

No.4 August 2015

From the President's desk

It is with great anticipation that I take on the role of President of this vibrant and active Mixed Methods International Research Association for the coming year. Several hundred people have participated in three regional conferences this year, with one more to come; planning is also underway for our international conference in Durham (UK) next year, and options are being considered around the world for further regional conferences in 2017. A scholarship scheme has been developed, and we are working on other initiatives that will contribute opportunities for professional development for members – more news of these in the next edition.

I am indebted to John Creswell, our foundation President, for the leadership he has provided in steering the Association through its initial year. Thank you John for your guidance and steady hand, and thank you for your continuing commitment to the Board of the Association.

I also have the pleasure of announcing that Tony Onwuegbuzie has been voted in as President Elect for this year. Tony brings a great deal of enthusiasm to the task, and extensive international experience. Please join with me in welcoming Tony to the MMIRA Board.

Pat Bazeley

Editor's tips for the mixed methods researcher

There are very few researchers who would consider undertaking a statistical analysis without the benefit of specialist statistical software. Software allows for much broader and more complex analysis of numeric data than was ever possible when I started out as a researcher with the benefit only of a statistical formula and perhaps a mechanical adding machine. Similarly, researchers are increasingly realising the benefit of specialist qualitative data analysis (QDA) software that facilitates management and analysis of data through coding, linking, reflective memoing, querying and visualisation processes.

Computer technology offers benefits to the mixed methods researcher as well, primarily through QDA programs that have grown to accommodate mixed methods functions, although quite a lot can be achieved with a common spreadsheet. Software will allow you to manage multiple data sources and types within the one project, and to manage multi-source data for each individual case, to facilitate combining, comparing and contrasting sources. You might look also for QDA programs that allow you to import demographic and scaled variable data for use as a basis for comparative analyses of text data, and to export qualitative coding as case-based variable data to merge with other statistical data for further analysis.



News & Events

Events still to come! A regional conference for those in the Asia-Pacific:

September 19-20, Ibaraki, Osaka, Japan: MMIRA Regional Conference at Ritsumeikan University's Ibaraki campus. *Introducing mixed methods across multiple disciplines.* Keynotes include Ben Crabtree, Hisako Kakai, Tomoko Kamei, Burke Johnson, Pat Bazeley, and John Creswell. Website: www.jsmmr.org Contact: jsmmr.adm@gmail.com

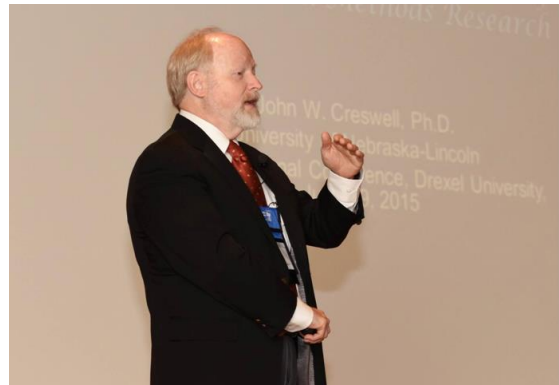
Reports from Regional Conferences

Drexel, Philadelphia, 19th June

The College of Nursing and Health Professions at Drexel University, in collaboration with the Mixed Methods International Research Association held a one day conference entitled "Improbable Dialogues: Inter Professional Mixed Methods Research Collaborations" on June 19, 2015.

The purpose of this one-day seminar was designed to bring together researchers from multiple disciplines to focus on improbable interprofessional topical and methodological dialogues through mixed methods research. Within this purpose we hoped to create new possibilities for research that could enrich and expand the scope, reach, accessibility, and perspectives on critical issues in a complex global culture.

The conference was a great success beginning with our Keynote address by Dr. John Creswell entitled "Cultural Diversity and Awareness in Global Mixed Methods Research". Our attendees



enjoyed multiple high quality presentations throughout the day representing diverse disciplines, unique collaborations, and creative approaches to mixed methods research. One of our attendees said:

"The conference was definitely a 'peak' experience for many. I spoke with other colleagues from the School of Education at Drexel, a medical doctor and professor who were attending and all described the conference as effective. I left feeling a sense of success, achievement and accomplishment, which expanded my self-confidence to continue moving forward with developing this interdisciplinary, mixed methods approach".

