

Research on special education needs: what and how to investigate in Special Education

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Abstract

The following discourse seeks to characterize and delineate research from the field of Special Education. The research tradition in this field is ample, at both theoretical and especially practical levels, but unbalanced in terms of research and meta-research. Such an imbalance can be attributed to (among other possibilities) the lack of agreement on research criteria or approaches: positivist, interpretive and critical. As has occurred in other areas of social and human sciences, in Special Education it is urgent that we reach an acceptance of the diversity of approaches, or, that a global, comprehensive approach emerges which can integrate all the perspectives or ways of seeing and investigating this reality. The need for diverse approaches or for an emerging global approach is justified due to the inherent complexity of the object under study: educational response to students with special educational needs. This involves not only analyzing the students themselves, but also resources at the human, spatial, material, technological and functional levels, as well as well as whatever relationships are established between them and between the school, family and social contexts.

Keywords: Special Education Research, Research topics in Special Education, Research approaches in Special Education, Research methodology in Special Education

[Article in Translation]