Journal *of*
ENTREPRENEURIAL
INNOVATIONS

# USING GROUNDED THEORY PROCEDURES IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP RESEARCH

**Wellington Chakuzira** Orcid ID : 0000-0002-5905-7672,
**Armstrong Kadyamatimba** Orcid ID:0000-0002-9638-0858
University of Venda

DOI : https://doi.org/10.14426/jeiv1i2.706

**Abstract:**

This paper addresses the problems that a number of qualitative researchers in entrepreneurship studies are faced with. Very often qualitative researchers are confronted with at least three main concerns (1) How can I collect good quality data? (2) How do I analyse such data? (3) How do I select a qualitative research procedure? It is against this background that the purpose of this paper is to demonstrate strategies that researchers can apply when using qualitative methodologies in entrepreneurship research. The value of this work is that it is among the first to encourage an increased application of qualitative methodologies, including the grounded theory approach in entrepreneurship research.

Keywords: *ATLAS.ti, entrepreneurship, grounded theory, methodology, qualitative*

## Introduction

Historically, the methodological position for entrepreneurship research has mainly been quantitative. However, as the entrepreneurship discipline matures, newly generated research questions are surfacing. While some of these questions are increasingly challenging the previously held beliefs, others are boldly venturing into unchartered territories. Nevertheless, these new research questions naturally call for theory-building approaches, all of which are a need for a paradigm shift in entrepreneurship research. A typical example of these new phenomena is the growing number of studies aimed at redefining and reclassifying entrepreneurial typologies. This type of research, for instance, is best positioned within cognitive discursive qualitative approaches, to fully grasp the complexity of the phenomena in question. This paper addresses the problems that a number of qualitative researchers in entrepreneurship studies are faced with. Very often, qualitative researchers are confronted with at least three main concerns:

1) How can I collect good quality data?
2) How do I analyse such data?
3) How do I select a qualitative research procedure?

While at face value the above-mentioned issues might seem trivial, these issues are known to cause much suffering and stress among researchers and PhD students (Shambare, 2019). It is also not surprising that there are so few qualitative studies in the discipline of entrepreneurship. Thus, the purpose of this paper is aimed at addressing the above-mentioned three key issues, as experienced by qualitative researchers. The balance of the paper is arranged in three sections, wherein each section attempts to provide insights into each of the highlighted challenges and strategies of dealing with these issues (with specific reference to the grounded theory approach methods).

## The reason for selecting a qualitative research procedure for a research in entrepreneurship

Starting out on a qualitative research project in entrepreneurship may be an exhilarating task, but it could also be a discouraging project. Generally, academics in entrepreneurship believe that an intuitive qualitative project only results from the scholar's amazing abilities (Charmaz, 1995). On the contrary, a good qualitative entrepreneurship research results from hard work and logical approaches. That will involve collecting enough data, synthesising the data, and making logical sense of the data.

In light of such questions, grounded theory methods, as argued by Charmaz (1995), provide a set of schemes for guiding a rigorous qualitative research. Arguably, grounded theory methods make the strategies of qualitative researchers clear and accessible for any hardworking researcher in any field (Charmaz, 1995, Charmaz & Belgrave, 2007, Gasson, 2003, Mavetera & Kroeze, 2009, Suddaby, 2006). This paper then uses grounded theory methods which were used to expedite a PhD research, where the method also enabled the investigator to develop a convincing analysis and it stimulated excitement of doing a qualitative research in entrepreneurship. This paper, therefore, will help prospective academics pursuing qualitative research in entrepreneurship, to plan their data collection and suggest strategies for handling their data analysis. In the following pages the paper introduces the grounded theory method and shows how investigators can apply its basic procedures to entrepreneurship research. Throughout the discussion, an illustration of points will be drawn from a recent study aimed at developing a new taxonomy of entrepreneurial ventures in Zimbabwe.

## The logic of grounded theory

Mavetera and Kroeze (2009) reiterated that the first proponents of grounded theory method were Glaser and Strauss, who used the method in their study of dying in-patients in 1967. What then are grounded theory methods? According to Charmaz (1995), grounded theory methods can be defined as follows:

> *Grounded theory methods are a logically consistent set of data collection and analytic procedures aimed to develop theory.*

Suddaby (2006) maintained that the methodology was developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) as a response against the extreme positivism that had flooded most social research. Glaser and Strauss (1967) specifically challenged prevalent assumptions of 'grand theory' – the notion that the purpose of social research is to uncover pre-existing and universal explanations of social behaviour (Charmaz, 1995, Charmaz & Belgrave, 2007, Gasson, 2003, Mavetera & Kroeze, 2009, Suddaby, 2006). However, grounded theory methods comprise of a set of inductive strategies for analysing data. Therefore, with grounded theory methods, investigators start with individual cases, incidents or experiences, and develop progressively more abstract conceptual categories to synthesize, explain and understand data as well as identify patterned relationships within the data (Charmaz, 1995).

More importantly, the method described by Glaser and Strauss (1967) is built upon two key concepts (1) constant comparison and (2) theoretical sampling. Constant comparison allows the investigator to collect and analyse data simultaneously (Glaser, 1992). Theoretical sampling allows the researcher to make decisions about the next data set, based on the theory that is being constructed. Indeed, both concepts violate long-standing positivist assumptions about how the research process should work. Variably, grounded theory methods provide a new methodology, which allows for systematic procedures to shape and handle rich qualitative materials, although they may also be applied to quantitative data.

## Feasibility of the Grounded Theory Methodology into Entrepreneurship Research

Over the past decades, there is little empirical validation of current entrepreneurial typologies, and there is conflict about which is the best taxonomy to describe entrepreneurs in Zimbabwe. This situation demands research that involves building theory from data (grounded theory procedures). In conducting this research, the investigator benefits from unique ways to facilitate an understanding of the complexity of entrepreneurial taxonomies in Zimbabwe. The collection and analysis of qualitative data from entrepreneurs, allows the investigator to drill deep into taxonomical issues among entrepreneurs in Zimbabwe.