The Chair of the Conference, Dr. Nancy Gerber, and our co-chair, Dr. Joke Bradt along with our amazing conference team could not have been more delighted with the outcome. Thank you to MMIRA as well for supporting our efforts.



San Antonio, Texas, 3rd- 4th August:

The University of Texas Health Science at San Antonio (UTHSCSA), the Mixed Methods International Research Association (MMIRA), the UTHSCSA's Office of Nursing Research and Scholarship and the School of Nursing Center for Community-Based Health Promotion with Women and Children sponsored the August 3 & 4, 2015 **Patient Engagement in Biomedical and Health Services Research: A Pragmatic Mixed Methods Approach Conference** that was funded in part by a Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) engagement award. This MMIRA regional conference was focused on patient-centered and community-engaged health-related research. The 115 registrants came from 13 states and three non-U.S. countries. Twenty-five different community partner/stakeholder groups were represented and 28 different universities were represented.

Health disparities in South Texas are countless and continue to increase. The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio recognizes the centrality of patient participation and need to focus attention on appropriate concerns and collaboratively build relevant interventions. Mixed methods research enables health science investigators to view problems from multiple perspectives, including the perspectives of consumers of the health care system. This conference therefore was designed to bring together diverse communities of patients/stakeholders, researchers, students, and health care practitioners with the aim of expanding knowledge on scientifically rigorous patient-centered outcomes research methods to produce improved and equitable health outcomes.

The program focused on processes for ensuring community partners' participation in research programs, funding initiatives supporting patient-centered mixed methods design studies. Keynote speakers and panel presentations were followed by podium and roundtable presentations, with ad hoc working sessions also providing opportunity for mixed methods experts to share additional materials, answer questions, and network for future collaborative projects. Feedback from those attending included:



Drs Barbara Turner, Helen Parsons, Sandra Burge, & Carlos Jaen, UT Health Science Center At San Antonio School of Medicine, presenting panel on Patient- and Community-Engaged Research

“We are just starting to be involved with community research and I believe that what I learned in this conference will really help spring board what is a possibility in my community and for my community. I look forward to working with the health science centers and feel I have a good idea how to be a part of it now.”

“I plan to use MMR in my program of science. I will not be as timid in pushing the envelope in the matter of working with MMR typologies.”



Dr David Morgan leads an Ad Hoc Working Group session at the San Antonio Conference

New books and resources

Check out the publications, working papers, and podcasts section of the UK ESRC's **National Centre for Research Methods** website - <http://www.ncrm.ac.uk/> for some wonderful resources for those interested in or with questions about methods.

Recently published books on, or using, mixed methods

Mixed Methods Research

Daphne Watkins and Deborah Gioia

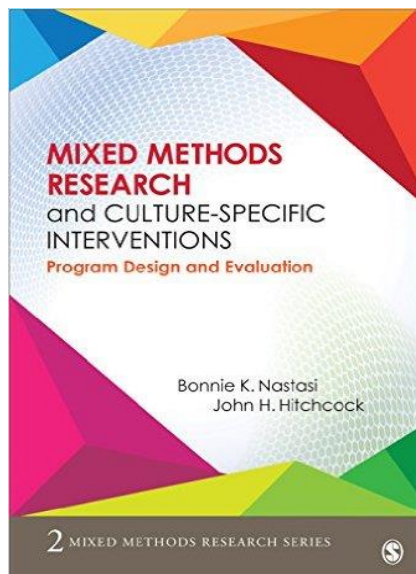
New York: Oxford University Press – Pocket Guide

ISBN: 9780199747450 September 2015

Social workers are provided with a practical guide for mixed methods research that focuses on the application of mixed methods approaches in social work. The guide underscores the theoretical underpinnings of mixed method techniques found in larger volumes and provides references throughout to more in-depth books and volumes on mixed methods research and social work research methods

Chapters introduce a mixed way of thinking, and then they cover design, data collection, analysis, perils and pitfalls, and writing up, presenting and teaching mixed methods.





