

Application of Grounded Theory Method in Exploring the Discourse of Involuntary Resettlement and Challenges Encountered

Abstract

Grounded theory demystifies complex real-world contexts such as community related issues where human interactions between the affected people and government officials are inexorably complex. Forming an integral part of a case study on involuntary resettlement using Grounded theory, the aim of this paper is to provide an in-depth description on the methodology adopted. Illustrating how the Grounded theory was used to explore the phenomenon of involuntary resettlement due to a highway construction project in Sri Lanka, the paper explains the challenges the researcher encountered in maintaining theoretical sensitivity, yielding codes and categories, undertaking theoretical sampling, achieving theoretical saturation, validating research outcome and defying their own biases. In conclusion, this paper shows that the research approach has lent itself to a unique Grounded theory research study which dealt with involuntary human resettlement. The study makes an original contribution to the body of knowledge on how Grounded theory research methodologies can be applied to research contexts such as involuntary resettlement.

Keywords: Grounded theory, Coding, Inductive enquiry, Involuntary resettlement, Research methodology, Theoretical sensitivity

1. Introduction

As a method of qualitative research, Grounded theory is evolving progressively (Julie Bytheway, 2018). This method has been used in a variety of instances including the public masses who have been denied voice (Ayón et al. 2017, Gibson 2016; Scull, Mbonyingabo, and Kotb 2016; Tuason 2013), developing policy (Faija et al. 2017) language testing (Prashneel, Ravisan & Goundar, Prashneel (2023) and uncovering complex managerial realities (Monteiro, M, 2023). Developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967), the Grounded theory has been premised upon pragmatism- matter of factness (Mead, 1967) and symbolic interactionism- making sense of the social worlds via language and symbols (Blumer, 1969). Grounded theory does not therefore test hypotheses (Birks & Mills, 2012). Nor, it merely 'describes' a phenomenon (Dunne, 2011) instead a theory is generated inductively (Pidgeon & Henwood, 1997). Urquhart (2013) describes Grounded theory is rich in integrity because it does not purport preconceived ideas. Grounded theory explores participants' beliefs, perceptions, preferences and actions to generate theory (Urquhart, 2013). Grounded theorists are not concerned with testing prior theories, but attempt to showcase the reality in a given phenomenon (LaRossa, 2005; Locke, 2001). A grounded theory study promotes theoretical relevance to emergent theories (Andersen, Inoue, & Walsh, 2013). In this pursuit, the researchers are required to be theoretically sensitive (Julie Bytheway, 2018). However, Denscombe (2010) asserts that researchers need to identify at the onset their philosophical stance in order to shed light on the substance of their research. In the meantime, methodological congruence is crucial to establish credibility of the research (Birks & Mills, 2012). Grounded theory approach entails iteration discovering

new insights in complex data sets (RastiBorazjaniFaghat, E. 2023).

In human resettlement, a plethora of problems such as irregular erections, lack of services, security, safety and health issues exist. Yet, the study is not aimed to solve these problems; rather it aims to uncover, in its full spectrum, the question as to 'why all these grievances' take place. Theory building requires identification of variables and their relationships, patterns and trends. Though a number of studies have identified the policy gaps in different contexts such as post conflict reconstruction (Seneviratne K, 2017), Expressway (H.M.T. Dharmawardhana, 2017) and (Akira Ozawa, So Morikawa, 2017), expansion of built up areas (Kathryn Gomersall, 2018), remote relocation mixed with another community (Vanclay, 2017), spatial effects (Rogers, S., & Wilmsen, B. (2020), landslide resettlement (PA Vijekumara, 2015), this particular study identified the gaps in addressing housing and infrastructure needs in resettlement related to a highway construction. In this project (the Central Expressway project Phase 1 in Sri Lanka), 6,432 people from 1,742 families got affected due to loss of landholdings resulting in 6 resettlement sites. However, the problems they faced in trying to regain their lost livelihoods are in most cases, unique.

2. Process adopted

The process adopted in the study is given in Figure 1 below.

