

Review of: "Balancing Well-being and Social Harmony. An Interdisciplinary Educational Approach"

Breeta Banerjee¹

¹ Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati

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If I have understood correctly, this article presents a success story of a multidisciplinary educational course designed by JEPA Limmat Foundation for students at the high school level. In the abstract part, it talks about reviewing the finalities and the methodology of this course based on knowledge of two socio-economic indicators- 'social harmony' and 'well-being'. In the introductory section, it provides a contextual background of why mutual understanding of sociology and economics should be promoted through describing how cognitive features differ across different objectivity-oriented and subjectivity-oriented disciplines. In the second section, it first presents the concept "authentic development" and then describes the proposed multidisciplinary educational course that can enable the students to develop the ability to evaluate 'authentic development' and propose solutions, and the outcome of the course. In the concluding section, it jots down the merit of this course, what this proposed course intends to achieve, and a suggestion that authentic development indicators should be the basis of all high school interdisciplinary courses. The overall topic is indeed intriguing. However, I do believe it can be significantly improved for better understanding of the topics discussed, clarity, and readability. My observations are as follows:

1. Conflict of interest

Both the authors of this article, describing a success story of the JEPA course, are affiliated with the foundation that developed the course, and at the end, readers are encouraged to contact the foundation for any further queries. There is a scope for a conflict of interests for offering a critical evaluation. Nowhere in this write-up is there a mention of any possible drawback or limitation of this course. Hence, I am not sure whether it should be treated as an academic analysis. There are other instances like addressing reviewer's comments within the article ("As suggested by one of the reviewers..."), or writing words in capitalized font to express emphasis ("..GLORY for the students") where I am not sure if using such a writing style is suitable for academic writing (although I understand and sympathize with the appeal and find it So Hard to resist myself).

2. Clarity regarding objective of study

There seems to be a lack of clarity in the purpose or objective of this article. In the abstract, it states: "This article reviews the finalities and the methodology of a multidisciplinary educational course designed for students at the high school level." But in the second section (after the introductory section), it states: "We proposed a semi-quantitative evaluation of these indicators using an educational project that involved high school or college students." And lastly, in the concluding part, it

states: "In our work, we do not aim to establish any classification. We simply use the indicators in an educational project attempting to diffuse the concept of authentic development." It is not clear if the article wants to evaluate the course, wants to evaluate some measure of 'authentic development' using that course, or wants to show a way to spread awareness about the concept of authentic development in society. It will be helpful for readers if this is clear. And for either of these objectives, there needs to be a strong argument justifying why this objective is chosen, for example, why this course is chosen to be studied, or why 'authentic development' is important and needs evaluation, or why school students need to learn about authentic development. The article, in its present state, touches upon all these points but does not elaborate or make an argument.

3. Clarity regarding parameters of success (or desired outcome) of the course

Regarding the evaluation of the course, there is a lack of clarity about the parameters of evaluation. There are one or two sentences on how students are excited and enthusiastic about these classes, and another one line about the students feeling like they can tackle problems ("They felt to be able to tackle problems often ignored by their parents and friends and, particularly, to be able to suggest specific measures that local administrations could enact to balance the overall F/G ratios, aiming to authentic development."). I am not sure if students finding a course exciting and students' confidence in being able to provide solutions for critical sociopolitical problems (like administrative neglect towards aged migrants) alone can be enough to call a course successful. No information has been provided about the number of students, their demographics, how the researchers found out about their confidence building (the method of collecting this information), what the problems were that they were tested to provide solutions for, how they provided solutions, and what their proposed solutions were. No information was provided about the parameters upon which this course has been tested, what exact change this course has managed to achieve for the students (even for the confidence-building part, the article says nothing about how these students felt about this prior to taking this course, and hence we cannot infer anything about the course's specific contribution).

4. Clarity over overall methodology

Measuring authentic development: How authentic development parameters are evaluated is not at all clear from this article. It seems F and G have sub-indicators which were evaluated using "semi-quantitative, normalized values between 1 (insufficient), 2 (average), 3 (excellent)." Elaboration is needed on what is meant by 'semi-quantitative' values, if this is a three-point scale or if there are more choices in between these three points, and exactly how they are aggregated to arrive at the final scores of F and G. The article does mention the source of the detailed methodology, but it should at least provide a proper gateway to the detailed methodology. Otherwise, readers cannot get much insight out of statements like this: "The results of their selections is exemplified by the values reported for the USA (F=1 and G=3) and for Guatemala (F=3, G=1)." Moreover, it is not clear how coding like 'insufficient' can be applied to indicators like "f₁ sociological impact of migration" or "g₄ economic impact of migration." What does an insufficient sociological impact of migration mean? It is not clear here.

5. Better organization of the write-up

A proper introduction can be added that will provide an effective context for the current introductory section, which provides conceptual background and should be in the literature part. This literature section (currently the introductory part) can be better arranged and updated to establish clear relevance to the research objectives at hand. There seems to be a number of redundant clarifications in the second section ('Educational evaluation...') that come at the end after describing some methods beforehand. For instance, initially it is stated that "The analysis is guided by a sociologist and an economist working *"simultaneously"* rather than sequentially," and later it was clarified by saying "The selection of teachers in the case of multidisciplinary classes has not presented difficulties; a single teacher could deliver the propedeutic classes." This confusion can be avoided by adding more details to the description of course design and teaching procedures. At the beginning (abstract), it is said that the course is for high school students, but in the educational evaluation part, it talks about "an educational project that involved high school or college students." Courses for high schoolers cannot be the same as courses for college students. There are disconnections in certain parts of the write-up. For example, the last paragraph of the second section lacks relevance when the whole course is already described along with the outcomes; it could have been utilized beforehand in the literature and conceptual part.

I am certain that these issues will be, or already are, taken care of in the final paper. I wish the authors all the best.