Critiques of learner-centered teaching

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Abstract: The discourse surrounding learner-centered teaching has been a focal point since the 1980s, with particular intensity during the 1990s. Following this period, dissent emerged from some educational theorists who criticized learner-centered teaching from various angles. One faction argued that learner-centered teaching disproportionately emphasizes the learner, thereby diminishing the role of the teacher, while another group contended that the model's focus on the learner's interests and needs comes at the expense of the content's importance. Many educators advocate for a teacher-centered, formalistic approach, positing that it is more effective in environments where resources are ample and the professional capabilities of teachers are exceptionally high. These divergent viewpoints have led to significant uncertainty among policymakers, curriculum developers, and educators regarding the implementation of educational strategies. Consequently, the ambiguity surrounding learner-centered teaching poses substantial challenges in its practical application within the classroom setting. Thus, how can these contradictions in the curriculum be effectively resolved? How can a lay parent, who may struggle to grasp these conflicting viewpoints, actively engage in their child's education? Additionally, how can a primary school teacher, who may lack sufficient qualifications, comprehend these concepts and deliver instruction effectively? It is urgent solve these problems. Therefore, the major intention of the present study is to revisit these major criticisms associated with learner-centered teaching. This study entirely based on the analysis and examination of the existing literature. This study has focused on nine criticisms of learner centered teaching to examine its deficiencies and weaknesses. These nine criticisms are- extreme contradiction in ideologies; legitimacy of learner centred teaching; more emphasis on the need, interest, freedom of learner; excessive attention on the learner; developmentally appropriate practice; practicality of learner centered teaching; individual and society; teacher's roles and responsibilities; and natural sequence of child development. An effort has been made to delve deeply into each criticism to reveal its underlying reality. The study concludes that while learner centered teaching is appealing in theory, its implementation is notably challenging. This difficulty is particularly pronounced in both developed and developing countries where there is a significant lack of resources and infrastructure, making the adoption of this pedagogy quite arduous.

Keywords: Child development, Developmentally appropriate practices, Learner centred teaching, Poststructuralists, Reconceptualists.

1. Introduction

1.1. Context of the Study

Although from the 1980s and particularly 1990s, Learner centred teaching (LCT) as a notion originated from the Western countries has been legitimised by government policies to be promoted in educational reforms in many developing countries (Black et al., 1993, O'Sullivan, 2004; Brodie et al., 2002), the Eastern world, both Developing countries, as well as more developed countries, have long

been known to follow a teacher centred teaching (TCT), emphasizing knowledge to be imparted, memorized, and then applied. Guthrie (1990) challenges the appropriateness of those LCT practices for the developing world and argues for the TCT which is believed to be more suitable for contexts where resources are limited and teacher professional capability is low. Similarly, O'Donoghue (1994) does not think those of discovery learning, activity based learning and integrated curricula are appropriate for the developing world as they presuppose small classes, rich resources, capable teachers which do not exist. Brodie et al., (2002) argues that LCT aiming for integrated curricula, active in-depth learning; appreciation for diversity, collaborative group learning, and individualised teaching, etc. require substantial school restructuring and management, more open space, rich resources and smaller classes.

There have been quite a lot of concerns and arguments over the appropriateness of LCT for developing countries where the social and cultural values, educational traditions, and available resources are so different from the West. Tabulawa (2003) notes that the current curricular reforms in many African countries which try to make LCT their official pedagogy in schools are a result of the ideological influence from the West, particularly from Britain over many years of colonialism. However, there are also studies from developing countries which show some degree of teaching effectiveness after adopting a more LCT (Brodie et al., 2002).

