

**Michael D. Fetters. (2020). *The Mixed Methods Research Workbook: Activities for Designing Implementing, and Publishing Projects*. Sage. Paperback, 293 pages. (ISBN: 978-1-5063-9359-9)**

---

**Reviewed by Sofia I. Melendez, Katrina Carbone,  
and Michelle Searle**

In *The Mixed Methods Research Workbook*, Michael D. Fetters has developed a practical resource for scholars, graduate students, and individuals with an interest in mixed methods research (MMR). Since many of the concepts presented are essential to all types of human research, the workbook would make an excellent required reading for an introductory graduate-level MMR course. The workbook is intricately scaffolded, with engaging lessons covering vital areas of MMR training—literature review, ethics, publishing, validity, grant applications, and philosophy worldviews. In particular, the *integration* of mixed methods is a key feature of the workbook. Fetter’s pedagogical intentionality is apparent, and the organizational structure and textual features render this a useful text for a range of audiences and worthy of keeping on your bookshelf for future reference. Common threads include collaborating with peers and illustrating concepts with stories drawn from a range of fields. Recent and relevant in-text citations solidify the evidence-based research used in developing this workbook and guiding mixed methods projects.

Effective textual features, such as chapter learning objectives to focus learning, checklists to review learning, and resources to further learning are used consistently. Notably, the workbook incorporates application activities with plenty of space to fully develop thoughts and work through the activities, promoting multiple means of representation and reflective questions. Multiple tables, figures, and templates are included, which align perfectly with the workbook style of the text to offer visual schemas and practice for complex topics. Many of these textual features are essential in helping the reader to skillfully apply integration in MMR. Worth noting are the workboxes, where readers can record ideas related to a specific project relevant to their work.

Fetters seems to adopt a pragmatist perspective throughout the chapters, which may be highly influential for readers who have not yet formed their philosophical assumptions. In addition, it may provide an important epistemological challenge for scholars whose assumptions lean toward other perspectives. We noticed that periodically, the explanations of qualitative components were framed more comprehensively and positively than the quantitative components and wondered if a more balanced description of both methods might have enabled novice researchers

**Corresponding author:** Sofia I. Melendez, Ryerson University, Toronto, Ontario, Canada:  
[sofia.melendez@ryerson.ca](mailto:sofia.melendez@ryerson.ca)

to develop their own perspectives (see pp. 4–5 and 212 for examples). MMR and the integration of diverse methods thrive on the synergy of using both methods to minimize any limitations that might be present in a single methodological approach. Nonetheless, Feters offers comprehensive background information about the state of both qualitative and quantitative research fields in order to give the reader a deeper and more contextualized understanding of important issues in the field (e.g., the extent to which different fields focus on philosophical assumptions) and the kinds of considerations required for optimizing the integration of MMR.

Chapters 1 and 2 provide entry-level research design information related to research topics, rationale, and feasibility. The inclusion of Chapter 3, which specifically focuses on literature reviews, is critical. Feters aligns with [Boote and Beile \(2005\)](#) to outline the impact of acquiring skills and knowledge for conducting a thorough and sophisticated literature review. The addition of a visual representation distinguishing the three types of literature reviews discussed might have been a useful addition to the chapter.

Chapter 4 outlines the type of knowledge that scholars from interdisciplinary fields are required to possess. It provides an introduction into reflexivity, theoretical and conceptual models, philosophical realms (i.e., ontology, epistemology, axiology, methodology, and rhetoric), and the spectrum between positivism and social constructivism. Chapter 5 outlines project topics that come from real-life problems and stories, focusing on the kinds of questions asked in MMR. However, there are many ways to generate research questions, as described by [McGuire \(1997\)](#), who outlined 49 methods to generate research questions. Nonetheless, Feters does recognize the constant evolution of research across these initial chapters.

A key strength within Chapters 6 through 12 lies in defining, distinguishing, and adding context to the nuanced terms used in MMR (e.g., triangulation, integration). This section of the workbook presents an important contribution to the field of MMR, which has historically struggled with a lack of consensus on terminology. This discord is a barrier for researchers looking to build on each other's work and for novices looking to access and enter the field of MMR. Indeed, Feters defined complicated terms throughout the entire workbook using simple, everyday language that individuals from any field could understand. For example, the text describes the eight integration strategies through a combination of text, figures, lists, and resources.

Additionally, Feters offers insightful advice about academia (e.g., applying for grants) and inclusive resources (e.g., Spanish language ethics tutorials), which is useful for MMR novices and those mentoring graduate students. The stepwise procedures offered for creating an implementation matrix (pp. 151–157) guide the reader thoughtfully through a challenging process.

In Chapters 13 through 16, Feters describes the use of joint displays, which exemplifies the strength of MMR in adding to the ingenuity and construct validity of the research process. Through the connection of joint display and MMR, complex concepts that may not initially have a visible link are more easily explained.

Indeed, the plurality of MMR requires visuals to demonstrate how research methods are integrated.

Readers with a quantitative background may have been initially surprised to learn about interactive analysis because it may seem like a form of unethical data peeking that inflates Type I error (Sagarin et al., 2014). Fetters does provide explanation but could have provided more detail to address this aspect of MMR so that those using a more positivist researcher paradigm might appreciate and consider adopting these methods.

Chapter 16 provides one of the most comprehensive yet concise and accessible overviews of validity and trustworthiness that we are aware of to date. Fetters integrates the work of foundational scholars, features of core concepts, and provides relevant exemplars.

The last two chapters provide insightful advice for identifying target journals (quality vs. quantity), discussing predatory journal red flags (p. 249), and outlining valuable resources (e.g., Journal/Author Name Estimator and Scimago Institutions Rankings). This advice is helpful when scholars are thinking about the dissemination of knowledge and career advancement. Fetters provides practical tips for research mentors or supervisors to share with their mentees or students. The final chapter unites core ideas from the workbook by bringing together aspects from previous chapters and summarizing essential concepts in a checklist with templates and examples.

Overall, this text makes an important contribution in the MMR collection by offering a resource that is comprehensive, accessible, and usable by a range of scholars. Since MMR is a relatively new and emerging area of scholarship, this text provides a robust amount of information with a welcoming tone that offers an entry point for those who want to make an initial foray into MMR or deepen their practice while working on a specific project. While integration is not the core focus of this text, the importance of integrating methods and analysis in the creation of MMR is a clear expectation. We wholeheartedly recommend *The Mixed Methods Research Workbook* for anyone looking to advance their knowledge about MMR.

## REFERENCES

- Boote, D. N., & Beile, P. (2005). Scholars before researchers: On the centrality of the dissertation literature review in research preparation. *Educational Researcher*, 34(6), 3–15. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189x034006003>
- McGuire, W. J. (1997). Creative hypothesis generating in psychology: Some useful heuristics. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 48(1), 1–30. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.48.1.1>. Medline:15012475
- Sagarin, B. J., Ambler, J. K., & Lee, E. M. (2014). An ethical approach to peeking at data. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 9(3), 293–304. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691614528214>. Medline:26173265