PREFACE

Welcome and Purpose

Our idea for this book originated from a confluence of our experiences as (a) researchers who publish mixed methods (MM) research, (b) faculty members who teach and advise students on using and writing MM research, and (c) reviewers/editors who evaluate MM research. From these experiences, we identified challenges with respect to writing and evaluating empirical MM manuscripts for publication. To us, these are two sides of the same coin.

Writing an empirical MM manuscript can present challenges. It is not always clear what to include in the manuscript, particularly when authors need to include information about the quantitative strand, the qualitative strand, and their integration. Guidelines for publishing MM research are still developing, and they can differ across disciplines. These challenges can be amplified if journals have page/word limits, making it difficult to know what to include in a way that enables reviewers to evaluate a MM study effectively.

Evaluating an empirical MM manuscript can also present challenges. There are numerous MM research designs, and the information about the quantitative strand, qualitative strand, and their integration is often spread across disparate pages of the manuscript. This can be mentally taxing for reviewers because they are trying to comprehend the topic and follow the various research methods while simultaneously attempting to evaluate the study's rigor. This book is our attempt to provide practical guidance for authors on writing an empirical MM manuscript in a way that explicitly communicates unique features of a MM research study and helps reviewers/readers effectively understand the different parts of the study and how they are integrated.

Overview of the Book

Although the main sections of quantitative, qualitative, and MM articles are generally the same, the features of those sections differ. In **Chapter 1**, we discuss the main sections of an empirical MM journal article.

We highlight the unique features of empirical MM articles to set up subsequent chapters in which we discuss strategies for writing each of these features in more detail. In **Chapter 2**, we discuss the journal review process and specific strategies for selecting an appropriate journal for where to submit one's manuscript. In Chapters 3–8, we discuss strategies for writing the main sections of an empirical MM manuscript. In **Chapter 3**, we focus on strategies for writing the *introduction and literature review* section of an empirical MM manuscript. In **Chapter 4**, we focus on the main components of the *methods* section and different ways to organize the methods section. In **Chapter 5**, we discuss strategies for writing the *results* section and different ways to effectively communicate findings. In **Chapter 6**, we focus on the main components of the *discussion* section. A joint display can be included in different sections of a manuscript. We devote **Chapter 7** to joint displays and discuss how they can be used to support integration of methods and results in MM research. In **Chapter 8**, we discuss the *title, abstract, and other elements* (i.e., references, tables/figures, supplemental material, keywords, and acknowledgements) of an empirical MM manuscript.

Pedagogical Features

Our main goal is to support researchers in writing an empirical MM manuscript that will be submitted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal. We include four main pedagogical features to aid in achieving this goal. *First*, we begin each chapter with a list of learning objectives to provide a general overview of the issues we discuss in each chapter. *Second*, to support researchers in the development of their manuscripts, each chapter has exercises, additional resources, and a checklist. In the exercises, we include activities that will help researchers with each major step of writing an empirical MM manuscript for a journal. Activities focus on relevant topics such as understanding the components of a MM article; selecting a relevant journal for one's work; and strategies for writing the main sections and subsections of a manuscript including the title, abstract, introduction and literature review, methods, results, joint displays, discussion, and additional components (e.g., references, keywords). If readers engage in the exercises provided within each chapter, by the end of the book, they will have an individualized manuscript virtually ready to submit to a journal. *Third*, we provide an appendix that includes all the checklists from each of the chapters for quick reference and to show them all in one place. *Fourth*, we extensively use illustrative examples and excerpts from published articles.

In Chapters 3–8, we provide numerous examples from published MM articles so researchers can see a range of models and ideas to consider as they write their own manuscripts. We include various tables, boxes, and figures to highlight these examples and reference other examples in the literature.

Audiences for the Book

This book is a primer for understanding how to write an empirical MM manuscript for publication in content-focused journals in a variety of academic disciplines, such as business and management, cardiology, clinical medicine, criminology and criminal justice, education, health and nursing, neuroscience, orthopedics, pharmacology, psychology, rehabilitation, social work, and social policy, to name a few. Thus, it will appeal to both emerging researchers and more advanced researchers from different disciplines who conduct MM research and who seek to publish their work. Graduate programs often offer courses on MM research and writing for publication. This book would be appropriate for both types of courses. Further, editors and reviewers can also benefit from gaining a better understanding of MM research, which in turn can inform how they manage and evaluate MM manuscripts. This book may also help editors develop author guidelines for publication of MM articles and serve as a reference that editors or reviewers can recommend to authors when providing feedback on MM manuscripts.

Importantly, this book is not an introduction to MM research. Many of these already exist. Rather, this book is about *writing* a MM manuscript for publication. If you are new to MM, we identify resources throughout the book that can support your understanding of MM. Further, this book will provide you with valuable ideas to consider when thinking about key components of a MM study and what to report in an empirical MM manuscript. Thus, it can serve as a standalone textbook, or it can be used to accompany an introductory textbook.

As we developed the book, we regularly assumed different perspectives that reflect the many roles that MM researchers adopt. We framed questions as reviewers, authors, and consumers to drive the content of the book. As you read, we hope you see the answers to questions such as, What are the commonalities and differences between and across disciplines in the way that authors write about MM research? What are essential features across disciplines, and what are discipline-specific features that researchers need to focus on when writing? How can we take a complicated study and tell a cohesive and compelling story about the importance of our research findings? What would a novice reader take away from my article? The variety of designs that fall under the umbrella of MM and choices that authors face creates multiple opportunities for communicating their findings. We hope the guidelines and examples we offer in this book help to reduce some of the intimidation associated with writing a MM research article for publication, allowing you to focus on the excitement of sharing your work with your audiences.

CHAPTER 1. FEATURES OF EMPIRICAL MIXED METHODS JOURNAL ARTICLES

A road map leads you to a destination, and it includes the major steps or milestones you need to reach your goal. This book is a road map for the goal of writing an empirical mixed methods (MM) manuscript. This chapter describes some of the major steps or milestones along the way. Specifically, this chapter describes the main sections of an empirical MM research article. Most empirical articles include the same sections and follow the same organizational structure: title and abstract, introduction and literature review, methods, results, and discussion. Completing each of these sections is a major milestone on the way toward writing an empirical article. These sections are common across empirical articles that report quantitative, qualitative, and MM research; however, features of those sections differ. In this chapter, we will discuss some of the unique features of empirical MM journal articles to provide you with a more detailed roadmap for writing your empirical MM manuscript for publication.

Importantly, this book is not an introduction to MM research. Many of these already exist. Rather, this book is about *writing* a MM manuscript for publication. If you are new to MM, we identify resources throughout the book that can support your understanding of MM. Further, this book will provide you with valuable ideas to consider when thinking about key components of a MM study and what to report in an empirical MM manuscript. With that said, let's begin the journey.

