
Table 1

Human Ecology Approach to Grounded Theory

Phenomenon of Interest→	↓
Theoretical Conditioning→	Answers three critical questions; (a) What is the real issue?; (b) What are the facts as we understand them now?; and (c) What is the role of the researcher? ↓
General Sorting	→ Generating awareness of human ecology under study. ↓
Reflective Sorting	→ Examining key concepts, phenomena, events, then organizing them according to knowledge of ecology. Describing setting, actors, process, events. Useful for triangulation and verification. ↓
Selective Questioning	→ Systematically defining area of interest through questioning. Assessing discoveries obtained during reflective and general sorting that lead to developing study purpose and forming the grand tour question. ↓
Protocol Development→	Pilot protocol: lifted from theoretical conditioning; formal protocol: developed from pilot procedures ↓
Open Coding	→ Systematic sorting data via categorizing events and concepts by properties and dimensional range. ↓
Reflective Coding	→ Comparing categories generated through open coding to understanding of the ecology. Open coding fractures the data--reflective coding determines their source and uncovers their properties, processes, dimensions, context and strategies for understanding their consequences as related to ecology. ↓
Reflective Coding	→ Tool used to bridge reflective coding and selective interpretation.
Matrix	Useful in isolating, then defining the core category by its linkages to properties, processes, dimensions, context, and for understanding the consequences. ↓

Table 1 (continued)

Selective Interpretation →	Identifying key theoretical underpinnings of emerging theory. Story line, developed to reply to grand tour question, is rich description of core category and its related properties. ↓
Consequences of the Emerging Theory →	Verifying process that examines the emergent theory for fit and relevance to the human ecology. Checks for credibility, transferability, and dependability of emergent theory. ↓
Meaning of Emerging Theory	→ Identifying impact of the theory on current theoretical literature. ↓
Conditional Matrix	→ Multi-dimensional diagram or model for analyzing consequences of emerging relationships on the ecology and in disseminating the theory meaning. ↓
Theory Generation	→ Concise statement of theory generated from data derived from the human ecology. Statement includes potential impacts theory may have on the ecology.