Mixed Methods Research and Culture-Specific Interventions: Program Design and Evaluation

Bonnie Nastasi (Tulane University) and John H. Hitchcock (Indiana University – Bloomington) June 2015

Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage ISBN: 9781483333823

This practical book shows practicing social scientists and graduate students how to account for cultural factors when developing and evaluating psychological and educational interventions using mixed methods research. Providing a methodological basis for handling cultural influences when engaged in intervention and/or evaluation work, the book covers a range of topics, including mixed methods research, program evaluation, ethnography, and intervention design. Throughout the book, the authors integrate illustrative examples to make more abstract content accessible.

- Chapter 1--Introduction: The Role of Culture and Context in Developing Intervention and Prevention Programs
- Chapter 2--Conceptual Models for Mixed Methods and Culture-Specific Intervention Development
- Chapter 3--Use of MMR to Understand Context and Guide Program Design
- Chapter 4--Use of MMR to Guide Implementation and Adaptation
- Chapter 5--Use of MMR to Address Validity Concerns in Program Evaluation
- Chapter 6--MMR Model Application: A Full Example
- Chapter 7--Implementation and Evaluation Challenges
- Chapter 8--Future Directions

And some not-so recently published books that might be of interest:

Weller, N., & Barnes, J. (2014). *Finding pathways: Mixed-method research for studying causal mechanisms*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Shaffer, P. (2013). *Q-Squared: Combining qualitative & quantitative approaches in poverty analysis*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

From the journals

IJSRM special issue

International Journal of Social Research Methodology (T&F) is publishing a special issue on on developments in pedagogical knowledge in the teaching and learning of social research methods later this year. Papers, many of which are relevant for mixed methods researchers, are currently being collected and are available via the Journal's 'latest articles' web link:

http://www.tandfonline.com/action/showAxaArticles?journalCode=tsrm20#.VdPo7_nzqHt

IJQM special issue

International Journal of Qualitative Methods (open access) has just published a special issue on mixed methods, Volume 14(2) (2015), at <http://ejournals.library.ualberta.ca/index.php/IJQM>.

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The Contribution of Mixed Method Analytical Procedures to Explanatory Power: A Mixed Method Article Review

By: Dr. Elizabeth G. Creamer, Professor, Educational Research & Evaluation, Virginia Tech.

Elliott, J., Gale, C., Parsons, S., & Kuh, D. (2014). Neighborhood cohesion and mental wellbeing among adults: A mixed methods approach. *Social Science and Medicine*, 107, 55-51.

Authors of a 2014 article appearing in the *Journal of Social Sciences and Medicine* took advantage of existing, longitudinal data sets of three cohorts of now elderly men and women living in southeast England to pursue questions about the relationship between healthy aging and a measure of neighborhood cohesion. With the assumption that positive engagement in informal exchanges with neighbors and participation in social activities promotes mental wellbeing, the study set out to identify both qualitatively and quantitatively derived covariates that could be tested in a regression equation.

My interest in singling out this article for a review is in both the use of mixed method analytical procedures and in the way they were reported. Rather than to summarize its design features, I picked this article to review for the MMIRA Newsletter because it is an unusually good example of how the mixing of qualitative and quantitative sources of data and procedures during analysis can be accomplished in such a way that it produces a coherent conceptual framework. The use of multiple sources of data and multiple analytical procedures extend in this case far beyond simple confirmation.

