

# On How to "Weave" a Network for the Application of Fundamental Educational Theory and Social Development Science Theory

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**Abstract:** Fundamental educational theory and social development science theory are two major theoretical systems closely related to education and social development. Starting from the concepts and connotations of these two theories, this paper analyzes the main content, implementation means, essence, and goals of fundamental educational theory; it then reviews and summarizes the major theoretical viewpoints of social development theory from both historical and contemporary perspectives. This leads to the conclusion regarding the interrelationship — the "upper" and "lower" linkages — between social development science theory and fundamental educational theory. Finally, from the perspective of educational work, and in combination with the relationship between the two, three suggestions are put forward. It is advocated that educational practitioners should actively construct paths for educational development and properly "weave" the application network of fundamental educational theory and social development science theory.

**Keywords:** Educational connotation; educational elements; educational essence; three-dimensional network; positive cycle.

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## 1. Introduction

The era exerts a tremendous influence on education, while education allows people to gain a more comprehensive understanding of social development. However, prior literature has rarely explored the relationship between the two, and a clear theoretical validation of their interrelationship has not yet been established. This paper argues that studying the intersection of social development science theory and fundamental educational theory, and summarizing and sublimating these findings in practice, is conducive to enriching both theories and providing better guidance for education.

## 2. Research Background and Significance

The construction of fundamental educational theory and social development science theory are both crucial for education and social development. They each play an extremely important guiding role—not only closely tied to talent cultivation and policy formulation but also intimately linked to the future development processes of the nation and society. Social development theory is one of the most valued social science theories in today's world, while fundamental educational theory broadly encompasses the essence of theories within the field of education and is a foundational and essential course for education practitioners. Although belonging to different fields, these two theories are intricately connected<sup>[1]</sup>.

Especially in today's era of rapid technological and economic development, social development theory and fundamental educational theory increasingly infiltrate each other from various aspects of education and society, becoming a major driving force for fostering "educated talents" to propel social development. Studying the relationship between these two theories helps promote the educational process and facilitates social development; in

particular, it assists in steering development direction, regulating the scale of impact, and ultimately plays a guiding and positive role in improving educational effectiveness and advancing social development.

## 3. Theoretical Overview

### 3.1. Fundamental Educational Theory

A systematic review and summarization of fundamental educational theory, based on practical educational needs, yield the following important viewpoints:

#### 3.1.1. The Connotation of the Concept of Education

The author believes that particular attention should be paid to the expansion of the connotation of the concept of education, which essentially aims at the overall improvement of educational quality. It refers to not only imparting knowledge on the basis of education popularization and equity but also enhancing students' comprehensive abilities, ultimately raising their overall level. Emphasizing the development of core competencies helps students achieve holistic capability cultivation. Especially in today's world, various countries are increasingly focusing on core competencies: for example, American students emphasize the cultivation of critical thinking, life and career skills; Singaporean students place particular importance on developing self-confidence and the ability to learn proactively while encouraging active contribution; in China, special emphasis is placed on cultivating core competencies related to autonomous development and social participation, aiming for students to achieve holistic development in aspects such as cultural heritage, responsibility, healthy living, and innovation practice, ultimately cultivating outstanding comprehensive talents<sup>[2]</sup>.

In summary, national expectations for student development are no longer confined merely to the breadth of knowledge but have extended to physical, innovative, emotional, and various other capabilities and qualities. This is the result of decades of exploration and breakthroughs in Chinese

education and represents a key national requirement for student education. Under such demands, Chinese youth will gradually make significant strides in education across knowledge, physical fitness, mental health, and skills development, steadily moving away from the shortcomings of “exam-oriented education” and toward becoming high-quality, well-rounded individuals.

### **3.1.2. Educational Elements and Means of Content Delivery**

The educational system consists of two roles: the educator and the educatee, which together form the elements of education. Generally, in schools, teachers are the educators and students are the educatees. Educational content is abundant and follows the principles of individual choice and scientific arrangement; the difficulty level of education is also set according to each child's physical and mental development and social needs. The educational methods encountered by educators and educatees are defined as the sum of all forms and conditions used in educational activities<sup>[3]</sup>.

