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Original Research

Constructivist Grounded Theory Practice in Accountability Research

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Abstract

This article offers the application of constructivist grounded theory in inquiring dimensions of accountability in education. The classical version of grounded theory, which was aligned with the positivist epistemology, has been well discussed in qualitative research. However, the constructivist version of grounded theorizing concerning education has not been adequately articulated in the existing literature. In response to this methodological gap, this paper discusses the canons of constructivist grounded theory in reference to inquiring school actors' accountability for service delivery in education. The paper draws empirical evidence from the author's study conducted in the context of community schools in Nepal. The paper argues that theory construction in constructivist grounded theory design is accomplished through the interaction of both data-indicated and extant theoretical concepts by integrating inductive, abductive and deductive reasoning during various stages of the inquiry.The paper also argues that, in constructivist grounded theory, it is not the data saturation as such but the level of researcher's satisfaction where the grounded theorizing terminates. The paper concludes that the constructivist epistemology of grounded theorizing is useful in addressing the localized understanding of accountability in the decentralized context of education governance in Nepal.

Keywords: Constructivist grounded theory; accountability; theoretical sampling; induction; deduction; abduction

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Introduction

Grounded theory method is a systematic inquiry of theory construction through the integration of inductive, deductive and abductive reasoning. It is inductive because the preliminary theoretical concepts are assumed based on the data which, in turn, provide a space for the abduction of ideas. In abduction,the best possible option or assumption is chosen from among the similar ones (Charmaz, 2017c). It paves the way for deductive reasoning to test the chosen assumption against further data and provisional categories. Since the earliest days, when Glaser and Strauss (1967) created the grounded theory, the method has undergone several modifications. Initially, grounded theory was underpinned by the post/positivist epistemology which is known as the modernist (1650-1970) and blurred genre (1970-1986) moment (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Locke, 2001) in the development of qualitative research. During those days, grounded theory method was popular and revolutionary in that it was a challenge to the domination of quantitative inquiry in social science research.

Grounded theory evolved significantly over time. It is "marked by differences of opinions and divergences in paradigm, philosophies, genres, approaches and methods" (Ralf, Birks, & Chapman, 2015, p. 1). The founders of the grounded theory diverged in terms of underlying epistemology, the role of prior theory and coding procedure (Seidel & Urquhart, 2013). The original version of grounded theory—originally described by Glaser and Strauss—reflected a modernist ontology (Charmaz, 2006; Seidel & Urquhart, 2013). Other philosophical positions such as constructivism, postmodernism, and criticalism have also provided an alternative approach to grounded theory methodology (Ralf et al., 2015).

From the post/positivism of Glaser and Strauss (1967) to the symbolic interactionism and pragmatism of Strauss and Corbin (1990) and to the constructivism of Charmaz (2008), grounded theorists offered new epistemological and ontological perspectives contextual to specific time and place (Ralf et al., 2015; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Following the epistemology of constructivism, Charmaz (2006) assumed that in grounded theory approach neither theories nor data are discovered; theories are generated by the mutual construction of knowledge by the researcher and the participants. Based on this assumption, she offered a more recent development of Constructivist Grounded Theory (CGT) in the mid-nineties (Charmaz, 2006, 2014; Fram, 2013; Seidel & Urquhart, 2013). In this way, post/positivism of Glaser and Strauss (1967) to the symbolic interactionism and pragmatism of Strauss and Corbin (1990) to the constructivism of Charmaz (2000) formed the basic developmental stages of grounded theory in qualitative research.

The classic grounded theorists Glaser and Strauss (1967) advocated delaying the conversation with extant literature to keep data safe from contamination of the received theory. Later Strauss and Corbin (1990) acknowledged that the researchers "bring to the inquiry a considerable background in professional and disciplinary literature" (p. 48).

Glaser's version seemed ambiguous. Later in Theoretical Sensitivity (1978), Glaser himself maintained, "It is necessary for grounded theorists to know many theoretical codes in order to be sensitive to rendering explicitly the subtleties of the relationship in his data" (p. 72). Regarding constructivist grounded theory, Charmaz (2006) also maintained that "delaying the review encourages you to articulate your ideas" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 165). Whether the review of literature be delayed or accompanied with grounded theory process has been a point of discussion and it needs to be verified by further empirical evidences.

