

Qualitative Approach of the Scrutiny in Educational Psychology

Aproximación cualitativa del escudriño en Psicología educativa

Antonio Rodríguez Fuentes* 

Universidad de Granada, Granada, España
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8036-9902>

María Jesús Caurcel Cara 

Universidad de Granada, Granada, España
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2169-9100>

Received on 09-20-18 Revised on 10-09-18 Approved on 01-12-19 Online on 03-20-19

Correspondence:

Email: arfuentes@ugr.es

Cite as:

Rodríguez Fuentes, A., & Caurcel Cara, M. (2019). Qualitative Approach of the Scrutiny in Educational Psychology. *Propósitos y Representaciones*, 7(1), 01-09. Doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.20511/pyr2019.v7n1.301>

© Universidad San Ignacio de Loyola, Vicerrectorado de Investigación, 2019.



Este artículo se distribuye bajo licencia CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 Internacional. <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>.

It was difficult for the interpretive opposing approach¹ to fight the previous exclusive current with its ideographic approach to the study of a now subjective reality, which was consolidated and applied to practice with the transformative intention of the complementary socio-critical approach², and through some of the qualitative methods: a) in the first approach, through the participant or non-participant ethnographic observation, instrumental, institutional, individual or collective study cases that provide understanding rather than previous description; b) in the second one, through the research-action or research based on the design that reverts the situation studied to free and improve it.

The multi-paradigmatic confrontation that even today is still in force brought the bi-methodological confrontation about in such a way that the dichotomy of the researcher in his position and proposal of all the structures that allow him to undertake the research process, has been affected by the tension of the methodological pairing and its methodological proposals of materialization. But neither the methodology belongs to any predetermined approach nor the methods to any of them. This makes out the only possible way out for the research process to be enriched by the previous conflict.

Indeed, the previous conflict has been overcome by using paradigms that manage a more detailed description of the reality and the way of approaching it through research. Even it has been called “emergent, integrating, holistic, understanding, ecological or contextual paradigm” (Rodríguez, 2005, p. 109). Instead of focusing on differences and contrasts of each one of the foregoing, it recognizes their particular gaps and even criticism, but positively and constructively proposes to overcome them through an eclectic position, taking the best from each one.

As for the methodology, mixed-method research approaches “MMR” have been also proposed (Cameron, 2001; Díaz, 2014). It is the methodical combination, using methods that supposedly belong to conflicting methodologies, or the main use of a method, but including another method, even of supposedly different methodologies. That is, a more open and dynamic research process where the important thing is to offer the most complete and understanding response to the object of study, which consequently, demands a more flexible and versatile research model and role (Rodríguez, 2018), that elsewhere (Rodríguez, 2017) has been called “qualitative” methodology due to its eclecticism between the “quantitative” and the “qualitative.”

Quantitative works and their unquestionable scientific methods have predominated in the specific field of the Psychology of Education, hence the criticism made by some authors (Hernández, Fernández and Baptista, 2010) who have proposed the use of several methods to “approach the psychoeducational research” (De la Fuente and Justicia, 2018, p. 1). They argue the proper object of the discipline: the understanding of any educational phenomenon, clearly ideographic rather than nomothetic purpose. Thus, as stated by Sáenz (2007), it cannot be ignored that we are dealing with specific, particular, unrepeatable human beings who think and feels, as well as social groups and communities, context in which appealing to qualitative research allows delving into the interiority, the subjective of those people and groups, generating knowledge of social, cultural and educational reality from the perspective of those who produce and live it (Balcázar, González-Arratia, Gurrola and Moysén, 2013).

In this regard, the qualitative paradigm emphasizes the context of discovery, describes and interprets the learning phenomena from the perspective of the actors involved and the researcher-participant relationship, looking for meanings and understanding of reality, taking into account the context and culture (Gonda, Ramírez and Zerpa, 2008). Thus, the probabilistic

¹ Symbolic, ethnographic, subjective, descriptive, phenomenological, anthropological, hermeneutic, or combination of the foregoing.

² Transformative, emancipator, social, critical, structuralist, humanist, or combination of the foregoing.

samples, the number of participants and the representativeness of the sample are no longer of interest, but the specific people whose particular characteristics allow them to participate in the study (Saénz, 2007). The researcher abandons the traditional apathy in favor of the “objectivity” and assumes an active constructive-interpretative and transformative role of reality throughout the entire research process and not only at some point of it (Cuevas, 2002; Stake, 1998), becoming the main data collection and analysis instrument (Krause, 1995); and the researched party becomes an agent that produces thought and meaning (Cuevas, 2002) and also transforms the reality.

In Educational Psychology, in recent years, qualitative research has been in full development and has positioned itself as valid and effective methodology in the understanding of the educational phenomena (Hernández-Arteaga, 2012). Qualitative approach studies and alternative research methods, which allow the understanding of facets and new characteristics of the psychoeducational concepts and processes traditionally studied have markedly increased (Gonda et al., 2008; Justicia and Pichardo, 2007). These studies are based on the flexibility and are developed in the real environment of the educational center and classrooms, analyzing the interaction processes of teacher-student, school-teacher-student context, family-social-school context, etc., evaluating the teaching-learning process from the subjective perspective of the involved people and providing advances in the theoretical understanding and interpretation of several organizational, instructional, social and emotional aspects of the classroom. And for this construction of knowledge, many methods, means, techniques and instruments are used for research, such as: participant observation, semi-structured or open-ended interview, focus or discussion groups, the structural or hermeneutic content analysis, ethnography of psychodramatic and sociodramatic techniques, the case studies, the inspection of life stories, workshops, field journals, evaluation of personal experiences, interaction in groups or communities, introspection, field notebooks, portfolios, anecdotic records, etc. (Balcázar et al, 2013; Delgado and Gutiérrez, 1999; Hernández et al., 2010; López-Pastor, 2009; Ruiz, 1999; Mejía, 2004; Taylor and Bogdan, 2002; Valles, 2003).