Acknowledging that there is scant literature on entrepreneurial typologies and that this is the first research of this nature in Zimbabwe, uniqueness of the research area justifies a grounded theory approach. Therefore, theory-building benefits from this qualitative research in which the researcher identifies important constructs from a

novel viewpoint. Again, it is complex to understand the nature of entrepreneurial activities, as well as to group these activities based on similar characteristics. Hence, the need to engage in grounded theory research to build meaningful theory and propose taxonomy for entrepreneurial ventures in Zimbabwe.

## WHAT IS QUALITATIVE RESEARCH?

The question, 'What is qualitative research?' demands a description of the nature and characteristics of the type of research in question. As argued by Lincoln and Guba (1985), qualitative research is usually done when the task of the researcher is to uncover and understand a phenomenon in its natural setting. As a result, qualitative research is able to uncover new knowledge, as well as generate a theory in a field where very little is known. In an attempt to account for what the phrase 'qualitative research' means, there is of course, extensive methodological literature addressing qualitative inquiry, and many definitions have been proffered, such as the following:

> *Qualitative research is a research strategy that usually emphasises words rather than quantification in collection and analysis of data (Bryman, 2006).*

> *Qualitative research is an umbrella term for an array of attitudes towards strategies for conducting inquiry that are aimed at discovering how human beings understand, experience, interpret and produce the social world (Ormston, Spencer, Barnard & Snape, 2014).*

In light of the above-mentioned definitions, academics assume that there is a systematic way of apprehending critical dimensions to problems that challenge the academic world (Jackson, Drummond & Camara, 2007). Nevertheless, in trying to grapple with what life means to human beings, academics should also understand that it is impossible to grasp every aspect of a social phenomenon, investigation, or question. More importantly, it is the responsibility of every researcher to approach each study with as much objectivity, ethical diligence, and rigor as possible. The approach to ensure objectivity, ethical diligence, and rigor, depends on whether the study is qualitative or quantitative. For years scholars have argued that the principal distinction between qualitative and quantitative research is that they do not share the same epistemology. Table 1 below shows some of the distinctions between the two methodologies.

Table 1. Comparison of Quantitative (Positivist) and Qualitative (Naturalist) Modes of Inquiry

| Quantitative Mode | Qualitative mode |
|---|---|
| *Assumptions* | *Assumptions* |
| Reality is single, tangible, and fragmental. Social facts have an objective reality. | Realities are multiple, constructed, and holistic. Reality is socially constructed. |
| Knower and known are independent | Knower and known are interactive, inseparable. |
| Primacy of method | Primacy of subject matter |
| Variables can be identified and relationships measured | Variables are complex, interwoven, and difficult to measure. |
| Inquiry is objective, value-free. | Inquiry is subjective, value-bound. (e.g., entrepreneurship is a subjective endeavour in which entrepreneurs seek to chart their own paths, therefore, getting to understand their unique perspectives is much more important) |
| *Purposes* | *Purposes* |
| Generalisability (Time and context free generalisations through nomothetic or generalised statements) | Contextualisation (Only time and context bound working hypotheses through idiographic statements) |
| Prediction | Interpretation |
| Causal explanations | Understanding actors' perspectives |

Table 1. Comparison of Quantitative (Positivist) and Qualitative (Naturalist) Modes of Inquiry (Contd.)

| Quantitative Mode | Qualitative mode |
|---|---|
| *Approach* | *Approach* |
| Begins with hypotheses and theories | Ends with hypotheses or grounded theory |
| Manipulation and control | Emergence and portrayal |
| Uses formal, structured instruments | Researcher as the instrument |
| Experimentation and intervention | Naturalistic or non-intervention |
| Deductive | Inductive |
| Component analysis | Searches for patterns) |
| *Researcher Role* | *Researcher Role* |
| Detachment and impartiality | Personal involvement and partiality |
| Objective portrayal | Empathic understanding |
| Etic (outsider's point of view) | Emic (insider's point of view) |

Source: Adapted from (Kolb, 2012, Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

## HOW DO I COLLECT QUALITATIVE DATA?

Although there are numerous methods of collecting qualitative data, this paper will explain how the investigator can collect data by using in-depth interviews. As postulated by Taylor-Powell and Steele (1996), an in-depth interview is an open-ended, discovery-oriented method to obtain detailed information about a subject matter from a respondent. In-depth interviews are a qualitative research method aimed at discovering a respondent's point of view, experiences, feelings, and perspectives. As stated by Flinders (1997), in-depth interviews are often preferred by qualitative researchers because of their four main qualities which includes (1) depth, (2) disclosure, (3) quality of data and (4) short timeliness, as described below.

- **Depth:** In-depth interviews can uncover valuable insights and enable you to find out "the real story" from the people in the know.
- **Disclosure:** Respondents are most likely to open up on a one-on-one basis.
- **Quality of data:** Skilled interviewers are able to respond to questions and probe for greater detail. Questions can be added or altered in real time if needed.
- **Short timelines:** Data can be collected faster than other research methods – usually within a few weeks.

Despite all the four qualities, it is important to understand that interviewing requires a high level of training and skill. This makes it important to have well-trained, highly-skilled interviewers conducting this in-depth interviews (Flinders, 1997). Using less skilled interviewers, usually increases the possibility of bias (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls & Ormston, 2013). More so, given the length of each interview and the associated costs, the number of in-depth interviews you will complete for a research project will be small (there is no standard number of interviews, but a total of between 10 and 15 interviews would not be uncommon) (Cresswell, 1998).

### Conducting an in-depth interview

As postulated by Ritchie et al. (2013) the four steps involved in conducting in-depth interviews are: (1) developing a sampling strategy, (2) writing an in-depth interview guide, (3) conducting the interviews, (4) analysing the data (see Figure 1).