The constructive version of grounded theory has gained currency in the current literature of qualitative research after Charmaz introduced it (Higginbottom & Lauridsen, 2014). Mills, Bonner, and Francis (2006a) explored the implication of constructivist research design concerning counteracting the power imbalance and role of reflection in grounded theory inquiry. Their discussion centred on the methodological processes of CGT. In another article 'The Development of Constructivist Grounded Theory', Mills et al. (2006b) examine CGT on ontological and epistemological grounds. They view the evolution of CGT in a methodological spiral that begins with Glaser and Strauss (1967) and continues to Charmaz's version. Charmaz's (2010) grounded theory explored the chronic illness of people, their strategies of managing their lives and its effects on self and identity. Charmaz (2011) also justifies the importance of CGT in social justice research and critical inquiry.

While reviewing the roots and development of CGT,Higginbottom and Lauridsen (2014) conclude that the difference in several versions of grounded theory could be seen in their overarching goals and their perspectives of the nature of reality. Moreover, Ralph et al. (2015) explore methodological dynamism of grounded theory. They uncover that "it is a process guided by symbolic interactionism, in which generation of researchers present" (p. 2). Ralph et al. (2015, p. 3) continue that such generations are related with different moments of the development of the qualitative research such as "traditionalism (1900–1950), modernism (1950–1970), blurred genres (1970–1986), the crisis of representation (1986–1990), postmodernism (1990–1995), post-experimental inquiry (1995–2000), and the methodologically contested present (2000–2010)." These moments represent particular perspectives on how people make sense of the world. People symbolically interact with contemporary philosophical paradigms at each moment. The methodological approach to grounded theory offered is "debated, interpreted and adopted" (Ralph et al., 2015, p. 3) in light of each moment. It was an act of observing and explaining how and why the grounded theory approach has changed since its inception.

Charmaz (2015) discusses methodological measures and pedagogical strategies of using grounded theory and theory construction. Following this, in the special invited paper, Charmaz (2017a) establishes that CGT uses the methodological strategies of the original version and shifts its epistemological foundations from earlier versions of the grounded

theory method. Again in 'Power of Constructive Grounded Theory for Critical Inquiry', Charmaz (2017b) justifies CGT for critical inquiry by relating it to the philosophy of pragmatism.

In using later versions of the grounded theory, scholars were much clear in using the prior theoretical concept in building theory. Bryman (2016) maintains that researchers need to be sensitive to the existing conceptualization of the research under study so that "their investigations are focused and can build upon the work of others" (p. 450). Locke (2001) uses the combination of "field-based story and theory-based story" (p.122). The field-based story is an emerged theoretical concept from the data and the theoretical story is the pre-existing theoretical concept in the field. At this point, to develop a theory a conversation with the theoretical story is suggested. Charmaz (2006, 2014) emphasizes the need to create a dialogue and conversation in the substantive area. She suggests a prior review of the literature to "position the study and clarify its contribution" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 168). Seidel and Urquhart (2013) write about three levels of important debates in using grounded theory related to "the underlying epistemology, role of prior theory, and coding procedures" (p. 238). They claim that different variations in grounded theory are the result of these debates.

These scholarly discussions present CGT's position at the theoretical level with a focus on justifying its application in diverse contexts. Such representative reviews have submitted two-fold commonalities in their presentation: they sketched the historical evolution of CGT and they explored the scope of the application of CGT in new contexts. Such discussions mostly centred on the theoretical level justifying the appropriateness of CGT. They have a little discussion about how the components of CGT have been put into empirical practices. More so, scholars' consent on an interactive conversation with the extant theoretical concepts in constructive grounded theory. However, these kinds of literature have not given any empirical evidence of how it works in the specifics of the local context. Instead, these raised a couple of questions: what features form the core of CGT? What are the similarities and differences between CGT and older versions of the grounded theory method? How are the characteristics and canons of CGT applied and contribute to theorizing in accountability research in education? Where does the theory really lie? How does the interaction take place between the researcher and the research participants? In response to such questions, I intend to extend the application of CGT in area of exploring accountability in education. This article aims to demonstrate the practice of using the constructivist version of grounded theory in accountability research. The pairing of CGT with accountability seems logical in that understanding and practice of accountability in the decentralized governance system of Nepal is shaped by the culture and political economy of the local context. That is to say, knowledge is constructed out of the dynamic interaction between the researcher, participants and the context rather than merely discovered out of the existing situation.