There are several ways that Elliott et al. (2014) used mixed method analytical procedures to enhance the explanatory power of their conclusions. They pointed to ways that multiple sources of data made it possible to explore alternative explanations for what had been observed:

The wealth of data also allowed us to explore whether the association between neighborhood cohesion and positive mental health is mediated or confounded by other factors including socio-economic circumstances, limiting long-term illness or disability, personality, or perceived level of social support. (p. 51)

For the qualitative portion of this iteratively executed analysis, the authors generated a set of themes from the analysis of biographical interviews with a subset of participants scoring at the extremes of the neighborhood cohesion scale. They identified related questionnaire items to quantify qualitative themes about social participation, social support, and mobility. For example, mobility issues were measured by summing responses to items in the questionnaire about the ability to climb stairs and to ride a bus. In the last stages of analysis, the authors returned to a quantitative approach. They demonstrated the predictive power of the qualitative derived variables, along with selected demographic variables, in a regression equation.

A third way that the authors used mixed method analytical procedures is by a strategy for reporting that explicitly signals what mixed methodologists refer to as a meta-inference. A meta-inference is a type of mixing that occurs in the final, interpretive stage of a research project. It "is a conclusion generated by integrating *inferences* [emphasis theirs] obtained from the QUAL and QUANT strands of an MM study" (Teddle & Tashakkori, 2009, p. 339). That the principal conclusion of the study fits the definition of a meta-inference is made overt by a choice of wording that explicitly anchors the inference to the source of data (e.g. qualitative or quantitative):

The *quantitative* findings suggest that neighborhood cohesion is more strongly associated with wellbeing at older ages. Analysis of the *qualitative* interviews provided some clues as to the possible underlying mechanisms. First, those in the older age groups were more likely to talk about the importance of membership in social groups, second there was more mobility or anticipated mobility in the younger groups. (p.50) [emphasis added]

The linking of the two data sources in the conclusion makes it clear that this is not a conclusion that could have been generated by one type of data alone.

The way that the authors organized the summary and discussion of their findings is consistent with their claim that one of the strengths of the study is "that both the qualitative and quantitative data and analytical methods are used in tandem" (p.50). A pattern of reporting on the findings by moving back and forth between qualitative and quantitative results is sustained throughout the presentation and interpretation of the results. The sustained focus on the interplay of the strands adds nuance and confidence to the conclusions. It is a way of presenting results and conclusions that is consistent with the logic of mixed methods.

Read these in the latest issue of JMMR (July 2015)

As a member of MMIRA, you can access Journal of Mixed Methods Research articles through the MMIRA website. What follows is a summary of articles in the most recent issue (vol.9, no.3, July, 2015).

Because sustainability is a concept for which people have so many embedded science-based and value-based assumptions, **Santiago-Brown, Jerram, Metcalfe, and Collins** used an innovative mixed methods approach in their exploration of the wine grape industry to gain a fresh perspective on the meaning of sustainability in agriculture. A lack of consensus on measurable variables meant the authors started with a qualitative approach, using focus groups with top executives from wine grape organisations working at the farm gate level in five 'new world' wine producing regions. Focus group techniques were adapted to ensure that everyone's opinion about relevant topics was recorded and heard, and to generate some quantitative ratings of relative importance of different dimensions of sustainability. Data from focus groups were coded with respect to major dimensions (economic, social and environmental) and to concepts within those. Relevant sentences were extracted to provide a dataset for content analysis using rating, clustering and linking techniques available through both Leximancer and NVivo. Results, displayed visually, allowed the researchers to remodel and redefine sustainability, taking into account the nuanced perspectives gained through their analysis process.

This article demonstrates a) innovative use of an adapted focus group technique, b) an innovative mixed methods approach to analysis of textual data, and c) excellent use of visual displays generated through ratings and counts to show the importance of and connectedness between concepts, all contributing to a useful refinement of a commonly used conceptual model of sustainability.

Santiago-Brown, I., Jerram, C., Metcalfe, A., & Collins, C. (2015). What does sustainability mean? Knowledge gleaned from applying mixed methods research to wine grape growing. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 9(3), 232-251.

Sedoglavich, Akoorie, and Pavlovich undertook eight case studies of small to medium enterprises (SMEs) in the agro-technology industry in their search for a better understanding of absorptive capacity (AC) – a firm's ability to build on prior related knowledge and innovate. They interviewed decision makers in the companies, looking at the interactions between technology transfer, knowledge management, AC, and internationalisation processes. After an elaborate (manual) coding process, they confirmed and developed their initial model, and identified particular factors applying to SME high-tech firms.