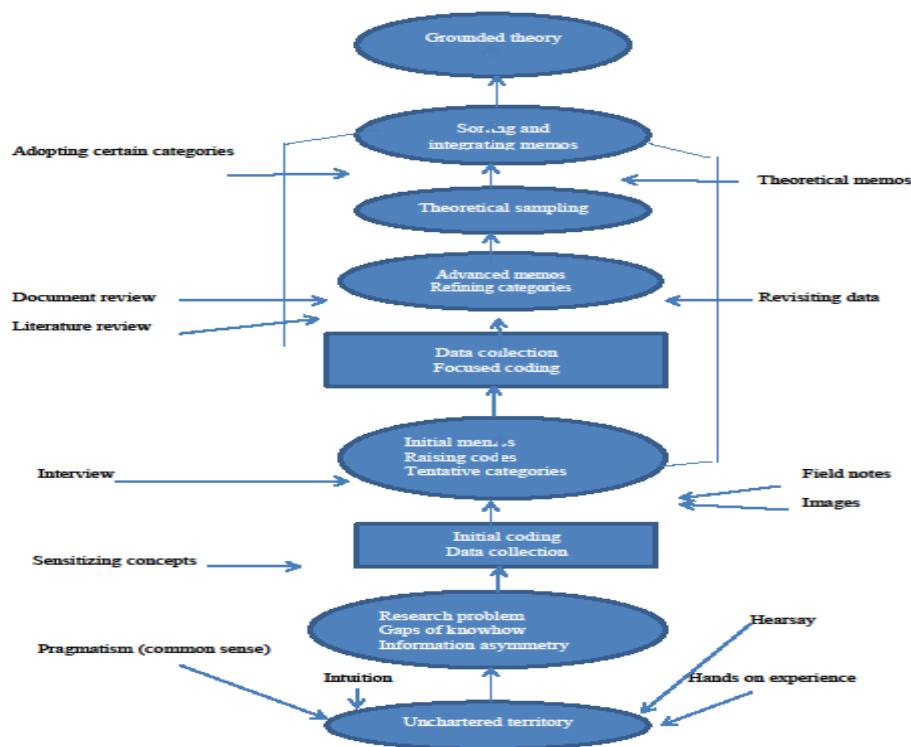


Figure 1: Process of Exploring Theories Grounded in Data

Researchers find it difficult to apprehend how grounded theory concepts and methods

can be properly adopted (Mohajan et al, 2023). Hence, a method article such as this would help understand the roadmap taken to lead the core of the phenomenological research (involuntary resettlement) which has been already conducted. It guides the readers through the actual traverse taken to reach theoretical saturation. While divulging the qualitative outline designed and implemented to identify gaps of housing and infrastructure needs in one of the resettlement sites located in the Gampaha district, the objectives were to (1) critically appraise the key features of the grounded theory (2) describe how grounded theory methodology has been applied by the researchers in the discourse of involuntary resettlement (being a complex phenomenon in the human world) and, (3) make recommendations for future grounded theory applications. The knowledge emancipated in this case study provided useful insights into resettlement planning and implementation.

3. Challenges encountered

The next sections of the paper explain how the researchers during the application of the Grounded theory method, coped with the challenges encountered in terms of maintaining theoretical sensitivity, yielding codes and categories, undertaking theoretical sampling, achieving theoretical saturation, validating research outcome and defying own biases.

3.1 Theoretical sensitivity

Theoretical sensitivity is all about the researcher's ability to define a phenomenon in abstract terms. Sensitivity can be raised by memoing itself and recording thoughts as they emerge during data collection, coding, and analysis. With this function iterative by process, the researcher becomes better equipped to answer the question of what data does truly mean. In fact, the existing secondary data enables mooting theories. However, the Grounded theory expects the researcher to identify new concepts from the data instead of using pre-defined concepts (Glaser, 2013). Some even argue that there is no need to review existing literature (Glaser, 1992), literature will impede the researcher's effort to generate theories (Reetley, 2008), and impinge upon subsequent observations (Suddaby, 2006). Birks and Mills (2012) warn that the use of literature is grossly a misunderstood trait of the Grounded theory. Hence, literature is searched after, not before, emergence of the theory (Urquhart, 2013). Avoiding literature review is not anti-scholarship (Glaser, 1998). However, Grounded theory studies do not use literature as in traditional approaches where a literature review is conducted to form research questions, design research methods and identify theoretical frameworks (Dunne, 2011; Elliott & Higgins, 2012; Hallberg, 2010; McGhee, Marland, & Atkinson, 2007; Xie, 2009).

Locke (2001) emphasizes that pre-set assumption(s) about the phenomenon under exploration are important. Maintaining theoretical sensitivity is one of the hallmarks of Grounded theory and, literature review could be in parallel to primary data collection (Julie Bytheway, 2018). An early literature review provides rationale for the study, ascertains gaps in research and places the proposed research within the body of contemporary knowledge (Birks & Mills, 2012; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Dunne, 2011; Elliott & Higgins, 2012; McGhee et al., 2007; Xie, 2009). It has no harm to consider literature leading to accumulated knowledge (Dey, 1993). A review of the pertinent literature establishes current thinking (Allan, 2003 and

Alireza Moghaddam, 2008). Pidgeon and Henwood (1997) also argue that the total elimination of literature is unlikely as the researcher needs to instill himself on theoretical sensitivity.