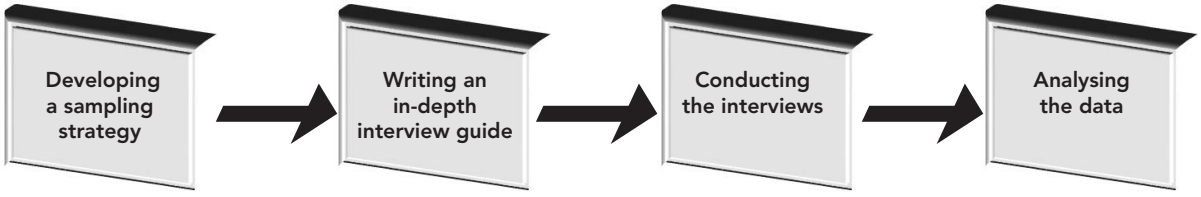


Figure 1: Steps involved in conducting in-depth interviews

### *1. Developing a sampling strategy*

The first step in conducting in-depth interviews is developing a sampling strategy that is determining who the researcher should be interviewing and figuring out how to find these people (Boyce & Neale, 2006). The researcher need to speak to the right people to get useful answers to the research questions. More importantly, the research goals should be used to help the investigator to determine who should be interviewed. There must be a clear understanding of the types of people to contact for the inquiry, which is usually determined by research objectives. Here are some questions the researcher needs to answer before conducting the interview:

- Why are you conducting the research?
- What do you want to learn from this research?
- What decisions will you have to make once the research is completed?
- Who will be mostly affected by your decisions?

### *2. Writing an in-depth interview guide*

An in-depth interview guide is a method for structuring an interview and ensuring that important questions will not be forgotten during the interview. You need to have specific objectives in mind when you are figuring out what to ask. You should ask questions in natural, conversational language, avoiding jargon or technical terms that your respondents may not know. Before you begin writing an in-depth interview guide, ask yourself the following questions:

- What is the specific purpose of the interviews?
- What information do I want to research?
- Who needs this information, and what are they going to do with it?

Again the investigator's research objectives will determine the content of the interview guide. The main aim of the guide is to ask questions that would supply the answers to the investigator's research questions, as well as meeting the set research objectives. The guide should be kept fairly brief and focus on the research objectives, for the researcher to get as much in-depth input from each respondent as possible. It is also important to avoid asking too many questions, as the researcher might not have enough time to explore the transcribed topics fully, and thus will not get the full benefit of conducting an in-depth interview.

### *3. Conducting the interviews*

Ideally, it is advisable to conduct an in-depth interview in an environment in which the respondent feels most comfortable. The researcher may also arrange to conduct the interviews by telephone (which is often more convenient for the interviewer, and may be more convenient for the respondent as well), but if the researcher has the time and resources, it is advisable that the respondent choose the location for the interview. This could be the respondent's home, workplace, or an appropriate public place (such as a quiet restaurant or coffee shop). To conduct a successful in-depth interview, begin by introducing yourself and the study. It is important to establish good rapport with the respondent and put him or her at ease. The investigator's main responsibility is to listen, observe and guide the respondent through the conversation until all the important issues of the guide are explored.

### *4. Analysing In-depth Interviews*

Basically, analysing in-depth interviews involves reviewing the records of the interviews and taking notes to keep track of the findings that are emerging. Ideally, the investigator will have a written record (either field notes or a transcription) of the interview. The researcher may also be reading a transcript while listening to an audiotape. The following section will describe how to analyse interviewed data using ATLAS.ti computer software for analysing qualitative data.

## HOW DO I ANALYSE QUALITATIVE DATA?

Data from the respondents in a qualitative research is usually analysed using framework analysis, thematic analysis and case study analysis, among others. The purpose of designing the research as qualitative research is partly to collect in-depth as well as semi-structured interviews from participants. Strauss and Corbin (1994) recommend that investigators, as discussed earlier, use open-ended interview questions to collect their data. This affords the researcher the opportunity to ask respondents both facts and opinions about specific events or clarifications. The in-depth and semi-structured interviews may be recorded using a digital voice recorder, and then transcribed.

Transcriptions are usually analysed by using ATLAS.ti, NVivo, MAXQDA and Quirkos, among others. This paper explains how one can use ATLA.ti to analyse qualitative data as discussed in the following sections.

## ATLAS.ti

ATLAS.ti is a scientific software program and is a useful qualitative data analysis (QDA) tool. It is very flexible and user-friendly. The product enables researchers to assign codes or labels to text, sounds, pictures, or video; to search these codes for patterns; and to construct classifications of codes that reflect stable models of the conceptual structure of the underlying data (Lewis, 2004). For the purpose of this paper, ATLAS.ti 7.5.7 was used.

Although there are numerous other QDA software available, ATLAS.ti is usually selected by qualitative investigators, mainly for three reasons: Firstly, easy access to training and support for the program. Secondly, in comparison to other qualitative software, ATLAS.ti is usually more cost-effective and within the financial budget of the research. Finally, recommendations from other researchers for example, (Archer, 2008, Lewis, 2004) are considered in the decision to use ATLAS.ti. Overall, ATLAS.ti has four main stages called 'managers' that process data: document manager, quotation manager, code manager, and network manager (see Figure 1).

