

INTRINSIC INDICATORS OF RESEARCH QUALITY

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Why is it so important to identify *intrinsic* indicators?

- If necessary and sufficient indicators can be identified then you secure maximal validity
- Extrinsic indicators only have validity in so far as they fully reflect the qualities indicated by intrinsic indicators
- Behavioural responses to assessment by intrinsic indicators ('washback') reinforce the development of quality. (Those in relation to extrinsic indicators distract from it)

Dealing with the diversity of educational research?

- The criteria that we identify will on the whole be fairly high level criteria which may be interpreted in different ways in relation to different genres of educational research
- This will apply in particular to the criterion of 'rigour' which may demand quite markedly different things between eg a randomised controlled trial, an ethnographic case study, a piece of deconstruction and an autobiographical narrative.

What are the intrinsic indicators of research quality?

1. *Those proposed at Leuven*

- Rigour
- Originality
- Significance
- Integrity
- Style

Rigour

- Appropriate methodology
- Coherent argumentation,
- Internal consistency of argumentation, method, evidence, and conclusions
- Counter-arguments are considered
- Reflexivity on limitations
- Appropriate methodology
- Coherent argumentation,
- Internal consistency of argumentation, method, evidence, and conclusions
- Counter-arguments are considered
- Reflexivity on limitations

Originality

- Unique (novel) contribution to the field in relation to previous work (with respect to content, methodology, and/or findings)

Significance

- Goals and conclusions should disclose the significance of the study
- Is the contribution original, creative, or innovative in a *significant* (non-trivial) way/
- Theoretical or practical embeddedness of the study?
- Independent reasons for appraisal of its significance (e.g. opening up a new field)

Integrity

- Study represents the genuine work of the authors (in contrast with e.g. plagiarism)
- Problems and limitations are acknowledged and reported
- Ethical codes of research conduct are applied (including confidentiality and informed consent)
- Acknowledgement of contribution by others

Style

- Communication tuned to the audience
- Well structured and organized text
- Comprehensibly written (clarity of the text, however, also depends on complexity of subject matter)
- Elegance and wit in writing (pleasure to read)

What are the intrinsic indicators of research quality?

2. Others to be considered?

- **Impact** (or is this part of 'significance'?)
- **International**
- **'Explicit relation to discourse context'** (or is this an element of 'originality' or of 'rigour'?)
- **'Erkenntnisleitendes interesse'** (or is this part of 'significance'?)

Impact

- has had demonstrable impact on policy and/or practice
- has had demonstrable impact on other research in the field (is this what is conveyed by '*Erkenntnisleitendes Interesse*'?)

International

- addresses an internationally recognised agenda
- references the international literature
- is published in an internationally recognised journal

Should these be the criteria we work with?

- Rigour
- Originality
- **Significance** (to include 'impact' and 'Erkenntnisleitendes interesse' and 'explicit relation to the discourse context'?)
- Integrity
- Style
- **International** ????? (widely employed but misleading and damaging?)