Learning Objectives

1.1 Understand the sections of empirical mixed methods journal articles.

1.2 Recognize the unique features of empirical mixed methods journal articles.

Empirical Mixed Methods Journal Articles

One of our goals for this chapter is to provide an overview of the sections of an empirical MM journal article. Although there are similarities between empirical articles that use either quantitative or qualitative approaches and MM articles, there are some key differences. These differences are important to consider as you begin the writing process. With that in mind, we discuss what MM research articles generally include and highlight some of the unique features of MM research articles that distinguish them from journal articles that do not use MM. In Table 1.1, you can see the standard sections of many empirical research articles, their order of appearance in an article, features that are unique to MM articles, and where we discuss them in more detail in this book.

We have organized the sections of empirical articles in Table 1.1 based on their order of appearance in a journal article. However, authors have personal preferences for the order in which they write these sections of a manuscript, which may differ from how the sections are ordered in the book or Table 1.1. For instance, some authors begin with the methods section when

Table 1.1 Standard Sections of Empirical Articles and Unique Features of Mixed Methods Articles

Sections of Empirical Articles	*Order of Appearance*	*Unique Features of Mixed Methods Articles*	*Where Discussed in this Book*
Title and Abstract	1	– Use of "mixed methods" in title – Overview of quantitative and qualitative methods and findings and their integration in the abstract	Chapter 8
Introduction and Literature Review	2	– Provide mixed methods rationale	Chapter 3
Methods	3	– Describe study design that includes quantitative and qualitative strands – Describe integration of quantitative and qualitative methods – Provide joint display (if relevant)	Chapters 4 & 7
Results	4	– Include quantitative and qualitative findings – Describe integration of quantitative and qualitative findings – Provide joint display (if relevant)	Chapters 5 & 7
Discussion	5	– Generate meta-inferences	Chapters 6 & 7

writing a manuscript. We encourage you to write the sections in whatever order works for you, keeping in mind that writing is an iterative process.

Title and Abstract

The first main section is the title and abstract. The title of an empirical research article conveys key information about a study to readers. An effective title communicates the topic of your study and captures readers' attention. A unique feature of the title for a MM research article is that it often includes the term "mixed methods," which explicitly highlights the overall approach used to conduct the study and helps orient readers. Once you have readers' attention, they are more likely to be drawn to your abstract, which is usually directly below the title. An abstract is a summary or overview of your study. It includes the most important elements of your study such as the topic, participants, methods, findings, and conclusions. A unique feature of the abstract for a MM research article is that it includes reference to both quantitative and qualitative methods and findings and their integration. This can present some surmountable challenges to authors because of word limits on abstracts. In Chapter 8, we discuss strategies for writing the title and abstract of your MM manuscript.

You may be asking yourself why we discuss the first section of an article (title and abstract) in the last chapter of this book (Chapter 8). As a general observation of our own writing, we tend to generate the title and abstract after we have completed writing the rest of the manuscript. It is up to you to decide when to write your title and abstract, but for the purposes of this book, we discuss these in the last chapter of the book because even if you draft a title and abstract before you complete the other main sections of your manuscript, you will still need to review and/or update them after you have completed the other main sections.

Introduction and Literature Review

The second main section is the introduction and literature review. The introduction is typically one to three paragraphs in length. It is meant to provide readers with a statement of the problem you are investigating, the importance of investigating that problem, and an overall purpose so readers understand the goal of your study. It usually precedes the literature review, which provides a synthesis of the literature related to the problem. A unique feature of the introduction and literature review for a MM research article is that it typically includes a description of how the MM approach will be helpful for investigating that problem. One important role of the introduction and literature review section is to guide readers to your research questions and the methods section. The introduction and literature review provide the necessary context and background for your study, leading the reader to understand the rationale behind your study and why you used MM in your inquiry. Later in this chapter, we discuss mixed methods rationales and provide examples of common rationales. The MM rationale typically appears in the introduction and literature review section. We introduce MM rationales here in Chapter 1 to familiarize readers with them and because a MMR is one feature that distinguishes a MM research article from other types of research articles. Then, in Chapter 3, we discuss strategies for writing different parts of the introduction and literature review for your MM manuscript, including the MM rationale.

Methods

The third main section is the methods section. In this section, you tell readers what you have done to carry out your study and explain how you attempted to answer your research questions. For instance, you provide information about the participants and describe how they engaged with the study interventions, materials, or data collection processes. You describe data collection methods and data analysis techniques. The unique features of a methods section for a MM article include a description of the MM study design and a description of how the quantitative and qualitative methods are integrated, which may be represented visually with a study design procedural diagram or through a joint display, if relevant to your study. In Chapter 1, we discuss three basic MM research designs and how researchers can integrate quantitative and qualitative methods in a MM article. In Chapter 4, we discuss strategies for writing the methods section of your MM manuscript, including strategies for describing your MM design and how to integrate the quantitative and qualitative methods you used in your study. A **study design procedural diagram** is a visual display of procedures in a MM study (Ivankova et al., 2006), which we discuss in more detail in Chapter 4. **Joint displays** are visual displays that are used to integrate quantitative and qualitative data during data collection, analysis, and/or interpretation (Fetters et al., 2013). In Chapter 7, we discuss how to use joint displays to integrate quantitative and qualitative approaches and strategies for developing joint displays for your MM manuscript.

Results

The fourth main section is the results section. The results section is used to address your research questions. In this section, you report the findings from the quantitative and qualitative strands and how you integrated them. The findings from your quantitative and qualitative strands can support, challenge, contradict, expand, or undermine each other. Thus, the unique features of a results section for a MM article include both quantitative and qualitative findings and their integration, which may include a joint display. In Chapter 5, we discuss strategies for writing the results section of your MM manuscript. We discuss ways to use joint displays to integrate the findings from the qualitative and quantitative strands in Chapter 7.

Discussion

The last main section is the discussion section. In this section, you tie together the threads of the manuscript and invite readers to consider the broader implications of your study. In the discussion section, you interpret the findings, generate meta-inferences about how the integration of the quantitative and qualitative approaches shed light on your topic, and explain how using MM provides insights about your topic that transcend the findings from each individual strand. Thus, the unique features of the discussion section for a MM article include the integration of findings from the quantitative and qualitative strands of your study and the provision of **meta-inferences**, which are insights drawn from the combined findings from the strands that cannot be reduced to either strand (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2008). Joint displays (discussed in Chapter 7) can be used to bring together quantitative and qualitative findings to generate meta-inferences. In Chapter 6, we discuss strategies for writing the discussion section of your MM manuscript.

Unique Features of Empirical Mixed Methods Journal Articles

In this section, we discuss some of the unique features of empirical MM journal articles in more detail. Our goal is to introduce these ideas to emerging MM researchers and to review them for those who are more familiar with these topics. In subsequent chapters, we discuss strategies for developing these features in your MM manuscript. The specific features we discuss include MM rationale and integration (integration at the level of research design, integration of data collection methods, and integration and interpretation of findings).