The ideology of LCT had a strong impact on American and British education during the late l9th and most part of the 20th century but there has recently been a breaking away from it by the two countries. Although LCT has many advantages, notion of LCT has been criticized from many fronts. This was because LCT was under serious attack by some scholars and philosophers. Olson and Bruner (1996) called LCT 'a not very meaningful term at best'. They say that it is 'a politically useful code word giving loosely affiliated groups a common identity' (p.19). They also point out that the term, LCT, has complex and contradictory underlying assumptions about Learner and their learning. Along similar lines, Tabulawa (2003) even critically sees the term as a disguise for Western aid agencies to sell their ideology of individualism and democracy to developing countries as he, like Holliday (1994b), believes that there does not exist a universal pedagogy which works with equal effectiveness irrespective of the context. To Entwistle (1970), the term LCT has become 'a slogan with all the potential for promoting change and creating misunderstanding' (p.11). He also noted that many theorists as well as practitioners rallied around different schools for or against LCT and some of the emphases upon the child have been subject to sustained criticisms, provoking a critical, even hostile, reception from many. This indicates that one of the major concerns of the existing field education has been LCT.

LCT in East Asia, Africa, and other developing countries of the world has been supported by International Aid Organizations such as UN agencies, UNESCO and UNICEF. Often this assistance is provided under the rationale of enhancing participation in schooling in line with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Education for All (EFA) (Mtika & Gates, 2010; Serbessa, 2006). Schweisfurth, 2011, p. 427) emphasises that some aid agencies view LCT as 'a policy panacea… to address a myriad of social problems in the developing world'. Aid agencies justify their promotion of such pedagogy in 'benign and apolitical terms' (Tabulawa (2003), p. 9), emphasising the efficacy of LCT in cognitive/educational terms. In the same vein, LCT ideas have been introduced in teacher-training programs and school reforms in many parts of South Asia and Africa with the intention of creating more child-friendly, democratic learning environments (Sriprakash, 2010). As such, LCT has been described as a 'travelling policy, transferred from country to country in the developing world to hopefully solve such historically intractable issues as poverty and political authoritarianism, to increase levels of foreign investment or to extend democratisation' (Altinyelken, 2011; Schweisfurth, 2011). However, Tabulawa (2003) presents an alternative view of the widespread implementation of LCT in developing countries. International aid agencies and institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, he claims, have prescribed the introduction of LCT through educational projects in developing countries, showing their preference and support for Western liberal democracy.

Tabulawa (2003) argues that 'if pedagogical practices are converging around the world, it is because a certain pedagogical approach is in the interests of powerful states or international organizations'

(p.140). Similarly, Nykiel-Herbert (2004) notes that learner centered pedagogy has spread in developing countries making a transition to democracy, perhaps because it promises intellectual liberation and emancipates from traditional approaches that are considered oppressive. LCT might also be considered as democratic in that it calls for a more equal relationship between teachers and students. Nykiel-Herbert (2004) critiques the role that aid agencies play in promoting LCT as a one-size fits all pedagogical approach, which works effectively in any settings. Guthrie (1990, cited in Tabulawa, 2003) suggests that LCT represents a process of Westernisation with its political and economic meanings. Such discussions emphasise the interconnected nature of pedagogy, politics and ideology. Whatever the reasons for the implementation of such approaches in developing country contexts, 'the history of the implementation of LCT in different contexts is riddled with stories of failures grand and small Schweisfurth (2011, p. 425).

This discussion clearly indicates that LCT has been criticized on the several grounds. It has been criticized by the many educationists, educational administrators and educational planners, policy makers, curriculum developers, child psychologists and the others. The major criticisms of the Learner centred teaching have been discussed in the following different sections.

1.2. Extreme Contradiction in Ideologies

The first criticism centers on extreme contradiction in ideologies of LCT. Rousseau has a very important role in developing the concept of modern Learner centred teaching. He developed naturalism and LCT through his novel. After the development of his theory, modern educationists carried out research in the field of LCT to further refine this theory. Rousseau developed the naturalistic theory of "Go Back to Nature" because the society of that time deformed Learner after a thorough and extensive study of the society Europe. According to Rousseau, he came to the conclusion that the society at that time could not develop the Learner, but nature itself would develop the Learner. His argument is that there is no other great teacher than nature. Rousseau argued that education as a form of nature rather than a teacher as a person would develop Learner in all aspects. In the process of teaching learning, he insisted that nature provides education along with the development of Learner rather than human teachers. In this way, Russia concluded that nature has a greater role than society in Learner's development and education.

