



NEW BOOKS IN REVIEW

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HANDBOOK OF MIXED METHODS IN SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL RESEARCH, Abbas Tashakkori and Charles Teddlie, eds., Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2003, 768 pages, \$99.95.

For most researchers in marketing, the title of this rather large volume, which consists of a collection of 26 works by 52 different authors, will seem a bit of a misnomer. In this context, “mixed methods” is not another moniker for “multi-method” research (Campbell and Fiske 1959) but instead refers to the integration of both quantitative methods (defined here as dominated by the positivist paradigm and its variants) and qualitative methods (defined here as dominated by the constructivist or interpretivist paradigm and its variants) under a new paradigm, a third “methodological” movement. Although methods are distinct from paradigms (e.g., qualitative research methods are not constrained to constructivists or interpretivists), that the editors confound them is instrumental toward the goal of offering up an alternative paradigm that presumably enables researchers to engage different methods and paradigms in a single research effort without incompatibility. Thus, the book is intended to provide researchers and students with the necessary philosophical, theoretical, and methodological foundations for engaging in mixed methods research—assuming the reader buys into this paradigm, which is not a given. Nonetheless, this book is essential reading for all who are conducting or curious about mixed methods research. It provides an exceptionally comprehensive examination of mixed methods research and thus should be valuable as both a pedagogical tool and a reference.

The book is organized into four sections: “The Research Enterprise in the Social and Behavioral Sciences: Then and Now”; “Methodological and Analytical Issues for Mixed Methods Research”; “Applications and Examples of Mixed Methods Research Across Disciplines”; and “Conclusions and Future Directions.” It also provides a glossary of nearly 150 terms; definitions are situated within various research contexts and identified as to source. This glossary is a valuable resource in itself. The book is grounded primarily in the educational research and social psychology disciplines, and thus direct connections to research in marketing are not present. Nonetheless, the philosophical and methodological issues discussed are directly relevant for marketing and other researchers who desire a closer integration between qualitative (interpretivist) and quantitative (positivist)

research, especially when combined in a single research project.

The first section begins with a definition of the mixed methods paradigm, which requires the rest of the book to even partially elucidate because of its complexity and varied interpretations by different scholars. The primary focus of this section is an analysis for justifying the mixed methods paradigm on both a philosophical and a theoretical basis. Because this section is the foundation on which the remainder of the book rests, more detailed scrutiny is appropriate.

For some time, researchers in marketing have recognized the contributions that research following different paradigms can make. For example, marketing scholars often situate their interpretive/qualitative research in the quantitative/positivist literature (e.g., Thompson and Troester 2002), and vice versa (e.g., Pechmann and Knight 2002), and show how their findings contribute to the overall knowledge of a phenomenon, regardless of the paradigm from which it is viewed. Thus, marketing researchers have achieved some consensus that knowledge can be valuable regardless of the paradigm from which it materialized or the paradigm to which it is applied. Mixed methods pushes this harmonious coexistence as a weak form of acknowledgment and assimilation to a more complex level of actual integration. As Tashakkori and Teddlie note (p. 11) in Chapter 1, “one of the assumptions of such research is that it is indeed possible to have two paradigms, or two worldviews, mixed throughout a single research project.” Accordingly, both interpretivist and positivist research can be performed by the same researcher(s) studying the same phenomenon, ostensibly to achieve greater knowledge.

Having conducted one of the first dissertations in marketing that combined an interpretivist study with a study using an experimental design (Compeau 1991), I must admit to sympathizing with the goal of this third methodological movement, though I must also confess that this book alone would not convince me entirely of the strength of its philosophical foundations. Every reader who is familiar with the paradigm wars of the 1980s and 1990s and who has aligned him- or herself with a particular worldview will struggle to accept the philosophical foundations on which mixed methods may rest. The book offers several stances on these foundations, including the a-paradigmatic stance, the incompatibility thesis, the complementary strengths thesis, the dialectical thesis (Chs. 3 and 23), the multiple paradigm thesis, the single paradigm thesis of pragmatism (Ch. 2), and the single paradigm thesis of the

transformative–emancipatory paradigm (Ch. 5). The a-paradigmatic stance posits that the epistemology-methods link is not only unnecessary but unnecessarily distracting as well. Moreover, it avers that a researcher can perform method without even knowing the paradigm in which that method is situated. Although this may occur, it simply means that the researcher is accepting an implicit paradigm embedded in his or her method. Most scholars of marketing are likely familiar with the complementary strengths thesis (for a similar stance, see Anderson's [1986] critical relativism), the dialectical thesis, the multiple paradigm thesis, and the transformative–emancipatory paradigm (a rubric for different forms of critical theory; see Murray and Ozanne 1991). Thus, I discuss two issues I believe are most critical to researchers in marketing.