Mixed Methods Rationales

A **mixed methods rationale** is the reason that researchers provide for using MM research to address their research problems (Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2016). Greene et al. (1989) identified five rationales for integrating quantitative and qualitative strands in MM research: *triangulation, complementarity, development, initiation, and expansion*. In this section, we describe these five MM rationales (see Table 1.2). We focus on one context (i.e., experiences following an operation in a health care setting) to show how the research question and MM rationale can differ within the same context. This will also serve to illustrate how a MM can be used to frame a MM study.

Table 1.2 Mixed Methods Rationales

Mixed Methods Rationale	*Description*	*Example Content-Focused Mixed Methods Research Question*
Triangulation	Use quantitative and qualitative methods to investigate similar aspects of a phenomenon to evaluate the extent to which the findings show convergence, expansion, or discordance	To what extent do patients' questionnaire responses overlap with themes identified in participant interviews about satisfaction with post-operation procedures?
Complementarity	Use one method to elaborate, enhance, illustrate, or clarify the results from the other method.	In what ways do nurse interview responses help to explain the questionnaire results about satisfaction with post-operation procedures?
Development	Use the findings from one method to inform decisions about the subsequent use of another method	How do nurses perceive the effectiveness and sustainability of post-operation procedures at their hospitals?
Initiation	Seek contradiction or contrast between findings from quantitative and qualitative methods	In what ways can discrepancies between findings from questionnaires and interviews with nurses inform post-operation care procedures at hospitals in different communities?
Expansion	Widen the scope and breadth of a study using both quantitative and qualitative methods to investigate *different* phenomenon	What do qualitative interviews with nurses about post operative procedures and patient satisfaction questionnaires reveal about a program developed to promote post-operative patient experiences?

Note: Based on Greene et al. (1989, p. 259).

Later, in Chapter 4, we will discuss strategies for writing your MM rationale and how to align it with your research questions and study design.

Triangulation

For triangulation, researchers use quantitative and qualitative methods to investigate the same phenomenon to evaluate the extent to which the findings from the two strands show convergence, expansion, or discordance. For example, a hospital wants to ensure patients have sufficient time to recover from major surgery while simultaneously ensuring there are adequate beds to manage the volume of patients in a recovery ward. A research team may decide to use questionnaires and interviews to investigate satisfaction with post-operation procedures for patients who require an overnight hospital stay following surgery. The researchers could investigate the extent to which the questionnaire findings (quantitative) and interview findings (qualitative) overlap or converge. The following could be a potential MM research question: To what extent do patients' questionnaire responses overlap with themes identified in participant interviews about satisfaction with post-operation procedures? Thus, when researchers have triangulation as a MM rationale, they typically intend to *compare* quantitative and qualitative findings.

Complementarity

For complementarity, researchers use one method to elaborate, enhance, illustrate, or clarify the results from the other method. For example, a hospital is concerned about the turnover of health care workers in the post-operation recovery suite and wants to ensure the delivery of post-operation procedures is sustainable for health care providers. In the quantitative strand, the researchers could use a quantitative questionnaire to measure health care workers' perceptions of post-operation procedures. Next, the researchers could purposefully sample a subset of workers who have positive, neutral, or negative perceptions of post-operation procedures. In the follow-up qualitative strand, they could conduct qualitative interviews with this subset of workers to help explain the workers' different perceptions of post-operation procedures. In this instance, the researchers could use the questionnaire to measure general perceptions among healthcare workers and to help them select a subsample of workers for follow-up interviews to help explain why they have those perceptions. The following could be a MM research question: In what ways do nurse interview responses help to explain the questionnaire results about satisfaction with post-operation procedures? Thus, when researchers have complementarity as a MM rationale, they typically intend to use one method to *explain* the findings from the other method.

Development

For *development,* researchers use the findings from one method to inform decisions about the subsequent use of another method, such as when qualitative themes are used to develop closed-ended questionnaire items for a quantitative measure. For example, researchers could conduct interviews with nurses about the effectiveness and sustainability of post-operation procedures. Then, researchers could use the qualitative themes to develop items for a quantitative questionnaire that will be used to evaluate the effectiveness and sustainability of post-operation procedures across various hospitals. The following could be a MM research question: *How do* registered nurses perceive the effectiveness and sustainability of post-operation procedures at their hospitals? Thus, when researchers have development as a MM rationale, they typically intend to use one method to *build* something for the other method (e.g., use themes generated from qualitative interviews to build closed-ended questionnaire items for quantitative strand), which in turn allows them to *explore* a phenomenon to examine trends or associations in a sample or population of interest.

Initiation

For *initiation*, researchers seek to explain contradictions or contrasts between findings that were obtained using quantitative and qualitative methods. For example, a hospital may be concerned about patient satisfaction with post-operation procedures in a health care network. In the first stage, researchers could develop a quantitative questionnaire to be sent to all nurses in the health network over a given time frame whose responsibilities include post-operation procedures. In the second stage, the researchers could use purposeful to identify nurses and conduct focus groups at hospitals of interest. The researchers could use divergent responses on the questionnaires to develop focus group questions for asking nurses about the socially situated nature of post-operation care at their hospitals. The researchers could integrate findings from the quantitative and qualitative strands to consider how current care adheres to general principles of post-operation care while still being flexible to the needs of hospitals in different communities. The aim is to compare findings from the different methods and evaluate the extent to which the results are contradictory or nonconverging. The following could be a MM research question: In what ways can discrepancies between nurse questionnaire data and interview data inform post-operation care procedures at hospitals in different communities? Thus, when researchers have initiation as a MM rationale, they typically intend to *compare* quantitative and qualitative findings.

Expansion

For *expansion*, researchers aim to widen a study's scope and breadth using quantitative and qualitative methods to investigate different phenomena. For instance, researchers could use a quantitative questionnaire to evaluate a program to promote patients' satisfaction with post-operation procedures and qualitative interviews to evaluate nurses' views on job satisfaction. In the qualitative strand, researchers could investigate how program goals and hospital policy support or constrain nurses in implementing the program. These findings could be integrated with the patient-level questionnaire findings in the quantitative strand. Thus, the study broadens the inquiry to include hospital policy as a context for procedures in a recovery suite. The following could be a content-focused MM research question: What do qualitative interviews with nurses and quantitative questionnaires with patients reveal about the impact of a program developed to promote patients' satisfaction with post-operation procedures? Thus, when researchers have initiation as a MM rationale, they typically intend to *compare* quantitative and qualitative findings.

