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Research Paper

Bridging education, knowledge, and skills: a theoretical framework

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ABSTRACT

The Education-to-Knowledge-to-Skills (EKS) Progression Model presents a systematic framework that upholds the sequential movement from education to practical skills, and the crucial role of knowledge as an intermediary stage, specially in the context of effective classroom management in this digitalized world. This model hopefully proposes that education forms the foundation by providing essential theoretical understanding via high-quality materials, interactive teaching, and conducive learning environments. Consequently, education emerges as the basis for knowledge attainment which is refined and internalized through practical engagement and repetition process. When knowledge becomes deeper systematically and gradually, it turns into skills that can be applied efficiently in the real-life applications, leading to a more sustainable and tangible outcome. This theoretical model obtains a structured development. Here, each stage builds upon the previous one, resulting in a logical flow. The movement from education to knowledge, and to skills may seem a linear, sequential process that supports the development of practical abilities, but it can be seen as a continuous cycle in case of improving gathered outcomes as well. With the alignment of theory and practical application, it provides a comprehensive framework for skill development and ensures that learners are well equipped to meet the demands and challenges of the modern world. Furthermore, the methodology follows a conceptual, theoretical, and qualitative approach, systematically analyzing inputs of the education, knowledge, and skills phases and bridging them sequentially with one another by the output dependency.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The effective transformation of education into practical skills remains a key factor of modern educational development. The acquisition of practical experience and practical skills has been highlighted as a critical feature of, and as a requisite for, the development of professional expertise [1], [2], [3]. Traditionally, education has to contend with the problem that knowledge acquisition does not guarantee the successful application of that same knowledge [4]. Since Antiquity, the task of bridging the gap between what is considered theoretical and practical knowledge has troubled the world of teaching and learning [5].

According to Whitehead [6], the ultimate goal of education should be to teach students to learn to apply knowledge. This is specially true for higher professional programs, which typically rest on different forms of knowledge that must become integrated to be applicable in different work contexts [7]. Education systems are finding it more and more difficult to close the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical applications as societal needs are reshaped by globalization, technological advancement, and the changing demands of professional environments. Dewey [8] suggested that education should align theoretical factors and experiential learning to achieve more meaningful intellectual growth which lays the foundation for lifelong learning. Likewise, Vygotsky [9] demonstrated the vital role of collaborative and interactive environments in shaping cognitive development as well as the importance of social interaction in education. The EKS model provides a systematic framework to address these challenges by focusing on three major stages of the progression including the education, knowledge, and skills. It has aligned both traditional and contemporary pedagogical approaches.

This approach also aligns with Kolb's [10] experiential learning theory where he highlighted the iterative process of knowledge refinement and skill acquisition through gathered experiences and potential reflections. The objective of this research is to examine the EKS model as a thorough framework for bringing educational systems into line with the needs of a changing global environment. It tries to close the gap between conventional educational systems via focusing on both theory and real-life applications with the encouragement of lifelong learning. It also focuses on applications in different aspects. In today's educational environment, the transformative power of hands-on experiences within conventional learning frameworks is becoming increasingly acknowledged. This shift reflects a pedagogical evolution that values contextualized learning and the acquisition of practical skills together with theoretical knowledge [11].

2. RELATED WORK

2.1. Education as a Foundation

Actually, effective education forms the basis of learning, cherishing cognitive and emotional development. For example, Dewey [8] promoted experiential education, advocating for learning environments that link theoretical knowledge to practical experiences. Again, according to Vygotsky [9], collaborative and social learning highly impact the cognitive growth. In addition, [12] suggest that integrating digital tools in classroom activities enhances engagement.

2.2. Transition to Knowledge

In the next step, the transition from education to knowledge, lucidly involves internalizing learned concepts through iterative practices. Scholars like Piaget [13] highlighted the importance of active engagement and problem-solving in case of knowledge retention. Reflective practices like journaling and group discussions broadens learners' understanding of abstract concepts and enables contextual applications. Furthermore, repetition approaches, structured learning programs bolster knowledge gaining procedures and consequently, bridge the gaps between foundational education and advanced applications. [14] Also offered a comprehensive theoretical analysis of knowledge and concentrated on the role of knowledge in relation to organizational development and knowledge management.

