The Use of Case Study and Grounded Theory Research Strategy in Interpretive Research in Tourism

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to discuss case study and grounded theory research strategy in the field of tourism to encourage the researchers to adopt the qualitative approach in conducting research. This paper addresses the topic on how to improve reliability, validity, and generalizability of qualitative research. Yin (2018) proposed that case study can be used as a research strategy in qualitative research to verify and to extend a theory, meanwhile for Eisenhardt (1989) and Gioia et al. (2012), case study is used to build theory using grounded theory. Both strategies are equally useful in the tourism sector. The choice of the research strategy depends on the research paradigm and how the researchers position themselves in the paradigm inquiry namely: ontologically, epistemologically, and methodologically. This article is significant to encourage the researchers in tourism to adopt a qualitative approach in conducting research when the researchers intend to gain a deep understanding of the phenomena in tourism such as customer behaviour, purchase intention, decision making process, and tourist motivation.

Keywords: Qualitative Approach, Case Study, Grounded Theory

A.   INTRODUCTION

Qualitative approach is deemed to be suitable for research in the tourism industry because the nature of the tourism industry is very complex with many sectors involved such as restaurant, hotel, accommodation, transportation and tour guide (Mura & Sharif, 2015). Qualitative research in tourism is proven able to provide data that is useful for research in tourism development that is related to various stakeholders (Goodson and Phillimore, 2004; Saunders et al., 2003) cited in (Vasilios Priporas, et al. , 2012). Research using a qualitative approach in tourism is regarded as useful based on the perspective that people involved in the tourism industry must be given freedom in giving their opinion and experience without constrained by rigid framework (Veal, 2006). However, there is still a limited amount of research in tourism using a qualitative approach. The cause of this phenomena might be because tourism is a relatively new field in social science that is less advanced theoretically and methodologically compared to other fields in social science (Phillimore & Goodson, 2004). Tourism itself is a complex phenomenon based on the interaction and interrelation of the stakeholders involved in it. However most of the research in tourism focuses on the tangible aspect of it that is readily measurable (Phillimore & Goodson, 2004).

Patton (1990) in (Mura & Khoo-Lattimore, 2018) mentioned that one of the characteristics of qualitative methods is its ability to produce information in a wealth of detail for a relatively smaller number of people and cases that are able to increase the understanding in the particular research topic. If the researcher is looking for in-depth understanding in providing answer for the research question, then the researcher can opt to use qualitative approach in conducting the research because qualitative approach is able to reveal valuable information that cannot be investigated using quantitative approach (Zikmund, 2003) cited in (Hendijani & Yuliana, 2016).

Historically qualitative research emerged from the field of anthropology, sociology, and humanities (Creswell, 2014). Some of the approach in qualitative research are:
1. Narrative research, an inquiry research design that comes from humanities where the researcher studies the life of individuals by asking them to narrate their life stories.

2. Phenomenological research, a research design that comes from philosophy and psychology that has strong philosophical underpinning and involves conducting interviews.

3. Grounded theory, multiple stages of data collection was involved in order to refine the interrelationship of information's categories.

4. Ethnography, the study of shared pattern behavior involving culture of a group of people in its natural setting for an extended period of time.

5. Case study, research approach that is found in many fields that involves evaluation and rigorous analysis of a case, event, activity and process (Creswell, 2014).

Scientific research should be started by pinning the research paradigms. Three elements of paradigm inquiry are: ontology, epistemology, and methodology. Phillimore and Goodson (2004) explained that ontology represents the nature of reality and what can be known about reality, while epistemology is where the researchers positioned themselves to what can be known, and methodology is the way the researcher investigate what to be known (Phillimore & Goodson, 2004). Below is the list of major research paradigms by Phillimore and Goodson (2004) and Creswell (2014).