After some time, psychologist Vygotsky developed the theory of social learning. He concluded that social interaction and society play an important role in the learning process of Learner (Brooker, 2005). According to Vygotsky, knowledge is socially construction (Boudourides, 1998). In this way, it is seen that Rousseau rejects crucial role of society in teaching learning process, while Vygotsky considers social interaction as inevitable. Therefore, it is found that Rousseau talks about going from society to nature, while Vygotsky's talk about going to society seems completely contradictory. Therefore, should educationists and curriculum experts develop curriculum and learning strategies according to Rousseau's naturalistic concept or should they develop curriculum based on social learning theory of Vygonsky? It is urgent to seek the answer to this question. Therefore, should educationists and curriculum experts develop curriculum and teaching learning strategies according to Rousseau's naturalistic concept or should they formulate curriculum based on social interaction according to Vygonsky? These questions remain unanswered. In addition, Piaget emphasized the individual in learning process, while Vygotsky emphasized the social interaction. All these questions are before us. How can a common parent of the Learner understand these ideologies that are difficult to understand even by experts in this field?

Due to these contradictions and differences of opinion among educationists, education policy makers, curriculum experts, teachers and professors are in confusion and are in confusion as to what to do. When it is difficult to understand the concept of LCT, it is very difficult to bring this concept into the school classroom teaching learning process. It seems that there are many contradictions within LCT. How to resolve these contradictions curriculum? How can a common parent who cannot

understand such oppositions be involved in their Learner's education? How can a primary level teacher who lack adequate qualifications understand these concepts and teach effectively?

1.3. Legitimacy of Learner Centred Teaching

The second criticism centers on legitimacy of LCT. Theories are proved on the basis of the validation process. To prove any theory, either it is necessary test it in the field or it is necessary to prove it logically. LCT received its validation from Rousseau, Piaget, and Vygotsky (Stone, 1996; Matthews, 2003). Most of the psychologists conducted studies on process of learning and claimed that learning process is the process of knowledge construction (Ryan, 2005; Geary, 1994:263). Although all these psychologists claim that learning is a process of knowledge construction, these psychologists have different opinions about the knowledge construction process. In this context, Piaget believed that such knowledge construction process is purely individual whilst Vygotsky claim that knowledge is socially and culturally constructed (Brooker, 2005; Boudourides, 1998:2).

Their other finding are that Learner's cognitive abilities become progressively more advanced and that such progress occurs in age-related stages, as one might expect (Matthews, 2003:54). Developmentalist psychologists take the first finding as establishing the superiority of natural learning over teacher education. The latter finding is regarded as establishing the truth of the natural development of cognitive abilities. With regard to the former finding, learning as an active knowledge construction process which is related to mental activity, and not to the superiority of natural learning. In fact, the actions of good teachers can be correcting misunderstandings and errors immediately, providing opportunities for independent application-show that it has always been implicitly recognised that learning is knowledge construction and that the principal agent of learning is the activity of the learner's own mind. With regard to the latter finding, it only showed a progression in cognitive abilities; the deduction that such progression is natural is based not on the findings but on the a priori developmentalist premise. The fact of progressive advancement in Learner's cognitive abilities does not invalidate instruction as the necessary condition for the optimal development of secondary cognitive abilities. Empirical evidence of progressive advancement in Learner's cognitive abilities has therefore no decisive consequences for traditional education theory. It still leaves romantic developmentalism, which is the backbone of learner centredness, in the realm of speculation. In fact, the non-universality of the three Rs and the increase in learning disabilities appear to validate instruction, and not natural learning, as the necessary condition for their development and all the intellectual learning based thereon.

1.4. More Emphasis on the Need, Interest, Freedom of Learner

The third criticism centers on need, interest and self-directed interest. It is criticised that with an exclusive emphasis on the learner and his freedom, the curriculum may be ignored and also the mastery of human knowledge and skills which require hard work as well as disciplined applications may be forgotten. This criticism related to freedom versus discipline and self-directed interest versus authoritative knowledge. Darling (1986) argues that it is clearly not enough to just recognize what Learner's interests are. We must also know what kind of interests we would like them to have and how such interests can be developed through education. Similarly, Oelkers (2002) criticises Rousseau for taking for granted that the self-development of the child is driven by immediate interests not by instruction. The opponents criticize LCT for giving too much freedom to Learner, making them unwilling to accept reasonable authority and letting their individual impulses lead their actions resulting in discipline problems.

