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Letter to Editor

Curriculum Studies Candidates' Bewilderment on the Application of Behavioral Research Designs

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One of the key problems for the candidates of 'curriculum studies' in the path of proposal writing and dissertation steps concerns behavioral research designs focusing on statistical analyses. This problem is a three-fold dilemma, namely:

1. Educational policies,
2. Research references, and
3. Instructors

- **On educational policies**

In Iranian universities, the heyday of logical positivism is still alive; therefore, the hegemony of behavioral research design and the use of statistical analyses are a typical norm in conducting research. However, in recent years, the qualitative and mixed-method approaches have been widely accepted in social and medical researches. Scrutinizing the websites and software tools for research affairs such as ***Pajooheshyar*** reveals the fact that dominance hinges on quantitative research.

Therefore, this kind of educational policy is in urgent need of metamorphosis.

- **On research references**

Most of the common research and even statistics books in the field of curriculum studies have been written, translated or compiled by psychologists (1, 2, 3) across the country. Moreover, in most of the cases, the dominant trend is quantitative research and the statistics is used to confirm or reject a hypothesis.

- **On instructors**

The instructors willing to teach research and statistics for curriculum studies candidates are typically psychologists of any kind. Although they are cognizant of educational theories and even curriculum studies trends, the nature of this discipline is not so clear for them; consequently, deliberately or accidentally, they guide the candidates to select a behavioral design. In most universities, there is only one form of proposal which can be quantitative. Nonetheless, in most instances there is no specific form for qualitative and mixed-method approaches. This catastrophe is not merely limited to the primary research. It further applies to the secondary research such as systematic review and meta-analysis.

To sum up, even in that quantitative form of proposal, the students, for instance, are not aware of type and measurement scales of variables as Stevens considered (4). The common trend is to write a proposal or a research report in a linear fashion; however, such a process is completely different from writing. The writing trend is linear even

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though the research conduction phases are cyclical. Even in quantitative research, the type and measurement scale of variables, hypotheses, statistical tests, and the design are completely intertwined; all are in a circle and it is impossible to write them in order. The nature of a research project through any approach is dynamic to the last day and this dynamicity has not been internalized in the universities across the country.

NOTE

The claims proposed in this review are fundamentally based on the authors lived experiences and the current context of the curriculum studies major; therefore, some vital references are just considered.

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