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John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, Sage, 2014, 273 pp. \$ 49 Paperback

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**Abstract.** John W. Creswell was previously a professor in educational psychology in the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. He moved to the University of Michigan in 2015 as a professor in the Department of Family Medicine. He has published many articles and close to 27 books on mixed methods. Professor Creswell is also one of the founding members of the *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*. He was a Fulbright scholar in South Africa in 2008 and Thailand in 2012. In 2011, he served as a visiting professor in the School of Public Health of Harvard University. In 2014, he became the Chairman of the Mixed Methods International Research Association. Professor Creswell has a personal website called “Mixed Methods Research” at <http://johnwcreswell.com/>. The site contains the information about his background, his own blog, consulting works and published books. He also posted replies questions from academic researchers and practitioners in the blog.

**Keywords.** Research design, Methodology, Methods.

**JEL.** A20, B40, B49.

### Book Review

**R**esearch *Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* examines the mixed method that combines both qualitative and quantitative research techniques. This book contains two parts. Part one is the preliminary considerations. Chapter 1 “The Selection of a Research Approach” describes the relationship among worldviews, research designs and research methods. The author talks about four different views of the world: the Postpositivist, the Constructive, the Transformative and the Pragmatic. The first chapter discusses the selection of the three research designs: quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods. Each approach has its own philosophy. In other words, the philosophy affects the application of the quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods. The opening statement in Chapter 1 is exactly on the influence of the assumptions of the worldviews and philosophies on the three research approaches. Chapter 2, “Review of Literature” elaborates on the importance of literature, the creation of a literature map and the clarification of literature implications. This chapter deals with the priority of literature searches and the production of research abstracts. With extensive research experience under his belt, the author details the techniques and steps of literature reviews. A literature review provides readers a snapshot to the research focus. This chapter explains how to use a literature map and how important the term definitions are.

Chapter 3 “The Use of Theory” introduces variables (e.g. independent variables, dependent variables and intervening variables) in quantitative research. Qualitative

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research includes quantitative variables, theoretic lens and theme generalizations. Mixed methods are mainly applied in social science theories and transformative paradigms. In this chapter, the focus on quantitative research is the relationship between variables. Examples on the theoretic use of quantitative research are provided. The section on qualitative research is the view of the world with lenses. There are also examples of the theoretic use. The mixed method is the attempt to combine both the quantitative and the qualitative techniques. The author provides the examples for social science theories and transformative paradigms. The integration of the quantitative and the qualitative approaches opens up the thought process and research steps of the mixed method. Chapter 4 “Writing Strategies and Ethical Considerations” speaks about the formats, the worldviews and descriptive structures of qualitative research. A basic format of qualitative research consists of problem statements and research designs. This chapter zooms in on the writing of the research agenda and the issues surrounding ethics. The author articulates his thought process and examines the “Hook-and-Eye” technique. This chapter teaches readers how to quickly and effectively highlight the keywords in order to browse a large amount of relevant literature.

The second part of the book is “Designing Research”. It starts with Chapter 5 “The Introduction” on how to write the qualitative or quantitative introductions. The author also discusses the deficiencies model, i.e. the research built on the gaps existing in literature. Different from the statement for typical research projects, such as the definition of research problems or issues, the construction of the research issues with existing literature, this chapter indicates that research papers can attract attention by highlighting the insufficiencies or deficiency of past literature. Chapter 6 is “The Purpose Statement”. Qualitative research, in its own right, is a purpose statement about the centre of focus. This chapter also gives examples. The purpose statement based on quantitative research emphasizes on the relationship between variables and the unit of analysis. Similarly, examples are set out here. Finally, this chapter discusses the purpose statement using mixed methods, including the research purposes for qualitative and quantitative studies, and the ways to design mixed methods. The three examples of research purpose statements provided are convergent, explanatory and exploratory in style.

Chapter 7 deals with “Research Questions and Hypotheses”. Examples for the statements of core issues in qualitative research are provided. The quantitative research is about the development of hypotheses with examples. The research questions and hypotheses in mixed methods require the zooming in of the issues both quantitatively and qualitatively. In addition to the statement of research questions, the mixed methods require the integration of the two. This chapter posits that the questions in qualitative research come from phenomena, the questions in quantitative research are based on assumptions, and the questions in mixed methods are the combination of the two. Meanwhile, this chapter provides examples on the basis of the author’s in-depth understanding of quantitative research. Chapter 8 details “Quantitative Methods”, i.e. surveys and experiments. The survey methods include research purposes, populations and samples, survey tools and statistical techniques. The experiment methods require participants, procedures (such as pre-experiments, quasi-experiments and true experiments), single-subject designs, and statistical inferences. This chapter explains the process of gathering data, analysing, interpreting, and writing about research findings. There are also some discussions on validity and statistical techniques.

Chapter 9 “Qualitative Methods” includes research designs, the researcher’s role, data collection procedures, data recording procedures, data analysis and interpretation. There are also validity and reliability tests in qualitative methods. This chapter examines the researcher’s role, data collection techniques, such as observations, interviews, documentations and the analysis of visual data. This section focuses on the coding procedures and the discussion of validity and reliability. Finally, Chapter 10 “Mixed Methods Procedures” presents the three basic designs for mixed methods: convergent mixed approach, explanatory

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sequential approach and explanatory sequential approach. The characteristics, data collection, analysis and interpretation, and validity test methods are all explained. Meanwhile, the author mentions three advanced mixed method designs: embedded, transformative and multiphase. The three basic mixed methods and the advanced mixed methods summarized by Creswell constituent the two pillars of the applications presented by this book. This allows the use of mixed methods to yields rich and diverse contents. Creswell's graphs and illustrations do not only demonstrate his in-depth understanding of the mixed methods, but also make it easy for readers and researchers to appreciate how the mixed methods are applied. This is tremendously helpful to the understanding of social problems.

In sum, this book explains how to develop research problems, focus on issues and make statements with qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods. The contents in these ten chapters are the fruit of the author's labour. What is unique is the layout of numerous examples and manuscripts so that readers can get a clear picture of how mixed methods are employed. Meanwhile, at the end of each chapter the author sets out writing exercises and provide a reading list so that readers can imitate the examples and go deeper into the research methods. This book makes significant contributions and serves as a quick overview and guidance for those who start to mixed methods. In fact, both quantitative and qualitative methods emphasize on the development of arguments and the reasonable solutions to real issues in society, as well as the construction of appropriate theories. The emergence of the mixed methods bridges the dialectics between these two research approaches. As social phenomena are becoming increasingly complex, the use of any single method may have its limit. The application of mixed methods is more likely to show the whole picture. By the way, according to Google Scholar, this book has been quoted as many as 68,108 times.\* This number speaks of the increasing popularity and the vibrant development of the mixed methods.

\* The search for "*Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*" in Google Scholar shows the first entry has been quoted 68,108 times (up to May 22, 2017). The fourth edition is published in 2014, but the Google Scholar search is in 2013. Even so, it will not diminish the contribution of this book.



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