2.3. Skill Development

In today's world, developing different and standard skills is everything because it is the practical application of knowledge. Kolb's [10] experiential learning model delineates iterative cycles of learning

including: concrete experiences, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation as foundation for skill mastery. Experiential learning provides alternative and relevant ways of improving complex skills [15]. [12] Suggest that practical knowledge and reasoning, classroom management with relevant real-world examples, significantly enhances the learners' ability to adapt and apply skills effectively. Constructive feedback mechanisms further refine skills, ensuring alignment with professional standards when necessary. Moreover, Knapp [16] designed the objective and performance based criteria of effective and efficient function in this regard.

There is much academic research that shows that hands-on and practical skills based learning is crucial for reducing the gap between theoretical class-room knowledge and practical application. In many fields of study, methods such as reflective practice, simulations, collaborative work and activity-based learning have significantly contributed to the quality of learning experiences, supporting students in the retention of acquired knowledge and prepping them for work in their professional field. The focus is not just on curriculums to be taught, but also on how they are transmitted. Increasing reliance on technology and engagement tools in practice contributes to student engagement and real-world skills. Flexibility as well as the competency to handle complex and changeable bodies of knowledge is also highlighted by scholars. In other words, the kind of education that draws a parallel between what is learnt in a classroom and what is relevant in human life is. Yet, no existing model fully integrates education, knowledge, and skills as a cohesive framework. From this perspective, this theoretical research article contributes a new dimension among these concepts to the existing literature, supported by justified and reasoned indicators in a nuanced way.

3. METHODOLOGY

The methodology of the EKS Progression Model is theoretical and conceptual in its nature, focusing directly on the decorated explanation of the stages within the progression and the relationships among education, knowledge, and skills. However, it is generally designed to explore how specific inputs at each stage contribute to the achievement of the desired outputs, envisioning and ensuring the transformation from foundational learning to actionable skills. The methodology is designed as follows:

3.1. Conceptual Framework Development

At first, this model is designed in a conceptual framework that illustrates the interconnected stages of education, knowledge, and skills. Each stage is properly developed by several specific inputs and outputs that provides a systematic step-by-step movement. The Education Stage establishes the foundation, where quality learning materials, interactive environments, and participatory policies initiate curiosity, collaboration, critical thinking, and so on. During the Knowledge Stage, learning gets better in more deep and practical ways through repetition, engagement with practical tasks, case studies, and iterative practices that transforms the abstract concepts into usable knowledge more efficiently. Lastly, the Skills Stage, converts this refined knowledge into practical capabilities and efficiencies through clarity of understanding, comprehension, and furthermore, all the steps are shaped by feedback-driven activities.

3.2. Systematic Analysis of Inputs and Outputs

This model's methodology prescribes a systematic analysis of how the inputs at each stage influence the outputs of other stage. For examples:

1. The influence of high-quality educational materials and interactive policies on generating foundational knowledge.
2. The repetition and practical approach to ensure effective skill development and implementation.
3. The importance of comprehension and clarity in converting refined knowledge into actionable, measurable skills.

3.3. Sequential Flow Design

From the perspective of a linear process, the methodology adopts a sequential design where the outputs of one stage consequently serve as the inputs for the next stage. This progress sustain a logical

development from education to knowledge, and finally to skills level. Here, each stage is treated as a dependent phase that builds upon the previous one which ensures coherence in the progression process.

3.4. Feedback Integration

This model also illustrates a possible feedback mechanism where the application of skills in the real-world contexts, while troubled with challenges, results in insights that can be refined in the earlier stages of education and knowledge attainment. This cycle ensures the continuous improvement and relevance of the model to practical life applications. Though this process seems to be linear, it can be reused for improvement in certain areas.

3.5. Qualitative Approach

This theoretical research article is supported by qualitative reasoning, logical arguments and conceptual alignment, no empirical data was collected. The methodology uses reasoning to ensure that the inputs and outputs align with the expected progression and that the flow of transformation remains consistent and practical.