Integration in Mixed Methods Research

Integration is a defining feature of MM research. **Integration** is "the linking of qualitative and quantitative approaches and dimensions together to create a new whole or a more holistic understanding than achieved by either alone" (Fetters & Molina-Azorin, 2017, p. 293). There are three ways researchers commonly aim to achieve integration in MM research (Fetters, 2020): integration in the research design, integration of methods, and integration of findings. There are other ways of achieving integration (e.g., Fàbregues et al., 2024). For the purposes of this chapter, we focus on these three.

Integration in the Research Design

In this section, we introduce three basic MM research designs that are commonly used in articles. It is important to remember that MM research is an emerging field, and there is a variety of different MM study designs. We focus on three basic designs that include one quantitative strand and one qualitative strand. We made this decision because this book is about writing MM research articles; covering a wide range of different designs would dramatically increase the length of the book, and it would be unwieldy. Rather, we believe the main ideas as illustrated with these three basic designs can be applied when writing about virtually any MM study design. Further, there are other resources available to researchers who want to learn about a wider range of MM research designs.

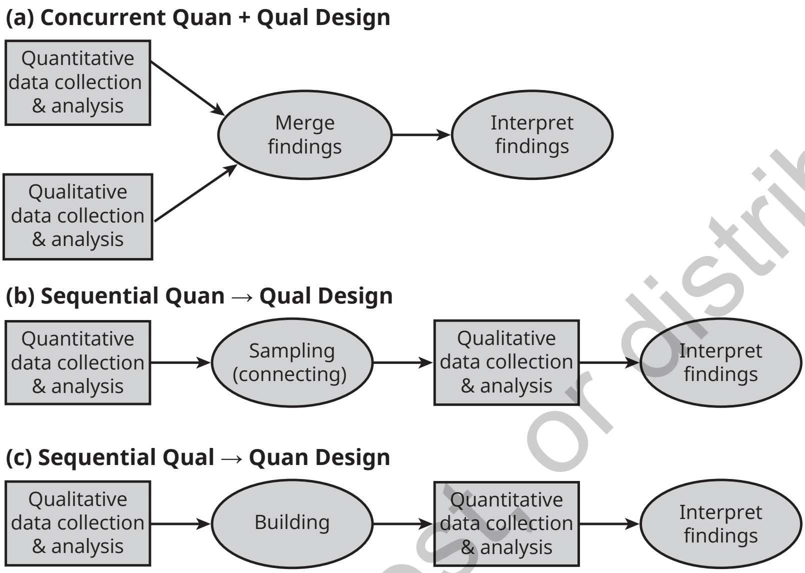
It is also important to note that MM researchers have not universally accepted a typology for labeling MM research designs. For the purposes of this book, we have adopted the Plano Clark and Ivankova (2016) typology. We made this decision because we believe their labels are intuitive and readers who are less familiar with MM designs can infer the nature of the design based on the label. Interestingly, in our own work, we tend to rely on the Creswell and Plano Clark (2018) typology, in part, because it is widely used by both emerging and advanced MM researchers. We discuss typology in more detail in Chapter 4.

Independently of whether you use a typology to label your study design, at its foundation, MM research is about integration of quantitative and qualitative approaches in the research design. There are three common ways that MM researchers foster integration in the research design: (1) collect and analyze quantitative and qualitative data at (or about) the same time (i.e., concurrent Quan + Qual design) (see Figure 1.1a); (2) sequentially collect and analyze quantitative data first and then collect and analyze qualitative data (i.e., sequential Quan → Qual design) (see Figure 1.1b,), or (3) sequentially collect and analyze the qualitative data first and then collect and analyze quantitative data (i.e., sequential Qual → Quan design) (see Figure 1.1c). Next, we will use the Plano Clark and Ivankova (2016) typology to discuss these three common ways that MM researchers have used to achieve integration at the level of research design (see Figure 1.1). These are synonymous with Creswell and Plano Clark's (2018) convergent design, explanatory sequential design, and exploratory sequential design.

Concurrent Quan + Qual Design

When using a concurrent Quan + Qual design, researchers collect and analyze quantitative and qualitative data at (or about) the same time (see Figure 1.1a). The logic of this type of design is that researchers aim to investigate the extent to which findings from the quantitative and qualitative strands (a) converge or not or (b) diverge or not. For convergence, researchers ask to what extent the quantitative and qualitative findings come together. For divergence, researchers ask to what extent the quantitative and qualitative findings move apart. An example of a concurrent Quan + Qual design is Moseholm et al. (2017) who investigated health-related quality-of-life variables (e.g., anxiety) when patients show nonspecific symptoms of cancer and are later evaluated for cancer. Participants were individuals who showed symptoms that are not specific to cancer yet need to be evaluated to refute or confirm a cancer diagnosis. Patients completed a quality-of-life questionnaire before and after the diagnostic evaluation. A subsample of these patients participated in interviews.

Figure 1.1 Basic Mixed Methods Research Designs



Sources: Adapted from Creswell and Plano Clark (2018) and Plano Clark and Ivankova (2016).

Thus, the MM rationale was triangulation, and the researchers intended to compare the quantitative and qualitative findings. As such, they included the interviews in the same time frame as the questionnaires to understand patients' experiences in-between (1) being told they need to be screened for cancer and (2) receiving the results of their screening.

Sequential Quan → Qual Design

When using a sequential Quan → Qual design, researchers collect and analyze quantitative data first and then collect and analyze qualitative data (see Figure 1.1b). The logic of this type of design is that researchers identify a quantitative finding of interest, and then they use purposeful sampling to identify participants whose perspectives can help the researchers understand or explain the quantitative finding. An example of a sequential Quan → Qual design is Siwatu (2011) who investigated pre-service teachers' (undergraduates in teacher certification programs) beliefs about their ability to use culturally responsive teaching practices. In the quantitative strand, he collected data with a closed-ended questionnaire and then used these data to purposefully sample participants for open-ended interviews in the follow-up qualitative strand. He identified participants who had higher and lower self-efficacy for using culturally responsive teaching practices and interviewed them. Thus, the MM rationale was complementarity, and the intent was to use the qualitative findings to explain a quantitative finding of interest. As such, he purposefully sampled a subgroup of participants and conducted interviews with them to explain why some participants had higher beliefs, whereas other participants had lower beliefs.

Sequential Qual → Quan Design

When using a sequential Qual → Quan design, researchers collect and analyze the qualitative data first and then collect and analyze quantitative data. The logic of this type of design is that researchers use findings from the qualitative strand to develop something, such as a questionnaire or an intervention, for the subsequent quantitative strand. An example of a sequential Qual → Quan design is Knighting et al. (2015) who investigated the burdens placed on carers (a person who delivers everyday care to a dying person) of patients with cancer and advanced progressive illnesses. In the qualitative strand, the researchers interviewed carers and analyzed the data using thematic analysis. Then, they used the themes to develop questionnaire items, which they used to develop an instrument designed to measure carers' well-being. In the quantitative strand, they administered the measure to a large sample. Thus, the MM rationale was development, and they intended to explore trends in a population of interest. As such, they used the themes they generated from the interviews to develop a questionnaire.