Therefore, exploring the relationship between educators and educatees is a crucial topic. There are three mainstream theories: Teacher-Centered Theory, Student-Centered Theory, and Dual-Subject Theory. Teacher-Centered Theory emphasizes the authoritative position of teachers in the educational process, controlling student activities and learning, requiring students to obey the teacher. Student-Centered Theory, on the other hand, emphasizes the central position of the student rather than the teacher, advocating that students proactively seek knowledge, learning methods, and guidance from teachers. Dual-Subject Theory stresses that both teachers and students are subjects, highlighting that teachers should guide and inspire students, while students must participate substantively, thus achieving an educational activity model characterized by equal and interactive participation.

### **3.1.3. The Essence and Purpose of Education**

In fundamental educational theory, academia debates the essence of education from three perspectives, resulting in the Productivity Theory, Superstructure Theory, and Special Social Practice Theory.

Productivity Theory holds that the fundamental attribute of education is productivity; essentially, education is a form of productive labor, focusing on labor experience and the reproduction of labor. The process of education becoming direct productive force is considered the educational process, and it posits that humans must be deliberately cultivated to become key elements of productivity.

Superstructure Theory argues that education does not have a direct and unconditional relationship with productive forces but is instead conducted through forms such as politics and economics. It views education as a task of cultivating moral character and transmitting knowledge and skills, categorizing it as an ideological activity.

Special Social Practice Theory contends that the above two debates merely concern the attribution of education, not its essence. It asserts that the essence of education should be a conscious and purposeful social practice activity aimed at cultivating people. Educational practice is the result of individuals changing their state according to their inner needs and goals, allowing for self-construction and socialization. It emphasizes the effective use of means, tools, and forms, utilizing life experiences for educational transmission and promotion, thus enabling individuals to become more personalized and better aligned with social demands.

In fundamental educational theory, views on the purpose of education are generally divided into four categories: Individual-Centered Theory, Society-Centered Theory, Life-Centered Theory, and Culture-Centered Theory.

The classification mainly depends on the direct purpose of education. For example, Individual-Centered Theory advocates starting from the nature of the educatee, aiming to cultivate outstanding individuals while maintaining their individuality and enhancing their personal value. Society-Centered Theory emphasizes promoting education based on societal needs, where individuals serve as raw material for education, are expected to conform to social development, and ultimately ensure the continuity and stability of society. In this view, social value is regarded as the highest value. Life-Centered Theory proposes closely integrating education with students' lives, preparing them for a fulfilling present and future life. Culture-Centered Theory emphasizes coordinating education, society, and individuals through culture, asserting that education itself is a cultural activity that should be conducted around cultural principles<sup>[4]</sup>.

## **3.2. Social Development Science Theory**

### **3.2.1. History and Present**

Social development theory is one of the most highly valued scientific theories and has garnered extensive attention from scholars and politicians since the 1980s. In the process of reform, opening-up, and socialist modernization, China has gradually formed many key points in social development theory. This not only provides new content but also enriches the theory of social development further. Conversely, the expansion and advancement of social development theory have also played a guiding role in China's construction efforts. From a contemporary global perspective, social development theory is moving toward a trend of comprehensive and coordinated advancement. China is also deeply influenced by this, with the country's development requiring the integration of economic construction and social development, with particular emphasis on the coordination between economic growth and social progress.

### **3.2.2. Major Theoretical Viewpoints**

The main theoretical points of social development science theory include the following: First, economic development strategies must be formulated in accordance with the laws of population development, ensuring every citizen's right to survival and development through planned development; Second, economic reforms must take the interests of the vast majority as the reference point, guaranteeing the interests of the majority while appropriately considering those of minorities; Third, the distribution of economic benefits must be ensured, with priority given to efficiency, aiming to maintain social stability and order.

Exploring its intersection with education reveals that particular attention should be paid to the idea that human development should be the ultimate goal, emphasizing a human-centered approach and leveraging science and technology as a key driving force. It is necessary to prioritize the development of science and technology, placing technological progress at the forefront of social development. Moreover, practical experiences, both positive and negative, should be summarized and refined, thereby enriching contemporary global development theory and providing further guidance for education. Through the development of science, technology, and education, China's economic and social progress can enter a new stage, bringing greater

happiness to the people.

