



INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES AND INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

(Peer-reviewed, Refereed, Indexed & Open Access Journal)

DOI : 03.2021-11278686

ISSN : 2582-8568

IMPACT FACTOR : 6.865 (SJIF 2023)

Book review: Research in Education

(Authors John W. Best and James V. Kahn (2012) 10th edition published by Pearson Education Inc. ISBN- 978-81-203-3563-9)

Anurag Mishra

Assistant Professor,
Department of Teacher Education,
D.S. College, Aligarh (Uttar Pradesh, India)

E-mail: amishradsc@gmail.com

Dr. Suman Shresth

Assistant Professor,
Department of B.Ed.,
N.K.B.M.G.P.G. College,

Chandausi, Dist. Sambhal (Uttar Pradesh, India)

DOI No. **03.2021-11278686**

DOI Link :: <https://doi-ds.org/doi/10.2023-88981588/IRJHIS2310001>

Abstract

The present book review is written to explore the strengths and the weakness in the book entitled Research in Education which is authored by John W. Best, Butler University and James V. Kahn, University of Illinois at Chicago. This is a comprehensive review of the whole book which aims to explore the thorough discussion, description, critical analysis and evaluation of the quality and significance of the book. This is basically a reference book of methodology of educational research which is meant to be used as a research reference or as a text book in an introductory course in research methods which is very appropriate for post graduate students and research scholars of faculty of teacher education and education discipline, and those who carry on research as a professional. All the research professionals should understand the techniques and methods of conducting research, for the purpose the present book is very worthwhile and utilitarian. In addition to analyse the books pros and cons, this critical and rational review recommends whether or not readers would value the work for its authenticity and overall quality.

Keywords: Book Review, Research in Education, Reference Book, Text Book, Research Methodology, Critical Analysis and Evaluation.

Introduction:

A review is a critical assessment of a text, event, object, or phenomena. Books, articles, entire genres or sectors of literature, architecture, art, policies, performances, and many more forms can be reviewed (<https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/book-reviews/>). A book review is a comprehensive description, critical analysis, qualitative evaluation, and rational suggestions regarding the quality, and significance of a book. Book review is organized according to major subject headings. It includes information on the author, title, place of publication, name of the publisher, and year, followed by an analytical review with a specific reference to the periodical in

which the review appeared (<https://ncert.nic.in/ncertltd/services/br.html>). It is used by faculty members as a book selection reference tool as well as to stay up with the latest publications in their specialized areas. A qualitative book review may be very useful and significant for the readers who are going to select a particular book in their discipline. There are two general approaches reviewing a book i.e. 1-descriptive review and 2- critical review (Joseph M. Moxley and Todd Taylor, 1997 pp. 83-90). Descriptive review presents the content and structure of the book objectively. It describes the essential information about the purpose of the book. Critical review delineates and evaluates the book in relation to critical and rational analysis of the whole book. This type of review is also known as literary criticism. It is a study, a genre of arts criticism, evaluation, and interpretation of literature or a book. Modern literary criticism is often influenced by literary theory, which is the philosophical discussion of literature's goals and methods (https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Literary_criticism). The book, 'Research in Education' is meant for research professionals of education. It is authored by John W. Best, Butler University, emeritas and James V. Kahn, University of Illinois at Chicago. The 10th edition of the book is published by PHI learning Private Limited New Delhi. Original edition of the book was published by Pearson Education inc.

