

Interactive comment on ““Thanks for helping me find my enthusiasm for physics!” The lasting impacts “research in schools” projects can have on students, teachers, and schools” by Martin O. Archer and Jennifer DeWitt

Anonymous Referee #1

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This paper is very interesting and it presents, in a very well organised and clear manner, the impact of a “Research in Schools” programme on participating students, teachers and their schools. The study was well designed and the authors draw very honest conclusions from the acquired data and from its analysis, in particular keeping the conclusions specific to the cohorts that participated in the programme. While non-trivial, the inclusion of control groups in the design would have added an extra depth to the study. Perhaps that will be possible in future studies.

Regarding the results presented on section 4.1.2 Skills, I am left wondering if students

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may have been influenced by teachers and/or by introductory materials handed out to them at the start of their participation in PRiSE, in building the list of developed skills. Was a list of “skills to be developed. . .” provided to them in order to “sell” the project? I suggest to include a comment on that.

On section 6 Conclusions, on line 538, the authors state “. . . suggest that these projects have been highly memorable. . .”. I agree that the data fully supports that the projects were memorable, but the classification as highly memorable seem a more subjective opinion by the authors. I suggest leaving out “highly” on that sentence.

The citation included in the title, while making it catchier, introduces some unnecessary bias. A different citation could have been, e.g., “I never really saw Physics as a choice for me . . . and the project hasn’t changed my mind about this.” Perhaps it is better to leave any citation out of the title. Having said that, I thoroughly recognise that the authors’ choice of citation is a much better reflection of the observed overall trend than the example I use above.

I cannot finish without stressing the importance of this and of similar studies. They are crucial to better understand the real impact of science communication activities carried out by HE institutions, research centres, science centres and museums, and to guide institutions and individuals into better practices.

P.S. The sentence beginning towards the end of line 244 reads “A similar proportion to with physics of 68%...”. Being a non-native English speaker, I may be missing some nuance of the English language, but that sentence doesn’t sound right to me. Apologies if it is my fault.

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