



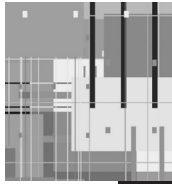
Richard S. Balkin
David M. Kleist

Second Edition

Counseling
RESEARCH

A Practitioner-Scholar Approach

American Counseling Association
2461 Eisenhower Avenue, Suite 300
Alexandria, VA 22314
www.counseling.org



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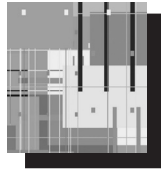
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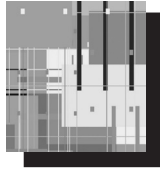
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Preface



Most of the counseling graduate students I (Rick) know do not wake up in the morning thinking, “Hot damn, I get to go to my research class today!” Rather, most of the students I have had in my research course come to class, at least in the beginning, with a lot of anxiety, much of which centers on discomfort with math. Honestly, I am not any different from the majority of counseling graduate students who have had this experience. When I was a graduate student, I walked into my research classes with the same emotions as most graduate students in counseling. I was anxious and felt unprepared. My experience with math was tumultuous at best. Much of counseling research is dependent on statistics, but I want to emphasize to you that research is not a computational nightmare but rather a process with logical steps to enhance our knowledge of the counseling profession. In fact, the math is not too difficult, as all we do is add, subtract, multiply, divide, and square root. So, relax! The math is not really the main part. Focus on the process.

Of course, counseling research is not solely dependent on quantitative methods. I asked David M. Kleist to join me as a coauthor given his expertise in qualitative research as well as our successful collaborations in the past. You will find in this book a strong overview of qualitative research and common approaches used in counseling research that inform practice. Counselors make great qualitative researchers because of the natural fit of hearing clients’ narratives and establishing meaning with them. These same skills can be used in developing meaningful counseling research.

The language used to describe research methods is technical, and both David and I attempt to reduce the confusion by using a conversational tone in this text. There will be times when the material may seem a little dry, but I think this book excels in providing research examples specific to counseling and bridging the technicalities of research and the realities of practice. Ultimately, research is a useless exercise if it is not utilized to enhance the counseling practice.

In this book, we strive to address two audiences: the counselor-in-training and the emerging researcher. If you are just being introduced to research in counseling, you will find this book helpful in providing an understanding of the primary methods of research used in the counseling profession. However, we also attempt to provide a bridge to individuals who have an understanding of research and wish to apply concepts to design studies. Hence, we feel this book will be useful to the master's student just beginning to understand research as well as to those considering topics for a thesis, dissertation, or the development of an initial study. To accommodate this broad audience, we include sections on research designs, respective to the content covered, near the end of each chapter. To assist with synthesizing and applying the content of each chapter, we provide a "Suggested Activities" section at the end of each chapter.

The text is divided into four parts. Part I, "The Essence of Research in the Counseling Profession," provides an overview of the practitioner-scholar model (Chapter 1), which informs the content of and approach to the book and emphasizes the connection between counseling practice and research. An introduction to the research process is presented in Chapter 2, addressing the choice of a research topic, review of the literature, and data collection and analysis. An emphasis on multicultural counseling and issues of diversity is essential to counseling, and the research process is no exception. We thus highlight research ethics and multicultural issues in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 includes an overview of the types of research that are delineated further in future chapters.

Part II, "Quantitative Research Designs," provides detailed descriptions of experimental (Chapters 5, 7, and 8) and correlational (Chapter 6) research. Meta-analysis is covered in Chapter 9 to provide an understanding of a genre of quantitative research that is especially important in identifying empirically supported treatments. Single-case research design is discussed in Chapter 8; this can be an important method for counseling researchers and practitioners who wish to evaluate the effectiveness of an intervention or treatment but do not have access to large numbers of potential participants.

Part III, “Qualitative Research Designs,” provides an understanding of qualitative research. Chapter 10 describes key philosophies, concepts, and ideas about qualitative research and the development and design of qualitative studies. Chapter 11 provides an understanding of preeminent methodologies of qualitative inquiry and how they connect to the purpose, design, and analysis of qualitative research.

Part IV, “Practice-Based Research,” is concerned with the development of measures that may be used for research and evaluation and for conducting program evaluations. Measurement is an essential component of research, and both practitioners and researchers often use measures to demonstrate efficacy and accountability. Program evaluation provides a connection between research and practice, and the process of program evaluation may incorporate elements of the various methods discussed in the text.

Throughout the book, we emphasize practical research examples relevant to counseling practice and highlight opportunities to reflect on these examples in the “Suggested Activities” sections. Regardless of the extent of your training, we hope you will appreciate the importance of being a consumer of research—that when you join the American Counseling Association, you also benefit from the flagship journal *Journal of Counseling & Development*, division journals, and the multitude of resources this organization offers to advance the counseling profession. We hope that after reading this primer on research design, emerging researchers will be able to pursue further research studies and advanced coursework feeling well informed about the research process.

