

Review of: "Grandparenting Children With Special Needs and Disabilities: A Narrative Review"

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The purpose of this article is to present in detail a methodology for gathering data on scientific productions and summarising them in relation to the experience of grandparents who have grandchildren with disabilities or special needs. This is an infrequent yet important review, given the major role played by grandparents in intergenerational solidarity issues.

For all that, the objective is only partially achieved.

I will not repeat a series of comments already made by other experts, but rather try to develop a point of view that complements the comments already made. The main thrust of my proposal is to emphasise that it is difficult for the objective to be fully achieved because the author has not sufficiently clarified the way in which the data collected is organised.

The introductory section of the text raises a series of major questions, and it is immediately apparent that the theme raises a number of different issues:

- what is a grandparent: the distinction between the roles and functions of grandparents made at various points in the introduction could have been better structured;
- the stages of grandparenthood and grandchildren's development: the stages are sketched out, probably too quickly, since, for example, the notion of announcing disability, which is fundamental, is not really dealt with;
- "distance" from grandparents (discussed at various points, without distinguishing between geographical distance and subjective/relational distance, and then confused with traditional/passive/active grandparental styles, etc.).

In this introductory section, there are undoubtedly other questions that could have been asked from the outset, such as the type of disability and the time of diagnosis, or the relationship with the parents.

The sheer number of potential questions immediately underlines the fact that it seems particularly ambitious to be able to cover everything in the space of one article.

The author then addresses the question of theories, paradigms, and models, followed by tools and measures, but without linking the two levels (which are in fact linked to the above themes).

For example, psychoanalytical theory is mentioned, and it has provided input on the place of grandparents in terms of intergenerational issues and the links between grandparents and parents (in this case, it is a question of "relational" distance, not material distance); systemic theory is considered, but when the article talks about grandparents, it talks about grandparents without raising the question of maternal and/or paternal grandparents and the question of the mother or father of the child with a disability.

The tools are presented in chronological order (retroactively?), but why not consider the tools in terms of the objectives they aim to achieve on the basis of differentiated and specific themes concerning grandparents?

The author has therefore identified a set of questioning principles, but they are not articulated and, as a result, he does not rely on choices to guide his research questions.

After the general presentation, the author presents the data collection procedure and then proposes certain lines of enquiry, certain themes, but without having presented the structuring logic, the guiding thread of a line of enquiry.

Contrary to what the introduction might have suggested, the final aim of the research strategy is not to ask "What are the theoretically relevant themes and in what way and how do the products identified provide answers", but "What are the themes dealt with in the literature identified", which is very different.

As a result, we end up with a list of themes and generalities about each of them, without really going into each point of view in any depth.

For example, in the introductory section, the question of the nature of disability is not raised, but it is included in the analysis themes. The question of culture and intercultural differences is touched on, but in relation to the difficulties of care and the impact on families, the question of institutional support for families is not really addressed, even though it interacts in a major way with the question of relay or family support.

It is therefore a pity that the large amount of information gathered, in the absence of a more precise analysis system with more focused and 'localised' research questions, does not fully achieve its objective.

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