Theory and Approach

Elena Huston

A Contribution to the Book entitled Non-Educational and Non-Technological Theories and Approaches for the Field of Education and Technology: A Proposal by 200 Academics

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Theory:

What is the name of the theory?

Flow

List a maximum of five fields/domains that the theory belongs to?

Psychology, sociology, management, philosophy, physics

List only two names of those who have written most about the theory, and reference only one of their publications?

- Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly. "Flow and the psychology of discovery and invention." *New Yprk: Harper Collins* (1996).
- Koufaris, Marios. "Applying the technology acceptance model and flow theory to online consumer behavior." *Information systems research* 13, no. 2 (2002): 205-223.

In plain and simple language and in a maximum of 90 words, define the theory?

A Hungarian professor of psychology, Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi, described a theory of flow, where our emotions work to support us in what we are doing. He explained that people are happiest when they are in a state of *flow*. People with a higher emotional intelligence are ones who are more likely to experience moments of flow as they are more open to the subtle forces. He introduced seven main conditions for achieving flow: being focused, being outside everyday reality, sense of clarity, sense of achievement, sense of serenity, timelessness and intrinsic motivation.

In plain and simple language and in a maximum of 110 words, argue for the value and implications of the theory?

This theory indicates that, when in the state of flow, we are intrinsically motivated or completely immersed in what we are doing. Teachers can observe expressions of engagement (or otherwise) at the behavioural, cognitive and emotional levels. Therefore, expressions of emotional engagement demonstrate motivation (outcome). By keeping the students in the flow, teachers facilitate and enhance their learning process, helping the students to create an opportunity for learning and intense focus, where learners can even feel that they lose track of time because they are so immersed in the task. Flow can be experienced in any task in any field of activity, from music to writing to painting to sports.

In plain and simple language and in a maximum of 100 words, argue for the benefit or risk that this theory hold for the field of education and technology?

One of the most significant benefits, which this theory brings to the field of education and technology is optimizing the learning process in online environments, using such platforms as Course Management Systems (Moodle, Blackboard), MOOCS platforms (*Coursera*), generic social platforms (*Facebook, LinkedIn*), Internet telephony (S*kype, SnapChat*), open-source online communities and specialist delivery platforms . Ultimately, students need to be weaned off extrinsic motivators and onto intrinsic ones like 'flow' states or self-engagement in challenging but rewarding learning tasks. Researchers have found that flow can enhance performance in a wide variety of areas including teaching, learning, athletics, and artistic creativity. It can also lead to further learning and skill development. Because the act of achieving flow indicates a substantial mastery of a certain skill, the individual should continually seek new challenges and information in order to maintain this state.

In plain and simple language and in a maximum of 50 words, argue for the risks or losses of not considering this theory in the field of education and technology?

It would be unwise to ignore the application of this theory to the field of education and technology, as this would mean that the learning process could be less enjoyable and productive. The failure to achieve the balance between the challenge and the skill would mean that the flow will not occur, thus resulting in frustration and apathy.

In plain and simple language and in a maximum of 50 words, argue for the challenges that might be faced when applying this theory to education and technology?

Some conventional education researchers may not accept this theory, as it might conflict with their traditional views of how the educational process should be structured. As flow described as one of the mental state, its definition might be misunderstood by some educators without background in psychology. Integrating flow theory into e-leaning environments requires flexible instructor-learner interaction and the innovative adoption (established or emerging) web technologies.

Approach/Notion:

What is the name of the approach/notion?

Emotional Attachment

List a maximum of five fields/domains that the approach/notion belongs to?

Psychology, anthropology, sociology, marketing, real estate

List only two names of those who have written most about the approach/notion, and reference only one of their publications?

- Bowlby, J. (1980). *Attachment and loss* (Vol. 3). Basic books., Phychology , 472
- Ainsworth, M. D. S., Blehar, M. C., Waters, E., & Wall, S. (2014). *Patterns of attachment: A psychological study of the strange situation.* New York: Psychology Press.

In plain and simple language and in a maximum of 90 words, define the approach/notion?

Attachment is an emotional bond between a person and a specific object. It involves proximity or accessibility and attentiveness but needs to be operationalised and distinguished from positive 'brand attitudes'. Attachments vary in strength, and stronger ones are associated with stronger feelings of connections, affection, love, and passion. The desire to make strong emotional attachments to others is a basic human need.

In plain and simple language and in a maximum of 110 words, argue for the value and implications of the approach/notion?

Emotional attachment is an enduring bond of affection with substantial intensity which is part of a motivational system (the attachment behavioral system) which emerged by natural selection to regulate proximity to an attachment figure. Whilst emotional attachment emerged and remains a prominent concept in child development psychology, it is also relevant in higher education, post-compulsory education or informal learning because, without it, students could drop courses. In other fields like organization, alienative calculative or moral emotional involvement is linked to power modes (coercive, utilitarian or symbolic). Relationships thrive when power mode and emotional status align in coercive-alienative, utilitarian-calculative or normative-moral power duos.

In plain and simple language and in a maximum of 100 words, argue for the benefit or risk that this approach/notion hold for the field of education and technology?

Research shows the need for 'belonging', which could be used psychologically to focus student cognitive energies on learning tasks that improve their social prospects. Links between attachment, sense of community, and empathic concern about other team members improve effective collaboration. Attachment behavior protects individuals psychologically and facilitates learning. Emotional attachment could help course participants feel secure, confident and more likely to explore his or her social potential in e-learning environment. If integrated correctly, Emotional Attachment can enable effective online delivery of a variety of subjects.

In plain and simple language and in a maximum of 50 words, argue for the risks or losses of not considering this approach/notion in the field of education and technology?

Without emotional attachment, course participants could experience anxiety, insecurity, despair and depression. Individuals' emotional attachment to a teacher or an online designed course predicts their commitment to stability in learning. Commitment is defined as the degree to which an individual views the relationship from a long-term perspective and has a willingness to stay with the relationship even when things are difficult.

In plain and simple language and in a maximum of 50 words, argue for the challenges that might be faced when applying this theory to education and technology?

If the notion of emotional attachment is not carefully and clearly defined, it could be misinterpreted and negatively affect educational process in an online environment. It can also mean very different things to learners and educators from diverse cultures and languages and therefore requires thorough analysis and understanding before application.