New to This Edition

In this second edition, we update theory, approaches, and research techniques as they apply to the counseling profession to inform practice and, perhaps, to evolve from being a research consumer to a research producer. In addition to citing the most up-to-date counseling research as examples and activities for the concepts introduced in this text, some of the highlighted revisions include the following:

- An examination of counseling research in light of the replication crisis—the difficulty in replicating findings of empirical research (Open Science Collaboration, 2015)
- An update to publishing counseling research and expansion of publication outlets

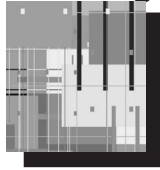
- Revision of research ethics considering the publication of the Revised Common Rule (Office for Human Research Protections, 2018)
- An update and stronger understanding of inferential statistics and their limitations (we expand on the concepts related to statistical significance, effect size, and confidence intervals)
- An expansion of single-case research design and application to counseling research
- Extending understanding of meta-analysis and how such studies benefit the counseling profession
- A thorough revision of qualitative research and approaches
- The development and utilization of measures in counseling research
- Additional models related to program evaluation
- The addition of a glossary to assist with technical terms discussed in the text (terms that are in bold italics in the text appear in the glossary)
- Supplemental materials for instructors, including a test bank of multiple-choice questions and PowerPoints for each chapter (available from the American Counseling Association)

Although the goal of this second edition is to provide a foundational understanding to applying research to the counseling profession, we also provide discussion of technical elements to designing studies for those who might wish to engage in the research process.

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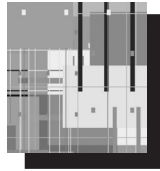


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I (David) thank Rick for your patience with my process and belief in my ability to contribute to the book. I also thank my wife, Jill, and children, Nathan and Mattie, who have provided unwavering belief in me as a person, father, and counselor educator. Finally, I thank all the doctoral students at Idaho State University who have expanded the envelope of qualitative research's relevance to the counseling profession.

We both wish to express our appreciation to Sheerah Neal Keith and Keon Stewart, who served as research assistants for this second edition and the development of instructor resources, and Carolyn Baker, the staff at the American Counseling Association, and the individuals who reviewed this text.

About the Authors



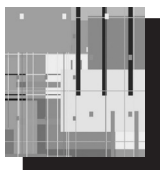
Richard S. Balkin, PhD, is a professor and coordinator of educational research in the School of Education at the University of Mississippi. He is editor of the *International Journal for the Advancement of Counseling*; past editor of the *Journal of Counseling & Development*, the flagship journal of the American Counseling Association (ACA); and past president of the Association for Assessment and Research in Counseling. His primary research interests include counseling outcomes, research methods, counseling adolescents, and cultural differences in counseling. He is a fellow of ACA, past recipient of the ACA Extended Research Award, ACA Best Practices Research Award, the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) Legacy Award, and Counseling Vision and Innovation Award.

Rick has published more than 100 peer-reviewed articles, books, and book chapters, the majority quantitative in nature. He is the author of *Practicing Forgiveness: A Path Toward Healing* (Oxford University Press, 2021) and *Assessment in Counseling: Practice and Applications* (Oxford University Press, 2018) and has authored book chapters on research methods as well as several journal articles related to research methods.

David M. Kleist, PhD, is a professor and chair of the Department of Counseling at Idaho State University. He is currently on the editorial board of *The Qualitative Report* and has held past edito-

rial positions with *Counseling and Values* and *The Family Journal*. He has chaired more than 23 qualitative dissertations in his 27 years at Idaho State University. He is a past president of ACES, was an ACES Legacy Award recipient in 2019, received the Rocky Mountain Association for Counselor Education and Supervision Lifetime Achievement Award in 2017, and has been honored with the International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors Mentoring Award. He has twice been selected as a master teacher at Idaho State University. His primary research interests include qualitative research methods, triadic supervision, and reflective processes in counselor education and supervision.

About the Contributors



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Kaytlin Stackpole, BS, is a current graduate student in the University of South Carolina School of Medicine’s rehabilitation counseling program. She works as a graduate assistant to members of the

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Michael J. Walsh, PhD, is a clinical associate professor in the University of South Carolina School of Medicine's rehabilitation counseling program. Dr. Walsh has been active in the national counseling arena, having served two terms as president of the Association for Humanistic Counseling and one term as a member of the American Counseling Association's (ACA) Governing Council. He also served on ACA's Ethics Committee (2010–2013 and 2015–2018) and as cochair of that committee in 2011. He continues to serve ACA in various capacities, most recently as ACA's parliamentarian (2020–2021) and as a member of various committees and task forces. In addition to working as a counselor educator, he is active in the field, providing consulting and training to various mental health and vocational agencies while maintaining an active private practice in professional counseling.