### **3.3. The Relationship Between the Two Theories**

#### **3.3.1. Social Development Science Theory as the "Underlying Foundation" for Fundamental Educational Theory**

The author believes that social development science theory serves as the "underlying foundation" for fundamental educational theory. For educators, understanding the relationship between social development science theory and fundamental educational theory is an issue that all educational participants must actively contemplate. Figuratively speaking, social development science theory acts as a vital "bridge" linking society and education, organically and closely connecting social development with educational development. Educators assume the role of "transmitters," primarily conveying the ideas and directives of social development science theory into fundamental educational theory. At the same time, they must ensure the timeliness of actions taken by educatees after receiving the theories, accurately monitor their ideological dynamics, and ensure that educatees' political and ideological actions remain closely aligned with the needs of social development.

As the "underlying foundation" of fundamental educational theory, the proper and long-term efficient development of social development science theory is the fundamental guarantee for the advancement of educational practitioners. Without the development or correctness of social development science theory, the ability to sustain the development of educational theory would be lost. In daily practice, social development science theory often plays the role of a "solid," "fundamental," and "reliable" guide, enabling educational work to proceed more smoothly and in tandem with various aspects of societal development. This not only enhances overall societal vitality but also significantly improves the operational efficiency of sectors like education. It serves as the "reassurance" for the formation of fundamental educational theory and is regarded as the most "stable and reliable" critical component<sup>[5]</sup>.

#### **3.3.2. Fundamental Educational Theory as the "Superstructure" of Social Development Science Theory**

Fundamental educational theory stands as the "educational superstructure" built upon social development science theory. It expands in a three-dimensional network manner, constructing upon the foundation of social development science theory, beginning from the educational perspective, with educators and educatees as the main actors, educational methodology as the foundation, and promoting social development as the ultimate goal. At this point, the educational foundation theory built upon social development science theory usually plays several roles, which the author metaphorically describes as follows:

First, it acts as an "adhesive," bonding education and social development by defining categories, engaging in discussions and analyses, and providing detailed explanations of fundamental concepts and theories within the field of education, thus significantly advancing the development of the entire educational enterprise.

Second, it functions as a "regulator," organically adjusting educational theory within the dynamic framework of social development, ensuring that education stays "on track" and maintaining the "timeliness" of education, thus making

fundamental educational theory consistently "advanced," "applicable," and "harmonious."

Third, it serves as a "vanguard," with education being a crucial component in revitalizing national society, bearing the major responsibilities and obligations of talent cultivation and technological advancement. Likewise, fundamental educational theory acts as a vanguard among related theories, continuously exploring and practicing in accordance with the development of social science theories.

## **4. Building a "Three-Dimensional Organic Network" to Promote the Proper Development of Education**

Effectively applying the relationship between social development science theory and fundamental educational theory, and constructing a "three-dimensional organic network" between the two, helps guide education along the proper path, improves overall work efficiency, and prevents the waste of energy and resources. Through mutual promotion, it establishes an excellent pattern of "dual development" in education and society. The author explains views and suggestions for grasping this relationship from two aspects: "direction" and "practice," as follows:

### **4.1. Emphasizing Guidance in Direction**

To realize the weaving of a three-dimensional network, it is necessary to exert the guiding role of social development science theory over fundamental educational theory, which is reflected in the formation, improvement, and implementation of fundamental educational theory.

First, in the formation stage, it is necessary to enhance the awareness of the influence of social development science theory on fundamental educational theory and form a unified theoretical framework by enriching the theoretical structure. In practice, those responsible for developing the foundational theory must have a thorough understanding of social development theory and be well-versed in social trends. Educational practitioners must grasp the relationship between the current state and shortcomings of education, the strengths and weaknesses of educational methods, and the relationship between educational heritage and future development, applying broad theoretical knowledge, rich teaching experience, and accurate judgment skills to the formation of fundamental educational theory<sup>[6]</sup>.