Literally, the review in substantive areas commences only after initial coding, that is after the theory emerges, and is used as further data during constant comparative analysis (Giles, King, & de Lacey, 2013; Glaser, 1998), (Birks & Mills, 2012; Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Hallberg, 2010). In grounded theory, it is acknowledged that the substantive area of enquiry is not, in its strictest sense, known before data collection, coding and emergence of theory (Christiansen, 2011; Glaser, 1998). An in-depth literature review could be commenced as soon as codes, categories and emerging theories have been identified. As long as the researcher remains theoretically sensitive and approach data with an open mind, it will help avoid assumptions and preconceptions (Hallberg, 2010). This requires analytic temperament to maintain analytic distance from the data. In other words, attempting to quarantine existing knowledge is counterproductive.

Box 1 explains how the researchers used literature and maintained theoretical sensitivity throughout the study.

Box 1

The researchers reviewed pertinent literature only when coding started and emerging theory identified. Keeping in mind that, preconceived ideas may jeopardize the hallmark of the Grounded theory, this review exposed some important variables in previous similar studies in different contexts in the recent past. Being one of the victims of the resettlement, a researcher needs to stop preconceptions. Hence, he articulated his assumptions in a memo at the outset of the research. As mentioned, it is not possible, nor indeed desirable, to separate the history from the building of a Grounded theory. This enabled the researchers to reinforce the discussions with more information in hand, remind the interviewees and direct the flow of discussion into areas of silence and inattention and widen up the inquiry. It was therefore felt that the total exclusion of literature is not possible as the researchers needed at least some theoretical knowhow to begin the process of interpretation and representation. (Remove)

3.2 Coding and Memoing

Conclusions reached by inductive methods are not logical necessities (Thagard, Paul and Cameron Shelley, 2005). They are not proven but theory (Glaser, 1992). While inductive reasoning cannot yield an absolute conclusion, it can actually increase human knowledge (it is *ampliative*). The ability to intuitively trust in knowing when to move from one stage to another builds with experience as the analyst gains confidence in exploring and confirming conceptual ideas as they emerge. This is a real challenge where the specific observations are converted to general conclusions. Beginning with line-by-line open coding of data and comparing incidents to each other in the data, the researcher codes the data in every way possible and asks a set of questions of the data. These questions sustain the researcher's theoretical sensitivity, transcend descriptive details and encourage a focus on patterns among incidents that yield codes. Line-by-line coding helps verify and saturate categories, minimize missing categories and

ensure relevance. The result is a rich and dense theory with the feeling that nothing has been left out (Flick, U. 2019).

Box 2 explains the coding process undertaken.

Box 2

Initial efforts at open coding were heavily influenced by the latest experience in the struggle for resettlement and reasonable compensation. As much as humanly possible, the researchers allowed data to control the process by writing a theory for only what emerges through induction. A series of open questions began to etch in mind; 'What is this data meant by?', 'What category does this event indicate?', 'What is actually happening in the data?', 'What is the main concern being faced by the APs?', and 'What made him think so?'. As a result, 83 codes were initially generated through open coding of data collected and analysed between October 2022 and February 2023; several of these codes were highly descriptive and, in some instances, somewhat repetitive. Field notes enabled capturing the essence of the participant's main concerns and how that concern is resolved without the burden of laborious transcribing followed by the tedium of lengthy transcriptions. The challenge of this inundation was successfully dealt with axial coding. Questions that were asked during the process of axial coding included "when, where, why, how, and with what consequences". Axial coding led to the 23 resettlement categories resulting 5 theoretical constructs unfolded. (Remove)

3.3 Theoretical sampling

Theoretical sampling is whereby the researcher concurrently collects codes and analyses data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them. This approach strengthens the rigor of the study while providing a structure to data collection as well as data analysis. The rigor tied into the application of established protocols is however unscrupulous in qualitative research. Harley, B., & Cornelissen, J. (2022) contended that rigor emanates from the way in which researchers engage in a deliberate reasoning process of inferring theoretical claims from their data. It is based on the need to collect more data to examine categories and their relationships (Silverman & Marvasti, 2008). Theoretical sampling allows better-formulated samples, meaningful than others. One of the tenets in theoretical sampling is that the researcher does not choose cases that are supportive to his argument. In theoretical sampling, another challenge is to overcome this tendency to select cases that support one-sided argument. It would be beneficial to look out for negative cases as well (Silverman, D. & Marvasti, A. 2008). As mentioned, theoretical sampling is an outcome of constant comparison which resolves 'data overwhelm' (Glaser, 2003). By alternating data collection with coding and conceptual memoing, the researcher is prevented from collecting redundant data as once a category has been saturated. As such, the researcher can only discover where next to collect data by first coding the initial data and then looking for comparison groups by which to saturate the emerging codes and their properties. Comparing groups gives the researcher the advantage of developing a variety of categories.

