Conducting grounded theory research: at social risk family context.

Dr. Rimvydas Augutavicius, augutavr@mruni.eu
Grounded theory - Social research strategy

Social research strategy

It is been widely used in the field of social research because of it’s universality and ability to explain specific social phenomenon
Discovered by A. Strauss and B. Glaser in 1967 as the result of the attempt to combine the best qualities of qualitative and quantitative research.
Classic grounded theory

Usually used to study a process – social phenomenon which is not explained by the science yet or the explanation is very fragmented and can not explore the full perspective
Non formal education of families at social risk

It is happening, implemented in practice, however no research or scientific explanation was available
Is it the non formal education?
Or is it not?
If so - how can we understand it?
The purpose – to discover a theory, grounded in empirical data that can explain the phenomenon:

What is happening – describe
Why is it happening – explain
How can it be managed, solved and processed - prescribe
Opposite to the traditional research strategies - everything starts with collecting the empirical data from the field
Implementation – collecting data

Theoretical sampling

Coding

Analysis

Research

Memos
Implementation - data analysis

Data

Indicators

Incidents

Memoing

Concepts/categories
Implementation – coding stages

1\textsuperscript{st} Stage. Broad data collected and analysed. The aim – to discover core category

2\textsuperscript{nd} Stage. The data related to core category is collected. The aim – theoretical saturation of core category

3\textsuperscript{rd} Stage. The aim – to discover the relations between categories and concepts. Writing theory
The main task – to discover main concern of the process and core category which is considered to be the key in solving it.

Ends when the core category is discovered.
CORE CATEGORY

It is distinguished by:

- Centrality
- Frequency
- Relevance
- Grab
- Variability
SELECTIVE CODING

The constant comparative analysis is still used, however the data is selected to fit core category

Ends when the theoretical saturation is achieved and no new data shows any new concepts
THEORETICAL CODING

The main task – discovering relationships between concepts and categories

Sorting of memos and memoing on how it is done

The theory discovered, writing the theory
THEORETICAL SORTING
THE MAIN CONCERN

„Lead to participation“

The main concern – it is the dominant difficulty or issue, which is faced during the process
CORE CATEGORY

„Engaging relationship“

Core category explains how the main concern is addressed, processed or solved.

It is dominant category, which is recognized and repeatedly found in the data. It is also distinguished by the tendency to interact with other concepts and categories.
Implementation and results – data collection and analysis cycles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research sample</th>
<th>Number of informants</th>
<th>Data analysis cycles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adults from families at social risk</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educators</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature analysis</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Literature analysis                  | -                     | 35                   |
Implementation and results – data collection tools

- **In depth interviews**
- **Focus groups**
- **Field observation**
- **Memoing**
- **Literature analysis**
- **Theoretical memo sorting**
Implementation and results

RESULTS

Rejection circle
How it is done?

Directing consciousness
How it is done?

T – content block
S – relationship block
I – information discrepancy block
E – emotional block
A – person reflection block
Implementation and results – action and content field blocks

Engaging relationship

Rejection circle

- Emotional discrepancy
  - Negative emotions, disbelieve, distrust, reluctance, disappointment
- Content discrepancy
  - Lack of help, limits of support
- Relationship discrepancy
  - Pushing to act, formal relationship, unmet needs
- Information discrepancy
  - unawareness, wrong perception of content, misleading information

Directing consciousness

- Emotional reflection
  - Holistic understanding, individual attention, contextual sympathy
- Need reflection
  - Purposeful help, acting together, involvement in situation
- Self reflection
  - Perception of self, perception of context, conscious decision, purposeful planning
- Value change
  - Change in opinion, critical vision, positive development, personal growth
Results

The non-formal education of adults from at risk families is the process that is explained by the interaction between and among educator and student or group of students, which is so called engaging relationship.
This concept of adult education can acquire positive or negative purposefulness depending on the content of the education process.
The process is also distinguished by the polarity of the purposefulness – two different poles of the engaging relationship identified and characterized by the blocks of contextual elements in the emerged grounded theory. The two poles of the concept are: the rejection circle and opposite to it – directing consciousness.
Blocks of contextual elements in the emerged grounded theory:

Emotional block
Content block
Relationships block
Informational discrepancy block
Personal reflection block
Thank you!!!