Qeios

Peer Review

Review of: "Can Service-Learning Benefit Students and Community Members? A Review of Research"

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This is a useful and well-structured narrative review with a particularly valuable strength: it considers not only the benefits of service-learning but also the potential harm to students and community members when programmes are poorly implemented. The practical emphasis on quality standards and implementation guidance is also valuable.

I recommend some important revisions.

1. The methodology needs greater transparency: the search strategy, database coverage, selection criteria, and justification for stopping at approximately 20 sources should be clearer.

2. Interest theory mainly points out student outcomes and provides limited theoretical explanation for community benefits, harms, reciprocity, and power relationships.

3. The findings are too descriptive and study-by-study; stronger synthesis is needed to explain why and under what conditions service-learning produces benefits or harm.

*The paper's strongest potential contribution is not simply that service-learning can bene*fit students and communities, but that its outcomes depend on implementation quality, reciprocity, preparation, reflection, duration, and genuine community partnership. Strengthening this argument would considerably improve the manuscript.

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

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