1.5. Excessive Attention on the Learner

The fourth criticism centers on excessive attention on the child. LCT is a protest philosophy; it protests against the over-emphasis placed on the content or curriculum at the detriment of the child. So, the fear is that too much attention on the child and on methods of teaching him may lead to the neglect of content or may suffer the same fate as curriculum centered education (Schofield, 1981: 58). The

problem with too much concentration of anything especially in educational method is that it easily leads to rigidity or orthodoxy which may not give allowance for new ideas and changes. Rigidity at a certain time will certainly result in educational irrationality, bigotry and lack of balance.

When we study most of the literature, we find that this concept puts too much emphasis on the child. Therefore, the most important aspects of teaching such as curriculum, content, educational materials and evaluation process tend to be overshadowed. More importantly, can the role of the teacher in the teaching process be devalued? Therefore, there is no clear idea of this concept regarding what the role of the teacher will be. Because the statement 'teacher should be the guide of the student' is not clear. In their historical analysis of the period from the late 1930s to the 1980s, Chung & Walsh (2000) found 40 meanings of the term LCT, thus suggesting that consensus of a common meaning may be illusionary. Nevertheless, they argued that 'despite a range of meanings, there appears to be a common ideological understanding across most educators' (Chung & Walsh, 2000). In this context, Chung & Walsh (2000, p. 229) found three major meanings: Frobel's notion of the child at the centre of his world; the developmentalist notion that the child is the centre of schooling; and the progression notion that Learner should direct their activities. Chung & Walsh maintained that underlying the ideological surface of these central meanings were different notions about Learner, learning and development. Thus, most of the literature on LCT laid more emphasis on is excessive attention on the child. Other aspect of the teaching learning remains less important in the field of education.

1.6. Developmentally Appropriate Practice

The fifth criticism centers on developmentally appropriate practices (DAP). The concept of child-centeredness has been a hotly debated topic for some time now. Not limited to this, child-centeredness has started to be considered as an interchangeable word with LCT. In this regard, Grieshaber & Cannella (2001) described DAP as the dominant pedagogical discourse in the Western nations such as United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. At the same time and LCT is linked with the better quality of education. Ryan (2005) claims that developmentally appropriate practice (DAP) is full expression of LCT and it can be used as a synonym of LCT. Prior to DAP, child centred pedagogy, as an ideology, was difficult to dispute and to challenge because it drew upon progressive values, such as democracy and individual freedom (Cannella, 1997). According to Brooker, 2005, It was not until LCT was codified into and 'in the guise' of DAP in a 1996 position paper by the National Association for the Education of Young Learner that it received its sharpest criticism.

Graue (2005) warn us that the hegemony of the developmental perspective has discouraged adequate sensitivity and attention to socio-cultural differences among Learner. Reconceptualists also believe that a standard child development approach to child centeredness is limited, partly because the theory underlying this approach developed only in the West and primarily before 80's. In their view, knowledge should continually be reconstructed across a variety of individuals, cultures and contexts. Reconceptualists urge a holistic view of Learner's developmental needs that encompasses sociocultural as well as biological factors (Burman, 1996). In a reconceptualist approach, the teacher interacts with each student to discover that child's unique needs rather than simply employ standardized practices (Burman (1994; Burman, 1996; Cannella, 2002; Grieshaber, 2008; MacNaughton, 2001). Reconceptualists see teachers as scholars who continually revise their theories of education as well as their pedagogy based on what they discover in the classroom (Ayers, 2002; Cochran- Smith and Lytle, 1990; Payley, 1999; Rasberry, 1996; Zeichner and Liston, 1996). MacNaughton (2001) has also informed that the DAP approach can create inequity by neglecting social relationships within the classroom, failing to value knowledge derived from actual classroom practices, and relying on outdated theories of child development.