Table 1 Research Paradigms Comparison

Phillimore and Goodson (2004)	Creswell (2014)
(1) Positivist and post positivist tend to be associated with quantitative research, the relationship between researcher and reality is objective and value free.	(1) Post-positivist , assuming that there is no absolute truth in the world, research is a process of making claims of proving new knowledge.
(2) Critical approaches are empirical research on marginalized groups in the society.	(2) Constructivist, Crotty (1998) in (Creswell, 2014) explained that in constructivism, human constructing meaning when they are engage with the world. It is similar to interpretive paradigm, the term that is used by (Veal, 2006).
(3)Interpretivism believes in multiple reality seeing reality and emphasizes relativism.	(3) Transformative worldview emphasizes on the study of lives and experiences of diverse groups that have traditionally been marginalized. It is similar to the critical paradigm that is mentioned by (Phillimore & Goodson, 2004).
	(4) Pragmatic worldview, pragmatism is not binded by any of one system of philosophy and reality. Pragmatists tend to use mixed methods for collecting and analyzing data rather than using one method only (quantitative or qualitative).

Source: Adapted from Phillimore and Goodson (2004) and Creswell (2014)

Interpretive Research Paradigm

Interpretive research paradigm believes in multiple realities (Phillimore and Goodson 2004) , it is similar to constructivism, the terms used by Creswell (2014). Some of the characteristics of interpretive research paradigm that distinguish it from positivist research paradigm by Schwartz-Shea and Yanow (2014) are: (1) Research is conducted to create meaning and highly contextual, explaining descriptively to answer why/how question; (2) Research design is iterative and dynamically flexible, framework and research question might be changed during data collection; (3) Research is a process to make an event make sense, researcher might benefit from previous developed theory; (4) Concept is developed based from the facts in the field, emphasizing on exploration to local knowledge. This paper will be focusing on

interpretive research paradigm based from the example of the latest articles that are using case study and grounded theory research strategy.

Case Study and Grounded Theory

This paper starts with a discussion on qualitative approach in tourism and focusing on case study research and grounded theory. The purpose of this paper is to discuss case study and grounded theory research strategy in the field of tourism to encourage the researcher in tourism to use a qualitative approach in conducting research. This paper addresses the topic on how to improve reliability, validity, and generalizability of qualitative research. Several characteristics of case study and grounded theory research strategy based on Yin(1981; 1984; 2018), Eisenhardt (1989) and Gioia et al. (2012) are describe which include:

1. The role of the existing theory
2. How to increase the quality of qualitative research
3. The process of conducting the research
4. Data analysis technique
5. How to increase reliability of the finding

The Role of the Existing Theory

Yin (2018) uses theory in the early phase of the study as a base for initial design used in the theory building research. Theory in case study research is used as the basis for analytic generalization and not as a grand theory like in quantitative research (Yin, 2018). While Eisenhardt (1989) and Gioia et al. (2012) suggested that to build theory, it is better not to use theory in the beginning to avoid confirmation bias. Eisenhardt (1989) proposed that case study research should be started from problem definition, followed by construct validation, then followed by case analysis and replication logic (Eisenhardt, 1989). Both Gioia, et al. (2012) and Eisenhardt (1989) mentioned that theory building in qualitative research using case study strategy is highly iterative, analysis begins in early phase of research together with data analysis.

How To Increase The Quality of Qualitative Research

To increase the quality of qualitative research, Gioia et al. (2012) recommended rigorous elaboration on how data and newly emerged concepts are connected. Meanwhile Yin (2018) advised for the use of a case study database which includes all the evidence containing the case study notes, documents, memos, preliminary narratives about the data and maintaining chain of evidence. Chain of evidence is started with a case study question followed by case study protocol, connecting between research questions to protocol topics, links creation for citation to specific sources in the case study database, and case study findings (Yin, 2018). Eisenhardt (1989) support the use of continuous comparison of data and theory in grounded theory that was proposed by Glasser and Strauss (1967), the use of tabular display and graphs for result presentation without changing the meaning after intensive coding that was proposed by Miles and Huberman (1984), and also cross case analysis that is developed by (Bourgeois & Eisenhardt, 1988) cited in (Eisenhardt, 1989). All of those techniques are believed to increase the quality of qualitative research.

