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12-25-2022

## Learning How Research Design Methods Work: A Review of Creswell's Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches

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### Recommended APA Citation

Chali, M. T., Eshete, S. K., & Debela, K. L. (2022). Learning How Research Design Methods Work: A Review of Creswell's Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches. *The Qualitative Report*, 27(12), 2956-2960. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2022.5901>

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## Learning How Research Design Methods Work: A Review of Creswell's Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches

### Abstract

In reviewing the fourth edition of John Creswell's *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches* (2014), the reviewers found this book to be a comprehensive guide for researchers in the field of social and academic management. They also observed that Creswell expertly explained the concepts described in this book and supported the theories with practical qualitative, quantitative, and mixed approach.

### Keywords

research design, qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods approach

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# **Learning How Research Design Methods Work: A Review of Creswell's *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches***

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In reviewing the fourth edition of John Creswell's *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches* (2014), the reviewers found this book to be a comprehensive guide for researchers in the field of social and academic management. They also observed that Creswell expertly explained the concepts described in this book and supported the theories with practical qualitative, quantitative, and mixed approach.

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## **Introduction**

With the increasing number of research problems in the social sciences, researchers will find John Creswell's *Research Design: Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches* (2014, 4th ed.) to be a well-written book that meets the needs of well-trained researchers. He is internationally renowned for his work in teaching and quality, and as a self-taught teacher. As the title suggests, the book provides an overview of the design and implementation of qualitative research methods that are useful for beginners and more experienced researchers.

Our main criterion for reviewing this book is we want to let readers know they should have sufficient information to learn how research design methods work. This newest edition of the book is even more monumental than the previous ones, comprising over 273 pages and 10 chapters covering all the areas one is likely to be interested in, almost.

## **Author History**

John W. Creswell, PhD, has been a professor of educational psychology at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln since 1978. In addition to teaching at the university, he has authored numerous articles on mixed methods research, qualitative methodology, and general research design and 12 books, many of which focus on types of research designs, comparisons of different qualitative methodologies, and the nature and use of mixed methods research. His books are translated into many languages and used around the world. For the last five years, Dr. Creswell served as a co-director at the Office of Qualitative and Mixed Methods Research at the University of Nebraska, which provided support for scholars incorporating qualitative and mixed methods research into projects for extramural funding. He served as the founding coeditor of the Sage's *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, and as an adjunct professor of family medicine at the University of Michigan where he assisted investigators in the health sciences and education with research methodology for National Institutes of Health (NIH) and National Science Foundation projects. He also served extensively as a consultant in the health services research area for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

## Book Content

What the reviewers saw in the third (Creswell, 2009) and fourth editions (Creswell, 2014) of this book is how this combination of different approaches, and their differences play a role in the research process. Most quality researchers focus on one approach: ethnography or experimental design and try to convince their readers of the value of that approach. This is what our academic knowledge means. But students and beginners need quality choices that meet their research needs and meet their own needs for research.

This book opens up the scope of quality research and invites readers to explore a number of ways to engage in research. Provides options for quality researchers to conduct quality queries and helps them decide which method is best for their research problems. Because there are so many books on quality research in general and on different questionnaires, it is difficult for quality research students to understand what options (i.e., approaches) are available and how one can make informed choices for research.

By reading this book we gained a better understanding of the preliminary consideration of research approach, literature, how to use theory, and writing strategies of research and knowing ethical consideration. Additionally, we learned designing research related with the purpose research statement, research question and hypothesis, qualitative, quantitative research method. Graduates and researchers are newcomers to quality techniques. However, experienced researchers in the field of quality research may find John W. Creswell approach to be useful, especially when it comes to writing up their qualitative research.

The highlights of this book are

- In Chapter 1, Creswell writes the choice of the research design is determined by the nature of the research problem, the issues to be solved by the research problem, and the personal experience of the researcher and the research audience. He also notes deep-rooted perspectives on the inquiry research process and specific research methods for data collection, analysis, and interpretation. These beliefs are embedded in our academic community through reading journals and books during academic training and through the advice of our mentors. The problem is, firstly, to know these assumptions and beliefs and secondly, to determine whether the researchers have actively included them in their qualitative studies.
- In Chapter 2, Creswell provides an overview to the review of the literature research so that the researchers should understand the process of reviewing literature, the general purpose of using literature, and designing literature in to qualitative and quantitative, and mixed study. This chapter is a good guide for beginning researchers who need to know about topic selection, writing, and identifying researchable or non-researchable topics before reviewing the literature and finding a research study within the existing body. This process includes preliminary estimates, process steps, and general considerations used in the process. A number of good databases are suggested by Creswell. The idea of creating a literature plan is practical and useful. On the other hand, readers will also benefit from some supplementary explanations and examples of how to evaluate previous studies.
- Creswell explains the use of theory in Chapter 3. This chapter will help the researcher to test the theories that are often used in quantitative research as explanations to answer their questions, as well as to test their validity in quantitative and mixed research approaches. The author takes each approach

one by one and explains its origin, its main characteristics, the different types of its use, the steps involved in conducting research within the approach, and the challenges that researchers may face. go on. In addition, the author provides some examples of which theories are suitable for quantitative, qualitative, and mixed research approaches.