Contents of the book contains preface, all the chapters are divided into three parts, nine appendices at the end of the book, author index, and subject index are given in the last few pages of the book. The main contents of the book is divided in the three major parts named as part-1, 'Introduction to Educational Research: Definitions, Research problem, Proposals, and Report writing' which is further subdivided into three chapters. Second part of the book named as part-2, 'Research Methods' which is further subdivided into six chapters. The last part of main contains i.e. part-3, 'Data Analysis' which is subdivided into three chapters. In this way there are total twelve main chapters which covers introduction, fundamentals of research, selection of the problem, techniques and significance of review of related literature, research methods, methods of data collection, tools and techniques of descriptive data analysis and inferential data analysis. The last chapter i.e. chapter twelve, Computer Data Analysis represents the application of computer based tools in the analysis of research data. In the last section of the book nine appendices are given which deals with the various statistical symbols and formulae, various tables regarding sample excel data sheet, tables of normal probability curve values, critical values for correlation, chi-sqaure test, critical values of t-distribution, F-distribution, and research report evolution. At the end of the book author index is given in which various pages are denoted regarding the authors cited in alphabetical order. In the subject Index numerous subjects and terminologies are presented in alphabetical order.

Detailed review:

The comprehensive, critical, and chapter-wise detailed review explores the strengths and weaknesses of the book. Few suggestions may also be there with the updation of the technology.

Part-1, 'Introduction to Educational Research: Definitions, Research Problem, Proposals, and Report Writing'. There are total three chapters (1-3) in this part.

Chapter-1, 'Fundamentals of Research' The very first line of the book why should you study research? impressed me a lot (Best and Kahn 2012 p.3). The justifiable answers of the question are firstly you will need to be knowledgeable consumers of educational research, secondly as a teacher and an educational professional you should continuously need to examine what you are doing with the advancement of science, technology, and knowledge. In the very first chapter fundamentals of research such as search for knowledge, scientific method, what is science?, role of theory, operational definitions of variables, the hypotheses: its formes & types, population, sampling, sampling techniques, and types of educational research are presented very concisely. Summary of the chapter, exercise, and references are given at the end of the each chapter.

Chapter-2, 'Selecting a Problem and Preparing a Research Proposal' one of the most difficult problems in the process of research is selection of the research problem. The steps involved in the proper selection of appropriate problem of research is given in this chapter. What will be the sources of problem in educational research?, How to select the major area and then precise & concise the statement of the problem, and evaluation of research problem (p.33) discussed efficiently in this chapter. The process of framing an applied, effective, and valid research proposal are given (p.p.33-46). Research ethics is an important topic in the research process which is described efficaciously in this chapter.

Chapter-3, 'The Research Report' is the detailed introduction of the research report which is to be submitted for the award of the degree. Different methods and one style of research report writing i.e. APA style (American Psychological Association) are being discussed throughout this chapter which is very impressive and significant to new researchers. APA Style provides a foundation for effective scholarly communication because it helps writers present their ideas in a clear, precise, and inclusive manner (<https://apastyle.apa.org/about-apa-style>). This style of scholarly writing is selected in the book because it is the most commonly accepted by journals in the field of education and psychology. The main text of the chapter consists of writing style, framing the manuscript, writing the review of related literature, tables, figures, citation, referencing etc.

Part-2, 'Research Methods' is the part aimed to provide the researchers with description of various research methods, and methodologies involved in the process of educational research. There are total six chapters (4-9) in this section.

Chapter-4, 'Historical Research' includes introduction and procedure involved in the historical research. Historical research strictly uses qualitative procedure based on humanistic research view. Types of sources of data i.e. primary sources of data and secondary sources of data is given (p.p.91-92). Historical criticism i.e. external criticism and internal criticism which is an important part of

historical research is efficaciously discussed (p.p.93-94). Some practical examples of topics related to educational historical studies are there. Important points associated to historical research report writing are taken in the text which is very useful for readers.

Chapter-5, 'Descriptive Studies, Assessment, Evaluation, and Research' endeavors to set out the variety of descriptive studies using qualitative methods in educational settings. Survey type research is broadly discussed throughout the chapter i.e. social survey, public opinion survey etc. Causal-comparative research (ex-post-facto research), correlational research, programme evaluation, trend studies, activity analysis, and meta-analysis are being presented in effective manner. The post-hoc-fallacy which is the serious danger to the ex-post-facto research is discussed with significant examples (p.p.144-145).

