



Tsermidou, L., and Zoniou-Sideri, A. (2012) 'Τεχνολογικά μέσα και ειδικό σχολείο για παιδιά με νοητική καθυστέρηση: απόψεις εκπαιδευτικών της ειδικής εκπαίδευσης' [The views of special teachers on the employment of technological means in special schools for pupils with learning disability] In A. Zoniou-Sideri, E. Nteropoulou-Nterou and K. Papadopoulou (Eds.) *Research in Special Education, Inclusive Education and Disability (Volume B)* Athens: Pedio, 117-140

### **Abstract**

Technology's introduction into schools has significantly influenced the contemporary educational reality. Modern research focuses on new technologies and their capacity to introduce classroom activities and practices that will engage students, through substantial, thought-provoking procedures. Technological progress plays a significant, manifold role in school practice. Pedagogy theorists introduce the concept of educational technology and acknowledge technology's educational benefits and its significant contribution to knowledge promotion.

Special education worldwide emphasises technology's beneficial role in educating students with disabilities. Contemporary research focuses on effective use of specialised software and assistive technology and demonstrates technology's significant contribution to students' school performance.

This research aims to explore the views of teachers in special primary schools for pupils with learning disabilities on technology's existence, means, frequency of use and role in special schools.

A descriptive, quantitative methodological approach is employed, using a questionnaire as the research tool.

The questionnaire's 40 questions evince the pupils' and teachers' profiles, technology's presence or absence in the classroom and the school, teachers' views about technology's role and aim in special schools and some demographic information about the research subjects.

The research sample comprised 72 primary school teachers working in special schools for pupils with 'mental impairment' in the Attica region.

### **Main findings**

One general conclusion that can be drawn from examination of the research data is that the inclusion of technology in a special educational context does not correspond to the general aims and learning objectives of the overall inclusion of technology into the educational context. It reveals a lack of substantial use of technology by both teachers and pupils in special schools.

The majority of educationalists – and, as a result, students – do not use modern technological means. Rather they continue to use tape recorders, television and photocopiers.

A lack of technological infrastructure in schools is one of the main factors affecting the introduction and use of ICT in classrooms, with the result that students are not motivated to use ICT.

Students tend to use ICT tools when they see their teachers using them. When teachers are indifferent to new technology, their students tend to have a similar response. Educationalists act as models for their students.



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Those educationalists who use ICT in the classroom tend to have more positive attitudes towards technology and recognise its value in teaching and learning. These teachers are the ones who motivate their students and encourage them to specialise in the field of ICT.

Educationalists who believe that ICT is only assistive (and not necessary) would never encourage their students to specialise in the field of ICT.

ICT as a key tool for promoting equity in educational opportunities;