Actually, reconceptualists and poststructuralists emphasize diversity in teaching learning process. In particular, they have expressed concern that developmentally appropriate practices (DAP) is biased in its focus on Western theories of child development and has limited application with respect to education's social and cultural dimensions (Burman, 1996; Cannella, 2000; Lubeck, 1998; Grieshaber,

2008). For the reason that education takes place within society's ever-changing, increasingly global contexts, it is important to view education from a holistic perspective (Delpit, 1995; Henry, 1996; Popkewitz, 2003, 2007). Reconceptualists and poststructuralists LCT as being overly reliant on outmoded notions of developmentally appropriate practices (DAP). Reconceptualists believe that developmental theories should be critically examined cross culturally, whereas poststructuralists work from a social perspective to reconstruct views of a child based on his or her multiple meaning making and discourse.

Poststructuralism emphasizes, through discourses across time and place, the richer thinking and knowing by which a child's development and learning occur. Through discourses, poststructuralism is sensitive to the equity of diverse ethnic/racial, cultural and social contexts (MacNaughton, 2001). It emphasizes education as spanning different times and places (González et al., 2005). In particular, poststructuralism calls for attention to and voicing of underrepresented perspectives (Genishi and Goodwin, 2008; Grieshaber and Ryan, 2005). Teachers who employ a poststructuralist approach often engage in autobiography and use other forms of self-examination to gain a deeper understanding of their own teaching (Genishi and Goodwin, 2008). In the classroom, they use Learner's real-life experiences to foster literacy (González et al., 2005). Poststructuralist teachers also heavily rely on Learner's artistic creations. The Reggio Emilia approach encourages Learner to give artistic expression to their unique perspectives (Edwards et al., 1998). In creating art, Learner create multiple discourses that result in each child's meaning-making being valued (Wright, 2005). Poststructuralists challenge the view that knowledge is obtained strictly by scientific methods or imparted by those in power. They see knowledge as constructed by all participants, whose perspectives have equal value and who contribute their own unique discourses, which change in response to factors such as culture, time and place.

Historically, pedagogical theory and practice have progressed from a TCT to a LCT in which the child creates meaning with the surging critical movement. Reconceptualists believe that LCT should not be limited to DAP based on traditional Western theories of child development but should continually be reassessed and reconstructed. As part of this continual revision, teachers continually examine their own theories and practices. Recent efforts to reconstruct an equitable outlook, poststructuralists advocate that this continual reconceptualizing be based on diverse perspectives and that it entails particular attention to underrepresented voices. Ultimately, the goal is to facilitate the adoption of these multiple discourses across schools, communities and societies to broaden our scope of understanding and add depth to the possible ways in which we can view Learner. In nutshell, it can be said that DAP is a standard child development approach. But Learner's development depends on nature of diversersty, culture, social norms and values.

1.7. Practicality of Learner Centered Teaching

The sixth criticism centers on the practicality of LCT. Bennett's (1976) study showed that the theory does not entail specific practices. Therefore, LCT has to take on many different forms in practice ranging from extremely learner centered to not at all child centered. The other problem is that with LCT ideologies. Teaching is expected to be organised by principles other than standards of attainment but teachers and teaching are often judged by examination passes, thus making actual implementation difficult (The Open University, 1984). It was treated much as an inspiration and the reality failed to provide much evidence in its implementation. As a result, a general belief is formed, that is, LCT are fine in theory but not so fine in practice (Perkinson, 1980:198). Most of the educators have raised question about the implementation of LCT. Alexander (2000:141) noted that 'while the language of primary education may have changed out of all recognition, the practice changed rather less'.

Teachers do not have 'the time, energy, imagination, intelligence, or patience; even if they do, they lack the freedom, the opportunity, the resources, and the support necessary to conduct such experiments' (Perkinson, 1980:198). Accordingly, some people argue that LCT is simply not practical in real classrooms for it is more expensive as it requires more resources to enable learners to take

responsibilities for much of their own learning and it requires a low pupil-teacher ratio in order to meet individual needs (The Open University, 1984). It is also blamed that Dewey had an unrealistic conception of the real situation in an ongoing educational system' (Perkinson, 1980) and his proposals for education demand highly imaginative, intelligent, sophisticated teachers-super teachers; and highly imaginative, intelligent, sophisticated students-super students. They also demand ideal schools with administrators and parents who are understanding, supportive and enabling' (Perkinson, 1980: 198).

