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European Journal of Information Systems (EJIS)

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Special Issue on “Applying the Grounded Theory Approach in Information Systems Research”

GUEST EDITORS

Natalia Levina, New York University (nlevina@stern.nyu.edu)

David Birks, Southampton University (d.f.birks@soton.ac.uk)

Walter Fernandez, Australia National University (walter.fernandez@anu.edu.au)

Syed Nasirin, Brunel University (Syed.Nasirin@brunel.ac.uk)

MOTIVATION AND OVERVIEW

Grounded theory approach has been used widely in information systems (IS) research since 1970s. It has and will carry on to offer ample possibilities for advancing IS research in the foreseeable future. However, the approaches have been practiced in several diverse ways, often drawing from traditions outside IS studies.

Although there are numerous methodological textbooks and devoted IS websites available to explain the grounded theory approach and its processes in detail, many IS researchers throughout the globe have some level of misunderstanding and are still not convinced on what just the approach is, let alone its procedure. As Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe (2006, p. 122) have argued that, *“Unfortunately many students [researchers] merely resort to quoting Glaser and Straus (1967) as a way of making their choice of a qualitative approach sound respectable. Often they misunderstand both the rigour that is involved in developing a “grounded theory” and the hard work and intellectual challenge that is involved”*.

As a consequence of this lack of knowledge, some IS researchers still believe that grounded theory approach is not thorough enough and should not be accepted as one of the canons for doing good science. Nonetheless, unlike the quantitative research approaches in which so much external structure has been imposed upon the data, there are various challenging problems involved in using the Grounded Theory Approach that requires prudent consideration from both the novice as well as experienced IS researchers. The primary objective of this issue is thus to publish leading examples of how the approach was applied to the field of IS, and by discussing these examples further, its challenges and recurring problems faced by IS researchers can be well reflected and valued. The special issue will focus on reflections arising from practical field applications of Grounded Theory Approach in researching information systems (i.e., more on ‘how’ than on ‘what’).

For consideration in this special issue, philosophical, conceptual, or propositional papers must be clearly anchored to original empirical work or published IS exemplars.

The editors invite papers related to (but not limited to) the following areas:

- Practical experience reports of success or failure of the approach, and lessons learned (e.g., reasons leading to the employment of the approach).
- Original exemplars which demonstrate that Grounded Theory Approach can be used to make significant contributions in Information Systems.
- Comparative or analytical studies of previously published IS Grounded Theory Approach exemplars that yield significant and novel insights into the approach in our context.
- Different design/modes of the approach (Glaserian, Straussian, and other school of traditions). Inductive versus deductive approach to Grounded Theory Approach research design. What should come first (data or theory) conundrum? Mixing Grounded Theory Approach with other qualitative and quantitative methodologies (triangulation exemplars).
- Strategy for data collection (instruments and procedures in collecting the data, sampling approach, coding problems, etc.) and analyses (challenges, procedures, simultaneity and saturation issues, etc.).
- Theory generation versus theory confirmation (substantive, formal and normative, etc.).
- Measuring the quality of the data (validity and reliability issues, e.g., credibility, originality, resonance, usefulness debates).
- The moral responsibility and ethical challenges facing researchers and the approach they have used to employ the grounded theory approach.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES AND IMPORTANT DATES

All contributions will be subjected to at least a double blind review process. There should be a separate title page, indicating the names and addresses of the authors. Please submit original manuscripts which observe the EJIS published style preferences:

http://www.palgrave-journals.com/ejis/author_instructions.html

Manuscripts must be sent electronically to one of the special issue editors no later than August 31st, 2009.

Contact the special issue editors for further submission instructions.

Reference

EASTERBY-SMITH, M., THORPE, R. and LOWE, A. (2006). *Management research: An introduction (2nd edition)*. London: Sage Publications.