Methodology

Methodologically, apart from the review of related literature, I drew empirical data from my ongoing research conducted during 2016-2018 in two community schools of Nepal. The study aimed at exploring 'what it means to be accountable for school heads for service delivery in school'. Open-ended interview, observation of the school events and school actors' performance, and document study were the methods of inquiry. Putting the headteacher (HT) at the centre of the web of school service delivery, I chose teachers, students, parents and School Management Committee members as research participants. Using the canon and procedure of CGT, I developed six core theoretical categories of understanding accountability in education service delivery. In this article, my focus is on demonstrating how key ingredients of CGT have been put into action to generate the grounded theoretical constructs of understanding accountability. I, finally, argued that construction of theory under the CGT approach calls for interacting with both the data-indicated theory and the extant theory of the broader field.

The subsequent parts of the article are structured as follows. First, I begin with the brief overview of CGT and its strategies, contradictions and similarities existed between the previous version and CGT. Then, I discuss the application of CGT strategies in my research context. Next, I argue that theorizing in CGT is accomplished through the interaction of field-based data-indicated theoretical concepts and the extant theoretical concepts.

Nature of Constructivist Grounded Theory

The nature of reality (ontology), the relationship between the researcher and the research participants (epistemology), and the best way to discover the reality (methodology) shape understanding and process of the research (Annells, 1996; Clarke, 2003; Guba & Lincoln, 2005). This forms the research paradigm. Grounded theory method originated in the post/positivist ground has been evolved and moved toward the constructivist inquiry paradigm in its later developments (Annells, 1996; Clarke, 2005). Methodologically, in constructivism, the researcher engages in an inquiry process that creates knowledge through construction of knowledge through a dialectical understanding of the phenomenon. The purpose of the research is not only to expose the reality but more importantly empower and sensitize the participants involved in the research process (Charmaz, 2016). Thus, constructivism has been regarded as a process of socially created knowledge product rather than just a mirror of reality (Charmaz, 2011).

With an awareness of paradigm or philosophical positions, it is possible to identify within which ontological, epistemological and methodological paradigm of inquiry the grounded theory method is philosophically situated. According to Glaser (1992), the classic grounded theory method is based on the concept of looking for "what is, not what might be" (p. 67) while searching for "true meaning" (p. 65). This concept is related to the

objective knowledge of the world. Later, Strauss and Corbin's (1994) work took a departure from the classic grounded theory method suggesting that a conditional matrix should be applied to data analysis. This means that microsocial factors such as individual or group behaviours, social, political or economic power relations need to be considered as possible conditions influencing social interaction. Likewise, the relativist ontology holds that reality consists of locally (re-)created knowledge. This demands an active role of the researcher in the research process whereby knowledge is kindled through the interaction of multiple perspectives (Mertens, 2015; Parker & Myrick, 2011).

It can be argued from the preceding ontological, epistemological and methodological discussion of grounded theory method that the classic post-positivist mode established by Glaser and Strauss (1967) leans ontologically toward critical realism, and a modified objectivist epistemology. There are several versions of grounded theory "depending on the researcher's ontological and epistemological beliefs" (Mills et al., 2006b, p. 27). Following this, Charmaz (2006, 2014) has taken a step further. She announced that "Researchers can use basic grounded theory guidelines with twenty-first-century methodological assumptions and approaches" (p. 9). It made it possible for the grounded theory to be a flexible approach instead of being a strict methodology (Charmaz, 2011).

