A Guide to Writing a Book Review for the International Journal of Multiple Research Approaches

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ABSTRACT

This editorial provides information on the expectations of the editors of the International Journal of Multiple Research Approaches regarding a book review. Several aspects of a book review have to be covered by the reviewer, including the biographical information of the book, an evaluation of the objective of the book, a summary of the book, an assessment of the book's strengths and weaknesses, and, finally, the overall benefits for stakeholders in the field.

KEYWORDS

Analytical commentary; benefits for stakeholders; book review; evaluation; strengths and weakness

Overview

The purpose of this editorial is to provide guidance on the type of book reviews that will potentially be accepted for publication in the International Journal of Multiple Research Approaches (IJMRA). At the onset, it is important to highlight the importance of unity of scope and tone. The scope of the review has to be rigorously adhered to, because this is a critical evaluation exercise (Obeng-Odoom, 2014). The tone should be neutral so that the information is succinctly articulated (Barzun, 2001; Cheney, 2005) and the reviewer position can be characterized as critical, evaluative, but civil (Obeng-Odoom, 2014).

Key Questions that the Review Should Address

Because a book review is an informed analysis (Obeng-Odoom, 2014), it is necessary to highlight up front whether the book delivers on the original intention. The argument put forward in the book has to be identified so that the reader can get a clear sense of the ambit of the book. Another important consideration is whether the book contributes to the field of qualitative, quantitative, mixed, and multiple methods research—taking into account the current trends and debates. Any omissions should be mentioned. The manner in which definitions are used has to be reflected upon and how these definitions compare with what is currently being explored in the field. Very importantly, who would benefit from reading the book and how the book compares with others books in the field have to be carefully considered (Johnson, 1995).

Elements of the Review

Several aspects will need to be included in the book review. The title of the book has to be provided in full, in addition to the author, place, publisher, date of publication, edition statement, pages, special features, price, and ISBN. The objectives of the book have to be indicated. A summary of the book will need to be given (Guetterman, 2016). Thus, an analysis of information provided in the book, breaking the information into relevant parts in such a manner as to provide a cohesive overview (Onwuegbuzie & Frels, 2016). Then, the strengths and weaknesses of the book will need to be discussed in addition to an assessment of these and what the implications would be for the IJMRA readership (Guetterman, 2016). The review should also include a reflection on the other books in the field and how the book under consideration compares with other books in the field. Finally, the report should include a section on the overall benefits to academics, researchers, and other stakeholders in the field. The following checklist should assist you when writing your review:
The Importance of Writing a Book Review

A book review is intended to be an evaluative commentary and not just a summary of a book. In a review, the reviewer illustrates their knowledge of the field. Writing a review also exposes reviewers to how others present and evaluate evidence, and thus can be a valuable learning tool (Obeng-Odoom, 2014). Reviews are also actively sought out as opposed to having to submit a journal article (Gorraiz, Gumpenberger, & Purnell, 2014). Therefore, book reviews are an academic exercise that adds value to everyone in the field.

Submitting your Review to the International Journal of Multiple Research Approaches

The review should be 1,000 to 1,200 words and will need to adhere to the writing style prescribed by the journal—in this case, the latest version of the American Psychological Association (APA) style guide. Most of the reviews are invited, as is the case with other journals (Guetterman, 2016). Having stated this, unsolicited reviews will also be considered. It is of utmost importance though that the media editor first be contacted to ensure that the book is not already under consideration by another scholar. We hope that you will consider submitting a book review to the journal.

References