The Process of Conducting Research

Eisenhardt (1989) suggested the use of preliminary constructs for the initial design of research to build theory. Firm empirical grounding can be resulted from the emergent theory if the preliminary construct corroborated with existing theory (Eisenhardt, 1989). Yin (2018) stated that a research design should be started from: research questions, prepositions and cases, with reasoning for connecting the data to propositions and using criteria for finding interpretation. Both Eisenhardt (1989) and Yin (2018) agree that research should be started with a research question as a base to make a proposition. Eisenhardt (1989) underlines the importance of research questions in theory building for case study research

strategy. Research focus is needed as a guideline to prevent the researchers getting overwhelmed by a big volume of data. Research design can be shaped using a preliminary specification. It is useful to allow researchers to make construct measurement accurately.

Data Analysis Technique

Gioia, et al. (2012) mentioned that data analysis can be started early at the same time with data collection using coding procedures to find emerging patterns. The process of theory generation is typically iterative, cyclical and non-linear. Interpretive design is allowing flexibility during the research which include changes in the interview questions based on the dynamics in the field (Gioia, et al. , 2012). Eisenhardt (1989) also agreed that data collection and data analysis may happened at the same time, a process that was initially suggested by Glasser and Strauss (1967). Eisenhardt (1989) supported the flexibility to make adjustments during data collection such as adding interview questions and protocols. To analyze the data, Yin (2018) proposes step by step data analysis: (1) Array and display data based on the question or based on the topic. (2) Watch for emerging patterns, insights and concepts. (3) Develop a general analytic strategy based on the emerging patterns, insights, and concepts.

How to Increase Reliability of the Finding

Yin (2018) suggested four tests to test the validity and reliability of the case study that is similar to the one that is used in post-positivist paradigm which include construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliability (Yin, 2018). Construct validity might be improved by the use of multiple sources of evidence, chain of evidence and member checking (Yin, 2018). Internal validity in case study can be increased during the data analysis process by clustering similar themes of the emerging concept, making explanation, and addressing rival explanations and also using logic models. While reliability can be increased by documenting the procedures as explicit as possible (Yin, 2018).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) proposed four basic criteria of trustworthiness which is equal with reliability and validity in positivist and post positivist research: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Decrop, 2004). The use of multiple investigators builds confidence in findings through increasing the creative potential of the study and adding the richness of the data from the complementary insights. Denzin (1978) cited in (Decrop, 2004) proposed that triangulation will limit personal bias and methodology bias and will increase the trustworthiness of the research. Denzin (1978) cited in (Decrop, 2004) identify 4 types of triangulation namely:

1. Data triangulation: primary data (interview, observation), secondary data (books, journal articles, newspaper, regulation, etc)
2. Investigator triangulation: dissertation promotor or colleague that helps read the research to give feedback to reduce researcher bias.
3. Method triangulation: the use of qualitative and quantitative methods for data collection.
4. Theory triangulation: the use of various perspectives to result interpretation. It is important to involve various source of theory to define the construct and the cause and effect relationship.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This study is using qualitative approach with Meta-synthesis method that is used to integrate and interpret qualitative research studies for generating new insights. This study is conducted by analysing and summarizing individual studies to uncover patterns, themes, and relationships across multiple qualitative studies on the chosen topic (Dawson, 2019). Meta-synthesis can provide a deeper understanding of the particular topic by examining, synthesizing, and interpreting the findings of the studies in the particular topic. This study is discussing 10 recent studies using case study and grounded theory approach in tourism. Meta-synthesis method is applied by discussing the type of study and the role

of the researcher, the role of existing theory and literature review, data collection and analysis technique, and how to increase the reliability of the finding.

C. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

There are ten recent studies using qualitative approach with Case Study and Grounded Theory research method that will be discussed in this paper. The research paper can be found in Table 2

Table 2 Recent Example of Qualitative Research in Tourism Using Case Study and Grounded Theory