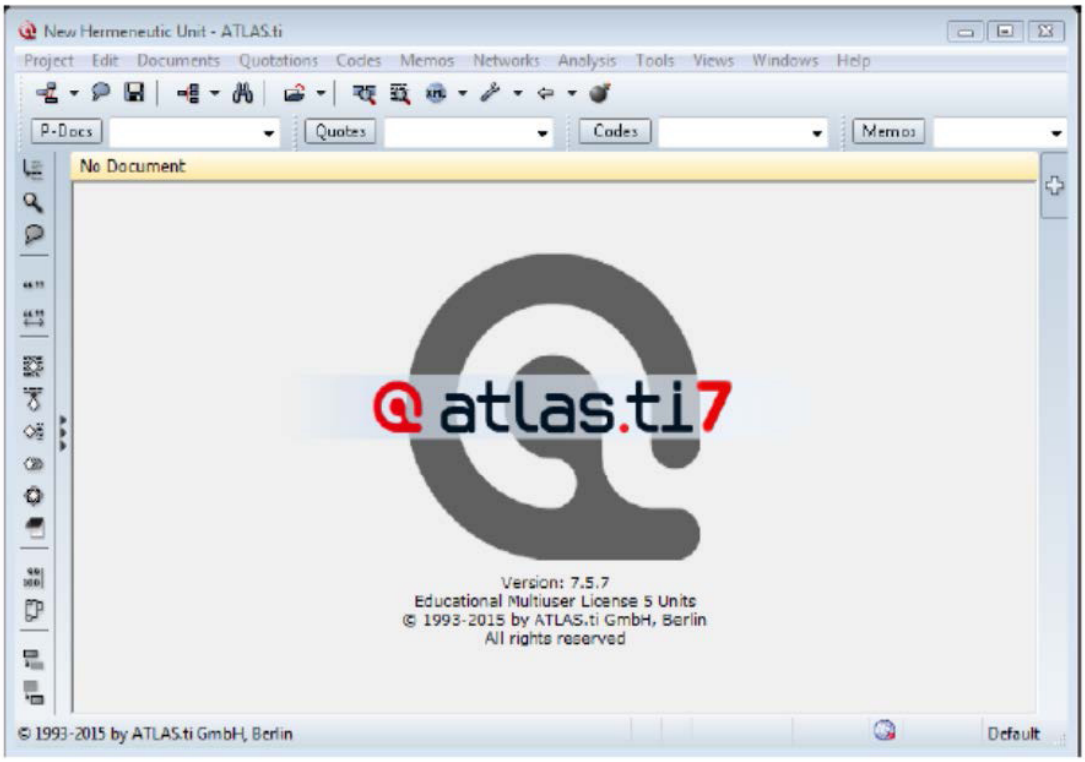


Figure 1: ATLAS.ti Main window
Source: ATLAS.ti 7.5.7

The different ATLAS.ti stages are used to explain the framework analysis in the following pages.

## Step 1: Sociological Perspective

When the investigator decides to follow a qualitative research, the data collection phase of this methodology begins with a sociological perspective of a general problem area, rather than a preconceived conceptual framework (Glaser, 1978, Neergaard & Ulhøi, 2007). Therefore the researcher will begin with an attitude of openness (asking RQ1) that will ensure that the emerging codes are extracted from the interview. All the information extracted from the interviews may be transcribed and imported to the ATLAS.ti to form the Primary Document (PD) as shown in Figure 2.

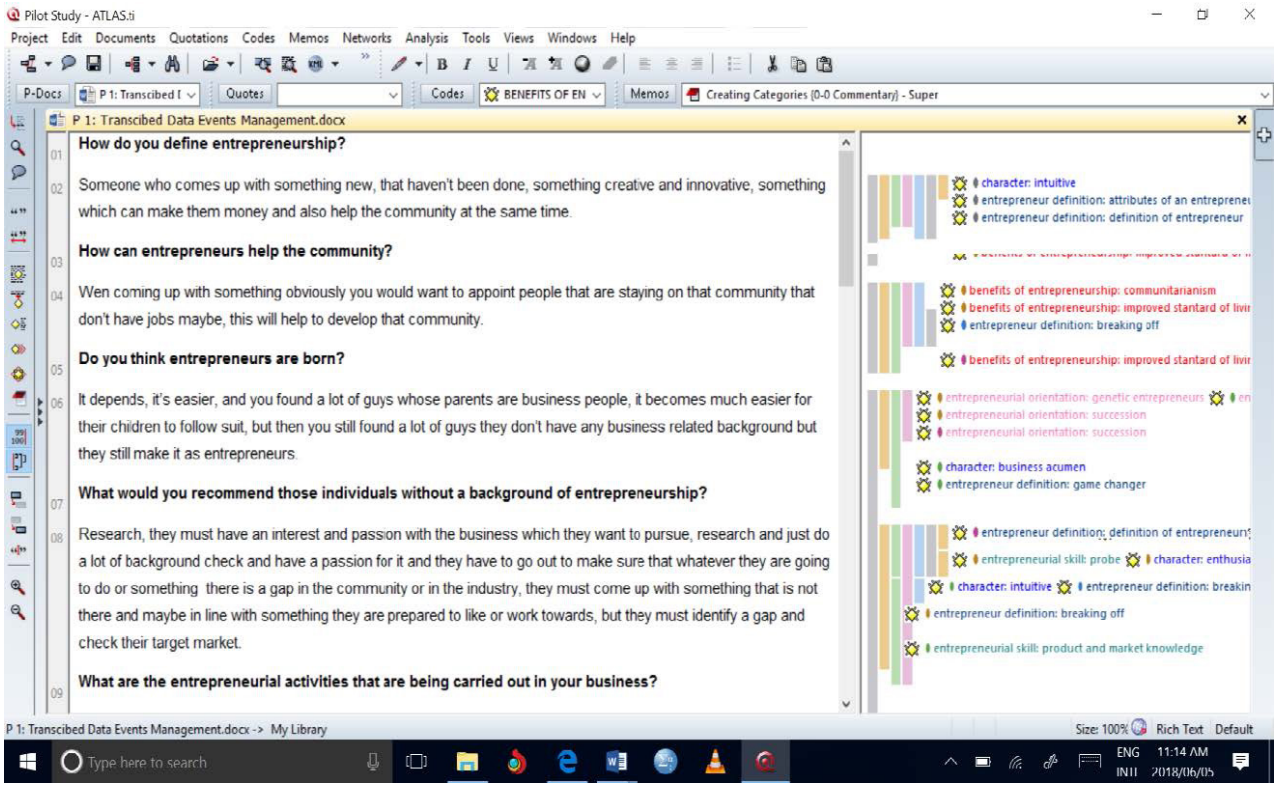


Figure 2: ATLAS.ti Primary Document Manager Window Source: ATLAS.ti 7.5.7

The Primary Document Manager programme can store and analyse several documents simultaneously, and these are temporarily stored in the Primary Document Manager (for example, P1: Transcribed Data Events Management dox in Figure 2). Furthermore, the PD allows creating Primary Document families which assist in organising data.