Chapter-6, 'Experimental and Quasi Experimental Research' strives to delineate the variety of research designs being used in experimental research. True experimental design using randomization, quasi-experimental design with no randomization and pre-experiment design offering a little or no control of the confounding variables. Experimental validity and threats to experimental validity is being deliberated (p.p.171-176), and experiment research and experiment design is explained in details (p.p.177-190).

Chapter-7, 'Single-Subject Experimental Research' describes regarding a specific type of experimental research conducted on single subject. This research design requires careful assessment, repeated observations, careful control, and applications of experimental treatment (p.218). It is the most commonly used research design and procedure which is slightly distinct from case-study method described in chapter eight. This research design is very useful and applied to the researchers of education field.

Chapter-8, 'Qualitative Research' describes the detailed and comprehensive overview of qualitative research methods. Various types of qualitative researches i.e. ethnographic studies, grounded theory, phenomenological studies, constructivism, semiotics, and case study etc. and their theoretical origin are presented in tabular form (p. 255) which is sourced from M. Q. Patton.

Chapter-9, 'Methods and Tools of Research' is a detailed description of methods and tools of collecting data for research. All the procedures are described in this chapter which are used in data gathering to test the hypothesis or answer the research questions. The most essential characteristics of the tool i.e. reliability and validity are being discussed in detail which is the very strong point of this chapter. Some specific research methods such as Q-methodology, Sociometry, Guess-who-technique, and Social distance scale are also described with applied examples.

Part-3, 'Data Analysis' the 10th, 11th and 12th chapters in this book all discusses quantitative analysis of data using statistical techniques. The goal is to provide the reader within overview of frequently used statistical procedures and thorough knowledge to perform majority of the calculations

manually or with the using of computer.

Chapter-10, 'Descriptive Data Analysis' depicts a broad overview of the sorts of statistics utilised in educational research as well as a brief introduction of data organising strategies. A range statistical approaches for describing a group of subjects are also included. Measures of central tendency, measures of variability, the normal distribution, standard scores, correlation, and the standard error of estimation are among the statistical process covered in this chapter.

Chapter-11, 'Inferential Data Analysis' statistical inferences and the central limit theorem as well as a variety of typical inferential statistical procedures are explained in this chapter. Different variations of the t-test, ANOVA the test for homogeneity of variance, partial correlation, multiple regression, chi-square test, and the Mann Whitney U-test are among the statistical techniques presented.

Chapter-12, 'Computer Data Analysis' explains how computers are used to calculate the statistical techniques mentioned in the previous chapters. The present chapter depicts how to organise data so that it may be easily entered into a computer programme and includes various instances of computer analysis. These computations are performed using SPSS for windows this material may include a copy of SPSS for windows student.

The development of knowledge and understanding in many different subjects is greatly aided by research books. Research books are invaluable tools for advancing knowledge and fostering intellectual growth. These works are the result of careful research, examination, and critical thought. Their strengths lie in their depth, credibility, and ability to provide in-depth analysis. However, they are not without their weaknesses, including potential bias and limited accessibility. Recognizing and navigating these aspects is crucial for both authors and readers to fully appreciate the value that research books bring to the scholarly landscape.

Strengths:

1. **Comprehensive Coverage:** The book provides an extensive overview of research methodology in the field of education, covering both quantitative and qualitative approaches.
2. **Practical Examples:** It includes real-world examples and case studies, helping readers understand how research methods are applied in educational settings.
3. **Clear Explanation:** The authors use clear language to explain complex concepts, making the book accessible to a wide range of readers, including beginners.
4. **Graphical Features:** The book includes helpful diagrams, pictures, tables and graphical features. It also contains summary of each chapter, review questions, and exercises that aid in comprehension and application.
5. **Citations and References:** The book is enriched with proper citations and references. References are given at the end of the each chapter as well as combined references in the end of the book.
6. **Cost Effective:** The present book is very cost effective in Indian edition, while it may be costly

foreign editions. The print and paper quality of the book is very good in such costs.