The constructivist research paradigm denies the existence of an objective reality. It asserted that realities are social constructions of the mind; and there are as many constructions possible as there are individuals (Girod-Seville & Perret, 2009; Mills et al., 2006a; Starks & Trinidad, 2007). This conceptual framework makes room for understanding multiple realities in constructivism. Charmaz (2005) claims grounded theory to be an analytical tool for analyzing processes for "studying social justice inquiry and social justice issues" (p. 508) with a focus on equitable distribution of resources, justice and eradication of oppression. Charmaz's position is that the classical version of grounded theory method minimizes the interpretive and constructionist aspects of the inquiry. She emphasises the need for social justice and equity perspectives in social research.

Alternatively, CGT method seems to be an evolved form of traditional grounded theory method that is relativist in orientation having multiplicity of truths that make up participants' and researchers' lives (Charmaz, 2006; Mills et al., 2006b) and their ability to effect change (Mills, 2009). It follows from this that theories and propositions are constructed by the researchers based on their interactions with the field (Charmaz, 2000, 2006). In other words, knowledge is created with the interaction of the researchers and the research participants. It varies from one context to another depending on the interpretation of the people. Consequently, the methodology of constructivism holds that knowledge is valid when it fits a given situation. This principle is illustrated by Glasersfeld (1984, as cited in Girod-Seville & Perret, 2009) using a metaphor of a key. "A key fits if it opens the lock it is supposed to open" (p. 27). It implies that the focus of the constructivist methodology is

on the construction of knowledge making the role of research participants, researcher and research context significant in the research process.

In CGT, the relativist ontology, subjectivist epistemology and naturalistic methodology reshape the interactive relationship between the researcher and the research participants in the research process. In doing so, Mills et al. (2006a) maintained that "a constructivist approach requires the creation of a sense of reciprocity between participants and the researcher in the construction of meaning and, ultimately, a theory that is grounded in the participants' and researcher's experiences"(Mills et al., 2006a, p. 9).According to Charmaz (2017), CGT holds pragmatist and symbolic interactionist heritage both philosophically and sociologically. She positions herself that the paradigmatic shift has brought about changes in the epistemological foundations of different versions of grounded theory. To make it explicit, she presents the major differences between objectivist and constructivist research in terms of divergent research practices as below.

Table 1

Approaches to Grounded Theory

Objectivist or Post/positivist Approach	Pragmatist or Constructivist Approach
• Allows no preconceptions (from the literature review and extant theories). • Treats data as unproblematic and self-correcting: "All is data" (Glaser, 1998). • Reflexivity is optional discover generalities abstract of time, place, or individuals—erases difference. • Methods are neutral. • Positivist theory seeks causes. looks for explanations and emphasizes generality and universality. • Follows the scientific methods. • Assumes an external reality. • Discovers abstract generalities. • Separates facts and values.	• Grapples with preconceptions Advocates "theoretical agnosticism" (Henwood & Pidgeon, 2003). • Assumes data are co-constructed, relationships matter. • Reflexivity is crucial for data analyses, and methods are constructed in specific times, locations, and situations. • Methods reflect values. • Theorizes the interpretative work that the research participants do; theory depends of researcher's view. • Emphasizes problem solving. • Assumes a fluid, an indeterminate reality. • Defines multiple perspectives. • Studies people's actions to solve emergent problem. • Joins facts and values.

(Source: Charmaz, 2014, 2017b, p. 38)

As stated above, the constructivist version of the grounded theory goes beyond the positivist boundary of the conventional grounded theory research process. Knowledge

generated is workable in the specifics of the contexts and conditions. The constructed knowledge is temporal in time and place dimensions. Having understood the basic tenets and nature of the constructivist grounded theory, in the following sections, I am going to discuss how basic ingredients of the constructivist grounded theory worked in my research context with a particular focus on the accountability research in education.

Constructivist Grounded Theory in Action

Despite contradictions and debates existed between various versions of the grounded theory method, the CGT version shares common features of the grounded theory approach. In the following section, I deal with these features with the empirical evidence of my inquiry process.