As the editors acknowledge in their first chapter, the philosophical issue of “compatibility” (i.e., commensurability) is a stumbling block for some. They discuss the incompatibility issue but finally dismiss it by suggesting that most researchers became bored with the philosophy debates and have subsequently ignored the issue. The editors also conclude that incompatibility has now been largely discredited because mixed methods research has been successfully employed. Finally, they note (p. 20) that, “A reading of this handbook indicates that most of its authors are comfortable with mixing their methods and are, in general, not very concerned with the purity of the underlying paradigms being maintained.” Although this description seems accurate, nevertheless, whether researchers consciously acknowledge the paradigm in which they live and conduct research, it still exists and constrains their research (e.g., Morse, Ch. 7).

Pragmatism is also proffered as a paradigm that can support mixed methods. In this view, the research question is considered more important than the method or paradigm. Philosophical debates are eschewed. As Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998, p. 30) sum up in a previous work, “Study what interests and is of value to you, study it in the different ways that you deem appropriate, and utilize the results in ways that can bring about positive consequences within your value system.” A rich and compelling explication of pragmatism by Spencer J. Maxcy (Ch. 2) fleshes out this philosophy and method on the basis of a review of its historical development. Whether researchers ultimately buy into pragmatism or not, this chapter is a fascinating examination of this paradigm, how it has evolved, and its implications for mixed methods research.

I believe that this mixed methods paradigm must already be accepted to some degree before most of this book will be useful, because on its own, the book does not provide convincing rhetoric to cause a reader to embrace mixed methods as a research paradigm. It does introduce mixed methods and the pragmatism paradigm well enough to enable the reader to explore the literature more deeply. In fairness, I do not believe the editors' intent was to convince the reader of any paradigmatic view, because the book embraces a wide variety of views and points to conflicts and problems associated with all of these controversial paradigms. One of the most significant contributions of this book is that the controversies surrounding mixed methods and the paradigms on which it might be based are laid bare.

The second section will primarily appeal only to researchers who have at least tentatively accepted mixed

methods as a research paradigm worthy of more significant study. This section focuses on the methodological issues associated with conducting mixed methods research. The coverage is broad, including the development of research questions and research designs, sampling, data collection, data analysis, the rhetoric of communicating mixed methods research, and even the inference process. Thankfully, it is detailed as well. This section is full of techniques and processes that will help any researcher carry out a mixed methods research project.

The third section is devoted to discussing mixed methods research across different disciplines. Scholars from evaluation research, management and organizational research, health sciences, nursing research, psychology, sociology, and education discuss the issues associated with the application of mixed methods research in their specific disciplines. This section is not as fundamental as the first two sections of the book, but it highlights many of the seemingly discipline-specific issues associated with mixed methods research.

The fourth section offers some conclusions and presents some challenges for mixed methods researchers. Two of the three chapters address how to teach and how to collaborate on mixed methods research. The final chapter revisits some of the issues discussed throughout the book and develops useful conclusions and directions for future discourse.

Overall, this book represents a formidable treatise on mixed methods research. To adequately develop a paradigmatic structure, scholars may need to read deeper into the philosophical foundations behind mixed methods research than what is available in this book. Nonetheless, readers will be hard pressed not to marvel at the contribution the book makes on all other counts and, taken as a whole, to the use of mixed methods in social and behavioral research.

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CROSS-CULTURAL SURVEY METHODS, Janet A. Harkness, Fons J.R. Van de Vijver, and Peter Ph. Mohler, Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2003, 420 pages, \$89.95.

Written by a group of international scholars who attended the Third ZUMA (Zentrum für Umfragen, Methoden und Analysen) Symposium on Cross-Cultural Survey Methods, this book intends to provide an integrated treatment of comparative survey methods. Although the book's goal of an integrated treatment is not entirely met, as a result of redundancy among the chapters and some minor variations in terminology, the book certainly has a great deal to offer scholars who conduct cross-cultural research on marketing topics; indeed, anyone who has conducted a cross-cultural study will find a wealth of new insights in this book.

The book is organized into five major sections: (I) Introduction, (II) Design and Implementation, (III) Error and Comparative Surveys, (IV) Analysis of Comparative Data, and (V) Documentation and Secondary Data Analysis. The Introduction makes a few critical points. First, as it pertains to methodological advances, interdisciplinary exchange is not keeping up with progress within disciplines. Because much of the knowledge disseminated here is not widely reflected in the marketing literature, this point is well taken. It is also notable that the book cites some contributions from marketing scholars, including some books and two studies published in the *Journal of Marketing Research* in the 1970s. This suggests that marketing academics can make far-reaching contributions to the social sciences in cross-cultural research methodology. However, it is also apparent that marketing literature needs to draw more on work being conducted in other disciplines to make such an impact.

