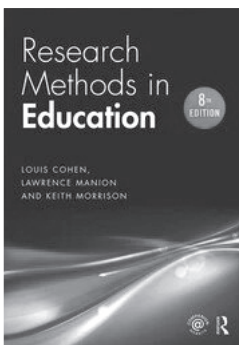


BOOK REVIEW

'Research Methods in Education' A Valuable Companion for Researchers and Educators

Reviewed by Hiranya Lal Lamsal



Research Methods in Education is authored by three very renowned and celebrated scholars and researchers: Louis Cohen, Lawrence Manion, and Keith Morrison. This eighth edition was published in 2018 by Routledge Tylor & Francis Group. The book's hardback mark is ISBN:978-1-138-20986-2, paperback is ISBN 978-1-138-20988-6 and eBook is ISBN 978-1-315-45653-9. 944 Pages, 79 B/W Illustrations. US \$55.00 (Approx.)

In the domain of instructional settings, research methods make genuine contributions. To quench the thirst for learning, the book '**Research Methods in Education**' is a significant reading for professional researchers and anyone who participates in educational and social research. The book captures all the methods executed by academic research at different stages of research through five pivotal parts. Each part emphasizes the context of educational research, research design; research methodology, and the procedures of data collection and analysis. The content summarises this and provides illustrative research advice and evidence with clear theoretical foundations. It was published Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988; it went through eight editions by 2018. This displays the splendid fame of the book. Cohen, Manion & Morrison discuss the essential components of research that are highly significant in educational research. It is implied that the eighth edition of **Research Methods in Education** propels learners and researchers about novice knowledge that strengthens deeper comprehension of the research components and approaches.

Introduction

The book entitled "**Research Methods in Education**" exhibits a wide range of research methods that are implemented in educational research. It discusses mixed methods research, theory in educational research, ethics in internet research and surveys, research questions and hypotheses, employing secondary data in instructional research, network software and netnography in academic research and statistical importance in research. This book also contains precious information and guidance on educational research that may be entirely valuable to researchers at all stages of their professional lives across the instructional area from the beginning to higher education.

The book has five parts altogether. Each part consists of various chapters. **Part 1** discusses the context of educational research, which includes the nature of inquiry from conceptions of social reality to the paradigm of complexity theory. Here the authors talk about different paradigms, positivism, post-positivism, criticisms of the naturalistic and interpretive approaches, postmodernism and post-structuralist perspectives and subjectivity and objectivity in educational research. In addition to this, this part focuses on mixed methods in research along with its foundations, approaches and uses in the domain of education. Critical educational research gives emphasis on critical theory, participatory research, feminist research, post-colonial theory and queer theory, and value neutrality in educational research. Besides this, this part makes us familiar with theory in educational research, evaluation and research, the search for causation, ethics in internet research and choosing a research project that tells the key issues and importance in selecting a research area. Finally, the first part gives information about the research for comprehending educational research.

Part 2 acquaints us about the research design through the ethics of educational and social research that indulges sponsored research, regulatory contexts of ethics, anonymity, confidentiality, and ethics in data analysis, reporting and dissemination. It also inquires about the research questions by raising a query ‘How many research questions should I have? Where do research questions come from?’ Similarly, this part covers research design and planning which gives a concept of research design and methodology, distinguishing methods from methodology, hosting and reporting literature review, data analysis, presenting and reporting the results, and ensuring the quality through managing the planning of research. In addition to this, it discusses the sampling procedures that capture the sample size and sampling error in qualitative research and mixed methods research. It gives an idea about the planning a sampling strategy to be used in educational research. The second part also deals with sensitive educational research along with ethical issues and the effects of sensitive research on the researcher. Providing good information regarding validity and reliability is the genuine aspect of this part of the book. It discusses the validity and reliability of qualitative research in accordance with interviews, questionnaires, experiments, observations, case studies, life histories and tests. Finally, yet most importantly, this part provides details information about the research methodology, design and sampling, and the role of validity and reliability in the domains of academic research.

In part 3, the authors introduce the methodologies for educational research. It covers qualitative, naturalistic and ethnographic research which includes detailed descriptions of naturalistic, ethnographic, critical ethnography, autoethnography and virtual ethnography along with phenomenological research. In the same way, it discusses the historical and documentary research that gives emphasis on the requirements, process and problems surrounding the use of documentary sources as well as a biographical approach to the history of education. This part talks about different methodological studies on surveys, longitudinal, cross-sectional and trend studies with their strengths and weaknesses in educational research. In addition to this, the authors elaborate on internet surveys, case studies, experiments, meta-analysis, systematic reviews and research syntheses, and action research through its advantages, disadvantages, significance and implementation in the domains of educational research. Opportunities for research with virtual

worlds, social network software and netnography in instructional areas are highly paramount. In a nutshell, this part emphasizes distinct methodologies for educational research. It discusses case study as one of the genuine research paradigms along with action research.

Part 4 of the book demonstrates methods of data collection. It discusses the questionnaire, which is one of the significant tools of data collection that includes how to make a planning questionnaire along with its ethical issues and the validity and reliability in observations, practical considerations in questionnaire design, administering and processing questionnaire data. Similarly, in this part of the book, the authors talk about the significance of interviews, observation and tests in the process of data collection. The authors discuss them in detail along with their types, ethical issues and designs for conducting educational research. Besides this, part four signifies advantages, challenges and instances of secondary data analysis in instructional research. This part indulges the strengths of the repertory grid technique, competing demand in the use of the repertory grid and examples of the use of the repertory grid in research. In addition to this, through this part, the authors display the issues to be aware of when using role-play, strategies for successful role-play as a research method and the essentiality of visual media in educational research. In conclusion, the fourth part of the book genuinely presents the procedures and methods of data collection. It emphasizes the way of using various tools for data collection. Besides this, it also focuses on how secondary data, role play and visual media are effectively implemented in the pedagogical research.

