

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

Julia Martinez¹

¹ Colgate University

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

This is a well-written and intriguing review that highlights both problems and solutions relating to school instability in South Africa. Of particular importance is the section on solutions, which is often given less attention in papers, and which makes this work a unique contribution. The work offers a thorough theoretical background from which to draw. I only have a few suggestions to improve the work.

Most importantly, it would be nice to see the solutions sections even further developed so that readers have even more specific directions. For example, in the Conclusions section, consider discussing the overall goals for students, and/or how the changes could improve students' outcomes. The Recommendations section could include additional citation and back-up, and it could more directly follow in the order of the Ecological Theory presented earlier in the chapter. The section could also further develop its explanation of the Ubuntu philosophy for readers who are unfamiliar with it. Perhaps offer concrete examples of how a teacher could utilize Ubuntu in one of the situations of verbal abuse discussed earlier in the chapter.

Second, and relatedly, please clarify the section labelled "The detrimental effects of the social environment and socialist ideology posited as the solution." I was not sure whether the authors were saying either: (1) that these theories do not really work for schools in South Africa, or (2) that these theories are not implemented well enough in schools in South Africa. Also, I was unsure why the authors used the term "kleptomaniac" in this section, which seems rather specific for the general ideas presented.

Third, the section labelled "Provision of ethical guidance" is an important one that could be explained more. This is because ethics, morals, responsibility, and emotional competence are all different things. Further explanation here could also help the transition into the next sections on Ubuntu.

The rest of my suggestions are more minor:

--Please remove the term "Systematic" from the title, as a systematic review is a technical term for meta-analysis (a quantitative review of reviews).

--Pg. 5, the sentence which starts "The unpredictability of who the next perpetrator will be or whom the next victim will have made" is a fragment. Please fix.

--Pg. 8, "The involvement of learners leadership is crucial as a central and integral stakeholder" is a difficult-to-understand

sentence, or perhaps a fragment. Please fix.

--Pg. 9, The header labelled "The availability of substances and instruments" might be better labelled "The availability of substances and weapons."

--Pg. 9, Close to the bottom of the page, a sentence starts "3 According to Statistics..." Please fix this typo.

--Pg. 12, "This study aims to explore the potential impact of implementing Ubuntu..." Unclear whether you are talking about your own paper or someone else's study; please clarify.