



BOOK REVIEW

Mixed Methods Research – A Guide to the Field

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Book Review

Mixed Methods Research – A Guide to the Field

Authors: Vicki Plano-Clark and Nataliya Ivankova

Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications Inc. (2016) pp. 368

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I recommend this book as particularly relevant for early career researchers as well as for any researcher thinking of engaging with the complex world of mixed methods research. The authors succeed in deconstructing both the challenges and the potential rewards inherent in this complexity and in the 'messiness' of the field of mixed methods research. This is achieved through a rigorous, systematic analysis, within a highly detailed socio-ecological framework, of the 'layers' involved in mixed method approaches. This framework is presented in chapter 1 as an effective model for clarifying the diverse perspectives on mixed methods, and for enabling researchers to interrogate, debate and manage the complex issues raised. Each subsequent chapter provides a detailed analysis of one 'layer' of the framework, highlighting in a structured way the key issues researchers must engage with and, most significantly, must render explicit within their work. The key aspects of each 'layer' are enhanced through offering examples from research studies, as well as through learning activities and extensive sources of reading to deepen understanding of the field. The chapters are all structured similarly – this can result in repetitive content – but does allow the reader to 'dip in and out' as required.

In summary, this is a highly relevant and well-grounded text, which offers a detailed, accessible, thought provoking and encouraging guide to constructing a mixed methods study.