However, despite widespread use of the term, Lea et al. (2003) maintains that one of the issues with LCT is the fact that many institutions or educators claim to be putting LCT into practice, but in reality, they are not (2003:322). Simon (1981) concludes with his review of a number of studies that it was the rhetoric not the reality that had impressed the public as if a revolution had swept away the traditional practice while in reality limited changes had actually taken place. Thus, the trendy ideology existed more in the rhetoric than in any reality (Alexander, 1984, 2000; Yandell 2003). Accordingly, what is more, the same rhetoric espoused by many often ends up with a variety of practices, some of which are 'totally inconsistent with the rhetoric.

1.8. Individual and Society

The seventh criticism centers on the contradiction between the individual and society. According to Edwards and Mercer (1987:170) criticise LCT for over emphasising the individual at the expense of the social. Hutchinson and Waters (1984: 108) argued that education should be geared not only to the learners themselves, but to 'all the parties concerned'. To Graddol (2006), all these parties, such as learners' families, textbook publishers, and examination providers, are becoming more complex nowadays as they may all have very different views and expectations about how education should be provided. Entwistle (1970) points out that in both political and educational theories there is a well-established assumption that society stands opposed to the individual; that social education is a threat to the individual integrity and for this very fact child centeredness is the focus of much criticism (p.32), because with 'an appreciation of Learner as individuals' the focus is less on 'what each might become and more on what each already is', contradicting Learner's natural growth and development with social needs and development (Darling, 1994:2).

On a practical level, it has been criticised for giving too much emphasis to the uniqueness of each individual child, which has led to too great an attention to 'individualised teaching'. If each child needs to be treated individually, it is argued, the complexity of classroom organisation can become overwhelming, while, at the same time, it becomes impossible to develop effective pedagogic means relevant to the needs of Learner in general (Wong. 2007; Simon, 1994), just as what Darling (1994: 5) states, 'If twenty or thirty Learner were all pursuing individual interests, it would be difficult for a teacher to support and monitor their learning or to accommodate the enlarged freedom which these activities would require'. (p. 5) In fact, to many teachers, it is simply too naive to think that they should not worry about what to teach and how to teach but just let Learner be self-directed and learn what they want to learn.

1.9. Teacher's Roles and Responsibilities

The eighth criticism centers on the negligence of the teacher's roles. Some critics strongly argue for the teacher's role as authority. They believe that Learner are not without limitations, it is the teacher's responsibility to assess and guide their spontaneous and unguided choices of activity. The teacher has a disciplinary role to encourage insistence and efforts in learning. According to Entwistle (1970: 208), to ignore the teacher's legitimate disciplinary function is to assume that the child has the capacity to discipline himself from the start, thus making schooling redundant' (208).

In LCT, with the emphasis shifted to the child, there is an obvious play down of the teachers' roles. Some educational philosophers, such as Peters and Dearden, are strongly critical of child LCT for its neglect of teachers' roles and the lack of recognition of instructions (Darling, 1994). Alexander (1984) strongly argues that the emotional commitment to an ideal is no substitute for intellectual engagement'

(p. 15). In the same line, King (1978) criticizes the Plowden Report by arguing that there are 34 entries on learning but none on teaching in the index of the report. The questions he asks are: isn't teaching a process which is to bring about learning? What is a paid primary teacher supposed to be doing except teaching? With a stress on good climate and interpersonal relations, child centered rhetoric effectively diminishes the importance of teachers' tasks on developing purposeful and valuable activities to achieve curriculum goals.

