Review of: "School instability in South Africa: a Systematic Review of Reflections and Experiences for a way forward"

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REVIEW

TOPIC: School instability in South Africa: a systematic Review of Reflections and Experiences for a way forward.

Reviewer: Prof E.B. Mokibelo

General View: The authors address a critical issue that has impacted negatively to the education system not only in South Africa but globally. Cases of violence, fatal shootings and killings have been reported even in Western countries. This could mean that societies are sick, societies are lacking and it is partly the responsibility of the education system to orchestrate an awareness amongst leaders of tomorrow who are secondary school students to curb the problem. The problem should not be addressed by schools only but the communities at large. Hence, the problem highlighted in this paper is a serious concern that needs to be addressed by the stakeholders and provide stringent measures and remedies to address it. A delay in addressing it could perpetuate the problem and the perpetrators may see it as a normal issue while it keeps other learners away from school. **Generally, this is a well written paper.**

Abstract: The abstract gives a summary of the whole paper. Most of the key aspects of research have been covered in the abstract. But the authors should also highlight the framework they used as well as concluding the abstract. **Hence, the conclusion is a bit lacking**.

Introduction: The authors stated the problem clearly and why it is a problem. The authors give the readers an idea of what they are writing about and make the readers to follow the problem raised in the paper throughout the document. However, the authors indicated a bit late which level of schooling they are writing about. **Secondary school**s could have been clearly indicated in the introduction together with the area of study. The absence of the level of education could keep the readers wondering at what level is the problem affecting the student population.

Theoretical Framework: The authors used a framework (Bronfenbrenner ecological system theory) that is relevant and applicable to the problem written about and the authors managed to apply it and blend the theory to the findings of the study. The principles of the theory have been clearly articulated and shown in the diagram provided. Hence, issues such as unstable homes, unpredictable family life, violence and crimes in schools have been found to be the causes of the problem of instability in schools. The framework therefore converges with the concerns raised in the paper.

Research Methodology: This is a **study,** from what the authors portray. It would have strengthened the paper had the

authors provided a section on the methodology and ethical considerations followed. Ethical considerations are important because this is a sensitive issue involving humans because some of the crimes happen in school in the presence of teachers and learners. It would be interesting to see how this issue was addressed. This is lacking in the paper for the readers to appreciate the results and discussion of the paper. Therefore, the authors should include this section.

Discussion of the Findings: The causes of violence have been laid out and blended with the review of literature and educational documents from South Africa together with Acts that guide the education system in SA. The discussion gives the reader a chance to learn about the problem and also appreciate the reflections and experiences used as examples. However, in such a study, it would have been worthwhile to hear some of the voices of students and teachers (verbatim) to get the feel of the problem being discussed.

Mitigating factors have also been clearly discussed. Again, the authors managed to blend the themes and the theoretical framework.

Conclusion: The conclusion is robust and recommendations are relevant to the problem highlighted in the paper.

Generally, this is a good paper that has an impact in the education system and society.

Recommendation: The paper should be **accepted/published** with minor corrections – the research methodology, a conclusion in the abstract and indicating the level of education being discussed in the paper.