Timing

As can be seen in Figure 1.1, the different research designs differ with respect to when the respective quantitative and qualitative strands are implemented, or the **timing**. That is, the timing of when researchers implement the respective strands differ. Timing includes two elements: simultaneity and dependence (Guest, 2013). *Simultaneity* refers to whether data collection for the quantitative and qualitative strands occurs *concurrently* or *sequentially*. *Dependence* refers to whether the implementation of the second strand is *dependent* upon the findings from the first strand, or whether they are *independent*.

Simultaneity and dependence often reflect the MM rationale. For instance, when the MM rationale is triangulation, the researchers collect the quantitative and qualitative data at approximately the same time (concurrently) and analyze the data for each strand independently before comparing the findings. For example, researchers may collect data with a closed-ended questionnaire and semistructured interviews from individuals in the same sample, analyze them independently, and then integrate the findings to identify convergence or divergence.

However, when the MM rationale is complementarity, data collection and analysis for one strand precedes data collection and analysis for any subsequent strand (sequential), and the data analysis for the follow-up strand depends upon the preceding strand. For example, researchers may initially collect data with closed-ended items on a questionnaire and analyze the data, which leads to some findings that need further explanation, such as why some participants had higher scores on the questionnaire, whereas others had lower scores. The researchers could purposefully sample participants for follow-up semistructured interviews to explain the quantitative findings. Data collection for one strand precedes data collection for the follow-up strand (sequential), and the data analysis for the second strand is dependent on the results from the first strand (because the participants are sampled based on the first strand).

Integration of Methods

There are two commonly used ways of integrating data collection methods. The first way is through **connecting** (Fetters, 2020). Here, the methods from one strand inform the purposeful sampling of participants for another strand. For example, when using a sequential Quan → Qual design, if researchers collect and analyze data from a quantitative questionnaire and want to use qualitative interviews to better understand those findings, they could use the quantitative data to purposefully sample participants for the follow-up interviews. In this case, the researchers' integration strategy involves using the quantitative findings to inform the selection of participants for the qualitative strand, which will allow the researchers to explain the quantitative findings of interest.

The second way is through **building** (Fetters, 2020). Here, the methods from one strand inform the methods for another strand. For instance, if researchers collect and analyze data from a quantitative questionnaire and want to use qualitative interviews to explain some quantitative findings, they could use the quantitative findings to build the qualitative interview guide in a sequential Quan → Qual design. This process involves using the quantitative data to structure the qualitative interview, ensuring that the questions are targeted, and the findings are comprehensive. Similarly, researchers could conduct focus group interviews and use the qualitative findings to build a quantitative questionnaire in a sequential Qual → Quan design. As a third example, if the MM rationale is triangulation, researchers could triangulate findings from a quantitative questionnaire and qualitative interviews in a concurrent Quan + Qual design; they could use items from the quantitative questionnaire to build prompts for the qualitative interview guide. Thus, integration is not just a step but a significant part of the research process, enhancing the depth and quality of the findings.

Integration of Findings

When integrating and interpreting findings, researchers actively combine quantitative and qualitative findings to generate inferences and meta-inferences about the topic of investigation. You draw inferences based on findings from your quantitative strand, and you draw inferences based on findings from your qualitative strand. **Meta-inferences** are insights drawn from the combination of quantitative and qualitative strands that could not be drawn (or at least grounded empirically) with findings from only one of the strands in isolation (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2008). The integration of findings is reported in the results section (see Chapter 5) and provides researchers with empirical support for the meta-inferences they make in their discussion section (see Chapter 6) and can be supported with joint displays (Chapter 7). As indicated, integration is a defining feature of MM research and is a primary criterion for readers to evaluate the rigor of your MM study. The absence of a discussion about integration is grounds to reject or to require revisions in an otherwise well-conceived study.

Concluding Comments

Before you begin writing your manuscript, you need to have a general sense of what to include in an empirical MM journal article. Although there are similarities across journal articles that use a variety of methodological approaches, empirical MM articles have some unique features that distinguish them from other types of empirical articles. In this chapter, we discussed some of these unique features, such as a MM rationale and integration. Reviewers will be looking for these features when evaluating your study. Explicitly referencing these features in your manuscript will help readers understand your study. In the exercises for this chapter, we suggest reviewing examples of published articles and then developing an outline for your manuscript. This will provide you with a road map with milestones for writing your manuscript. In subsequent chapters, we will focus on strategies for writing the different sections of your manuscript with a specific focus on writing about the unique features of MM articles.

Exercises: Understanding the Features of Empirical Mixed Methods Journal Articles

1. Identify an empirical research article that uses either quantitative or qualitative methods, and identify an empirical research article that uses MM. Generate an outline of each article that includes headings and subheadings, and compare the article outlines. How are the outlines similar? How are they different? (*Please read the next exercise before you select a MM article; it may be possible to use the same article for both exercises.*)
2. Identify an empirical MM research article that uses the same or similar research design as you have used in your study. Generate an outline of this article that includes heading and subheadings. Then, generate an outline for your manuscript that includes headings and subheadings.
3. Using the article you selected for the second exercise, determine how the authors aimed to achieve integration. Did they aim to achieve integration in the research design? Integration of methods? Integration of findings? If yes, how did they do this?
4. Revisit your outline. Consider your MM rationale, study design, timing, and integration. Indicate where you aimed to achieve integration, and add a few sentences to describe how you attempted to achieve integration.

Additional Resources

Mixed Methods Rationales

1. **Plano Clark, V., & Ivankova, N. (2016). Why use mixed methods research? In V. Plano Clark & N. Ivankova, *Mixed methods research. A guide to the field* (p. 79–103). Sage**.
    - In this chapter, the authors discuss different perspectives about the MM rationales. They provide an overview of sets of options from the MM methodological literature.
2. **Newman, I., Ridenour, C. S., Newman, C., & DeMarco, G. M. P. (2003). A typology of research purposes and its relationship to mixed methods. In A. Tashakkori & C. Teddlie (Eds.), *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research* (pp. 167–188). Sage.**
    - In this handbook chapter, the authors discuss the connection between understanding the purpose of one's research and the

selection of appropriate research methods for addressing one's research question. The chapter focuses specifically on different types of MM rationales in the MM literature.

Integration

3. **Hitchcock, J., & Onwuegbuzie, T. (2022).** ***Handbook for advancing integration in mixed methods research*****. Routledge.** https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429432828
   - In this handbook, authors discuss integration across a wide range of disciplines and different perspectives of integration.
4. **Fetters, M. D., Curry, L. A., & Creswell, J. W. (2013). Achieving integration in mixed methods designs—Principles and practices.** ***Health Services Research*****,** ***48*****(6pt2), 2134–2156.** https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6773.12117
   - In this article, the authors describe integration principles at three levels of a MM study (integration at the study design level, integration at the methods level, and integration at the interpretation and reporting level) and provide illustrative examples.