Fillmore (1985) found that by and large, the most successful classes for language learning were the ones that made the greatest use of TCT activities and classes that 'made heavy use of individual work were among those found to be among the least successful for language learning' (p.24). Accordingly, some scholars in language teaching hold similar reservations. O'Neill (1991) argues for the TCT by saying that people take a wrong assumption about TCT approach. They often ignore the likely effects of the teacher and his/her instruction on the learner. He believes that what usually happens in good teacher centered lessons is that teachers are starting from and paying close attention to those factors in a lesson they believe will promote learning and which are most directly under their control (p. 301) and he calls for the importance of doing ordinary things well (p. 293). O'Neill (1991) further explicitly criticises learner centered ideology for its lack of recognition of the roles played by the teacher. He makes the point that teachers play a key role in ensuring learning and they are also very important participants in the classroom. They possess a great deal of knowledge about the subject matter, the requirements from the curriculum, and about the needs of their students in their social context. He calls for teachers from other cultural and teaching contexts to reflect on and develop teaching techniques to suit real classrooms rather than to meet the standards of the borrowed notions (p.9).

1.10. Natural Sequence of Child Development

The nineth criticism centers on natural sequence of child development. Donaldson (1978) was critical of the tasks constructed and the ambiguity of the language used in Piaget's tests, thus the validity of the results. By modifying the way tasks were designed and the instructions given with the same intention to test Learner's ability to reason, Donaldson and other researchers proved that even very young Learner showed capability of deductive reasoning and abstract thinking. She argued that Piaget's theory on Learner's stages of development was not only inaccurate but also damaging as it had had a direct impact on the everyday practice of many teachers in primary teaching resulting in an underestimation of Learner's capabilities in logical thinking. It also led to the neglect of individual differences or uniqueness of each child, which is in contradiction with the basic ideology of LCT (Desforges and McNamara, 1979). This criticism focuses on the claim that all Learner follow a natural sequence of development repeatedly stressed by many writers such as Rousseau, Froebel and Dewey and further intensified by Piaget. The validity of the theory and the way it is used particularly by Piaget were challenged by some scholars and researchers in education (Donaldson, 1978; Alexander, 1984; Wood, 1998).

2. Conclusion

Although LCT has supported by the many educationists, the notion of LCT has been criticized on the several grounds. The opponents criticise LCT for giving too much freedom to learner, making them unwilling to accept reasonable authority and letting their individual impulses lead their actions resulting in discipline problems. It is also criticized as it is treated much as an inspiration and the reality failed to provide much evidence in its implementation. Accordingly, the most of the opponents of the LCT express their view that there is danger of centeredness. The problem with too much concentration of anything especially in educational method is that it easily leads to rigidity or orthodoxy which may not give allowance for new ideas and changes. Rigidity at a certain time will certainly result in educational irrationality, bigotry and lack of balance. Accordingly, Reconceptualists and poststructuralists criticize child centered pedagogy as being overly reliant on outmoded notions of developmentally appropriate practices. Reconceptualists believe that developmental theories should be

critically examined cross culturally, whereas poststructuralists work from a social perspective to reconstruct views of a child based on his or her multiple meaning making and discourse.

Another criticism focuses on the validation of child centered theory and educationist call for validation of the LCT. Another criticism falls on the contradiction between the individual and society. Opponents points out that in both political and educational theories there is a well-established assumption that society stands opposed to the individual; that social education is a threat to the individual integrity and for this very fact child centeredness is the focus of much criticism. Another criticism has recently emerged out of concerns that even though the adult child relationship has been an integral part of the modernist concept of LCT, the adult roles of observer and facilitator within this relationship seem to be quite limited. Accordingly, some educational philosophers, such as Peters and Dearden, are strongly critical of LCT ideology for its neglect of teachers' roles and the lack of recognition of instructions. The validity of the theory and the way it is used particularly by Piaget were challenged by some scholars and researchers in education (Donaldson, 1978; Alexander, 1984; Wood, 1998). Donaldson (1978) was critical of the tasks constructed and the ambiguity of the language used in Piaget's tests, thus the validity of the results. Another criticism is related to gender and power relationship. And lastly it is criticism focuses on the free and individual child. This is how LCT has been criticized on the several ground. On the basis of the thorough review of the literature it can be concluded that it is very difficult to implement learner centred teaching in developing and underdeveloped countries where there is extreme need of resources and infrastructure.

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