Finally, the methodology of this research article indicates a theoretical, sequential, and systematic qualitative approach which has focused on defining and analyzing the key stages and their components. Furthermore, it ensures that the transformation from education to skills is both justified and applicable in real-world contexts.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Definition of Key Terms

4.1.1. Education

Education is the systematic and formal process of spreading knowledge, values, and skills through structured methods by respective actors. John Dewey [8] highlighted the experiential learning as central to education, arguing that it must connect theoretical constructs with real-world applications. However, [12] further highlight that education becomes effective when aligned with societal and professional needs, incorporating innovative teaching methods and technological tools. Education means a systematic approach on a particular topic or course to make someone fully understand about it by a certain organization or person within a proper environment and infrastructure. More briefly, it is an enlightening experience on a definite matter by an instructor. It is a formalized process with a view to having an output [12].

4.1.2. Knowledge

Knowledge represents the structured comprehension and retention of information acquired through education. It perfectly bridges theoretical learning with practical application which requires iterative practices to deepen the understanding and making it more sustainable. Vygotsky [9] strongly said that collaborative learning and scaffolding play pivotal roles in knowledge attainment and preservation. Knowledge is an abstract concept without any reference to the tangible world. It is a very powerful concept, yet it has no clear definition so far. From the Greek philosophers up to present experts in knowledge management, people tried to define knowledge but the results are still very fuzzy [14]. So, finally, knowledge is the formal or informal understanding as well as retention of information acquired through learning and experience process. It focuses on bridging the gap between theoretical education and practical application, enables individuals to interpret, analyze, and use information precisely. In addition, it is dynamic, evolving with continued learning and real-life application.

4.1.3. Skills

Skill is defined as, the learned ability to bring about pre-determined results with maximum certainty; often with the minimum outlay of time or energy or both." [16]. But, for implementing skills, there is no alternative to education and knowledge based on deep understanding and comprehension of a certain matter. Skills are the abilities to apply knowledge effectively in practical settings, encompassing

cognitive, technical, and interpersonal domains. Kolb's [10] experiential learning theory indicates skills develop through iterative cycles of experimentation, reflection, and refinement. This experiential learning approach not only enhances students' technical proficiency [17], [18], but also cherishes the development of soft skills such as communication [19], teamwork [20], and problem solving [21].

4.1.4. Inputs

In this part, inputs are the resources, strategies, and methodologies those develop through the EKS model. High-quality educational materials, structured curricula, adaptive technologies, interactive policies, and other techniques and strategies are designed to enhance learners' developmental needs as inputs [12] those consequently impact in effective outputs and better learning outcomes.

4.2. Theoretical Framework of the EKS Model

The Education-to-Knowledge-to-Skills (EKS) Progression Model provides a structured approach to understanding how education transforms into practical skills through the intermediary stage of knowledge. The Figure 1, illustrating the model is given below:

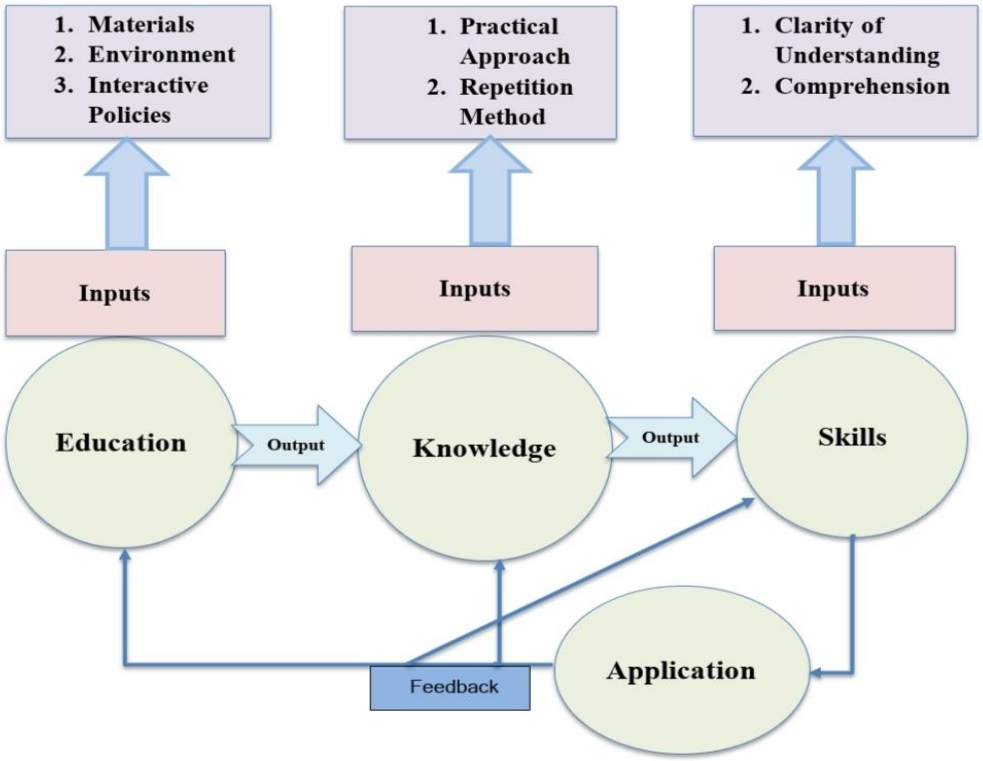


Figure 1. The EKS Mode

This model delineates a sequential process through which individuals' transition from acquiring education, turning it to knowledge, and finally to develop applicable skills happen, as reflected in the Figure 1 properly. It clearly highlights the integral components (inputs and outputs) those define each stage which systematically ensures a structured flow of development. It illustrates education as the foundation that results in knowledge which is further refined and transformed into practical skills for application. The structure and progression reflect an organized system that connects theoretical learning to actionable expertise, outcome, and enhancement.

Stage 1: Education

Education is the initial point in this EKS progression model that provides the basis on which knowledge and skills are built systematically in nuanced ways. It largely focuses on the delivery of fundamental concepts of learning, and the access to information. The process begins with some specific inputs that ensure the quality of education and its further use. These are given below:

Inputs in Education:

a) Materials:

Educational materials, for examples: textbooks, lecture-notes, online resources, visual aids, and other components serve as the core content delivery tools for the effective classroom management. These materials are the building blocks of the educational process for the students which contains the knowledge that learners need to obtain precisely.

b) Environment:

Actually, the environment, whether physical or digital, sets the tone for effective education enforcement. Classrooms, laboratories, libraries, or virtual platforms must support an uninterrupted flow of information in a sound environment free from noise pollution or other obstacles. Organizing the teaching so that students are motivated and engaged, getting to know more of the subject, being trained in performing on the topic, reflecting on and promoting judgement which, in the end, results in commitment and the formation of an identity are all steps on a ladder of accomplishments that is much focused in the literature on gaming and simulations [22].

c) Interactive Policies:

Methods such as participatory learning, two-way communication, group activities, and question-answer sessions make the educational process engaging. These policies ensure learners actively engage with the material rather than passively consuming information.

Output of Education:

The output of the education stage is knowledge development. It is a primary understanding of concepts, theories, and ideas those can be refined more in the next steps.

Stage 2: Knowledge

In the second stage, knowledge, it is concerned about enhancing the understandings gained from education, and bridging the gap between theory and practice. Knowledge is being ready here to be applied in the real-life cases.

Inputs in Knowledge:

a) Practical Approach:

To convert foundational knowledge into refined understanding, learners engage in practical applications such as experimentation, problem-solving, demonstrations, or other real-life scenarios. In the contemporary educational cases, there is an apparent recognition of the transformative impact that practical experiences can exert when integrated into traditional learning frameworks [23], [24], [25]. In particular, the alignment of academic learning with practical experiences could create future workers who are better equipped to meet the demands of today's dynamic job market [26], [27].

b) Repetition Method:

Here, in this step, repetition ensures the retention and accuracy of understanding. This guides in revisiting concepts and learnt things through iterative practice that enables learners to internalize the material and develop a deeper grasp of the subject properly with precision.