Checklist: Features of Empirical Mixed Methods Journal Articles

- ☐ Have you drafted an initial outline of your MM manuscript?
- ☐ Have you identified a MM rationale for your study?
- ☐ Have you determined where you will attempt to achieve integration in your study?
- ☐ Have you considered labeling your MM study design?

CHAPTER 2. SELECTING A JOURNAL FOR AN EMPIRICAL MIXED METHODS MANUSCRIPT

You have conducted a mixed methods (MM) study and are in the process of writing a manuscript to submit to a journal for publication. You have probably thought generally about a range of journals you would like to target, but now you will want to think strategically about selecting a specific journal to ensure it is a good fit for your work. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss some strategies for selecting an appropriate journal for your manuscript. To do so, we begin the chapter by discussing the journal submission process. By understanding this process, you are in a position to make better decisions about where to submit your empirical MM manuscript. Later, we provide several easily implemented strategies for finding a journal and preparing your manuscript to submit to that target journal.

Learning Objectives

2.1 Understand the journal submission process.

2.2 Develop strategies for identifying a journal for your empirical mixed methods manuscript.

The Journal Review Process

Before we discuss how to select the best journal for your MM manuscript, it is useful to begin by briefly describing how the journal manuscript submission process works. If you understand the process, you are in a better position to make purposeful decisions throughout the process. So, let's start with the day you press the submit button for your empirical MM manuscript and then work our way back through the strategies you use to decide upon a particular journal as the potential outlet for your work.

Internal Review

To begin, once you submit your manuscript the first stop is with the journal editor or associate editor, depending on the size of the journal. For many journals, the editor uses this first look to decide whether the manuscript fits within the scope of the journal. This is called an internal review because it is reviewed by the editor who is internal to the journal. At this point in the process, the editor generally considers the extent to which the content, research methods (e.g., MM), and quality of the manuscript fit with the journal's focus and meets the journal's standards. If, for whatever reason, the editor thinks the manuscript does not fit with that journal's focus or standards, they may decide to "desk reject" the manuscript. This means the editor has decided the manuscript will not go out for external review (discussed shortly). Depending on the editor's workload at that time, this decision may come quickly, within a month. If you receive a desk rejection, you need to find a more suitable journal for your manuscript.

External Review

If the editor decides the manuscript fits within the scope of the journal's focus and standards, they will send the manuscript out for external review, in which the editor aims to secure two to four anonymous external reviewers, depending on the journal. Although some journals practice open peer-review, it is still more common for journals to seek anonymous external reviewers. These reviewers will be members of the journal's editorial board, or the editor may invite ad hoc reviewers. Ad hoc reviewers are scholars who have relevant expertise for evaluating the content or methods of the manuscript but who are not on the editorial board. For example, an editor may seek a reviewer with expertise in MM. Generally, the potential reviewers are asked to provide anonymous feedback to the editor within 4 to 6 weeks. Keep in mind that even if everything is going as planned, 3 or 4 weeks may have already passed since you submitted the original manuscript.

Categories of Decisions

Once the external reviewers submit their reviews to the journal, the manuscript and reviews are returned to the original editor. The next step is for the editor to use the reviewers' comments and suggestions, as well as their own reading of the manuscript, to write a letter to the author(s) that includes a decision about the journal's interest in publishing your manuscript. Generally, there are four categories of decisions: (1) accept, (2) revise and resubmit with minor revisions, (3) revise and resubmit with major revisions, and (4) reject.

Accept

The first category is "accept as is," which means that the manuscript, in its present form, has been accepted for publication and moves on to the next stage in the publication process. Keep in mind, this almost never happens for the initial submission of a manuscript. Remember, the editor has asked two to four experts to review and think about potential changes they think will improve the quality of the manuscript. Basically, it is their job to provide suggestions for improving your manuscript. Which means that "accept as is" is seldom a result on the original submission; rather, this is used after a manuscript has undergone one or more rounds of revisions.

Revise and Resubmit

The next two categories are "revise and resubmit with minor revisions" or "revise and resubmit with major revisions." It is important to understand that at this point in the process, a "revise and resubmit" is good news and indicates that if you can make the suggested changes, the editor has an interest in publishing your manuscript; it is not accepted, but it is potentially on the way to acceptance. In either case, the manuscript is back in your hands. Moving forward, the timeline is dependent upon the nature of the suggested changes (minor or major) and your own workload. In other words, if there are minor changes, and you have time to work on it, you may make revisions quickly and potentially resubmit within a month. However, if there are a lot of changes and you have other projects, it may be much longer, depending on the nature of the revisions (e.g., need to collect more data). Whatever the case, you will resubmit the revised manuscript to the journal with a detailed list of how you addressed comments from the editor and reviewers. If the revisions are minor, the editor may review the changes internally and decide whether to accept it, but they may still decide to send it out for external review. If the revisions are major, the editor will almost certainly send it out for external review before making a decision.

Rejection

The final category is "rejection," which means that it is time to find a different journal for your manuscript. Now your task is to use the feedback from the reviewers and editor to make revisions before sending it to another journal. Remember, if a person is an expert reviewer for Journal X on this particular topic, there is also a chance they are an expert reviewer for Journal Y. Thus, you may have some of the same reviewers, which happens more than you think, so make sure you have addressed the suggested changes from their first review. It is important to remember that just because one editor rejects your manuscript does not mean that all editors will reject your manuscript, particularly if you use feedback to improve the quality of your manuscript. Make the suggested changes, and find a better home for your manuscript.

What You Can and Cannot Control During the Review Process

It is probably clear at this point that there are a lot of factors involved in trying to anticipate a timetable for the submission process. It will depend on the journal, the editors, the reviewers, and of course yourself. Thus, it is important to understand what you can control and what you cannot control. For example, you do not have control over how many other scholars are submitting manuscripts to that journal at the time you are submitting your manuscript. You cannot control how long a reviewer will take to review a particular manuscript or the time the editor will take to process the manuscript. However, there are some things you can control that have the potential to move your manuscript through the review process. Here are some important questions to consider:

- Does your manuscript include an up-to-date synthesis of the literature (see Chapter 3)? If your manuscript does not cite any work from the last 4 or 5 years, it suggests that you are not keeping current with the literature. Most manuscripts include a mixture of older and newer references to the literature. Including both older and newer references shows that you are familiar with the history and scope of the topic.
- Does your manuscript include articles that were published in your target journal (i.e., the journal where you plan to submit your manuscript)? If you do not cite any articles published in the journal, the editor(s) or reviewers might question whether your manuscript is a good fit for the journal. The editors/reviewers are looking for work that will appeal to their readership and a clear way to establish this connection is to show how your work complements existing work in the journal. If you do not see a clear connection between your work and existing work in your target journal, it may signal that this journal is not the best fit for your manuscript, and you need to identify another journal.
- Did you carefully follow the instructions to authors on the journal's website? The instructions should include information such as writing style, word limit, and so on. If the guidelines for the journal indicate a word limit of 10,000 words and you send in a manuscript that is 20,000 words, it basically shows you have not taken the time to read and follow the guidelines for the journal. Some editors have an assistant who screens manuscripts for compliance with journal guidelines. The assistant can send a manuscript back to an author even before the editor sees it if the manuscript does not meet the journal guidelines.
- Is your manuscript well-written, such that you have avoided typos, grammatical errors, and other writing issues? Again, if there are numerous problems, it suggests you have not taken the writing process seriously. Have your coauthors read the manuscript so your team is more likely to identify these types of issues. If you are the sole author, have one or more trusted colleagues read and provide feedback. Remember, writing is a form of communication; thus, it is important that you provide a well-written document to reviewers. You want to make sure you are communicating your ideas effectively to readers.

- Have you conducted a rigorous MM study, and is it clearly communicated in your writing? For example, the reader should understand your MM design, be able to tell what activities the participants were involved in from the beginning until the end of the research, and understand how you integrated the quantitative and qualitative strands. We will address many of these issues throughout this book (see Chapters 4–7).
- Finally, you have control in deciding which journal to submit your manuscript. As such, the next question becomes, "How do you make a good decision about where you submit your manuscript so that you increase the likelihood of acceptance while maximizing impact (e.g., readership) of your research?"

Selecting a Journal for Your Empirical Mixed Methods Manuscript

So now we are back to our original question of deciding which journal is the best fit for your empirical MM manuscript. Next, we focus on some helpful strategies to use during that process. To set the stage, imagine you are going to speak at a conference. Probably one of the first questions you might ask yourself is, who will be in the audience? Does the audience consist of researchers, students, practitioners, or a mix of members with different roles? Are you speaking to a group of experts or will your audience have different levels of background knowledge about your topic? Knowing your audience helps you craft a message that communicates your goals and meets the audience's expectations. Similarly, when writing a manuscript, you need to investigate different journal outlets to maximize the potential fit between your manuscript and the journal's audience.

Thus, our goal here is to find a match between your manuscript and a potential journal that will publish your manuscript. We suggest that you begin investigating a potential journal early in the research and writing process. Starting early allows you, when possible, to adapt your MM manuscript in ways to better fit the journal's aims and scope. Thus, we begin by asking some key questions about potential journals.

Do the Aims and Scope of the Journal Match Your Project?

Generally, there are several places where you can investigate the aim, scope, or focus of a particular journal. One place to start is by visiting their website, where you will generally find a journal description, an aims or scope statement, and/or an editorial statement. All of these have the potential to provide you with information that may help you learn about that journal. These statements are often written by the current editor(s) or may reflect the history of the articles published in the journal. Below are two journal statements to use as examples. The first is from the *American Educational Research Journal* (AERJ).

> The *American Educational Research Journal* (*AERJ*) is the flagship journal of the American Educational Research Association, featuring articles that advance the empirical, theoretical, and methodological understanding of education and learning. It publishes original peer-reviewed analyses that span the field of education research across all subfields and disciplines and all levels of analysis. It also encourages submissions across all levels of education throughout the life span and all forms of learning. AERJ welcomes submissions of the highest quality, reflecting a wide range of perspectives, topics, contexts, and methods, including interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary work. (https://journals.sagepub.com/home/AERA)

We have underlined some of the key information in that statement. First, we see that AERJ is considered the flagship journal of a large educational research association, and they publish peer-reviewed articles. In addition, this statement indicates they are interested in all aspects and levels of education, as well as various research methods used to investigate those issues. This implies the journal is broad in scope but also selective. In addition, and more specifically, the statement for the journal indicates they welcome “a wide range of perspectives, topics, contexts, and methods,” which suggests your MM manuscript would be welcome.

Our second example is the *Journal of Transcultural Nursing,* which is the official journal of the Transcultural Nursing Society. The following is their “aim and scope” statement:

> The *Journal of Transcultural Nursing* is the official journal of the Transcultural Nursing Society. The mission of the journal is to serve as a peer-reviewed forum for nurses, health care professionals, and practitioners in related disciplines to discuss issues related to the advancement of knowledge in the areas of culturally congruent health care delivery and to promote the dissemination of research findings concerning the relationship among culture, nursing and other related disciplines, and the delivery of health care. (https://journals.sagepub.com/aims-scope/TCN)

As with AERJ, this journal is attached to a professional organization. Not all journals are associated with a professional organization; however, if they are, one question should be "Am I or are the people I work with, members of that professional organization?" If you are not, but the journal's focus is a match to your professional interests, joining the organization might be a good idea. In addition, we also see in their statement that the journal is clearly focused on "culturally congruent health care delivery." As such, if this way of looking at health care matches your perspective or your target audience, this journal may be a good fit for your manuscript. However, if this is not your focus, you may want to look elsewhere. Unlike the AERJ statement, this statement does not specifically address research methods and as such, it would be useful in this case, and other cases, to search current and past issues to see if MM articles have been published in the journal you are considering. A useful tip here is that many articles that use MM tend to use the term "mixed methods" in the title or as a keyword. As such, when searching within a journal or more generally, include "mixed methods" as one of the search terms.

Another excellent place to gather information about a journal is the editorial board, which is generally accessible by a link on the journal's website. The editorial board consists of scholars who anonymously review manuscripts in their areas of expertise and provide feedback to the editor(s) about the potential for publication. Also, they typically publish their work in the journal. Thus, an important question becomes, "Do you cite members of the editorial board in your manuscript?" If you have or intend to cite them, that is a further indication the journal's readership may have an interest in your topic area. In fact, if there are scholars on the editorial board that you cite in your manuscript, there is a good chance those scholars will be asked to review your MM manuscript. Further, if MM research is still relatively rare in your field, you might want to think about whether any of the members of the editorial board have published MM studies. And you should determine whether the editorial board membership represents a single, dominant approach to research. Many journal editors value plurality of methods and may express a desire to broaden methodological inclusivity in an editorial statement. Although the methodological expertise of the board membership may be fairly narrow, if the editor has recently published a statement about expanding methodological representation, you may find the journal more welcoming to MM research than the publishing history and board membership may suggest.

So far, we have discussed questions related to the match or fit between a journal and your work. Another useful question to ask is, "Does publishing in this journal fit the expectation and norm in your department (e.g., journal impact factor)?" For example, suppose you are an assistant professor in a psychology department, and you are interested in issues related to the psychology of learning in schools. In this case, even though AERJ is a top journal in education, other faculty members in your department might not see publishing in that journal as an important journal for an assistant professor in psychology (e.g., Will an article in this journal be viewed favorably when you apply for tenure and promotion?). Thus, it may be useful to keep an eye on both your goals as a researcher and publication expectations at your institution.