Theoretical Sampling and Data Saturation

Theoretical sampling is the process of collecting further data in the light of categories that have emerged from earlier stages of data analysis. Strauss and Corbin (1990) maintained that sampling in grounded theory proceeds in terms of "concepts, their properties, dimensions, and variations" (p. 8). The creator of constructivist grounded theory approach, Charmaz (2014) also maintained that the main purpose of theoretical sampling would be to elaborate and refine the categories constituting the theory. In the process of data collection, the researcher moves back and forth between data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2014; Willig, 2013) and continues until s/he reaches a point where no possibility of obtaining new information remains. This process is known as the theoretical saturation of data. According to Charmaz (2006), "Categories are saturated when gathering fresh data no longer sparks new theoretical insights, nor reveals new properties or these core theoretical categories" (p. 113). However, Dey (1999) challenges the notion of saturation (as cited in Charmaz, 2006). In constructivist epistemology, knowledge is constructed and reconstructed through participants' prior experience built on his/her cultural and historical context through interaction. The deeper we go into the cultural and contextual interaction with the participants by way of theoretical sampling, the more we are likely to extend our curiosity. Therefore, depending on his/her satisfaction level, the researcher needs to terminate the process. With this in mind, I contend that it is not the saturation of data as such, rather the level of researcher's satisfaction where the data collection process in constructivist grounded theory terminates.

For initial sampling, Charmaz (2006, 2014) suggests establishing sampling criteria for people and situations before the researcher enters the field based on relevance. "Initial sampling in grounded theory is where you start, whereas theoretical sampling directs you where to go" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 100). Theoretical sampling, in turn, earns its way to memo writing and further analysis of data. Following this, in my first episode[1] of the interview with school actors (September 26, 2016), I arrived at 89 open codes. Out of this initial

coding, I, in turn, established 22 categories. All these categories were interrelated. Each category had its property and dimensions[2]. Out of those categories, I achieved few emergent concepts[3] such as autonomy given to the HT with visible accountability mechanism makes difference in school; parents are not interested in school because they are not empowered and capacitated; the politically like-minded team creates positive environment in the school. I had to verify these initially emerged concepts against further data in the following episodes. In light of emerging conceptual issues such as autonomy to the HT, empowerment of the parents, politically like-minded team, I selected other resourceful or data-rich participants to address the emerging issue or category. I decided to interact with the District Education Office (DEO) personnel for a further episode of data collection. I did so on the ground that before going to school, the DEO would be the rich source of data on these issues. Moreover, DEO is the official administrative agency to oversee the performance of the school. I kept a record of this in an analytic memo I prepared at the end of the episode.

After the second episode of data collection (interaction with DEO personnel), I arrived at 12 open codes and 9 categories. The conceptual categories emerged then were: HT's commitment rather than his position or qualification makes a difference in school management; social audit has been proven as a tool to create awareness among the parents; school as an arena of political exercise is the root of unhealthy environment in school, trust on HT works as a motivator for parents and SMC; empowerment of parents and SMC makes them proactive for participation in school activities; good relationship and communication between school actors build trust on school; being sensitive to student learning and result based evaluation of teachers makes them empowered; HT can work with greater confidence if s/he is given autonomy and authority in matters of managing human; and physical and financial resource for the school. I compared and combined the previous categories and concepts emerged during the first episode; and came up with a cumulative list of 23 categories and concepts. I knew that school actors' accountability role has been understood in relation to these roles in the school.

At this moment, I noticed a few emerging conceptual issues such as HT's commitment, the role of social audit in creating awareness, politics in school, communication with the parents, and performance-based evaluation. In light of these conceptual issues, to find out more about these categories, I wished to interview the HT of the sub-urban school where he was said to have managed the school comparatively better with limited resources. In this way, I needed to verify and enrich the theoretical/conceptual issues guiding the theoretical sampling in my study. This process continued until I got satisfied with the data, and I no more wished to add more information. Traditionally, it was a stage of data saturation (Charmaz, 2014; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). I, at this point, argue that there is no saturation of data as the deeper we go into the situation, the newer feelings we have. It never ends.