## Step 2: Constant Comparison and Open Coding

The next step involves the generation of various categories by constant comparison of data through a procedure known as open coding (Age, 2011). This procedure will saturate the whole research process, since it will involve comparing of cases with one another and then comparing the emerging data to more cases throughout the data collection process (Heath & Cowley, 2004). ATLAS.ti will use the Code Manager to execute this process. By using this function, data can be clustered into related ideas called codes (see Figure 3).

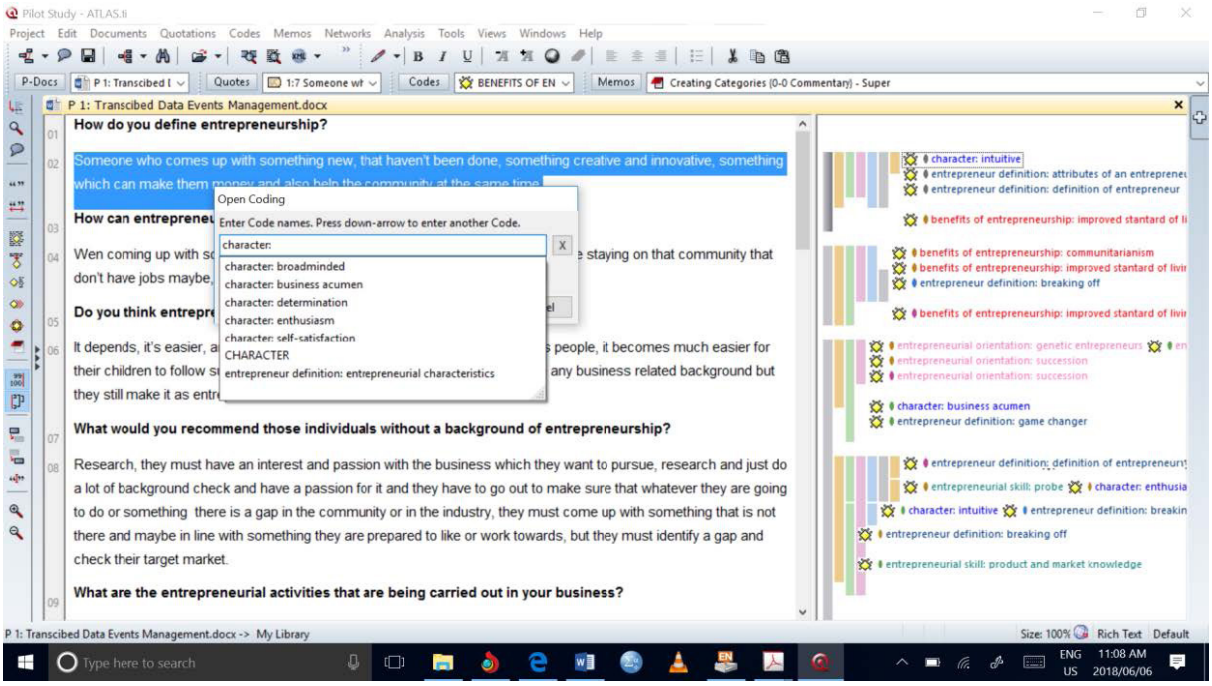


Figure 3: ATLAS.ti Codes option Window Source: ATLAS.ti 7.5.7

At this stage, the researcher usually captures meaning from the paragraphs, sentences, phrases and words on the PD manager text on ATLAS.ti. The investigator can highlight the paragraph, sentence, phrase or word, and right click on the highlighted text to create a code as shown in Figure 3. Continuously repeating this process on the PD manager text, will allow the researcher to create multiple codes.

ATLAS.ti supports seven methods of assigning codes (Archer, 2008). First, there are codes that can be created without being associated with specific text. These are known as 'Free Codes'. 'Open coding' is the more common approach and a technique in which a code is assigned to specific pieces of text. Once codes have been stored in the Codes Manager, there is an option to assign additional pieces of text with existing codes from a list – 'coding by list'. Another feature supported by the software is 'In-Vivo' coding. This is assigning a code to text utilising actual text as the code. 'Quick coding', on the other hand, assigns one specific code to multiple pieces of text. Then there is 'Drag and Drop coding', whereby a code is assigned by dragging and dropping the code from a list of codes to a selected piece of text. Lastly, there is 'Auto-coding', which automatically allocates codes to specified sections of the text.

## Step 3: Core Category and Selective Coding

Multiple codes can be amalgamated into families (or themes) in which further analysis can be conducted as shown in Figure 4.

