BOOK REVIEW

The book
Foundation of Mixed Methods Research
Teddlie C & Tashakkori A
2009 Thousand Oaks: Sage

Reviewed by
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Mixing qualitative (QUAL) and quantitative (QUAN) research methods challenges researchers in the Social Sciences domain. Scholars need to address proper ways of mixing methods for research quality and academic rigor. In this context, the work of Teddlie and Tashakkori is a recommended book for any researcher who intends to use mixed methods (MM) approach. The book is divided into two sections. In the first section, the authors present five chapters relating to the fundamentals of the 'third methodological movement' (i.e. mixing QUAN and QUAL approaches). This section covers the approach, MM fundamentals, MM roots before and after the 20th century, and the paradigm issues. In the second section, the authors add six chapters, covering specific features for preparing for a MM research project, research design, sampling strategies, data collection procedures, analysis and inference processes.

Specifically, chapter 1 introduces the main differences among the QUAL, QUAN and MM approaches, the different backgrounds, research traditions and how the three approaches can coexist peacefully. Chapter 2 presents the MM basic elements, its terms and definitions, as well as the MM utility. Chapter 3 covers the MM historical path—from Antiquity, Middle Ages, Scientific Revolution to the 19th and 20th centuries—underlining the emergence of Human Sciences and the inductive-deductive research cycle that is commonly used in different ways. Chapter 4 explores the four landmarks in the 20th century, named the Traditional period (referring to Positivism, from 1900 to World War II), the Postpositivist area (from end of World War II to 1970), the Diversification and advances in methodologies in Human Sciences period (from 1970 to 1990), and the Institutionalization of MM as a third methodological community (from 1990 to present). Chapter 5 brings the methodological continua, contemporary points of view, and discussions of recent debates concerning MM.

The second section of the book starts with chapter 6, where the readers find a four-step model for generating research questions in MM approach, followed by a 12-step sequence for literature review and guidance for generating research objectives in the more complex and hierarchical nature of MM research questions. Chapter 7 provides the guidance for selecting and adapting a MM research design to an existing research project. In doing so, the authors present the five families of design typologies (methods-strands matrix), dimensions, terminology and notational system for MM. This chapter ends with practical orientations relating to selecting and adapting appropriate design in a seven-step process. Chapter 8 covers the MM sampling strategies and addresses probability and purposive samplings. A typology of MM sampling strategies is also provided with examples. Chapter 9 shows the preparatory steps before collecting data such as ethical issues, conceptualization of different type of data collection procedures, pilot studies, engagement in several activities to ensure data collection quality. Finally the authors introduce the 'Matrix of Data Collection Strategies for MM research'.

Chapter 10 concentrates on MM data-gathering strategies supported by the matrix presented in chapter 9. The MM data collection comprises both QUAL and QUAN data using more than one (and diversified) data collection strategies. Examples on how to follow the matrix are presented to cover the innumerous possibilities of mixing data sources and collections. Chapter 11 addresses QUAL and QUAN data analyses and their specific features in the MM approach. This chapter also covers the five MM research designs. The sequential mixed data analyses are addressed in two ways: QUAL > QUAN and QUAN > QUAL. The new types of analytical techniques are addressed to present the transferability or interchangeability of QUAL/QUAN data such as fused data analysis, and inherently mixed data analysis, among others. Lastly, chapter 12 is dedicated to discussing the quality standards of inferences in MM research by addressing validity, the concepts of inference quality and inference transferability. After the discussion, an integrative framework of inference quality and transferability is presented and explored. The book presents an epilogue regarding politics, challenges and prospects of MM research, a glossary, and consulted references.

In summary, this book makes an outstanding contribution to the MM research domain, and is recommended to graduate students and earlier researchers in the Social Sciences as well as Behavioral Sciences.

Reviewer

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