

## Publishing Grounded Theory Research Studies: Are IS Journals and Conferences Ready for Them?

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Grounded Theory Method (GTM) is a promising method to develop theory that is grounded on qualitative and quantitative data. However, its application is not always well done or sometimes not well understood. Its application is not free from criticism due to lack of rigor in some research procedures and descriptions of results. Some researchers have pointed out the problem of publishing these studies due to the enormous volume of data gathered and the space needed to explain the findings.

This presentation attempts to analyze the issue of publishing GTM studies in top journals and conferences. Based in our experience in the publication of IS research studies that use the GTM, and a literature review on the topic, we have detected a set of issues to be discussed.

The main issue is the adequacy of referees to review these types of articles. Complains about lack of problem definition, no research questions, no hypothesis, no literature review are quite common considerations. A typical positivist way of analyzing these studies often arises. We also think that the problem of publishing GTM studies goes beyond its frontiers and probably it is a problem of publishing qualitative research studies. Some qualitative researchers maintain that the canons or standards by which quantitative studies are judged are quite inappropriate for judging the merit of qualitative studies (e.g. Agar 1986, Merriam 1995). Strauss and Corbin (1998, p. 266) also agree that although “the usual scientific canons of good science have value but require redefinition to fit the realities of qualitative research and the complexities of the social phenomena that we seek to understand”. They discuss the institutionalized scientific canons and propose new extensions for GTM studies and qualitative studies in general.

The second issue is the problem of lack of argumentation for GTM findings with critics arguing for more quotes of the participants or more evidences that support the findings. But how can that be done in 20-25 pages? Some critics also demand that GTM should be explained in detail for broader readers! Some researchers have suggested that these studies are more adequate to thesis or research reports where the length is not a constraint, but aren't they limiting the diffusion of theory by taking this position? Would it be better to change (or at least expand) the canons and standards of top is journals to publish these articles? Why should the article fit the journal standard and not the journal fit the methods (or approach) perspective?

The purpose of this presentation is to discuss these issues, present our own experience, arise open questions such as the above ones, and obtain some feedback from participants in order to improve and increase the number of publications.