Integrating the arts and mixed methods research approaches

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Mixed Methods Research & Arts-Based Research: Theoretical Considerations

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Outline

I. Gaining common ground: Key concepts & philosophical intersections of the arts & MMR

II. State of the science: An overview of how the arts & MMR are currently being integrated

III. The arts-MMR integration continuum: Considering different points and extents of intersection

IV. Examples of arts-MMR Integration: What does/can arts-MMR integration look like?

V. Considerations for future practice: Practicalities, quality etc.
I. Gaining Common Ground: Key Motivations & Observations

- Trend towards methodological pluralism
  - Growing popularity of MMR
  - Within paradigm mixing
  - Types of typologies & alternatives
  - Hinges on pragmatism & epistemological pluralism

- Trend towards using arts-in-research for epistemic (and less commonly, ontological) reasons

- Similar course of history between arts-based & MMR
  - Use extends beyond recognition as research paradigm

*Identify the actualities and potentials of an arts-MMR intersection*
I. Gaining Common Ground: Key Propositions

• Meaningful, impactful and “accurate” research is the aim

• “The arts” are not an elitist niche, but an integral aspect of being, (thinking), & culture

• Mixed methods research (MMR) & arts share inherent similarities

• All methods provide unique ways to understand, represent & communicate

• Considerations are practical, as well as epistemological & ontological
1. Gaining Common Ground: Representation & Constructed Practices

balance
/ˈbæl(ə)ns/ noun
1. an even distribution
   "she lost her balance"
   synonyms: stability, equilibrium
2. a situation in which the forces are equal

"And take them three times a day. I did, but I got dizzy and unstable.
the interviewees attempt to find a balance associated with the medication."
I. Gaining Common Ground: Definitions

**Mixed-Methods Research**
- Qual (narrative) + Quant (numerical)
- Integrated for *added value*
- 1+1=3 Integration challenge (Fetters & Freshwater, 2015)

**Arts-Informed Research**
- Situated within qualitative paradigm
- Informed by the arts in any form (Knowles & Cole, 2008)

**Arts-Based Research**
- Arts are centrally positioned
- Systematic use of arts as a means of inquiry
- Results in both a practice & a product
  (Barone & Eisner, 2012, Leavy, 2015; McNiff, 2008)
Debating and integrating paradoxical forms of knowledge—as in dialectical reasoning—is a fundamental aspect of human philosophical history and scientific inquiry (Johnson & Gray, 2010).

MMR and arts-based approaches embrace these epistemological foundations and methodological challenges.

These foundational similarities create a productive and intuitive bedrock for research integration

(Archibald & Gerber, 2018)
I. Gaining Common Ground: Philosophical Parallels

Mixed methods way of thinking: dialogic value & commitment to engaging with different ways of seeing, hearing, understanding (Greene, 2007)

Dialectical Stance: Engage with divergence & dissonance to generate puzzles and paradoxes leading to new understandings & insights (Greene, 2007)

Dialectic between forms of reasoning & approaches to research, types of data, representation: Similar between MMR & ABR, reflecting dialectical pluralism

(Taken from Archibald & Gerber, 2018)
I. Gaining Common Ground: Philosophical Parallels [ABR]

- Pluralistic & constructivist
- Intersubjective ontology
- Aesthetic, embodied / sensory knowledge
- Iterative & immersive modes of investigation
- Reflective, personal (＆ relational)

(Barone & Eisner, 2012; Archibald & Gerber, 2018; Leavy, 2015)
I. Gaining Common Ground: The “whole picture” challenge
I. Gaining Common Ground: The “whole picture” challenge
Divergence

- Epistemologies
II. State of the Science of Arts-MMR

Integrating the Arts and Mixed Methods Research: A Review and a Way Forward

Mandy M. Archibald

Flinders University, Adelaide, Australia
II. State of the Science of Arts-MMR: Review Methods

Records identified through database searching (n = 1,003)

Records screened after duplicates removed (n = 847)

Full-text articles assessed for eligibility (n = 88)

Studies included in evidence synthesis (N = 26)

Duplicates removed (n = 156)

Records excluded (n = 759)

Full-text articles excluded, with reasons (n = 62)
II. State of the Science of Arts-MMR: Predominant MMR Designs
II. State of the Science of Arts-MMR: Arts-MMR Intersections

Study of arts’ impact
Focus: evaluation

Study of art processes and engagement
Focus: reflection on meaning construction

Arts-informed research
Art influences but is not central to inquiry

Arts-based research
Artistic process is central to inquiry
II. State of the Science of Arts-MMR: How are the Arts Used?