Authors	The type of study and role of the researcher	The role of the existing theory and literature review	Data collection and analysis technique	How to increase reliability of the finding
Abdelfattah & Eddy-U (2019)	The lead author enters the research as an insider (emic perspective). He provided the background for proposing the research questions based on his previous job as a tour guide in Egypt.	The study analyzed previous studies that discuss tourist's motivation and tourist's expectations. No particular theory is used for the reasearch's framework.	The collection and the analysis of data is conducted at the same time. Triangulation is used for data collection and data analysis.	Data triangulation: interview, field notes, observation. Researcher triangulation: data is analyzed by groups of researchers. Member checking: the interpretation of the interview is given to the interviewee to check whether the interview results are interpreted correctly.
Arroyo, Barbieri, Sotomayor , & Knollenberg, (2019)	Using interpretivist paradigm	Previous study and theory is used in the conclusion section to support the findings	Data is analyzed using thematic analysis with open and axial coding. Triangulation of data and peer debriefing is also applied.	Interpretive paradigm facilitate the knowledge creation through the study between participants and researchers.
Proyrungroj (2016)	Researcher immersed him/her self in the setting (emic perspective)	Social Exchange Theory is used as a framework to understand the process, causes, and consequences of the interaction and relationship between volunteer tourists and host,	The researcher was using six steps of data analysis process by Braun and Clarke (2006) which includes:data familiarization, initial codes formulation, themes searching,	Interpretive paradigm is used to acquire an understanding that is rich, in-depth and holistic about the relationship between hosts and volunteer tourists.

		throughout their interaction	themes identification, organizing the themes under different names, report making process.	
Luo, Lam, & Ye (2019)	Exploratory study, adopting a grounded theory approach considering entertainment tourism is relatively new. Grounded theory is used to answer "what" question .	Content analysis was used in this research to prevent forming any "a priori" theory. Thus the result can be open for further discussion.	Using constant comparison technique by Glasser and Strauss, back to back technique was used to translate the transcript immediately after the interviews.	This study positions the result of the study in supporting previous study. Three researchers examine the transcript independently and work together to build the framework, this method allowed inter coder reliability.
Pham & Truong-Dinh, (2018)	Exploratory research, answering "what" questions.	The basis of this research is Co-creation theory by Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004). Previous studies on co creation are mentioned in literature review to build the background of the study.	Using semi-structured questionnaires through in-depth interviews using snowball sampling, looking for expertise in the research topic. Tabular data is used to display data analysis to discuss the emerging topic.	Study's result were achieved by discussing the relevant theories and previous research related to co-creation in tourism and customer experience.
Martin & Woodside (2011)	Grounded theory using both etic and emic perspective to make sense of the thinking process of leisure travel which include conscious and unconscious beliefs, attitudes and choices.	Consumer Psychology Paradigm by Cohen (1999) and Gestalt modeling are used as a framework to get the holistic picture on consumers' thinking process in planning their holiday.	Onsite interviews to five informants were used to adopt an approach that is more reflexive for a thorough analysis.	The researchers are using thick description on the discussion to increase validity and reliability of the findings.
Keshavarzian & Wu (2017)	Interpretivist paradigm is used because by using Repertory Grid	Previous study explaining travelers' decision-making	Interview using Repertory Grid Technique is used to collect	Repertory Grid Technique is highly structured and allowed

	Technique, the researcher agrees that there is no absolute reality, the individual makes his/ her own reality.	process is discussed in the literature review to picture how complicated the decision making process was by the travelers before they decided to go for holiday.	statements by interviewee. Next, the interview result is categorized into similar themes followed by content analysis to classify the various themes.	interviewees to use their own words to describe their answer to prevent interviewer's bias.
Marais, Du Plesis, & Saayman (2017)	Exploratory study, answering "what" questions.	Previous studies discussing key success factors were listed in the literature review.	Data was collected using seven structured interviews to the informants. Creswell's six steps in data analysis and interpretation were used to transcribed and analysed the data.	Trustworthiness of this research was achieved by coding and data recording.
Holmes (2017)	Case study using grounded theory is used to answer the "how" question. Reality is built along the way in the research (interpretive paradigm).	Previous studies using Integrated Rural Tourism (IRT) are discussed to build the background of the study. IRT is used to examine to which extent it can be applied to the wine tourism and wine industry in Ontario.	The interview is transcribed word by word and analyzed using the NVivo program for coding in two rounds to categorize the themes.	The result of the study is compared to previous study to increase generalizability.
Han & Chan (2013)	Qualitative method is used because of the exploratory nature and lack of empirical data from Hong Kong on customer perception on Green Hotel.	There is no theory mentioned in this study. Previous studies on green hotels were mentioned as a means of comparison of informants' answers and the practice of green hotels.	Responses were recorded, analyzed, and grouped under similar themes.	The result of the study is compared with previous study to increase generalization level.

