

Peer Review

Review of: "An Attempt to Explain Why There Are No Psychology Courses in the School Curricula of Nearly All Countries Worldwide"

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With this preprint, the authors attempt to answer why psychology courses are not mandatory in high schools worldwide in response to the view that a better knowledge of psychology would help to abate strife and evil in the world. To answer this question, the authors surveyed 37 nursing students who are recent high school graduates using Google Forms. They conclude that the lack of interest and trust in psychology as a science by educators and parents is the reason. As the authors consider psychology education imperative to diminish world problems, they conclude that possible actions to make psychology courses mandatory in high schools worldwide are necessary.

The writing style is inviting, and the process undertaken is explained. However, there is far too little information provided on the methodology for this study to be replicated.

The authors begin with a concern that a lack of high school psychology programs is a problem. Demonstrating this paucity, they provide information from the government websites of eight first-world countries. What they find, contrary to the dire position they present, is that in all of these countries, psychology is a course offered at the high school level—in three countries, it is compulsory. The authors do not demonstrate that there is less of a focus on psychology courses than on any others in the curriculum. This comparative information is necessary to indicate that psychology courses are at a disadvantage to others in the high school curriculum.

Although the evidence the authors provide would lead readers to suppose that psychology courses are at least as well-represented in the curriculum as other courses, lacking comparative data, the authors proceed to explain why psychology courses are avoided without offering evidence that they are evaded.

What is most problematic about this section is that each sentence is a pronouncement with no citations to support the claims.

Readers may be surprised at how the authors plan to demonstrate their claims. Although the authors indicated their worldwide concern in the Introduction, they have conducted a study on 37 nursing students. Why they selected nursing students, what country they represent, on what basis the questionnaire was developed and validated, and how they analyzed the data are not revealed. Furthermore, there are no citations in this section.

The Results section is perplexing. Figure 1 shows that each question had three different response options. However, the presentation of the original questionnaire shows that only two of the thirteen questions have options—1 and 11. Figure 1 offers the results of only the first eight questions without explaining why the other responses are missing. Figure 2 is additionally confusing because it represents the responses to question 11, presenting eight options when the questionnaire supposedly offered only three. There is no information regarding obtaining the results for Figure 3 and Figure 4.

Discussions are to consider the results from a broad perspective, which the authors do. The problem is that they provide insufficient information on the different theories they consider. Since these theories are from a wide range of perspectives and were created for reasons other than considering the psychology curriculum, the discussion of these is more confusing than helpful. The wide range that should concern the authors is current research on psychology in the high school curriculum—not theories by major theorists regarding the working of the mind.

The conclusions follow from the process undertaken by the authors. However, given the data presented, they are unwarranted as there is insufficient support for them.

The self-referencing of this preprint represents too great a percentage of the reference list. Furthermore, the articles self-referenced are not directly related to the topic.

This preprint, therefore, is more representative of a well-told story than scientific research. Readers who are interested in a story may find this enjoyable. If they are looking for sound and valid research, this work should be avoided.

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.