Output of Knowledge:

The result of this stage is refined and transparent form of knowledge. This output is more structured, organized, and ready for direct application. Here, advanced steps are taken to make sure knowledge is ready to be applied practically. Good quality teaching needs both practical experiences and theoretical underpinnings. For this reason, teacher education programs always seek to combine and balance learning by doing (practice) with learning about doing (theory) [28].

Stage 3: Skills

The third stage of this model is application of the progression where refined knowledge is converted into actionable real-life practical skills. In fact, skills are the tangible outcomes that demonstrate the ability to apply learned concepts effectively. In the contemporary educational environment, there is a growing imperative for educational programs and initiatives that cherish a heightened awareness of employability and sense of agency among young individuals, while nurturing the development of versatile and orientation skills [29].

Inputs in Skills:

a) Clarity of Understanding:

Here, learners must achieve a thorough and clear comprehension of their refined knowledge. It ensures fully understanding of information and its relevance and applications.

b) Comprehension:

Apparent and visible clarity is achieved here because learners need to understand what they are studying or learning. It ensures easier applications of the gained knowledge on skills.

Output of Skills:

Skills that can be applied in real-life contexts is the output of this stage. It is about application. These skills are measurable and directly applicable in practical life. They are the endpoint of the model. They showcase the successful transformation of theoretical input into practical applicable efficiency.

4.3. The Sequential Flow

Table 1. The Sequential Flow

Stage	Description
1. Education	Acts as the Starting Point and Introduces Learners to New Concepts.
2. Knowledge	Concepts are Processed and Refined Through Practice and Repetition.
3. Skills	Knowledge is Turned Into Skills by Applying Understanding in Practical Contexts.

Illustrated in the Table 1, the sequential flow ensures that each stage is built upon the preceding other which results in a logical and consistent progression. It also has a feedback mechanism where real-world skill application refines education and knowledge acquisition, develops skills, creating a continuous improvement cycle. Though appearing linear, it allows for iterative enhancements in specific areas. Research by Fettes and colleagues stressed that it is not simply a matter of "skills transfer", from educational to work context, but a continuous and transformative process during which individuals learn how to recontextualize skills to suit different activities and environments [30].

Finally, education is a structured process aimed at making individuals aware of specific subjects, while knowledge is the deeper, self-realized understanding that results from education. Education is demonstrated through certificates, whereas knowledge is reflected in a person's thoughts, behaviour, and actions. Not all educated individuals are knowledgeable unless they attain a profound comprehension of a subject. However, theoretical and practical understanding define knowledge, but it can be either constructive or destructive as clear in scientific advancements like atomic bombs. Unlike education, which is an institutional and collective approach facilitated by instructors, knowledge can also be acquired through personal observation and realization. Furthermore, education encompasses diverse fields, including technology, engineering, and applied sciences, beyond just philosophical or psychological knowledge. In social sciences, knowledge is applied through research, policy-making, and innovation. When knowledge is effectively utilized, it develops into a skill, marking the practical application of acquired understanding. Therefore, knowledge emerges as the outcome of education, while skill is the product of effectively applied knowledge [12]. This paradigm shift reflects a pedagogical evolution that acknowledges the efficacy of contextualized learning and the acquisition of practical skills in tandem with theoretical knowledge [31], [32], [33].

4.4. EKS Model vs. Traditional Learning

Table 2. Comparison of EKS Model and Traditional Learning

Aspect	EKS Model	Traditional Learning
Approach	Sequential (Education → Knowledge → Skills); A Cycle to Enhance Outcomes.	Often Fragmented
Focus	Application and Integration	Memorization
Outcome	Practical Competence	Theoretical Understanding

The key comparison between the EKS model and traditional learning methods shows some essential differences, specially how knowledge is acquired and applied. The EKS model follows a logical and cyclical sequence, as shown in Table 2. Beginning with education, it moves forward through the formation of knowledge before culminating in the development of skills. Once you have mastered the skill, this sequence continues. It is also a cycle that is structured and can be kept up to date to improve results. It gives learning greater direction and focus on results. Traditional education, on the other hand, is frequently criticized for being fragmented. It usually handles education as discrete knowledge units that aren't connected to practical uses. Learners are left with theoretical knowledge but little chance of practical competence because the emphasis is often on memorization rather than integration.