In the study by Abdelfattah & Eddy-U (2019), the lead author enters the research as an insider, using emic perspective. The introductory section discusses tourist motivation and expectation from the previous studies, no particular theory serves as the research base. The collection of the data and the analysis of the data was conducted at the same time. Data triangulation, researcher triangulation and member checking are used to increase credibility and quality of the qualitative study. Data triangulation includes: interview, field notes, observation. Researcher triangulation includes data analysis by a group of researchers. Member checking is conducted by giving the interpretation of the interview to the interviewee to check whether the interview is interpreted correctly.

In the study by Arroyo, et al., (2019), the researchers were using interpretivist paradigms. Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis using open coding and followed by axial coding. Previous study and theory was employed in the conclusion of the study for supporting the results of the research. Triangulation and peer debriefing was also used to improve the reliability of the findings. The creation of knowledge was facilitated by the study between participants and researchers using interpretive paradigm. The researchers chose interpretive paradigm because they aim to ground theory from the data in this research.

In the study by Proyrungroj (2016), the researcher immersed him/herself in the setting as an insider (emic perspective). Even though the researcher was using interpretive paradigm, he/she still uses theory in the beginning of the study. Social Exchange Theory was employed as a framework to understand the process, causes, and consequences of the interaction and relationship between volunteer tourists and hosts, throughout their interaction. The researcher was using six steps of data analysis process by Braun and Clarke (2006) which includes: data familiarization, initial codes formulation, themes searching, themes identification, organizing the themes under different names, report making process. Interpretive paradigm was used to acquire an understanding that is rich, in-depth and holistic about the relationship between hosts and volunteer tourists.

In the study by Luo, et al. (2019) exploratory study with grounded theory approach was adopted considering entertainment tourism is relatively new in the study of tourism. Grounded theory was employed to answer the "what" question. Content analysis was adopted in this research to prevent forming any "a priori" theory, so the result can be open for further discussion. Constant comparison technique by (Glaser & Strauss, 2017) was applied in this research with back to back technique to translate the transcript immediately after the interviews. The result of the study was positioned in supporting the previous study. Three researchers examined the transcript independently and work together to build the framework, this method allowed inter coder reliability.

In the study by Pham & Truong-Dinh (2018) exploratory research is used in answering "what" questions. Theory of co-creation by Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004) was utilized as the basis of the research. Previous studies on co-creation are mentioned in literature review to build the background of the study. This study is using semi-structured questionnaires through in-depth interviews using snowball sampling, looking for expertise in the research topic. Tabular data by (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014) is utilized to display data analysis to discuss the emerging topic. Study's result were achieved by discussing the relevant theories and previous research related to co-creation in tourism and customer experience.

In the study by Martin & Woodside (2011) the researchers are using grounded theory with both etic and emic perspective to make sense of the thinking process of leisure travel which include conscious and unconscious beliefs, attitudes and choices. The researchers were using Consumer Psychology Paradigm by Cohen (1999) and Gestalt modeling as a framework to get the holistic picture on consumers' thinking process in planning their holiday. Onsite interviews to five informants were used to support an

approach that is more reflexive for a thorough analysis. The reliability and validity of the findings were improved using thick description on the discussion section.

Interpretivist paradigm is adopted in the study by Keshavarzian & Wu (2017). The use of Repertory Grid Technique indicates that the researcher agrees that there is no absolute reality, the individual makes his/ her own reality. Previous study explaining travelers' decision-making process is discussed in the literature review to picture how complicated the decision making process taken by the travelers before they decided to go for holiday. Interview using Repertory Grid Technique is used to collect statements by interviewee. Next, the interview result is categorized into similar themes followed by content analysis to classify the various themes. Reliability of the finding is increased by using Repertory Grid Technique which is highly structured and allows interviewees to use their own words to describe their answer to prevent interviewer's bias.