Box 3 explains how theoretical sampling occurred.

Box 3

The first sample was those who have been already residing at the resettlement site for several months. Later on, these interviewees identified other possible participants (snowballing). Since it was impossible to gather data from all individuals who have secured a plot of land in the resettlement site, a selection was made from those individuals. The problem of information asymmetry remained, as each individual case was unique. Interviews were conducted at the resettlement site. Interviews were with individuals, individual families and affected community as a whole. The participants led the conversation. Considering the gravity of the issues, the researcher had to actively intervene in the dynamics of the interview. Family discussions enabled participants to freely discuss topics of family interest and allowed researchers to gather a variety of views at a short spell of time. Interview with the affected community as a whole became the forum to reveal matters of common interest. The researcher had to control the flow of the discussion as some of the issues became hotly debated and contested among themselves. Participants were encouraged to lead open discussions initiated through broad open questions. The researcher coordinated the conversation to encourage participants to share perceptions and experiences that potentially explain how they experience the resettlement. During semi-focused interviews participants were asked to describe and explain their experiences, actions, ideas, and feelings by providing examples of specific situations, incidents, barriers and bottlenecks. The research timeline was made flexible enough to accommodate the foregoing steps which are iterative by nature. . (Remove)

The main criterion is that the data collected should apply to a particular category, irrespective of the differences or similarities. The first point of locating the data was “by going to places and talking to people who are most likely to be able to provide some insight into the problem” (Goulding, 2002). Although sampling at the beginning of the research is rather unfocused, it becomes more focused as the data collection and analysis progresses. Initially, the researcher considers the most obvious events. However, as concepts are identified and the theory starts developing, further data incorporated to strengthen the findings. This 'theoretical sampling' will only end when all the categories are saturated (Goulding, 1999). The constant cyclic and combined process of data collection, analysis, coding, and memo writing, and direct theoretical sampling are used to identify further research participants, contexts and data collection methods. Memos facilitate reorienting the researcher at a later date (Goulding, 1999). Adequate time will enhance reflexivity to emerge concepts and theories (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). However, data collection was constrained by practical reasons such as the unavailability of resettlers at the site. An audit trail needs to be maintained through detailed field notes, data records, memo writing and diagramming to show how the substantive theory emerges from the data and record flexible, systematic research processes (Birks & Mills, 2012; Denscombe, 2010). Meanwhile, it is important to empower the participations as a source of data. During a grounded theory interview, the participants and the interviewer are treated as equals (Scott, 2011). Regarding the size of sample, Morse (1994) suggests conducting 30–50 interviews for ethnography,

ethnoscience and grounded theory.

Box 4 explains the quality criteria adopted at the interview.

Box 4

Quality criteria included establishing a comfortable, private, and quiet interview, building rapport with the interviewees, taking the role of an interested learner; active listening; using open-ended questions and avoiding leading questions; probing; and adopting a non-judgmental approach moving back and forth between gathering and analyzing data (iterative process) preventing random collection, feeling overwhelmed and unfocused. Participants were contacted to check whether emerging codes, memo-ideas and theory development resonate. The challenge of get the data overwhelming, inundating and redundant was navigated by strict coding process, however, the idiosyncrasy of the researchers was inevitable to empower the participants, boost up the discussions, and address the information asymmetry. Participants' statements were repeated to check clarity and interpretation. Observation and social skills were used to further the discussion. Previous responses were used to formulate further discussion topics. Prompts such as "Can you explain that further / in more detail?, Tell me more about ..., What happens next... ?, Is there anything else you would like to say?" were also used to further the discussion. An audit trail was maintained, with references to location, participants, date and time of interview and non-verbal clues etc. As suggested by theoretical sampling processes, participants were asked if the correspondence exchanged between the affected people and the administration could also be used as data for this study. All research participants were contacted to partake in member checking processes to check whether emerging codes, memo-ideas and theory development resonate and are recognized by them. This was found to be hectic, laborious and tedious to administer. (Remove)