Second, active and dynamic improvement is crucial. This stage is a vital support for forming a sound fundamental educational theory. Under the premise of aligning with social development science theory, refinement and enhancement can be carried out at multiple levels and degrees, thus producing a detailed and scientific fundamental educational theory that provides norms and guidance for educational practitioners. Feedback typically comes from students and teachers, both of whom have faith and trust in the fundamental educational theory and hope their feedback and experiences can contribute effectively to its development.

Third, in the implementation stage, education must be executed closely around the key ideas of social development science theory and fundamental educational theory, fully exerting their primary functions. Practice should focus on identifying and refining issues and forming feedback to further improve the fundamental educational theory. Theory and practice must not be separated but made "alive" and "dynamic" to let the theory play a guiding role. As the saying

goes, "There is a gap between formation and implementation"; theory only gains enduring significance when it is "implemented" and "applied."

## 4.2. Positive Cycle in Practice

Correctly forming and applying fundamental educational theory can effectively improve education quality and significantly increase the number of highly skilled talents, thus positively influencing social development through education. This impact is mainly reflected in two aspects:

First, the development of specialization. Educatees can develop stronger specialization by engaging in practical applications of fundamental educational theory, undertaking advanced training in multiple fields to gain professional abilities. It also cultivates a broader vision among talents and provides more diverse solutions for practical problems, ultimately enriching educatees with broader knowledge and practical experience, thereby better promoting social development.

Second, resolving contradictions. A sound fundamental educational theory, aligned with social development science theory, enables educatees to achieve their educational ideals and goals in a structured and purposeful manner, avoiding "confusion" and "bewilderment." This conserves the cognitive energy of educatees and enhances the efficiency of educators<sup>[7]</sup>.

Fundamental educational theory and social development science theory are, in essence, guiding "encyclopedic" theories. When developing, these two theories must align in the "same direction." Proper positioning and alignment enable them to advance toward a common goal, achieving the long-term objective of "smoother educational development and more robust social development."

## 4.3. Mutual Promotion Overall

Through the guiding and influencing roles discussed above, a "positive cycle" can be realized between the two theories. Under their combined effect, theories will move toward a more mature level, ensuring that educational outcomes and social development proceed steadily along the right path.

The mutually promoting effect between the construction of fundamental educational theory and social development science theory achieves a "1+1>2" result. By enhancing informatization, the two theories can be scientifically monitored and improved. Moreover, real-time dynamic control and precise task quantification should be emphasized in applying the theories, enabling a more accurate assessment of outcomes.

Mutual promotion integrates all aspects of education into the overall educational system, with specific and individualized distinctions based on different age groups and regions. Furthermore, the entire educational system is embedded into the trajectory of social development, promoting scientific progress "from the small to the large," fulfilling the ultimate life value of educational practitioners. Successfully "weaving" the application network of fundamental educational theory and social development science theory is akin to drawing the blueprint for the positive development of education.

## 5. Conclusion

This paper systematically reviewed and summarized

fundamental educational theory, revealing that national expectations for student development have expanded beyond mere knowledge breadth to encompass physical, innovative, emotional, and various other competencies and qualities. It then analyzed and summarized the major theoretical viewpoints of social development theory from historical and contemporary perspectives, emphasizing the importance of exploring its intersection with education and advocating for a proactive focus on human-centered development goals, leveraging science and technology as key drivers.

The theory demands the advancement of science and technology, placing technological progress at the forefront of social development; moreover, it stresses the importance of summarizing and refining both positive and negative experiences in practice to further enrich contemporary global development theory and better guide education.

From this, the interrelationship between social development science theory and fundamental educational theory is derived: social development science theory acts as the "underlying foundation," while fundamental educational theory serves as the "superstructure." Furthermore, the roles of fundamental educational theory as the "adhesive," "regulator," and "vanguard" are clarified. Finally, from the perspective of educational work, three recommendations are proposed based on their relationship: "emphasizing guidance in direction," "forming a positive cycle in practice," and "mutual promotion overall."

It is advocated that all educational practitioners actively build pathways for educational development and strive to "weave" a robust application network between fundamental educational theory and social development science theory.

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