Study by Marais, et al. (2017) is an exploratory study, answering the "what" question. Previous studies discussing key success factors were listed in the literature review. Seven structured interviews were conducted to collect data from the informants. Creswell's six steps in data analysis and interpretation were used to transcribed and analysed the data. Trustworthiness of this research was improved by the use of coding and data recording.

Study by Holmes (2017) is a case study using grounded theory to answer "how" question. Reality was built along the way in the research (interpretive paradigm). Previous studies using Integrated Rural Tourism (IRT) are discussed to build the background of the study. The interview was transcribed word by word and analyzed using the NVivo program for coding in two rounds to categorize the themes. The result of the study was compared to previous study to increase generalizability.

In the study by Han & Chan (2013) qualitative method is chosen because of lack of empirical data on customer perception on Green Hotel in Hong Kong and the exploratory nature of the study. There is no theory mentioned in this study. Previous studies on green hotels were mentioned as a means of comparison of informants' answers and the practice of green hotels. Responses from the informants were recorded, analyzed, and grouped under similar themes. The result of the study is compared with previous study to increase the generalization level.

DISCUSSION

The ten examples of the qualitative articles in tourism above are using interpretive research paradigm which can be seen by the assumption and system of believes chosen by the researchers as explained by Schwartz-Shea & Yanow (2014) which include: (1) Believe in multiple realities, like in the study by Luo et al. (2019) that asking respondent from various sector in the entertainment industries to get various perspective from the stakeholders ; (2) Using thick description to explain choice of place and timing of interview like the study by Abdelfattah & Eddy-U (2019), Pham & Truong-Dinh (2018) and (3) Highly contextual, like study by Arroyo, et al., (2019), that specifically explaining about the culture of Andean community and study by Proyrungroj (2016), that explain about the culture in Thailand; (4) Meaning is socially constructed, happened through interaction between host and guest as the subject of the research in the study by Proyrungroj (2016), (5) Believe that meaning emerge from the field during the course of the study Proyrungroj (2016), Luo, et al. (2019) Martin & Woodside (2011) Keshavarzian & Wu (2017); (6) Reflexive approach, based from the view that the researchers might be wrong in their assumption (Yanow, 2014) like in the study by Martin & Woodside (2011) the result of the interviews were read and revise by group of people in the team; (7) Informant is purposely chosen due to their skill and competence, study by Marais, et al. (2017) is about Japanese tourists so informant is purposely chosen based on that criteria, meanwhile respondents from various background and nationalities is chosen to get variety of responses in the study by Han & Chan (2013); (8) Flexible in nature, like the study by Holmes (2017) that

is aimed to answer "how" questions. It was started with general themes, theory is added as the research progress; (9) Justification for choice of informant, choice of place, and timing for interview is provided as a background for the researchers interpretation of the data Abdelfattah & Eddy-U (2019) ,Arroyo, et al., (2019), Han & Chan (2013).

D. CONCLUSION

Yin (2018) proposed that case study can be used as a research strategy in the qualitative research to verify and to extend a theory, meanwhile for Eisenhardt (1989) and Gioia et al. (2012), case study is used to build theory using grounded theory. Both strategies are equally useful in the tourism sector. The choice of the research strategy depends on the research paradigm and how the researchers positions themselves in the paradigm inquiry namely: ontologically, epistemologically, and methodologically. If the researchers aim to use case study to test a theory then they can use the positivist/post-positivist paradigm that positioned the theory in the beginning of the research. On the other hand, if the researchers aim to use grounded theory in case study to build a theory then they can proceed with an interpretive paradigm that believes reality is built by individuals and the research begins with only a little knowledge about existing theory to avoid conclusion bias. However, based from the examples of the qualitative research in tourism above, it is possible for the researchers to use the theory at the beginning of the research while adopting an interpretative paradigm at the same time like the study by Proyrungroj (2016), and study by Martin & Woodside (2011). This paper is not meant to be a vigorous research about case study and grounded theory in qualitative research in tourism. The aim of this paper is to explain those two strategies in qualitative research to encourage more researchers in tourism to adopt case study and grounded theory as their research strategy. Further study about other research strategies in qualitative approach should be conducted to increase the familiarity level of the selection for the qualitative research strategy in tourism so the number of researchers adopting a qualitative approach in their research in tourism will be increased.

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