

# The value of mixed methods research over the present decade in Psychology: A critique study

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## Abstract

**Introduction:** Mixed methods research (MMR) refers to integrating quantitative (QUAN) and qualitative (QUAL) approaches within a research study. This century has recognised MMR as a third methodological approach. During the last decade, international bodies such as the Journal of Mixed Methods Research (JMMR) and the Mixed Methods International Research Association (MMIRA) have established the milestones of the MMR. A work-in-progress review observed that psychology is one field in which there have been fewer advancements.

**Objective:** This communication aims to extract from a scoping review of the JMMR over the first half of the present decade: (i) the MMR features applied to the Psychology field, (ii) what MMR-specific novelties have recently appeared in other areas that could be applied to our field, (iii) the MMR global implementation and report facets holistically applied interdisciplinary, and (iv) a reflection about what measure to be taken to advance in MMR in Psychology.

**Results:** Despite publishing four issues annually, the advancements observed in the JMMR reflect a significant positive academic evolution based on the impact factor, as indicated by the Journal Citation Reports and the Scimago Journal and Country Rank. Although it is a multidisciplinary journal, the JMMR is situated in the first decile of the interdisciplinary social sciences category. Regarding the Psychological field, theoretical and conceptual foundations, these advancements relate to a set of paradigms (e.g., the transformative approaches). Research designs are more complex, especially the qualitative approach (e.g., grounded theory with a relational design). However, most advancements come from other fields: health, social, and educational sciences. There are many paradigmatic proposals (e.g., to avoid ambiguities, communicate better QUAL and QUAN integration, construct the study with an artisanal attitude, embrace complexity, and promote more social justice). Regarding the designs, while convergence is more prevalent, others, such as multilevel and case studies, are also present. The major expansion has been on data analysis techniques (e.g., mixed cross-sectional analysis, network analysis, cost-effectiveness analysis, hybrid inductive/deductive thematic analysis), with a rise in the application of mixed-content digital techniques using visual elements (e.g., digital photographs, vignettes, Venn diagrams, mapping strategies). The MMR global advancements include integrating QUAN and QUAL methods and pushing for a comprehensive review of terminology, quality standards, and reporting guidelines.

**Conclusions:** A recent examination reveals an encouraging trend in MMR, particularly in interdisciplinary areas where Psychology is underrepresented. This field could benefit from the application of technological and data analysis techniques, especially with enhanced graphic support. Additionally, there appears to be increasing complexity in the theoretical assumptions surrounding MMR, along with significant developments in analytical methods. However, research designs remain the least advanced technical-methodological aspect, representing a weak area where Psychology excels and could contribute to progress. Lastly, the quality of research outputs and the dissemination of MMR within our field need to be addressed in this second decade of the 2020s.

## **Keywords**

Mixed Methods Research; Scoping Review

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