

## Second Response to REVIEWER #2

Reviewer #2's most recent comments:

I wanted to express my appreciation for the improvements made to the revised article, "Breast Cancer Outreach in Ghana: A Review of Awareness Campaigns and the Role of Social Work in Advancing Functional Knowledge". However, I noticed that several paragraphs in the "Implications for Social Work" and "Conclusion" sections are still missing proper citations. Including additional references would greatly enhance the depth and credibility of the research presented. The following citations from the reference list were integrated into the body of the manuscript: Dadzi, R., & Adam, A. (2019); Dadzi, R., & Adam, A. (2019); Ofosuhene, R., Effah, A., Sam-Awortwi, W. Jr, Boamah, R. A. B., Akosah, P., & Obirikorang, C. (2025). However, the following citation must be included in the manuscript: Owusu Achiaw, S., Geue, C., & Grieve, E. (2025).

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I want to begin by separating the issue of “missing citations” from the "Implications for Social Work" and "Conclusion". While citations are expected in the “Implications for Social Work”, the idea of citations being required in the “Conclusion” runs counter to standard research manuscript writing conventions.

**The Question was put to AI (Gemini): How common is it for research articles to contain citations in the Conclusion or should Conclusion be mostly independent thought?**

Please share the response with Reviewer #2.

In academic writing, it is **highly uncommon** and generally discouraged to include citations in a standalone **Conclusion** section.

Major style guides (like APA 7th edition, Chicago, or MLA) do not explicitly forbid them, but the standard convention across most disciplines is that the Conclusion should represent your independent, synthesized thought.

The breakdown of how this works in practice depends heavily on the structure of the paper and how the section is framed.

### 1. The Core Purpose: Independent Thought

The Conclusion is meant to answer the "So what?" question of your research. It is your final opportunity to step back from the granular data and literature to articulate the broader significance of your findings. Because of this, it should be the place where your voice is strongest.

Introducing citations in this section usually creates two problems:

- **The "New Evidence" Trap:** Introducing a citation often means you are bringing in a new source, concept, or piece of evidence. New material belongs in the Literature Review, Introduction, or Discussion—never in the Conclusion.
- **Diluting Your Authority:** The conclusion is where *you* claim your findings. Relying on external citations can make it feel like you are still leaning on other scholars to make your final point.

## 2. Structural Variations (Discussion vs. Conclusion)

The "rule" against citations applies primarily to papers that feature a separate, dedicated **Conclusion** section. It is important to distinguish this from the **Discussion** section:

| Section Type      | Common Structural Layout                                             | Citation Norms                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Discussion</b> | Often a standalone section or combined as "Discussion & Conclusion." | <b>Citations are frequent and expected.</b> This is where you actively compare your empirical findings back to the existing literature.      |
| <b>Conclusion</b> | A brief standalone section at the very end of the manuscript.        | <b>Citations are highly rare.</b> Focuses strictly on the global takeaway, limitations, and future directions of <i>your</i> specific study. |

*Please note, my manuscript presents two separate sections—Discussion and Implications for Social Work—before the standalone Conclusion section. Therefore, there should be no expectation of citations in the standalone Conclusion, per standard APA conventions.*

*Furthermore, I present to you two manuscripts recently published in high impact journals where it is clear that the authors do not include any citations in their standalone Conclusion sections, as would be expected.*

**SAMPLE MANUSCRIPT #1—Published paper; NOTE No Citations in the Conclusions**

*Health Promotion International* has an official impact factor of **3.6** (released in 2026 and based on 2025 citation data). The journal boasts a Scopus CiteScore of **4.8** and is recognized as a Q1 ranked journal in the Health (Social Science) category.

**SAMPLE MANUSCRIPT #2—Published paper; NOTE No Citations in the Conclusions**

The academic journal *Health Systems* has an impact factor of **2.2**. Because there are several similarly named journals in the field, here is a breakdown of impact factors for the most common titles (Taylor & Francis): **2.2**

**With respect to “missing citations” in the Implications for Social Work, the initial response indicated the following citations were included.**

For reviewer #2:

Please note the following citations are included in “Implications”

American Cancer Society (2026)

Gilbert & Dako-Gyeke (2018)

Tuck et al.(2024)

Dedey et al. (2025)

Adam et al. (2026)

Osei et al. (2022)

Agha et al. (2021)

Amonoo et al. (2023)

Tetteh et al. (2024)

These are 9 citations, which represents about a fourth of the 34 total references.

However, to hopefully address Reviewer #2’s request for additional citation in the **Implications for Social Work** section, I have added a new 10<sup>th</sup> citation (Else et al., 2023) in the first paragraph and reinforced the second paragraph with existing citations for Tuck et al.(2024) and Bonsu & Ncama (2019), which means this section reflects nearly one-third of the manuscript’s citations.

**Finally, Reviewer #2 acknowledges that two of the three problematic citations were corrected, but is asking about the following:** *However, the following citation must be included in the manuscript: Owusu Achiaw, S., Geue, C., & Grieve, E. (2025).*

The reviewer might have missed my first response, which was:

Owusu Achiaw, S., Geue, C., & Grieve, E. (2025) was corrected to Achiaw et al. (2025—and is was already integrated into the body--see page 4

So, indeed, Owusu is the first name of Achiaw and therein lies the confusion, which has been clarified and corrected.