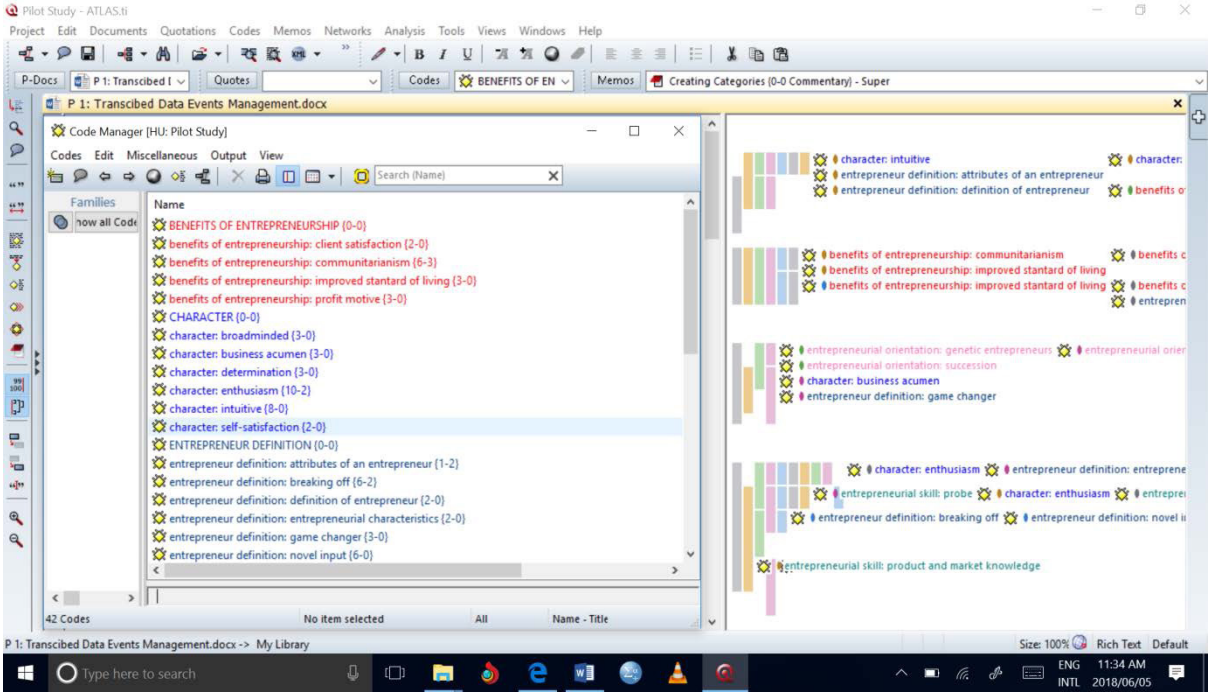


Figure 4: ATLAS.ti Code Manager Window
Source: ATLAS.ti 7.5.7

Through continuation of the above procedure of constant comparison, the researcher will establish core codes (see character: enthusiasm in Figure 4), based on the information proffered by the participants (Neergaard & Ulhøi, 2007), which is a category that holds all other categories together (for example BENEFITS OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP in Figure 4). When the core code has emerged, the researcher will undertake the process of selective coding (Heath & Cowley, 2004). Selective coding will allow the researcher to compare incoming data to the core codes in a more precise manner than when the categories were first established (Neergaard & Ulhøi, 2007). In this process of selective coding, only variables related to the core codes are considered to generate improved categories.

## Step 4: Building a new Theory

Finally, the improved categories will be compared to concepts in order to build a new theory. How the various categories are related, is considered by a process of theoretical coding which will be facilitated by writing down theoretical memos (Heath & Cowley, 2004) that elaborate on the theoretical codes. Theoretical memos will represent

immediate notations of emerging categories and how they interrelate with core codes. The memos will facilitate identification of a new theory. The analysis phase will end up with theoretical writing (Age, 2011) that will bring all the details of the substantive theory together in an overall conceptual description, which is then weaved into the existing literature on the subject of entrepreneurship.

## Research Quality Considerations and Grounded Theory Process

In this section, the key question appears to be whether grounded theory quality measures can be clearly articulated in its methodology. However, it is important to revisit the monograph of Glaser and Strauss (1967), which argues that the label of 'methodology' should be associated with grounded theory. Noteworthy is that in modern literature, methodology and methods are shown to be underpinned by ontological and epistemological assumptions (Charmaz, 2014). The following inquiries may be considered:

a) Ontology deals with questions of reality and asks, what is the nature of the social world? - (is there a reality external of individuals perceptions of reality)

b) Such ontological questions inform epistemological questions of knowledge such as, how is knowledge of the social world possible. - (can knowledge be separated from the process of its production) (Weed, 2009)

Having addressed such inquiries, considerations can turn to methodology which asks, 'What techniques or reasoning should be followed in the creation of knowledge?' This simply resembles the overall research strategy. Finally, the strategy developed (methodology) will guide the methods used, where the consideration is, 'What specific procedures should be adopted to gather data?' Ultimately, this answers the question on what data collection tools (for example questionnaire, interviews, participant observation) will be employed.