Therefore, I preferred the words 'satisfaction level of the researcher' rather than 'data saturation'. My realization is in congruence with what Dey (1999) said – 'theoretical sufficiency' (as cited in Charmaz, 2006, p. 114). Theoretical sampling performed in this way paved the way for continuing the construction of theory. The following section presents how the theoretical sampling earns its way to theory generation through coding and categorization process.

Coding and Categorization Procedure

Coding in grounded theory means defining the process of what the data are about. (Charmaz, 2014). Analysis of data begins with the coding of data. In the coding process, we summarize the data and give a short name to it which represents the essence of the data. In other words, a chunk of data text is given a name – process code, attribute code and descriptive codes etc. based on the nature of the data text. Then, similar codes are put under a provisional category. Such provisional categories formed are verified by further data texts/ codes by way of integrating the inductive, deductive and abductive process. In this process of verification and refinement of data, there is a continuous back and forth movement across the data texts, codes and categories. Eventually, this leads to the generation of theory.

According to Charmaz (2006, 2014), grounded theory involves three main phases of coding: an initial coding, focused coding and theoretical coding. Initial coding involves naming each word, line or segment of data. Focused coding uses the most significant or frequent initial codes to sort, synthesize, integrate and organize a large amount of data. In theoretical coding, the categories developed during focused coding are integrated and their relationship is specified. At this stage, the codes move the "analytical story in a theoretical direction" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 63). Saldaña (2009) prefers to use first cycle coding using attribute coding, structural coding, descriptive coding, process coding and in-vivo coding and the second cycle coding using the pattern or focused coding procedure. There is a slight variation in the coding approach of Strauss and Corbin and Charmaz's approach. Strauss and Corbin suggest open coding, axial coding and selective coding (Bryman, 2016) whereas Charmaz (2006) discusses four types of coding: initial, focused, axial and theoretical. However, in her version of constructivist grounded theory, Charmaz (2006)describes axial coding as an optional stage which may or may not be helpful for the researchers. Despite their varying approach to describing the coding procedure, scholars agree on three phases of coding: initial (open coding), focused (axial coding) and selective (theoretical) coding. I followed Charmaz's approach of using open coding (line by line/paragraph coding), focused coding (creating cumulative categories), focused (cumulative categories) and theoretical coding (core categories). The following sections explain how I used the process in my study.

Initial coding. After the interview and observation of the events, I transcribed the data. Data were further coded using descriptive, attribute and process coding (Saldaña, 2009).

Those codes were grouped under related categories. Further, each category covered many codes as it was developed out of several open codes. In other words, a category represented several codes. Therefore, to facilitate the iterative practice of constant comparison, each code under the respective category was given its own unique code number. Similarly, each category was also given its own code number for its identity. To facilitate this process, I developed my own data management format in MS-excel programme creating a column of data codes, research participant, location, related cumulative category, code number, thematic category. It helped me to filter the data for analysis.

I present an example of initial coding from my data episode-M16-P[4]. I conducted an interview with the SMC Chair of the urban school. The interview lasted about two hours. After the interview, I transcribed the data in participants' own language-Nepali (so as not to lose the emotional essence of the participants). Then I prepared the memo for each episode of data collection. The transcription and memos were dated and entitled with the name of respective research participants along with the location of the research site.

The interview was coded using 22 codes. The codes mostly included process codes and attribute codes (Saldaña, 2009). Twenty-two codes were put under twelve categories of different types. Category one, for instance, was entitled 'building trust and integrity'. It represented four codes (code number 1, 2, 3, 22). Similarly, another category no. 6 entitled 'giving HT the authority, autonomy and power' contained four codes (code number 9, 11, 14, 15). This episode had five contradictory emerging concepts: private school for parents: is it obligation or choice?;Ying and Yang of democratic and autocratic practice: democratic decision making, autocratic implementation; HT's integrity as the foundation of accountability relations; trust and goodwill pays for long: continuation of SMC appointment; proactive or creative mind has no barrier. These episode-specific categories and concepts were refined and adjusted against the cumulative categories and concepts developed so far.

