

Mapping the Literature on Psychological Literacy in Low- and Middle-Income Countries

Monday 1 September 2025 14:29 (22 minutes)

Introduction

The concept of “psychological literacy” has emerged as a dominant framework for conceptualising psychology graduate attributes. Psychological literacy refers broadly to student’s ability to apply psychological principles, such as critical thinking, to personal, societal, and professional challenges. However, most of the scholarship in this field has focused on higher education contexts in the UK, US, and Australia. There is a growing need to explore how psychological literacy and broader undergraduate outcomes are conceptualised in low and middle-income countries (LMICs), where unique cultural and societal factors may shape educational priorities and practice.

Methods

A scoping review was conducted to identify and analyse existing literature on psychology undergraduate outcomes in LMICs. Peer-reviewed articles were collected and screened for relevance, focusing on studies discussing graduate attributes within local contexts. A total of 34 articles from countries including Argentina, South Africa, Indonesia, and Brazil were identified and reviewed systematically. Papers were synthesised to determine key themes and outcomes.

Results

Our review generated a framework of nine broad psychology undergraduate outcomes that were emphasised across the LMICs. These included interdisciplinarity, ethical engagement, foundational psychology knowledge, effective communication skills, and a commitment to addressing social issues. Each outcome was uniquely shaped by the local context, reflecting the need to adapt psychology education to societal priorities and global standards.

Discussion

The findings highlight the utility of aligning undergraduate outcomes with local contexts. That is, the nine outcomes from LMICs only partially overlap with the dominant conceptualisations of psychological literacy from Australia, the US, and the UK. This suggests that definitions of psychological literacy should be flexible to local needs, a perspective that is notably absent from the existing literature.

Is the first author also the speaker?

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Please indicate up to five keywords regarding the content of your contribution

Psychological literacy; cross-cultural; critical thinking

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Session Classification: Parallel Session 1