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Peer Review

Review of: "Conceptual Architecture for a Critical Realist Synthesis of a Universal School-based Mindfulness Intervention"

Krešimir Žažar[1]

1. University of Zagreb, Zagreb, Croatia

The paper titled 'Conceptual Architecture for a Critical Realist Synthesis of a Universal School-based Mindfulness Intervention' anticipates high expectations, which in the end are not met. It indisputably deals with a relevant topic – 'school-based mindfulness interventions' (SBMI) – which is inspected through the lenses of critical realist synthesis. However, the main profile and goals of the work remain somewhat vague, i.e., it is not apparent whether the ambition is to convey a meta-theoretical analysis of 3 theoretical approaches aiming to explain SBMI (Archer, Pearlin, Bonell), an evaluation analysis of concrete SBMI programmes, or something else as the key aim of this study. These doubts are also reflected through a far too extensive list of 12 research questions, 6 expected outcomes, and 5 stated objectives of the research (pp. 5-7). Furthermore, if the evaluation of diverse approaches is at stake, then it is not entirely clear from where the empirical data are derived, and if a meta-theoretical analysis is under consideration, then the evaluation criteria also remain concealed.

In terms of composition, the article is also quite confusing, with the theoretical framework appearing on page 16, the methodology section a few pages before, and without a clear findings section, discussion, and/or conclusions. Hence, it is not appropriate in terms of coherence and consistency.

The strongest feature of the manuscript is drawing an argument for why critical realism is an appropriate conceptual tool in estimating SBMI by demonstrating how particular attributes of SBMI might be effectively comprehended if analysed with a critical realist conceptual architecture. By focusing primarily on this aspect of the paper, it would much more successfully fulfil its promising anticipation.

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

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