Letting the participants have their own voice is fundamental (Birks & Mills, 2012). Scott (2011) advises researchers to ask broad open questions, let the conversation unfold, and empower participants to share experiences and perspectives. Researchers record field notes describing the context and any nonverbal clues (Birks & Mills, 2012). Despite the power bestowed on the participants, the researcher is not passive, but instead coordinates the back talks to generate theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

3.4 Theoretical Saturation

In grounded theory, research processes continue until a point of saturation is reached, that is when no new concepts are emerging from data (Urquhart, 2013). Saturation is viewed as a method for ensuring methodological rigor and trustworthiness, as well (Peters, H. C., 2023). Researchers need to "look for groups that stretch diversity, confident that category is saturated, based on widest possible range of data" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 61). As Birks and Mills (2012) instruct, in continuous cyclic processes, the researcher needs to collect and analyse data using constant comparative analysis until new data requires no new codes or categories, and instead fits within existing codes and a point of saturation appears to be reached. Hence, Grounded theory is not a linear process, but instead is a self-correcting approach that integrates research processes—such as collecting data, defining subsequent samples, coding data, analysing data, writing memos and diagrams, generating theory, and reviewing literature—in cyclic and cumulative ways so that emerging concepts can be explored further (Birks & Mills, 2012; Denscombe, 2010; Urquhart, 2013). Theoretical saturation implies that data is collected until "no new evidence appears" or until the

researcher delivered enough information to describe the phenomenon under study (Suddaby, 2006). Saturation is only a regulatory idea for sampling size in qualitative research (Mason, 2010). Saturation is a subjective determination that new data will not provide any new information or insights for the developing categories (Creswell, 2012). Theoretical saturation is realised(1) when no new data comes out concerning a category, (2) the category is intense enough to cover variations and process and (3) relationships between categories are delineated adequately (Brown, Stevenson, Troiano& Schneider, 2002).

Box 5 explains the process of achieving theoretical saturation.

Box 5
 Each code and significant quote was clearly traced back to the original data. Researchers recorded where codes and quotes specifically occur in the data, including, for example, the participant, interview date, and precise time during the interview recording. As such, the researchers continued to theoretically sample for indicators of several core categories. Through constant comparison, few more indicators of the concept were coded to achieve theoretical saturation and to provide properties and dimensions. The number of indicators per category is not as significant as the requirement to sample sufficiently to achieve theoretical saturation. The important thing is that each concept has earned relevance in relation to the theory, its relevance theoretically sampled for and sufficiently validated and its properties and dimensions identified though constant comparison and interchangeable indicators to theoretical saturation. (Remove)

Achieving a point of saturation can result in a huge amount of data, however. Furthermore, initial coding can create hundreds of overlapping initial-codes as many interviewees for example will hold the same point of view, similar perception and close experience.

3.5 Internal validity and credibility

Strauss and Corbin (2008) suggest the following assumptions on which grounded theory methodology is predicated.

1. Need to go to the field to discover what is really going on.	As researcher, fully emerged in the process alongside the participants, a series of different opinions formed the basis of the discussion up until any new opinion ceased. The participants also contributed the study from their own embodied experiences. This variety brought richness to the discussion.
2. Relevance of theory to the development of a discipline.	Pertinent theories evolved with the empirical findings (shown in Fig 1) scaffold the development of the discipline of human resettlement
3. Complexity and variability of phenomena and of human action.	In human resettlement, problems remain complex, that is, a lack of disquiet for housing and infrastructure needs which has given rise to a plethora of uneven problems concerning human action
4. Belief that persons are actors responding to problematic situations.	In the discourse of human resettlement, the APs and Officials as the key actors responding to problems encountering
5. Assumption that persons act on the basis of meaning.	It is believed that people act sensibly prudently and consciously

6. Understanding that meaning is defined and redefined through interaction.	People make sense of the reality during their interactions iteratively. It was found that both the APs and Officials adjust their positions when mistaken.
7. Sensitivity to the evolving and unfolding nature of events (process).	The process adopted helped maintain sensitivity and reciting events that formed a larger portion of the phenomenon
8. Awareness of the interrelationships among conditions (structure), action (process), and consequences	A set of steps and processes which are the building blocks of the grounded theory where categories drawn from respondents and help focus on making implicit belief systems (ie, consequences) explicit.

