. H., Bruening, P. S., & Duffin, L. C. (2011). The role of educational psychology in teacher education: Three challenges for educational psychologists. *Educational Psychologist*, 46(2), 71-83.
15. Ramirez, J. J., & Olson, M. H. (2020). *An introduction to theories of learning*. Routledge.
16. Shakir, M., & Sharma, S. (2017). Using educational psychology for a better teaching-learning environment. *International Journal of Education*, 8(1), 20–28.
17. Thompson, R. N. (2012). *Schools and their effectiveness in the Kathmandu Valley, Nepal*. University of London, Institute of Education (United Kingdom).
18. 'Teachers' Preferences'. 2005 Merriam-Webster.com. Retrieved 7 May 2005, from [https://www.merriam- Webster.com/dictionary/ Teachers Preferences](https://www.merriam-Webster.com/dictionary/Teachers%20Preferences).
19. Toews, K. (2021). The Processes of Help-Seeking and Counsellor Development in the Context Of Men who Experience Intimate Partner Abuse. <https://core.ac.uk/download/478191260.pdf>