- 26%
- 63%
- Combination: 11%

Archibald, M. (2018). Integrating the arts and mixed methods research: A review and a way forward. IJMRA
II. State of the Science of Arts-MMR: What artistic forms are used?

93% & = 29%

93%

7%
II. State of the Science of Arts-MMR: Justifications for use

Greene et al. (1989)

**EXPANSION**: extend the breadth & range of inquiry by using different methods for different inquiry components

**COMPLEMENTARITY**: elaboration, enhancement, illustration, clarification

**TRIANGULATION**: convergence, corroboration, correspondence of results

**DEVELOPMENT**: results from one method help develop/inform the other method

**INITIATION**: discovering paradox & contradiction, new perspectives, recasting questions or results
Arts-MMR Justifications - Bedrock for Practice

**Transformative**

Seeks to disrupt assumptions and entrenched perspectives reenacted and perpetuated by research practices.

**Constructivist decoding**

Seeks to decipher which messages are impacted by dominant influences and research practices (e.g., social norms), and which are critically absent throughout integration

*(Archibald, 2018)*
"Research that combines arts research methodology with methods positioned in an alternative paradigm within a single study or program of study." (Archibald, 2018).
State of the Science: Exploring an Arts-MMR Methodological Intersection

Arts and Mixed Methods Research: An Innovative Methodological Merger

Mandy M. Archibald\(^1\) and Nancy Gerber\(^2\)
III. Arts-MMR Integration Continuum

(Archibald & Gerber, 2018)
IV. Exemplars: Arts-MMR
IV. Exemplars: Arts Based Dissemination

Communicative Integration
July 1

What an amazing day! Tahir and I took the kids to the Canada Day parade. We walked around for hours and then joined some neighbours for a barbeque. The kids had a blast! It was great to see.

At first, I was worried all the excitement and activity would be too much for Sammy, but he was great! In fact, it’s been weeks since his last asthma attack.

Tahir hopes Sammy is outgrowing it. I suspect it has more to do with the changes we made at home. Either way, it’s been a welcome break.

Will my child grow-out of asthma?

Asthma is a life-long (chronic) condition with no cure. Sometimes asthma symptoms go away for a period of time – even years. This is called remission. Sometimes these symptoms return during teenage years or early adult life. It is normal for asthma symptoms to get better or worse throughout the year and as your child grows.

Sometimes in children, asthma-like symptoms like wheezing and coughing are not actually asthma but something else, like a lung infection (e.g., bronchiolitis). Conditions like this tend to get better as the child grows older.

There are also many different types of asthma. Asthma symptoms can be mild, moderate, or severe. Some children have symptoms that go away, sometimes for long periods of time (intermittent) while others have persistent asthma.

Asthma Fact!

In Canada, the number of childhood asthma attacks (flare-ups or exacerbations) is highest in the fall and lowest in the summer.
IV. Exemplars: Arts Based Dissemination

Communicative Integration & Analytic Integration

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IV. Exemplar:
Communicative Integration & Analytic Integration

IV. Exemplars:
Transdisciplinary Centre for Research Excellence in Frailty & Healthy Ageing
IV. Exemplars: Arts-MMR

Conceptual Integration
V. Conclusions & Considerations: Quality & Terminology

Risks of subsuming arts into dominant research ideology

Implications for how quality is conceptualized, yardsticks for its measurement, and which terms are used to communicate about quality

Bespoke criteria

(Archibald, 2018)
V. Conclusions & Considerations:
Skills, Practicalities & Resources
V. Conclusions & Considerations: Skills, Practicalities & Resources
V. Considerations for Future Practice:
The challenge of evocation

“The principles of true art is not to portray, but to evoke”
- Jerzy Kosinski
V. Conclusions & Considerations

- Increasing use and integration of arts and MMR
- Tendency to focus on arts-informed > arts-based inquiry
- Strong potential for utilizing the arts in concept formation, juxtaposing, exploring divergence
- Further progress to be made with integration, in reference to the full integration challenge
- Opportunities for analysis of visual data and visualization methods for integration
- Considerations for how researcher, participant, and artist generated work could contribute to initiation, triangulation, etc.
- Wider breadth of art forms (e.g., performance, film) & enhancing focus on ABR
V. Conclusions & Considerations: Making art.... And making sense
Thank you

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