Table 1: Assumptions predicated in the Grounded theory

Riege (2003) insists the importance of obtaining a kind of consent (amber light) prior to espouse the findings. Crescentini and Mainardi (2009) conclude that the major difference between internal validity and credibility is owing to the smaller sample size of qualitative studies, since it is claimed that smaller sample sizes cannot be validated. However, the depth and richness of qualitative research counteract the smaller sample size (Crescentini&Mainardi, 2009). Bowen, 2005; Terre Blanche &Durrheim, 2006 recommend the use of multiple sources of data as a source of validation. Bowen(2005) recommends members checking a valid source of integrity. In doing member checking, Glaser, (2002) emphasizes the crucial importance that the participants understand that the study “is not their voice: it is a generated abstraction from their doings and their meanings that are taken as data for the conceptual generation”. Peer debriefing is also a method where the peer reviewer evaluates all areas of the research to include decision-making, methodology, legal and ethical issues, and other matters pertaining to the research (Lewis, 2009). Further, it is hoped that the other researchers are able to transfer the findings of this study to new contexts in their studies by using it as a framework for reflection. These aspects have been reiterated by Terre Blanche &Durrheim(1999). In order for it to be sensible, the researchers declared the limitations anticipated contributions of the study. Crescentini&Mainardi, 2009 recommend a structured process to avoid publication pitfalls. Box 6 explains the process of validity.

Box 6

In this study, a process where three sources of data was used, including memoirs; interviews and literature to confirm the findings. The study utilized member validation where participants were contacted and requested to verify the accuracy of the initial findings. The researchers strived to build rapport with the interviewees in order to obtain honest and open responses. However the challenges were the passive response of the APs who feel that researches are only for education purpose which will bring nothing for them. During the interview, the researchers restated, paraphrased and summarized information and then questioned the participant to determine accuracy. Member checks completed after a study are completed by sharing all of the findings with the participants involved. The participants affirmed that the summaries reflect their views, feelings, and experiences. All the member checks were carried out verbally throughout the conduct of fieldwork. On the other hand, prolonged engagement in the study over a period of four months aided in the ability to detect and account for distortions that might be in the data. It also helped become oriented to the situation so content was appreciated. A peer review was finally undertaken to ensure that all the necessary elements have, as much as possible, fulfilled throughout the study. (Remove)

3.6 Acknowledging Bias and Limitations

Most researchers entail a disciplinary background that establishes a perspective from which to investigate problems (Goulding, 1999). It is important that, in Grounded theory applications, the researchers challenge their biases and acknowledge their own experiences (Julie Bytheway, 2018). Researcher reflexivity is critical to rigor (Jessica L. Johnson et al, 2020). This is essentially the researcher's insight into their own biases and rationale for decision-making as the study progresses. Acknowledging the researcher experience in the subject discourse is ethical attire in research. Critical appraisal skills enable researchers to systematically assess the trustworthiness, relevance and results of published papers (Connor J, et al, 2023). It is important, therefore to map the process as it evolves, use diagrams to illustrate the emergence of the theory, and point out critical junctures in terms of theoretical insights (Goulding, 1999). According to Glaser (2002), getting participants involved in review component is not appropriate. Grounded theory is generated from much data, of which many participants may be empirically unaware. Indeed, grounded theory is not their voice; it is a generated abstraction. The study had a limited number of participants which may have some kind of impact on the generalizability of the results. Interviewing officials in parallel with the affected persons eased out the bias of entertaining one sided opinion.

Box 7 explains the process of acknowledgement.