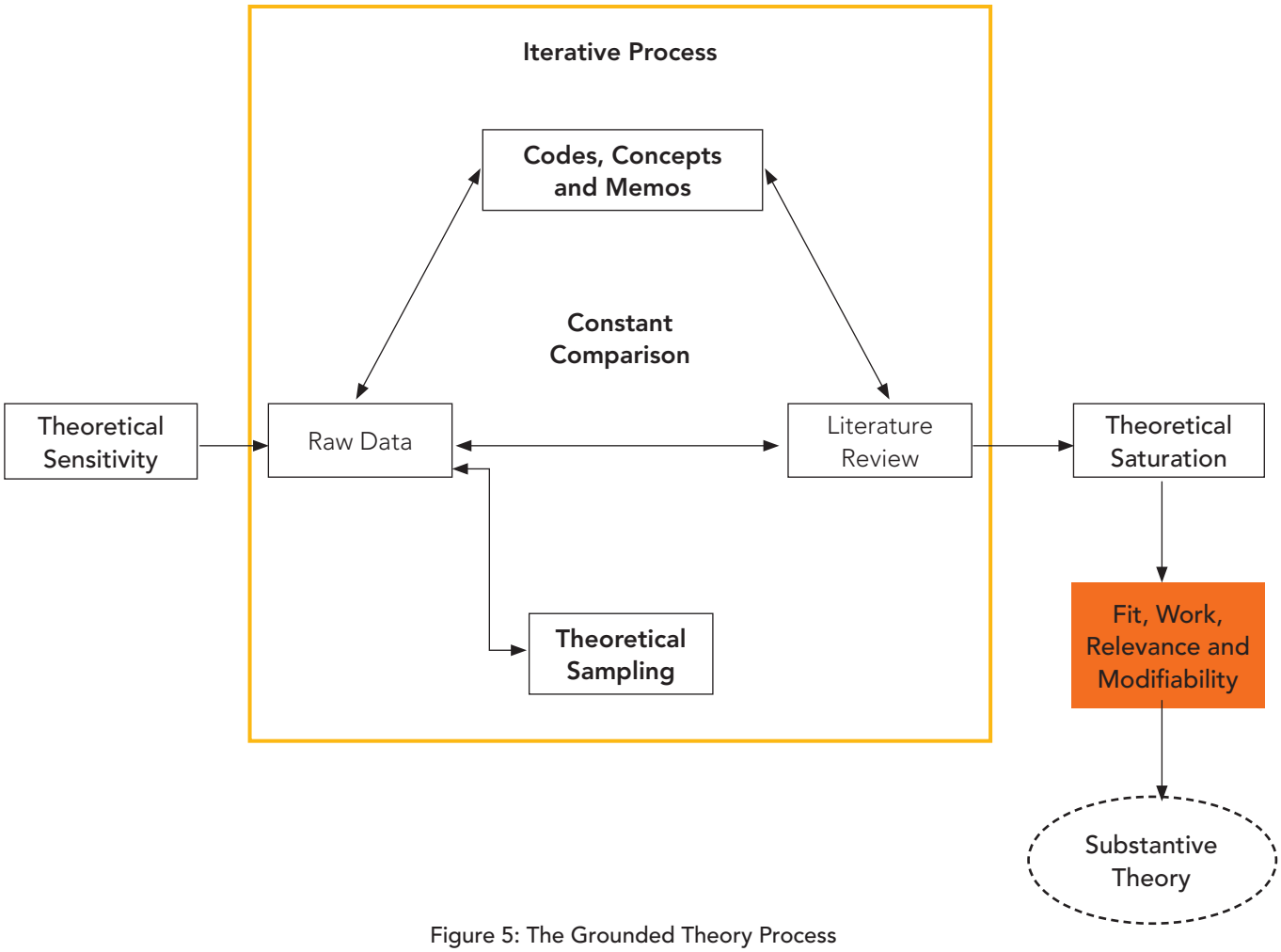


Figure 5: The Grounded Theory Process
Source: Modified from Weed (2009)

Therefore, the paper considered grounded theory not only as a methodology, but as a 'total methodology' that provides a set of ideologies for the whole research procedure. More often than not, research quality of the grounded theory methodological process is compromised by researchers who believe that their research qualifies for the grounded theory label, because they have chosen to employ some of the elements of grounded theory. Therefore, this calls for examination of the core elements of grounded theory methodology, without which a study cannot rightly be claimed to be grounded theory research as shown in Figure 5.

An Iterative Process – In ensuring quality, this research considers grounded theory as not linear, and data collection will be carried out simultaneously with data analysis. Thus, data will be collected, analysed and compared with the literature. Subsequently, additional data will be gathered to help improve concepts. The concepts will then be analysed and compared with the literature and original concepts, leading to the intensive collection of further data, and thus the process continues until the theoretical coverage of the research area is adequate (see Figure 5)

Theoretical Sampling - Another concept which is important in ensuring quality of a grounded theory is the sampling procedure. Therefore, this research follows grounded theory samples which sample data in relation to issues that develop from the analysis to identify anomalies. Consequently, data in this research is collected to help improve and develop the theoretical concepts that are emerging from the analysis (see Figure 5). Unlike most sampling procedures, theoretical sampling in this study is aimed at refining ideas, not increasing the size of the original sample.

Theoretical Sensitivity - Data collection in this research is indeed guided by the emerging analysis (theoretical sampling), however, a key question of what guides initial data collection may be asked. Indeed, this question is predominantly common among academics who mistakenly believe that grounded theory is an approach where the researcher enters the field without an understanding of the research area. Therefore, as shown in Figure 5 where theoretical sensitivity is included in this study of the grounded research process, the later belief automatically becomes a lie. It is supported by the earlier desktop work in the research literature review. Theoretical sensitivity in this research, therefore, acknowledges that investigators approach the research area with an awareness of the research site, but importantly, without any preconceived ideas about what they might discover.

Codes, Memos and Concepts - The process of grounded theory coding is one where initial coding, in this case on a word-by-word, seeks to describe entrepreneurial typologies before moving to a second stage which may take place via selective or focussed coding seeking to conceptualise entrepreneurial typologies. This development from description to conceptualisation is aided by memo writing. Memo writing in this paper allows emergent notions and linkages to be properly noted and encompassed in the iterative analytical process. Consequently, the methodological strategy for this stage of the current research procedure is to move from codes (description) to concepts aided by memos.

Constant Comparison - The constant comparative method is what holds together the iterative analytical process in a current grounded theory research procedure (Glaser, 2002). Initially, the comparison is between data and data, then between codes, then between codes and concepts, then between concepts and literature. Once the analysis has developed beyond the initial stages, the constant comparison is between data, codes, concepts, and literature as a way of continually checking that the emerging insights are grounded in all parts of the analysis (Glaser, 1992, Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Theoretical Saturation – Indeed, grounded theory is an iterative process. Some indication, therefore, is needed as to when further iterations are no longer necessary, and this is provided by the point of theoretical saturation (Glaser, 1994) (see Figure 5). Charmaz (2006) succinctly argues that saturation has been reached when gathering fresh data no longer sparks new theoretical insights, nor extends the properties of theoretical concepts. As such, theoretical saturation ensures that the generated grounded theory has conceptual density and theoretical completeness.

## Truth and validity in grounded theory

Indeed, literature confirms that validity and reliability are inappropriate measures of quality for grounded theory research (Lomborg & Kirkevold, 2003). Various scholars have attributed this to the linguistic meaning of the grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2014, Charmaz & Belgrave, 2007, Glaser, 1992, Guba & Lincoln, 1994, Lomborg & Kirkevold, 2003, Mills, Bonner & Francis, 2006). However, as a concept, grounded theory have become loaded and associated with the imposition of criteria derived from ontological realism and epistemological positivism upon

research that is not underpinned by such ontological and epistemological assumptions (Sparkes & Smith, 2013). As such, this paper recommends grounded theorists to follow the path advocated by Sparkes and Smith (2013) in developing quality measures appropriate to the adopted grounded theory approach:

1. **Fit:** 'Fit' will be ensured by constant comparison and theoretical saturation. It relates to how closely the concepts and theory generated, fit the incidents and entrepreneurial taxonomies they will represent (Weed, 2009).
2. **Work:** The theory generated from this research 'works' if it will be able to offer analytical explanations for problems and processes in the context of the taxonomical issues of entrepreneurial ventures in Zimbabwe.
3. **Relevance:** The 'relevance' of a theory in this research relates to the extent to which it will deal with the real concerns of entrepreneurs in Zimbabwe.
4. **Modifiability:** Finally, grounded theory should be 'modifiable', in that it should be open to extension or further development to accommodate new insights provided by further empirical research in the future (Weed, 2009).