Weaknesses:

1. **Logical Sequence:** The book should be according to the steps of the research process. The chapters in the book seems to be haphazard which is difficult to understand for new readers.
2. **Limited Focus:** Depending on the edition, the book is not covering newer research trends, emerging technologies, or contemporary issues in education.
3. **Overwhelming for Beginners:** While the authors strive for clarity, some beginners might still find certain sections or topics overwhelming due to the technical nature of research methodology.
4. **Insufficient Depth:** In an attempt to cover a wide range of research methods, the book might not delve deeply into any one approach, which could leave some readers seeking more in-depth understanding. Specially in very first chapter all the concepts such as variables, hypothesis and it's forms, population and sampling, purpose of research, and types of educational research is given in very short which seems to be insufficient.
5. **Outdated Information:** The book hasn't been updated recently, some of the content might be outdated, given the evolving nature of educational research methods and practices.

Conclusion:

A book review is used by readers and faculty members as a book selection reference tool as well as to stay up with the latest publications in their specialized areas. Every book places different demands on the reviewer. No single strategy is appropriate for all novels. Consider as many points as appear relevant while being responsive to the book under discussion (https://subjectguides.uwaterloo.ca/find_book_reviews). In "Research in Education" by J. W. Best and James V. Kahn, the exploration of three distinct parts spanning twelve chapters presents a comprehensive journey through the realm of educational research. The authors expertly combine descriptive insights with critical analysis, offering readers a well-rounded perspective on the subject. From the foundational principles of research design to the nuanced challenges faced by educational researchers, this book serves as an indispensable guide for both novices and seasoned scholars. As the authors bridge the gap between theory and practice, readers are equipped with the tools to engage with research methodologies effectively. "Research in Education" stands as a testament to the enduring importance of methodical inquiry in shaping the educational landscape. This book empowers readers to not only comprehend the intricacies of research but also to apply these insights in meaningful ways, making it an invaluable resource in the field of education.

References:

1. Anastasi, A. & Rubina, S. (1997). Psychological Testing (7th ed.), Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
2. Best, J.W. & Kahn, J.V. (2012). Research in Education PHI Learning Private Limited, New

Delhi p.3 ISBN- 978-81-203-3563-9.

3. Bogardus, E.S. (1933). A social distance scale. *Sociology and Social Research*; 17, 265-271.
4. Cronbach, L.J. (1997). *Essentials of Psychological Testing* (5th ed.) Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
5. Drewry, John. 1974. *Writing Book Reviews*. Boston: Greenwood Press.
6. Hoge, James. 1987. *Literary Reviewing*. Charlottesville: University Virginia of Press.
7. Kerlinger, F.N. (1986). *Foundations of Behavioural Research* (3rd ed.). New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.
8. Moxley, J.M. & Taylor, T. (1997). In *Writing and Publishing for Academic Authors*. Lanham, MD: Rowan and Littlefield, pp. 83-90.
9. Patton, M.Q. (2002). *Qualitative evaluation and Research Methods* (3rd ed.), Thousands Oaks, C.A.: Sage, p.p.132-135.
10. Siegel, S. (1956). *Nonparametric Statistics for the behavioural science*, New York: McGraw-Hill.
11. Sova, Dawn, and Harry Teitelbaum. 2002. *How to Write Book Reports*, 4th ed. Lawrenceville, NY: Thomson/Arco.
12. Walford, A.J. 1986. *Reviews and Reviewing: A Guide*. Phoenix: Oryx Press.
13. Winer, B.J. (1971). *Statistical principles in experiment design* (2nd ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Web links:

14. <https://apastyle.apa.org/about-apa-style>
15. https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Literary_criticism
16. <https://ncert.nic.in/ncertltd/services/br.html>
17. https://subjectguides.uwaterloo.ca/find_book_reviews
18. <https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/book-reviews/>