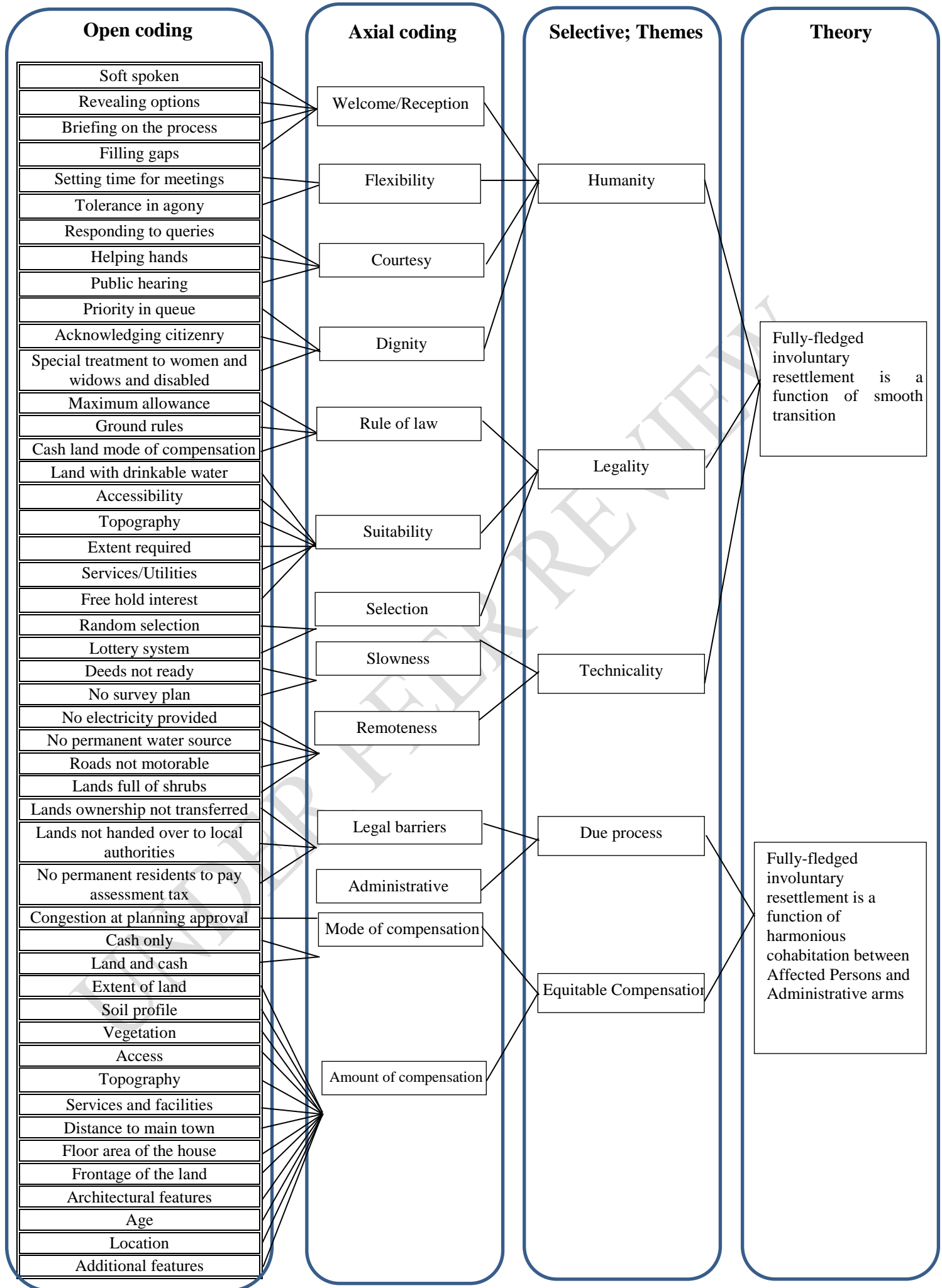
Box 7

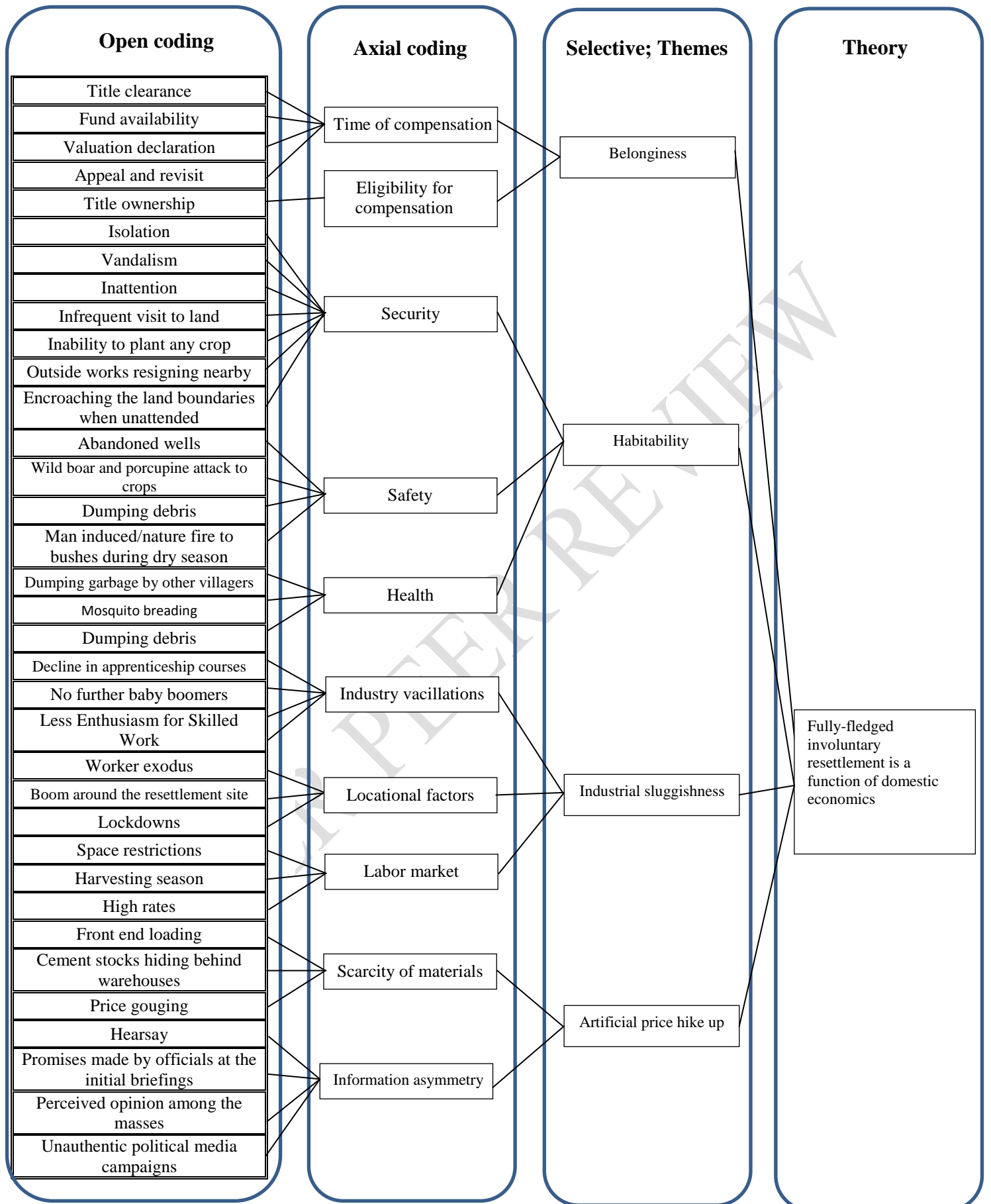
The researcher's bias was minimised by using member checking. Participants were encouraged to share their perceptions and experiences of learning; however they may have chosen not to nor have had the time to include all relevant information and also may not have been able to describe nor be aware of all of their nasty experiences. The researcher judged the point of saturation in order to cease data collection process; however more data could have added valuable information to further the understanding and explanation of human resettlement as a discourse.