## CONCLUSIONS

It is now critical to understand that the grounded theory method in entrepreneurship research, is adopted for the generation of theory as opposed to theory testing. As concluded by Strauss and Corbin (1967), the way grounded theory method is used in practical research tasks, is purely an alteration of the original dicta as suggested by its champions. Academics are advised to refer to the statements proposed by Glaser and Strauss and to compare these with the grounded theory method alternatives as recommended by Strauss and Corbin (1990), Charmaz and Belgrave (2007), Gasson (2003), and by numerous other investigators before they embark on a practical research project.

Scholars should understand that the grounded theory methodology proposed by Strauss and Corbin (1967) are guideline principles, or they represent a framework of good practices. In different research perspectives, researchers are encouraged to alter and apply the dicta flexibly. Based on the present researchers' experiences, novice users of grounded theory methodology in any field are encouraged to consult the works of Glaser and Strauss (1967), Strauss and Corbin (1990), Glaser (1992; 1994; 2002) and Charmaz and Belgrave (2007), before deciding on their research design.

## REFERENCES


AGE, L.-J. 2011. Grounded theory methodology: Positivism, hermeneutics, and pragmatism. *The qualitative report,* 16, 1599-1615.

ARCHER, E. 2008. Introduction to ATLAS. TI.

BOYCE, C. & NEALE, P. 2006. Conducting in-depth interviews: A guide for designing and conducting in-depth interviews for evaluation input.

BRYMAN, A. 2006. Integrating quantitative and qualitative research: how is it done? *Qualitative research,* 6, 97-113.

CHARMAZ, K. 1995. Grounded theory. I: JA Smith, R. Harré & L. Van Langenhove (red): Rethinking methods in psychology (s. 27-49). London: Sage.

CHARMAZ, K. 2006. Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative research. *SagePublications Ltd*, London.

CHARMAZ, K. 2014. *Constructing grounded theory*, Sage.

CHARMAZ, K. & BELGRAVE, L. L. 2007. Grounded theory. *The Blackwell encyclopedia of sociology*.

CRESSWELL, J. W. 1998. Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions. Sage Publications.

FLINDERS, D. J. 1997. InterViews: An introduction to qualitative research interviewing: Steinar Kvale. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1996. Pergamon.

GASSON, S. 2003. VI. Rigor In Grounded Theory Research: An Interpretive Perspective on Generating Theory From Qualitative Field Studies. Rigor in Grounded Theory Research.

GLASER, B. & STRAUSS, A. 1967. The discovery ofgrounded theory. *London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson*, 24, 288-304.

GLASER, B. G. 1978. *Theoretical sensitivity: Advances in the methodology of grounded theory*, Sociology Pr.

GLASER, B. G. 1992. *Basics of grounded theory analysis: Emergence vs forcing, Sociology* press.

GLASER, B. G. 1994. *More grounded theory methodology: A reader,* Sociology Pr.

GLASER, B. G. Constructivist grounded theory? Forum qualitative sozialforschung/forum: Qualitative social research, 2002.

GUBA, E. G. & LINCOLN, Y. S. 1994. Competing paradigms in qualitative research. *Handbook of qualitative research*, 2, 105.

HEATH, H. & COWLEY, S. 2004. Developing a grounded theory approach: a comparison of Glaser and Strauss. *International journal of nursing studies*, 41, 141-150.

JACKSON, R. L., DRUMMOND, D. K. & CAMARA, S. 2007. What is qualitative research? *Qualitative research reports in communication*, 8, 21-28.

KOLB, S. M. 2012. Grounded theory and the constant comparative method: Valid research strategies for educators. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies*, 3, 83.

LEWIS, R. B. 2004. NVivo 2.0 and ATLAS. ti 5.0: A comparative review of two popular qualitative data-analysis programs. *Field methods*, 16, 439-464.

LINCOLN, Y. S. & GUBA, E. G. 1985. *Naturalistic inquiry*, Sage.

LOMBORG, K. & KIRKEVOLD, M. 2003. Truth and validity in grounded theory–a reconsidered realist interpretation of the criteria: fit, work, relevance and modifiability. *Nursing Philosophy*, 4, 189-200.

MAVETERA, N. & KROEZE, J. H. 2009. Practical considerations in grounded theory research.

MILLS, J., BONNER, A. & FRANCIS, K. 2006. The development of constructivist grounded theory. *International journal of qualitative methods*, 5, 25-35.

NEERGAARD, H. & ULHØI, J. P. 2007. *Handbook of qualitative research methods in entrepreneurship*, Edward Elgar Publishing.

ORMSTON, R., SPENCER, L., BARNARD, M. & SNAPE, D. 2014. The foundations of qualitative research. *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*, 1-26.

RITCHIE, J., LEWIS, J., NICHOLLS, C. M. & ORMSTON, R. 2013. *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*, Sage.

SHAMBARE, R. 2019. Presenting a PhD research proposal: A guide for commerce students. *African Journal of Science, Technology, Innovation and Development*, 1-15.

SPARKES, A. C. & SMITH, B. 2013. *Qualitative research methods in sport, exercise and health: From process to product*, Routledge.

STRAUSS, A. & CORBIN, J. 1967. Discovery of grounded theory.

STRAUSS, A. & CORBIN, J. 1994. Grounded theory methodology. *Handbook of qualitative research*, 17, 273-285.

STRAUSS, A. & CORBIN, J. M. 1990. *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*, Sage Publications, Inc.

SUDDABY, R. 2006. From the editors: What grounded theory is not. *Academy of management journal*, 49, 633-642.

TAYLOR-POWELL, E. & STEELE, S. 1996. Collecting evaluation data: An overview of sources and methods. *University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension Service. Cir.* G3658-4.

WEED, M. 2009. Research quality considerations for grounded theory research in sport & exercise psychology. *Psychology of sport and exercise*, 10, 502-510.