- In Chapter 4, Creswell reflects on writing styles and ethics. In this chapter, he explains to the researchers the ethical issues, the general organization of the study, the research topics and the writing strategies of the study. This research style differs for each quantitative, qualitative, and mixed research design. As evaluators, all researchers write about ethical issues of research, but it is far from practical. In addition, since research rigor and writing styles vary from university to university, it is better to explain how to use the same general research structure for all universities.
- Creswell discusses the introduction of research methodology design in Chapter 5. He explains the steps in the research process of how to write a good research proposal using qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. He advises how to prepare a clear research proposal on the overall structure of the study in qualitative, quantitative, and mixed research, starting from introduction, abstract, research problem, etc. He explains how to write a research problem and points out gaps in previous literature. Gaps and deficiencies in the literature are illustrated with examples. The chapter highlights the importance of induction in quantitative research. However, it is preferable to give guidance to the writer when the research literature is limited to find out the research gap of the study.
- In Chapter 6, Creswell discusses the statement of purpose of the study. He advises the researchers on how/when a statement of purpose is used in qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method research creative methods. In addition, he explained the reason for preparing the statement of purpose, showed the key principle used in the design and gave an example of the statement of purpose in making the research proposal. Creswell presents a clear explanation of the difference between the purpose of the statement and the research problem and the research questions of the study.
- In Chapter 7, Creswell discusses the research questions and hypotheses. He explains how the researchers develop research questions and hypotheses in a qualitative, quantitative, and mixed research proposal. He also elaborates on the purpose of the statement, developing research questions and developing hypotheses for qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods studies. In this regard, it is better for the author to provide examples and explanations on the three points in the description, research questions and the research hypothesis because these are the most related points in the research design.
- Creswell discusses the quantitative method of research proposal in Chapter 8. He reflects in detail on the essential parts of a methodology, looking at a part of the research design, such as correlation and factorial comparative approaches, rather than the survey and descriptive part. He gives some good advice on how to use the necessary tools for the survey and the details of the experimental study. He also presented the basics of various experimental designs; otherwise, it would have been difficult to provide the details of each design. Although, he explains many practical concepts for a researcher that novice researchers may not understand.

- In Chapter 9, Creswell focuses on qualitative research. He explains how the researchers use the qualitative research method in the research proposal. Creswell explains how the research sample is listed and explained, with all the data collection, registration procedures, analysis, presentation, interpretation, data verification. In qualitative research method, data are collected through interviews, observation, documentation, and audiovisual data. However, the author of this book is better at showing the main differences between the qualitative and quantitative method, which is very important in the research proposal. In addition, it is better for the author to demonstrate how and when the researchers measure the validity and reliability of data measurement techniques.
- Creswell discusses mixed methods techniques in Chapter 10. Creswell again develops the hybrid method between qualitative and quantitative method. He pointed out how researchers can use qualitative and quantitative data in a mixed method design. According to Creswell, both data collection are tightly integrated and research questions and research problems were developed; therefore, to gain a deeper understanding of the research problem and enable the researchers to adopt and use mixed methods.

### **Reviewers' Evaluation**

The strengths of this book are it is a general guide for researchers in the fields of social and academic management. Each chapter has some clever purpose at the beginning, so the reader can easily explore their needs. The book is also comprehensible, and the language of the book is very simple. The integration of knowledge and working viewing in each chapter is exciting. The arrangement of this book is ingenious and convenient. This book helped us to comprehend what qualitative philosophies can be and what analytics aspect.

All of the chapters were very helpful: The contrast of the research design approaches helps to give a good perspective, and the discussion of ethics and participant engagement will be useful as we move into my own research design. This book is intended to provide an in-depth understanding of qualitative research and to enable the researchers to understand how and when qualitative, quantitative, and mixed research approach is applied in research.

The author not only looks at commonalities in research design in different ways, but also reflects how each of the qualitative, quantitative, and mixed research approach analyzes relates to each other. This exclusive work is a comparatively effective and informative introduction to the student, using a variety of central qualitative, quantitative, and mixed research approach techniques.

One weakness of this book is that it may be difficult to understand for some beginner researchers just learning about qualitative, quantitative, and mixed research approaches. Therefore, we think Creswell would be better to clarify the concepts described in this book and to support the theories in applied research design of qualitative, quantitative, and mixed research approach.

Despite this weakness, we find Creswell introduces the reader to the thoughts and feelings of the researcher in research design, unlike other books that provide steps to conduct quality research. We think the book will stimulate exciting, informative interactive conversations as its readers learn how these research design methods work in their own future research studies.

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### Author Note

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### Article Citation

Chali, M. T., Eshete, S. K., & Debela, K. L. (2022). Learning how research design methods work: A review of Creswell's Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches. *The Qualitative Report*, 27(12), 2956-2960. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2022.5901>

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