A second key point made in the Introduction is that it is the responsibility of researchers to demonstrate the quality of their research. In a cross-cultural context, this means ensuring that equivalent constructs are measured and that various types of bias are minimized. In subsequent chapters, these topics are discussed in rich detail. The discussion is at times frustrating, because the authors frequently suggest that more research is needed to understand some specific sources of bias in cross-cultural studies. However, good guidance based on the current state of knowledge is also provided.

Parts II and III are the heart of the book, because they focus on design issues that cut across cross-cultural surveys. These sections will humble many investigators who have conducted cross-cultural research, because publication standards in individual disciplines do not appear to incorporate all that is known about ensuring measurement equivalence. For example, Harkness's suggestion that translation be integrated into a study's design rather than evolve after a source document has already been developed is seldom followed in marketing research. In addition, the guidelines for assembling a translation team composed of experienced translators, reviewers who possess strong language skills, and a final adjudicating body go well beyond what has been commonly practiced. In published marketing studies, translations have often been performed by either the researchers or relatively inexperienced students. Harkness's directive to go beyond back-translation by at least supplementing it with other assessment procedures is also fascinating. She illus-

trates the problems that can arise in back-translations by examining how the German phrase *Das Leben in vollen Zügen genießen* might be translated into English for a cross-cultural study. An appropriate (nonliteral) translation of the phrase is "Enjoy life to the fullest." An inexperienced translator might render it more literally as "Enjoy life in full trains." A German back-translation could approximate the original phrase, hiding the discrepancy between the meaning of the English and German versions. For researchers, this example creates the scary realization that literal back-translation can mask flaws in the translated version of a questionnaire.

The chapters on design (Part II) collectively give good advice on a variety of issues, including training translators, choosing words that lead to better translations, establishing equivalence, choosing samples, and reducing response error. Tom W. Smith's chapter on developing comparable survey questions is exceptionally well done. Smith stresses the need to develop functionally equivalent questionnaires but acknowledges that only a small proportion of cross-cultural studies report reliability and discuss whether findings have equal validity in all of the cultures studied. He notes that both bad translations and intrinsic differences in meaning can taint the results. For example, the English-language term "mental health" can be translated into Chinese as either *jingshen jiankang* (spiritual health) or *xinli jiankang* (psychological health), the former of which contains meaning not present in English. To address these problems, the authors advise using multiple measures and more items. Advice on dealing with eight sources of response error, including social desirability bias and acquiescence, is also given. In Chapter 8, Häder and Gabler provide good specific advice on sampling in cross-cultural settings and make it clear that nonprobability samples are problematic.

One drawback of the middle section of the book (and to a lesser extent elsewhere) is that there is considerable redundancy among chapters. Although some chapters, such as those on context effects, background variables, errors in comparative survey research, and social desirability bias, might work well on a stand-alone basis, they disrupt the flow of the book by repeating material in other chapters.

Part III, Error and Comparative Surveys, has some of its thunder stolen by Part II, in which several sources of error already are discussed. However, a good summary of the major sources of bias (construct, method, and item) in Chapter 10, along with a strong chapter on nonresponse bias, makes this section of the book worthwhile. Chapter 12 on the comparability of data collection methods is interesting and makes some valid theoretical points, though some marketing academics may find it difficult to relate to, given the relatively light coverage of mail surveys. The limited coverage of mail surveys is also apparent in the discussion of nonresponse in Chapter 11, in which most of the studies analyzed are administered in person or by telephone and have high response rates (generally well over 50%).

In Parts IV and V, more specific topics, including multidimensional scaling, multitrait-multimethod studies, response function equality, and documentation in cross-cultural contexts, are nicely explained. Van de Vijver's Chapter 14, which discusses statistical techniques that can be used to identify bias, is a standout that should be read by all cross-cultural researchers. The main point in this chapter

is that a combination of appropriate up-front design and post hoc statistical testing is needed to maximize the validity of comparative studies. Too often, in past international marketing research, authors have not used available statistical techniques for ensuring the equivalence of data collected cross-culturally. Readers need evidence that participants in a cross-cultural study are responding to the same constructs and that the measurement scale used is being processed similarly. Nevertheless, strong work in this area, notably Steenkamp and Baumgartner's (1998) framework for assessing equivalence by establishing configural, metric, and scalar invariance, among other possible tests, has been applied all too rarely. The final chapter in the book provides an excellent step-by-step procedure for conducting meta-analysis of cross-cultural studies and explains both the potential of this type of research and the caveats.

In trying to provide an integrated treatment of cross-cultural survey methods, the authors may have been attempting an almost impossible task. The reader will not always experience a smooth flow across chapters and will inevitably see some topics repeated. Nevertheless, cross-cultural researchers and other readers will appreciate the book. Those who teach international marketing will find the book laden with rich examples that can be integrated into lectures on international marketing research. Moreover, anyone who is asked to review cross-cultural papers for marketing journals will find that the book provides important insights. This book is valuable general reading for

researchers and an important reference book on specialized topics in cross-cultural research.

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