This type of research requires, as stated by Hernández-Arteaga (2012), research competence, mental, conceptual, social openness and time to become linked with and participate, in a determined and intense manner, in the social context under study, taking care of what do events mean for the participants of such context. Additionally, an interpretative framework that determines the reality of the social phenomenon.

The last qualitative research trends developed by the educational psychologists are characterized by using inter and transdisciplinarity when approaching the educational problems, and in many occasions, in the search for solutions that implement qualitative and quantitative strategies in their designs. What is at stake is the richness of the information collected and its offshoots through several data collection instruments and their analysis to establish the results and conclusions that fulfill the objectives of studies that are more real and synchronic with the phenomena that mix psychology and education. I encourage researchers to make efforts to interpret and transform the psychoeducational reality.

References

- Balcázar, P., González-Arratia, N. I., Gurrola, G. M., & Moysén, A. (2013). *Investigación cualitativa*. México: Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México. Recuperado de <http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11799/21589>
- Cameron, R. (2011). Mixed Methods Research: The five Ps framework. *The Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods*, 9(2), 96-108. 2011. Recuperado de: <http://www.ejbrm.com>.

- Cuevas, A. (2002). Consideraciones entorno a la investigación cualitativa en Psicología. *Revista Cubana de Psicología*, 19(1), 47-56. Recuperado de <http://pepsic.bvsalud.org/pdf/rcp/v19n1/06.pdf>
- De la Fuente, J & Justicia, F. (2018). *Tópicos recientes de investigación en Psicología de la Educación*. Madrid: EOS.
- Delgado, J., & Gutiérrez, J. (Eds.) (1999). *Métodos y técnicas cualitativas de investigación en Ciencias Sociales* (3ª reimpresión). Madrid: Editorial Síntesis.
- Díaz, S. M. (2014), Los métodos mixtos de investigación: presupuestos generales y aporte a la evaluación educativa. *Revista Portuguesa de Pedagogía*, 48(1), 7-23. 2014. Doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.14195/1647-8614_48-1_1
- Gonda, S., Ramírez, J. J., & Zerpa, C.E. (2008). Investigación cualitativa en Psicología Educativa: contribuciones al aprendizaje autorregulado. *Laurus, Revista de Educación*, 14(26), 111-135. Recuperado de <http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=76111491006>
- Hernández, R., Fernández C., & Baptista, P. (2010). *Metodología de la investigación* (5ª ed.). México: McGraw Hill.
- Hernández-Arteaga, I. (2012). Investigación cualitativa: una metodología en marcha sobre el hecho social. *Revista Rastros Rostros*, 14(27), 57-68. Recuperado de <file:///C:/Users/maria/Downloads/Dialnet-InvestigacionCualitativa-6515553.pdf>
- Justicia, F., & Pichardo, M.C. (2007). Metodología de Investigación en Psicología Evolutiva y de la Educación. En E. Fernández, F. Justicia y M.C. Pichardo, *Enciclopedia de Psicología Evolutiva y de la Educación*. (pp. 17-50). Málaga: Ediciones Aljibe.
- Krause, M. (1995). La investigación cualitativa. Un campo de posibilidades y desafíos. *Revista Temas de Educación*, 7, 19-39.
- López Pastor, V. (2009). *Evaluación formativa y compartida en Educación Superior*. Madrid: Nancea.
- Mejía, J. (2004). Sobre la investigación cualitativa. Nuevos conceptos y campos de desarrollo. *Investigaciones Sociales*, 8(13), 277-299. Doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15381/is.v8i13.6928>
- Rodríguez, A. (2005). Research on special education needs: what and how to investigate in special education. *Electronic Journal of Research in Educational Psychology*, 3(1), 97-112. Doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.25115/ejrep.v3i5.1158>
- Rodríguez, A. (2017). *Proceso de investigación educativa: Metodología e informe de resultados*. Curso desarrollado en el Instituto Panameño de Educación Especial, de la República de Panamá (Panamá). 5-9 de Junio de 2017.
- Rodríguez, A. (2018). *Investigación en educación*. Conferencia impartida en el III Salón Estudiantil, organizada por la Unidad de Cultura Científica, del Vicerrectorado de Extensión Universitaria de la Universidad de Granada (España). 4 de Abril de 2018.
- Ruiz, J. I. (1999). *Metodología de la investigación cualitativa* (2ª edición). Bilbao: Universidad de Deusto.
- Sáenz, M. A. (2007). Aproximación a la investigación cualitativa en Psicología y Educación. *Revista Humanitas*, 4(4), 58-81. Recuperado de <http://132.248.9.34/hevila/HumanitasRevistadeinvestigacion/2007/vol4/no4/4.pdf>
- Stake, E. R. (1998). *Investigación con estudio de casos*. Madrid: Morata.
- Taylor, S. J., & Bogdam, R. (2002). *Introducción a los métodos cualitativos de investigación: La búsqueda de significados*. Traducción de Jorge Piatigorsky. Barcelona: Ediciones Paidós Ibérica.
- Valles, M. S. (2003). *Técnicas cualitativas de investigación social: Reflexión metodológica y práctica profesional*. Madrid: Editorial Síntesis.