Do Your Mentors, Colleagues, and the Scholars You Cite Publish in This Journal?

Another key question to investigate is who is publishing in that journal. When developing your MM manuscript, you will be synthesizing literature related to your topic (see Chapter 3). You will draw upon literature that pertains to the topic area addressed in your study and literature that pertains to MM. During this process, you will have identified key researchers in your topic areas, main theorist(s) that discuss and think about your topic using particular theoretical frames, and methodological considerations from researchers who use MM. Look for patterns or trends across journals in which these articles are published. Ask yourself, "Are the majority of these articles published in the same two to three journals?" If they are, perhaps those journals (or others like them) would be a good fit for your manuscript.

Conversely, if you look at a potential journal and see that, so far, none of the articles you currently cite in your manuscript were published in that journal, this tells you at least one of two things. One you need to look more closely at that journal for articles about your topic area (e.g., key word search). Second, the journal (i.e., current editors, editorial board members, journal audience) may not be that interested in your research area or the methodological approach you are using. Either way, you may need to adjust either your approach to writing the manuscript or the choice of the journal. The lack of empirical MM articles in a journal does necessarily signal an unwillingness of a journal to publish MM research. It may be the case that the dominant research paradigm represented in that journal has been in place for years or decades, or MM may be a relatively new approach to inquiry in a particular discipline. The journal may be receptive to MM research studies and the methodological contributions they can provide for opening new lines of inquiry.

As you develop the introduction and literature review for your manuscript, you will use work by previous scholars to build your theoretical framework and to synthesize the literature (Chapter 3). This leads to two additional questions to consider. First, are the scholars you cite in your manuscript publishing their work in the journal? Second, do other researchers cite those same scholars in the journal? If those scholars publish or are cited in that journal, it suggests that the editor and the members of the editorial board are already familiar with these scholars' work. On the other hand, if those scholars do not publish or are not cited in that journal, it may suggest that either the editor or the members of the editorial board may be unaware of or do not follow those theoretical frames. This basically means either you will need to spend more time introducing and justifying your theoretical framework, or this journal may not be the best match for your manuscript.

Finally, you may have mentors and colleagues who are familiar with particular journals who can provide some suggestions about journals to target. They may be editors and/or serve on editorial boards and be able to provide insights into previous patterns or upcoming changes/trends that may not be readily apparent. For instance, because of their connections, they may be aware that a particular journal is now more interested in attracting empirical MM articles and willing to share that information.

Does the Journal Publish Mixed Methods Research Articles?

In addition to favoring particular theoretical frameworks, journal editors and reviewers may also tend to publish articles that use particular research methods and methodologies. For example, some journals have historically published only or mostly articles that use quantitative research methods or only qualitative research methods. Thus, a journal that tends to publish only quantitative research methods may not be the best fit for your MM manuscript. Again, this basically means one of two things, either you will need to use more text to introduce and justify your MM approach or this may not be the best match for this particular manuscript.

Thus, when investigating a journal, it is useful to see how many articles published in the last 5 years have used MM research. If the number seems low, consider using more text to describe and explain your use of MM. That said, some journals may be trying to broaden their representation so it can be useful to review the editor's inaugural editorial statement, which is used to communicate the editor's vision for the journal. This typically appears in the journal near the beginning of the editor's tenure and can provide insights into the editor's goals and often includes cues about their views about methods that have or have not previously appeared in the journal. It would also be useful to look at the MM articles published in that journal to see how they introduce and talk about the methods they have used; there may be value in following their lead. Thus, some editors and reviewers can be receptive to less familiar methods when authors inform readers about MM in their writing. Further, this can potentially lead to more widespread understanding and acceptance of MM research. In addition, if it is an important journal for you to publish in, it may be useful to contact the editor, describe your manuscript, and try to gauge the interest in your manuscript.

Concluding Comments

As indicated, an important step in the publication of a MM manuscript is the selection of a journal that fits the manuscript you have written or intend to write. In this chapter, we have provided some strategies to help you select a journal outlet that has the potential to be a good match with the MM manuscript you are writing. During this process, it is important to focus on what you can control, like selecting a journal that will fit your project. The following practice exercises will help you to begin to think through that process.

Exercises: Evaluating the Fit Between a Journal and Your Manuscript

1. Select three or four key empirical journal articles that you reference in your manuscript. In what journal(s) were they published?
2. Review the reference list of those three or four key articles you identified in Item #1. As you look at those reference sections, which two journals are cited the most frequently?
3. Take the two journals you identified in Item #2. Use the Internet to locate the website for each of those journals. Then, address each of the following questions for both journals:
    a. What does the journal's aim, scope, or focus statement say about what they are interested in publishing? Do you see indications that they might be interested in your manuscript?
    b. Find the listing of the members of the editorial board. Do you see scholars that you are currently citing in your manuscript?
    c. Find the listing of articles that have been published by that journal over the last 3 years. Do you see any articles on topics related to yours? Do you see published articles that used MM designs in those journals?
4. Based on your findings, do you think that either of these two journals would be a good home for your manuscript? Why, or why not?

Additional Resources

1. **Frandsen, T. F. (2019). Why do researchers decide to publish in questionable journals? A review of the literature. *Learned Publishing*, *32*(1), 57–62.** https://doi.org/10.1002/leap.1214
    - This article addresses the literature about publishing in questionable journals and examines whether some researchers seek an

easier path to publication despite being aware that a journal may not meet acceptable academic standards.

2. **Knight, L. V., & Steinbach, T. A. (2008). Selecting an appropriate publication outlet: A comprehensive model of journal selection criteria for researchers in a broad range of academic disciplines. *International Journal of Doctoral Studies, 3*, 59–79.** https://doi.org/10.28945/51
   - This article discusses the challenges scholars face in selecting the right journal for their research. The authors offer a model that includes 39 factors organized into three main categories: the likelihood of timely acceptance, potential impact, and ethical considerations.
3. **Sharifi, C., & Buccheri, R. K. (2020). Selecting a journal for your manuscript: A 4-step process. *Journal of Professional Nursing*, *36*(1), 85–91.** https://doi.org/10.1016/j.profnurs.2019.06.003
   - This article guides nurses in choosing a journal for publication. Key factors considered include peer review status, target audience, the types of manuscript accepted, and the publishing model.

Checklist: Selecting a Journal for an Empirical Mixed Methods Manuscript

☐ Do the aims and scope of the journal match your project?

☐ Does the journal publish MM research articles?

☐ Do your mentors or colleagues publish in this journal?

☐ Do the scholars you cite in your manuscript publish in this journal?

☐ Do you have back-up journals if your top journal declines to accept your manuscript?