

Mixed Methods Research Design [10 credits]

Module leaders: Dr Dan Wheatley; d.wheatley@bham.ac.uk

Dates & Venue: 30th April and 1st May 2018, Room 429, Muirhead Tower

Module Description

Mixed methods is an increasingly prominent approach to conducting social science research, including in social policy, psychology, business management, education and economics. This module will equip students with understanding, and practical experience, of mixed methods approaches within the social sciences. By combining quantitative and qualitative research techniques, mixed methods offer the social scientist a number of benefits but also present a range of challenges. Students will gain understanding of the ways in which methods can be combined at different stages of enquiry in order to successfully blend different methods of data collection, to allow both statistical robustness and rich nuanced understanding of a subject. They will also gain understanding of the potential risks involved in combining methods, including relevant ethical considerations. Teaching methods will include lectures, and interactive practical learning taking place within the classroom and through independent learning exercises.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this module, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate a critical understanding of mixed methods research.
- Design a mixed methods research project from initial identification of research questions and methods, through sampling and data collection, to allow effective triangulation and robust findings.
- Identify appropriate ways to structure a mixed method research project, including alternative ways of employing methods at different stages of enquiry.
- Extract and manipulate data from secondary sources.
- Integrate quantitative and qualitative data collection methods in a single research design to address a specific problem.
- Critically evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of mixed methods research techniques.

Key Texts

- Bryman, A. (2012). *Social Research Methods* (4th Ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Cresswell, J. W. (2013). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (4th Ed.). London: Sage.
- Cresswell, J. and Plano Clark, V. (2011). *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research* (2nd Ed.). London: Sage.
- May, T. (2011). *Social Research: Issues, Methods and Process*. (4th Ed.) Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Ridenour, C.S. and Newman, I. (2008) *Mixed Methods Research: Exploring the Interactive Continuum*. Carbondale, IL: South Illinois University Press.
- Saunders, M., Thornhill, A and Lewis, P. (2016). *Research Methods for Business Students* (7th ed.) Harlow: Pearson.

- Teddlie, C. and Tashakkori, A. (2009) *Foundations of Mixed Methods Research: Integrating Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches in the Social and Behavioural Sciences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Course Assessment

A 2,000 word small scale pilot mixed methods research project and provide critical reflection on their design.