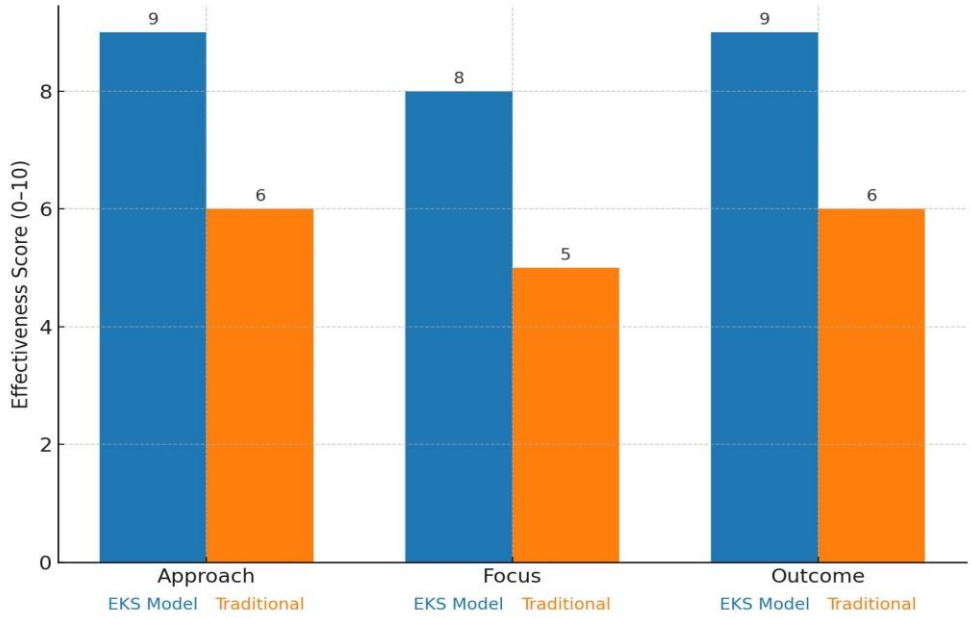


Figure 2. EKS Model vs. Traditional Learning

When we look at the three core aspects of the Figure 2. Including approach, focus, and outcome it becomes evident why the EKS model may offer a more effective route to meaningful learning. The model encourages learners not only to absorb knowledge but to actively engage with it, test it, and transform it into usable skills. On the other hand, traditional methods are about completing large volumes of content, but, sometimes fails to ensure clarity, comprehension, application, and so on. Although the scores used in the Figure 2. Are illustrative and not based on empirical data, they reflect widely observed perceptions in educational discussions. Educators and learners are advocating for models like EKS that prioritize depth, continuity, and relevance over sheer volume of content. Education and training systems across the globe have long concentrated on the acquisition of knowledge and development of skills. However, the successful application of these competencies in real-life situations remains a key challenge [34]. Educational leaders need to understand, lead, and develop education in a complex context [35]. In a world that values skills and adaptability, the EKS model appears far better aligned with modern educational needs than its traditional counterpart.

5. CONCLUSION

Within this vast education ecosystem, a major challenge for all teachers is to allocate time, effort, and resources to ensure that their students receive a quality education with real-world implications, influencing soft-skill attainment, such as teamwork, communication, and critical thinking skills [36]. The EKS Progression Model offers a clear and structured framework for turning basic education into practical, real-life applicable skills where knowledge plays an important role in the middle of the process. This model lucidly upholds the vital significance of quality-based-aspects such as engaging learning materials in the environment, interactive teaching methods and student outcomes, hands-on involvement, suitable environment, repeated practices, clear understanding and alignment, and so on. At first, education builds the theoretical foundation of this approach. Later on, this is then shaped into usable knowledge through practice and reinforcement. Finally, that knowledge is developed into practical skills that support strong performance in case of applications. In essence, this ambitious model provides a justified, logical, step-by-step flow, with each stage building on the one before it. Feedback mechanism ensures continuous improvement. Because of its flexible structure, the EKS Model can be applied in many tiers, from school curricula, training programs to professional development and lifelong learning processes. The integration of theory-based and practical-based approaches connects and applies foundational components with multiple academic experiences [37]. Finally, the proposed EKS Model contributes significantly to the education process, knowledge attainment and innovation, workforce development, sustainable growth in skill-driven economies, and enhancement of several other aspects by bridging the gap between theoretical learnings and practical applications. The major findings, recommendations, and limitations of the research are given below:

5.1. Findings

The created knowledge can result in as a theory or as a practice and that is why research is known as the origin of innovation [38], which is the utmost outcome of this article. The key findings of the Education-to-Knowledge-to-Skills (EKS) Progression Model are given below:

1. A clear and systematic framework that connects education and skill development via the intermediary stage and role of knowledge.
2. The foundational role of education, supported by quality materials, interactive pedagogy, and supportive learning environments.
3. Repetition and practical approaches turn education into knowledge precisely.
4. The final stage which is “skills”, requires both clarity and comprehension to convert knowledge into real-life skills.
5. The sequential model ensures that each stage is built effectively upon the previous one.
6. Feedback mechanism enables learners to revisit and strengthen earlier stages which proves it as a continuous cycle.
7. It obligates the integration of theory and practice that ensures learning outcomes are applicable and measurable, enhanced than the traditional models.
8. It can be applied in diverse learning scenarios.

5.2. Recommendations

The recommendations of the theoretical research article are given below:

1. With the inclusion of quality materials, supportive learning atmosphere, and adoptive interactive teaching policies and methods, improve the existing educational systems.
2. Learning, aligned with practical approaches and other methods, must be made fun for the students. It must seem joyful to them, not a burden.
3. Skills must be developed with clarity, focusing on the real-life applications.
4. A specific and suitable curriculum, aligned with the EKS model, to ensure a smooth transition from education to knowledge and then to skills, can be adopted.
5. Feedback mechanisms can be applied for continued learning and revision.
6. The EKS model can be integrated into institutional and national educational policies.

7. Adaptability and inclusivity are crucial for universal application.

5.3. Limitations

The EKS Model offers a valuable perspective for understanding how conceptual learning turns into practical skills, but, it has several limitations. The model is entirely theoretical in its nature because no empirical data was collected to examine its real-life compliance. The linear structure of learning may oversimplify its complex and non-linear feature as well. In some cases, stages may overlap or occur simultaneously or in a different way. Furthermore, it does not sufficiently consider external factors including the emotional, social, or environmental influences that significantly affect learning outcomes and enhancement. The concept of universal applicability and the diversity of educational systems, cultural contexts, and institutional practices are also significant challenges. However, the model does not account for individual learning differences. For examples: cognitive abilities and personal preferences. Despite acknowledging the feedback mechanism for continuous learning and enhancement, the procedures are not outlined in detail.

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Author Contribution Statement

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Fahmida				✓	✓					✓		✓		

C : **C**onceptualization
M : **M**ethodology
So : **So**ftware
Va : **Va**lidation
Fo : **Fo**rmal analysis
I : **I**nvestigation
R : **R**esources
D : **D**ata Curation
O : Writing - **O**riginal Draft
E : Writing - Review & **E**diting
Vi : **Vi**sualization
Su : **Su**pervision
P : **P**roject administration
Fu : **Fu**nding acquisition

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors have declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Informed Consent

This study did not involve human participants. Therefore, informed consent was not required.

Ethical Approval

As this study was based solely on theoretical approach, secondary data and document analysis, ethical approval was not required according to the institutional guidelines.

Data Availability

The data supporting the findings and conceptual framework of the EKS (Education-Knowledge-Skills) model are theoretical and derived from educational research literature and pedagogical principles. No primary datasets were generated or analyzed during the development of this model. All relevant information is available within the article. Further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author.

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