The authors then returned to the literature and identified seven variables to use in measuring and modelling AC quantitatively. Using multiple regression, Karnaugh maps, and fuzzy logic, they were able to identify areas of business strength in each of the firms. A potentially useful technique of juxtaposing the quantitative and qualitative results for each firm in an integrated display demonstrated concordance between the results of the two methodological approaches used in the study, although, as this was placed at the end of the discussion, I would suggest their study followed a triangulation (corroboration) design, rather than being integrative and complementary, as claimed.

Sedoglavich, V., Akoorie, M. E. M., & Pavlovich, K. (2015). Measuring absorptive capacity in high-tech companies: mixing qualitative and quantitative methods. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 9(3), 252-272.

Client violence is a problem for all of those working in the human services sector. The goal of **Enosh, Tzafirir, and Stolovy** is to develop a contextually-sensitive measure that can be used for workers in different human services, sectors, and nations. At this stage, they have focused their attention on social workers, as a group particularly exposed to client violence. They used a sequential MM process in their development of the scale, beginning with qualitative interviews to ensure depth of understanding of the issues, after which an expert panel helped to critique item construction and relevance, and to assess interrater reliability. Primarily statistical methods were then used with a larger sample to examine internal consistency, content validity, and convergent validity, but with qualitative feedback also recorded. The authors of this article clearly have a thorough understanding both of their topic, and of the standard principles of scale development (which they communicate clearly), although I am unconvinced of their claim that the scale has wider applicability (at this stage), given its development so far being entirely within a sample of Israeli social workers.

Enosh, G., Tzafirir, S. S., & Stolovy, T. (2015). The development of client violence questionnaire (CVQ). *Journal of Mixed Methods Research, 9*(3), 273-290.

McManamny, Sheen, Boyd, and Jennings used four criteria in a review of the application of mixed methods to prehospital (i.e., primarily paramedic) research, evaluating 23 articles published over the past 12 years. They note that the enormous variety of situations encountered in prehospital settings poses a number of challenges for researchers, one of which is obtaining informed consent in emergent situations. In their review, the authors found discussion of philosophical assumptions was largely absent in the articles, as was a clearly stated (and implemented) rationale for choice of mixed methods design. Data collection methods were dominated by the usual combinations of surveys and interviews, but for this group these were supplemented by reviews of records and observations. Data integration was considered by the authors to be “underdeveloped” in these studies.

McManamny, T., Sheen, J., Boyd, L., & Jennings, P. A. (2015). Mixed methods and its application in prehospital research: a systematic review. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research, 9*(3), 214-231.

MMIRA updates

Scholarship news

The MMIRA Board has approved funding of International Travel Awards to support travel to the next international conference (to be held at Durham, UK, in early August, 2016) for a graduate student member, a member from a developing nation, and a graduate student member from a developing nation. We have also approved funding for a Dissertation Award also to support excellent recently graduated students in attending the next international conference for the association.

Applications will open in November, so details of how to apply and conditions attached to the awards will be published on the MMIRA web and in this newsletter in November.

Membership

Currently, MMIRA has 624 members, including 202 regular members, 212 student members, 154 members from developing nations, and 25 institutional memberships. Our members come from all major continents and most academic disciplines.

148 of our members currently need to renew their memberships. If you are one of these, *please* renew as soon as possible! Also, *please* tell others about MMIRA and ask them to join!

MMIRA on Facebook

MMIRA on Facebook is constantly growing. We invite all MMIRA members to join the MMIRA community in Facebook to follow the news about MMIRA and discuss the mixed methods research developments around the world: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/mmira/>

MMIRA on Twitter @mmira2014

Follow MMIRA on Twitter at @MMIRA2014 and be the first to hear about upcoming events, opportunities, and mixed methods resources. Twitter is a great way to network with the MMIRA international community of scholars and create opportunities for collaboration.

Your association

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