


Chapter 13

Grounded Theory as a Systematised Qualitative Research Approach

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ABSTRACT

Grounded theory that emerged in the late 1960s aimed at discovering new theories grounded from the perspectives of experts and commoners in proximity to the area of enquiry to gain a constructive solution for the multi-faced problems encountered in the contemporary society. It is a blend of scientific objectivity and traditional subjectivity through the incorporation of data from various sources executed with number of distinct features like coding paradigm to ensure conceptual compactness and expansion. The chapter tries to portray grounded theory as a systematized qualitative approach toward the understanding of various changing social phenomenon in the field of sociology and other disciplines. The chapter provides an overview of the entire research process of grounded theory commencing from the sampling techniques with the criteria of saturation to generation/collection of data, and techniques of analysis for the development of a new theory.

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INTRODUCTION

The realm of social interactions encompasses a multitude of events that compel individuals to critically reassess their immediate environment. All individuals possess a natural inclination towards comprehending and elucidating everyday happenings. This fundamental inclination towards curiosity serves as the underlying basis for doing social science research, which may be broadly defined as the process of critically analysing a social phenomenon to enhance comprehension and provide explanations for the motives and mechanisms behind human behaviour. The aforementioned description at the elementary level places significant emphasis on the inherent process of rediscovery that is inevitably intertwined with the pursuit of inquiry. This process of rediscovery involves delving into existing knowledge and theories, questioning their validity, and seeking new insights and perspectives. It is through this continuous cycle of inquiry and exploration that social scientists can contribute to the ever-evolving understanding of human society and its complexities. This evolving complex society involves interpretation and learning of everyday phenomenon which is predominately done by sociologists through symbolic interactionism and ethnomethodological approach respectively. These methodological approaches are basically qualitative and inductive in nature which primarily result in the creation of a knowledge base through the observation and interpretation of real-life experiences by individuals. One such systematic and comparative qualitative approach applied qualitative research methodologies, especially in the fields of medicine, engineering, management, and other social sciences with admiration in the field of psychology and sociology (Mohajan, D & Mohajan, 2022a; V. R. Pulla, 2014). This research method aims at generating theories from the data gathered making it both a blend of qualitative methodology with quantitative form of data collection from various sources executed with a number of distinct features like coding paradigm to ensure conceptual compactness and expansion (Pulla, 2016; V. R. Pulla, 2014). As a research method intended to produce theories with high practical implications for the relevant field of understanding. Thereby, enabling it to build a theory grounded from the perspectives of experts and commoners in proximity to the area of enquiry working towards gaining a constructive solution for the problems encountered. This methodology was established in the area of sociology opposing the development of grand theories that were constructed to glorify the elucidation of various social phenomenon addressing the gap between theoretical and empirical understanding. As a methodology, it requires little appropriate knowledge about a phenomenon since it aims to construct an explanatory theory uncovering the inherent process of the area of inquiry on a particular problem or a series of events and the changes related to the particular event or phenomenon predominately associated to human actions and behavior (Bluff, 2005; Chun Tie et al., 2019). As a theory-generating

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