

## Peer Review

# Review of: "The Arc of Dramatic Catharsis: When Push Comes to Shove, Purge and Release, and How to Measure Them"

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In this manuscript, the author announces several interesting results and raises essential topics for discussion but presents them in a way that may confuse the reader. The role of digital storytelling needs to be clarified in the initial sections because it is central to the experimental part of the work. Furthermore, digital storytelling may bring additional concerns to some readers regarding computational narratology, such as plot generation, story/character arcs, emotion models, interactive stories, and audience modeling. Therefore, in the initial sections, the author must clearly explain the limited scope of digital storytelling considered in the work.

Regarding the theoretical framework, the manuscript needs a more in-depth presentation of the Hero's Emotional Journey concept and the arc of dramatic catharsis. Also, we recommend discussing the arc of dramatic catharsis for narrative patterns other than the Hero's Journey.

Although well-known concepts, the author should define catharsis and other basic concepts (e.g., narrative thinking) to help readers. Even for the expert reader, these concepts may raise different understandings depending on the references provided.

The manuscript reports several experiments (already published) that show the benefits of using storytelling associated with structured frameworks such as the Hero's Journey. However, these are specific experiments restricted to elementary school students with insufficient subjects to claim statistically valid results. Furthermore, the conclusions (section 5) must include more details about how the experiments supported the claims. The manuscript mentions an experiment (apparently already published but not listed in the list of bibliographic references, Lambropoulos and Kostara) that focuses on the proposed theme of catharsis. Again, the author presents the results superficially. However, even considering that the objective is more a proof of concept than a comprehensive statistical work, experiment details are essential to understanding the claims (such as the resume of the data, link to the data and forms, and comments).

Considering the author's level of knowledge and the importance of catharsis in storytelling (digital, in particular), we recommend rewriting the manuscript to focus more on the central theme. This theme, although looking for more general

conclusions, is the consideration of Aristotle's Poetics in the pedagogy of modern creative writing with proofs of concept mainly applied to students of elementary schools. The title should also reflect this context.

## **Declarations**

**Potential competing interests:** No potential competing interests to declare.