The researcher constructed codes that fit the data, as far as possible, by engaging in initial coding. The provisional, initial codes were carefully compared with each other and with data, further elaborated and grouped together based on similarities and differences, leading to fewer but more focused and comprehensive codes. As a result of the iterative process, coding and constant comparison enabled focused codes that are fit tightly with their data. For example, the focused code 'courtesy' had its roots in initial codes like 'helping hands', 'public hearing', 'responding to queries'. Another focused code, 'dignity', had its roots in initial codes like 'priority in queue, 'acknowledge citizenry', 'special treatment to women, widow and the disabled' as indicated in Figure 2. Theoretical sampling is prominent in the iterative process which guided later interviews to fill out emerging categories. These focused codes provided framework for subsequent analysis. Grounded theory methods of focused coding, theoretical coding, constant comparison, memo-writing and theoretical sampling guided the researcher to merge focused codes such as 'flexibility', 'dignity', 'courtesy', into an even more comprehensive focused code developed into a category that labeled 'humanity'. Other groups of focused codes were further merged into other more comprehensive categories such as 'legality', 'technicality', and 'due process'.

Fig.2 Model for open coding and axial coding

UNDER PEER REVIEW





4. Conclusion and Recommendations

Theoretical sampling enables reaching theoretical saturation to a grounded theory with theoretical completeness. In addition, the empirical grounding of the theory led to a few key middle range theories which explain the link between involuntary resettlement and smooth transition. In addition, the grounded theory provided an abstract understanding on meanings and actions and how victims construct them. Further it fine-tuned the qualitative components of relevance and resonance as the participants in the study could recognize the subtle characteristics forming part of the phenomenon, involuntary resettlement. It is clear that the grounded theory is not created exclusively based on actual data but it may also be based on previous knowledge, personal perceptions, preferences and experiences about the research phenomenon. However, grounded theory is an inductive research methodology that substantially avoids preconceived ideas and follows enquiry and self-correction. Hardly the theorists strictly undermine the importance of literature review but stress not to too much depend on the existing literature that may otherwise impair the efficacy of open mindedness. Challenges related to data overwhelming, data inundation, data redundancy, willingness to disclose sensitive information, information asymmetry, thickness of data, treating participants equally, diversified opinion and idiosyncrasy of the individual researchers are inevitable. Along with the theoretical sensitivity, the researchers are to constantly fine tune the approaches to their empirical studies such as empowerment of interviewees, intervention in the dynamics of discussions where desirable, member checking, audit trials and peer-briefing.

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