

More Than One Kind: Different Strands of Grounded Theory Used in Library and Information Science

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ABSTRACT

To examine how different strands or versions of grounded theory have been used in LIS, we focus on three high-profile LIS journals (i.e., *Journal of Documentation*, *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology*, and *Library & Information Science Research*) known for their high impact and wide coverage of qualitative research. Literature searches were conducted on the Web of Science in February 2023, and research articles using grounded theory were included for analysis. Qualitative content analysis was used for data analysis. A coding protocol was developed, consisting of the following methodological elements: (1) versions of grounded theory being used; (2) levels of grounded theory (i.e., macro level, micro level); (3) data collection methods (e.g., interviews, focus groups); (4) data analysis methods (e.g., constant comparative analysis, open coding, and selective coding); and (5) overall characteristics of grounded theory (e.g., simultaneous data collection and analysis, inductive analysis, and emergent design). During the pilot coding session, each author coded ten randomly selected papers independently. The pilot coding results show that Charmazian (constructivist) grounded theory approach was the most popular version, and grounded theory was predominantly used as a research design or methodology, with interviews as the most frequently employed data collection method and constant comparative analysis being the most commonly used data analysis technique.

ALISE RESEARCH TAXONOMY TOPICS

Research methods

AUTHOR KEYWORDS

Grounded theory; qualitative research; research methodology; library and information science

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