


# An Introduction to Educational Research: Connecting Methods to Practice


By Chad Lochmiller, Jessica N. Lester



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Written specifically for education practitioners, **An Introduction to Educational Research: Connecting Methods to Practice** approaches research methods from a practice-first perspective that aligns research with professional experiences and identifies the tools and resources readers can use when conducting their own research. Throughout the book, authors Chad R. Lochmiller and Jessica N. Lester illuminate complex research concepts using problems of practice confronting educators to help readers make meaningful connections with key concepts and research practices. The authors present balanced coverage across research methodologies that is linked to practice, so readers clearly see research as a tool they can use to improve classrooms, schools, districts, and educational organizations.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"It is practical for teacher leaders and researchers."

--Jill Bradley-Levine

"The content is not overly complex but at the same time explains very important research method concepts"

--Arturo Olivarez, Jr.

"The "practice-first" approach is very productive and creative. I enjoyed this aspect very much."

--Harriett Gaddy

"Links to practice are useful and clear, and provide "anchoring points" for the concepts and content."

--Wendy G. Troxel

"The embedded activities, links, reflections, etc., in each chapter are excellent and hopefully, if used by the instructor/student, may lead to a deeper, richer class discussion."

--Dawn Behan

"Very specific and well-articulated vocabulary reviews at the end of each chapter."

--Michael Putman

"School leaders, teachers, and other educators wanting to learn more about how to conduct research on important topics that will improve their knowledge and practice will find this book to be incredibly beneficial. Chad Lochmiller and Jessica Lester provide numerous examples of relevant research questions, strategies for collecting qualitative and quantitative data, ethical considerations influencing researchers, and effective ways to prepare and disseminate research findings. By presenting complex ideas in very readable and understandable terms, the authors demystify research jargon and approaches to conducting educational research. By furnishing educators with a fresh perspective on the practice and utility of educational research, this book provides a useful and practical approach for data-driven decision making."

--Bruce Barnett

"In writing this book, Lochmiller and Lester have made useful progress on an issue that long plagued education - the divide between worlds of research and practice. Having lived for a number of years in both of these worlds, I recognize that resources for teaching research practices and traditions to Ed. D. students are often not written to speak to the particular issues that education practitioners face. The authors have fulfilled the promise of creating a volume that truly addresses the "practitioner-scholar," recognizing that the marriage of scholarly work traditions and the practice of education is necessary for those seeking to develop a deep understanding what happens in schools, defining and investigating problems of practice, and, ultimately, for imagining solutions that ensure schools and school systems work better for students. Along the way, the authors have incorporated practical exercises and regular opportunities for reflection on- and in- practice. This volume is a must read for those heading into leadership roles in schools and systems who want to incorporate a research-grounded frame, and who are interested in integrating research practices into their daily work. Well done!"

--Michael Copland

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## About the Author

**Chad R. Lochmiller** is an Assistant Professor in Educational Leadership & Policy Studies in the School of Education at Indiana University where he teaches courses on data-driven decision-making, school finance, and research methods for practitioners. Dr. Lochmiller received his Ph.D. in Education with a specific focus

on leadership, policy, and organizations from the University of Washington in 2010 and received his Master's of Educational Administration from Gonzaga University in 2005. His research focuses on contemporary education policy issues, specifically those related to school finance and human resources. He is particularly interested in the ways in which finance and personnel issues influence leaders' ability to enact meaningful reforms at the school and district level. He is also interested in issues related to leadership development and preparation. His research has been recently published in journals such as the *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, *Journal of School Leadership*, *Journal of Research on Leadership Education*, and *Journal of Cases in Educational Leadership*.

**Jessica Nina Lester** is an Assistant Professor in the Inquiry Methodology program in the School of Education at Indiana University where she teaches courses focused on introductory research methods and qualitative research methodologies, with a particular focus on discourse and conversation analysis. Dr. Lester received her Ph.D. in Educational Psychology and Research, along with a graduate certificate in Qualitative Research Methods in Education, from the University of Tennessee in 2011. She received her Master's of Education in 2005 from the University of Mary. Her research activities lie at the intersection of disability studies, discourse studies, and critical/social theory. Dr. Lester recently co-edited a book focused on performance ethnographies and co-authored a book focused on the use of digital tools across the qualitative research process. She is currently the co-editor of *The Palgrave handbook of child mental health: Discourse and conversation studies* and *The Palgrave handbook of adult mental health: Discourse and conversation studies*. She most recently published in journals such as *Qualitative Inquiry*, *Discourse Studies*, and *The International Journal of Qualitative Studies*.

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