

Review of: "Assessment of Learner Satisfaction in Secondary School Education"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

Review of

"Assessment of Learner Satisfaction in Secondary School Education" by Mailu, J.K. & Odeny M.L.

I would like to thank the Editors for allowing me to review this report. Learner satisfaction is an important topic in education at all levels with existing prior research relating to this the subject. This topic is becoming more or more important as students and/or those paying for student education (e.g., governments, states, parents etc.) wanting education of high quality which may in fact require a higher level of learner satisfaction.

This review is relevant only for the article that I received without any changes made. I believe that updates could have been made that may make some of my comments redundant.

I found the study by Mailu, J.K., & Odeny, M.L. to be very interesting but with significant flaws that restrict the acceptance for publication. I hereby present several of the major problems with this study with suggestions on how the authors can correct and resubmit at this journal or to one more appropriate for their findings and target population. This is not an exhaustive list of problems.

1. The study design must be clearly and correctly chosen something that is not clear in this study. I am not certain what was done exactly. This may be because it was not explained clearly, due to writing errors or in fact a wrong design mentioned. All data presented in this report are quantitative although they mentioned of data collection focus groups with nothing mentioned what was done or obtained in those sessions. This can be misleading for the readers as it may make them think that this is part of a larger mixed methods study.
2. It seems to be that there is one aim in this study: Assessment of learner satisfaction. The correlation of learner satisfaction with academic achievement could be part of this assessment but it could also be an aim on its own (e.g., To explore how learner satisfaction is related to academic achievement). The "second" aim would be more correct with the data presented. The objectives (and research questions) would have to be written though so that they help reach this aim.

In this report I am not certain what assessment of learner satisfaction is, as it was not described including how it would be studied.

1. The introduction has little support why this study should be done. It is important to have as much background

information as possible and mention why this study is needed. What does it add to the current literature? I also suggest getting help with scientific writing from university colleagues with experience in scientific writing and/or from writing professionals.

2. The methods section is very limited with very little explanation. The questionnaire which has the questions shown in figure 2 and was piloted according to the authors has no explanations how those questions were chosen (who wrote them?). Why was not an existing validated questionnaire not used? The data analysis although good so far not complete with some important information not studied. Stratification among high and low learner satisfaction should have been explored more. Data should have been presented separately for this groups. Were biases considered? Could the results have been confounded by some variable? (e.g., by strata or by age, gender etc.). There are some peculiarities to this study sample. It includes older students (are these outliers?) and no A grades. Students that receive lower grades are more likely to have lower satisfaction and to be of lower academic performance. This must be explored. The sampling procedure is also not clear. Perhaps consulting with a statistician may be helpful.
3. The results section should not include descriptions of what is easily shown in the figures but rather should point out the important/relevant points.
4. The discussion was very limited with some mention of findings and how they relate to the literature but not so much what was new and what makes this study important. There were no mentions of the strengths and limitations of this study. Based on the population studied is this study pertinent only to this population or can it be generalized? A better description of the population is needed and how it differs.
5. Ethics consideration was mentioned but should be more elaborate.
6. Because of writing limitations transparency of methods and procedures is weak.

It is recommended that you refer to the AXIS evaluation tool published in 2016. It will provide you with important information to include in your report. Other evaluation tools do exist (e.g. the CASP evaluation tools) and are freely available on the web. Choose the one most pertinent to your study design and ensure that all information mentioned in those tools is included and explained in your report.

Although it is my decision that this report is not published at this time point, with significant changes and considerations a publishable report can be submitted to the correct journal.

Thank you for the nice research work.

Good luck to the authors in their future submission.