The final part, Part 5, of the book discusses the data analysis and reporting of the research. This chapter of the book provides adequate information about qualitative data analysis on distinct titles such as approaches to qualitative data analysis, organizing and presenting qualitative data, coding and content analysis, discourses on conversation, narratives and autobiographies as texts, analyzing visual media, the strengths and concerns about the grounded theory in detail, approaches to quantitative data analysis, statistical importance, effect size and statistical strength in research, descriptive statistics, inferential statistics with different tests, regression analysis and standardization from inferential statistics, factor analysis, cluster analysis and structural equation modeling, selecting a statistical test and mixed methods: using qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) to integrate cross-case and within-case analysis. Through this part, the authors target the readers to supply ample information about the data analysis using inferential statistics which includes the t-test, analysis of variance, the chi-square test, degrees of freedom, the Mann-Whitney and Wilcoxon tests, the Kruskal-Wallis and Friedman tests, regression analysis, simple linear regression, multiple regression and standardized scores. It also supplies the descriptive statistics analysis which covers frequencies, percentages and crosstabulations, measures of central tendency and dispersal, correlations and measures of association, and taking stock. Similarly, coding and content analysis tell a bundle of information about coding of the thematic analysis from the collected data which assists in organizing and presenting qualitative data through tabulating and narrative and biographical approaches for analysing qualitative data. The last part of the book also discusses quantitative data analysis which talks about the parametric and non-parametric data, types of variables, hypotheses testing and its distributions. In the same way, it discusses the grounded theory along with its various versions, stages in generating a

grounded theory, tools, strengths, evaluation and preparing to perform tasks in grounded theory. Through analysing the visual media, authors have discussed content analysis, discourse analysis, and analysing the moving images. In fact, the last part of the book is all about the data analysis procedures of both qualitative and quantitative research approaches in educational research.

Additional features

While going through the textual additions and traits of the book, it is inferred that at the end of the chapter, the authors include a companion website to the book which provides the PowerPoint slides of each chapter. There is an online address from where a reader can get a sum up of main points from every chapter of distinct parts of the book. Besides this, at the bottom point of every chapter, the conclusion is mentioned by pointing to key points of the chapter that assist the researchers who wish to comprehend the content in a diligent way.

Strengths of the book

Regarding the strengths of the book, while going through it, I have noticed that it is a complete package qualitative research guided book. It undoubtedly provides a genuine roadmap for those who have a great thirst for learning research paradigms, research designs, research methodologies and tools of data collection not only qualitative methods but also quantitative one. The tables and diagrams of all pages give very clear ideas to every reader and the researchers. In addition to this, every part of the book emphasizes the advancement of the research abilities by supplying applicable examples from qualitative research. A companion website hands a phenomenon range of materials to capture distinct aspects of research instances and examples that could be much handier to the researchers. The book has provided splendid content regarding constructionism, value neutrality in educational research from part 1, sponsored research, power and position, and choosing a research project from part 2, clear perception of autoethnography, generalization in case studies and participatory action research from part 3, administering questionnaires, using secondary data in educational research from part 4 and Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis (CAQDAS), content analysis with software, inferential and descriptive statistical analysis from part 5. Overall, the book is a valuable asset for every researchers and reader who are highly interested in conducting research in an instructional setting. Reviewing the book, I absorbed a satisfying experience. The book really empowered me with good confidence while conducting research and sharing ideas about research-oriented content. It strongly focuses on education studies taking pupils from conceptualization to presentation skills.

What is missing?

Although the book has tried to cover a lot, there are some essential items that should have been covered in it. The book has five parts, and each consists of more than eight chapters. The book is too bulky in regard to maintaining qualitative research content in depth. The book captures less content associated with quantitative research methods. Qualitative research methods are

highlighted much more in detail and also theoretical facets of the research approach. Novice learners from countries like Nepal may need help to read and comprehend the research content from many tables and other graphics signals. Though the caliber of the book is strong, it is difficult for the pupils and the learners to understand. For example, the authors could provide illustrative examples of how ethics in research is perceived and practiced in the Global South, especially in low-income countries. The book is only comprehensible for those who already have a sound knowledge about research paradigms, designs, methodologies and processes of data collection and analysing. I don't believe that the readers or the students will be supported by the brief summaries given in each part chapter of the book to get its meanings in an expected manner.

Conclusion

The book 'Research Methods in Education' by Cohen, Manion & Morrison is a valuable asset for researchers, learners, and teachers in research. While reviewing the book, I was intrigued by conducting different types of research following distinct research paradigms and research methodologies. The book motivates me a lot about conducting research after comprehending research methods in an instructional setting. The examples, research terminologies, different research methods and paradigms, case studies, and research concepts throughout the book enabled me to associate it with my academic expedition as well as real-life experiences to carry out research in the domain of education. It performs across the levels and provides clarity for the commencing researcher with an open mind to novice approaches and emerging practices. This book certainly assists learners, practitioners and researchers in developing new knowledge about effective learning, and teaching and sharpen understanding of how learners learn about educational research. Overall, the book is well-published for everyone who has to receive educational research projects. It provides a piece of genuine guideline about the research to beginning researchers on the nature and methods of comprehending qualitative and quantitative research designs and offers a practical roadmap for data gathering and analysis. Eventually, I'd like to recommend the book to anyone interested in studying research paradigms, research designs, research methodologies, and the process of data collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative research methods in educational research. This book is recommended for those who are highly interested in conducting educational research.

References

- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2018). *Research methods in education* (8th ed.). Routledge Tylor & Francis Group. London and New York.