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

Radhamoney Govender

MANUSCRIPT TITLE: SCHOOL INSTABILITY IN SOUTH AFRICA: A SYSTEMIC REVIEW OF REFLECTIONS AND EXPERIENCES FOR A WAY FORWARD

Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to review this manuscript.

Article suitability for publication

The article is contemporary and relevant and has the potential to be published.

Abstract

The abstract provides an overview of the study. The research setting, aim, methodology and recommendations are highlighted.

Introduction

The introduction provides an adequate frame for the reader. The study does not have any research questions. The author is urged to formulate the research questions and include them in the last paragraph of the introduction.

Literature Review

Some of the sources display a review of, and insight into, the relevant literature. The connection between viewpoints is mostly clear. The discussion on Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (on page 4) should focus more on the education system. The aspects related to social workers should be deleted as this does not add value to the study.

Key concepts such as school instability, violence and crime are explained and discussed. The authors draw from existing literature by means of graphs and a table to adequately discuss school instability and its causes.

Some information that is included in the study require references, e.g., Page 5, paragraph 3.

The use of unpublished data (on page 10, paragraph 3) weakens the arguments in the study.

Research Methodology

Research methodology is crucial in any study; irrespective of the type of article. This important section is completely omitted in the study. The authors are advised to include the research methodology after the literature review section.

Briefly describe what methods were used to 'collect' the data.

Discussion

After including the research questions in the study, ensure that the research questions are addressed in the discussion section. Concepts/Terms such as 'moral education', 'emotional intelligence', 'Ubuntu', 'collectivism', 'progressivism' and 'Utopianism' should not be defined in the discussion section. Definitions of terminologies should be included in the literature review section.

Conclusion

The conclusion needs to be revised after the research questions are included. After revision, ensure that the research questions align with what is discussed in the conclusion.

Recommendations

The recommendations should be derived from the discussion.

This is a review article and not based on original research. Delete 'and recommendations provided by teachers in select KwaZulu-Natal schools' (the first and second lines in the Recommendations section).

References

The reference list is not arranged in alphabetical order and needs to be revised. The sources used in the article contain the author's surname and the year of publication only. No page numbers are included.   This makes it very difficult for the reviewer/reader to verify information.

Overall Comments

The authors relied heavily on Oluwatoyin Ajani's (who is one of the authors in this study) previous research. This weakens the arguments posed in the study. The authors are advised to refrain from the overuse of their own studies in future studies.

The authors are addressing an important and pertinent issue as violence in South African schools is escalating and new methods or strategies need to be identified and implemented in order to curb this surge. However, revisions are required. Thus, the authors are urged to revise the article and resubmit.