Eventually, I arrived at 56 cumulative categories and 64 concepts. Each cumulative category again kept its original category code number intact. For example, cumulative category number 28 entitled 'being proactive and reflective' contained ten original categories (the code number being F11, J15, J16, J17, J23, K4, K9, K25, K31, M19). Each category code, in turn, leads down to the original codes in the data transcription. From the accountability perspective, I have identified the emerging issues as HT's autonomy and power, pro-activeness of the HT, being guided by the values and principles, having trust on teachers for change. To address the emerging issues and the cumulative concepts, I decided to interview an influential ex-SMC Chair of the same school. It was an instance of theoretical sampling. I labelled it as episode-M-17 dated March 16, 2017.

Focused coding. Focused coding was the second step of coding data. It was done after I have established an analytic direction through initial coding. It was a process of

synthesizing and explaining a larger segment of data (Charmaz, 2006, 2014). Charmaz (2014) illustrated that focused coding is about "using the most significant or frequent earlier code … that makes the most analytic sense to categorize your data incisively and completely" (p. 57). I developed focused codes through comparing cumulative categories to data, and categories to codes. It helped refinements. For example, out of 747 open codes and 84 cumulative categories, I arrived at 26 focused codes. They were more theoretically abstract with a wider representation of the data. The following table presents a sample list of consolidated categories I have developed as focused coding.

Table 2

Sample of Focused Coding (Cumulative Categories)

Categories Emerged
1. Building capacity of PTA and other actors. [A1, B4, C4, C9, A17, B3, C12, C17, E2, F6, G5, G10, H3, H13, J5, K1, K3, K11, K15, M2, M14, O4, P3, P11, Q3, R4, R5, R7, T1, U2, U6, X1, X2, AA2, DD1, GG1, HH4]z
2. Getting support from local official, cooperation and coordination. [A2, C20, E4, G20, I10, S7, S8, U11, FF2]
3. Being transparent sharing information. [A3, D5, F3, G6, I7, I13, K36, O14, Q13, HH2]
4. Getting synergy of political interests. [A4, B7, C5, A5, G13, I17, J8, J11, K3, M11, P4, Q10, S6, U5]
84……

Note: Alphabetical and numerical codes given in the parenthesis indicate the memo serial and the code number in the data-text transcription respectively.

Strauss and Corbin (1990) presented axial coding in place of focused coding (Bryman, 2015). They continued "coding is a set of procedure whereby data are put back together in a new way after open coding by making connections between categories and sub-categories" (p. 96). Charmaz preferred to use focused coding stating that relying on axial coding may limit the learning of the researchers' world and restricting the codes they construct (Charmaz, 2006). She maintained that "focused coding requires decisions about which initial codes make the most analytic sense to categorize your data incisively and completely" (Charmaz, 2006, pp. 57-58). Nevertheless, I find the axial coding paradigm with modification as an analytical framework for theory generation.

Theoretical coding. Theory generation is done after the continuous process of open coding, axial coding and selective or theoretical coding of the data. Theories are traditionally categorized as grand theories, middle-range theories and local or minor theories (Charmaz, 2000; Creswell, 2014). The theory generated through grounded theory does not have wide applicability or scope. It is also not a minor working hypothesis either. Instead, the grounded theory is the middle-range theory which is drawn from multiple data

sources, explaining a substantive topic (Charmaz, 2000; Creswell, 2014; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Once this middle-range theory is established, it could be used in three possible ways: (i) using a visual coding paradigm (Brown, 1993, as cited in Creswell, 2014), (ii) stating a series of propositions or hypotheses, and (iii) presenting in a story or a narrative form (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The gradual evolution of grounded theory is seen giving way for presenting its results more creatively. Creative thinking is a basic quality of qualitative researcher (Kara, 2015; Saldaña, 2015). Discussing creativity and cross-disciplinary work in research, Kara (2015) points out the benefits of crystallization approach. She explains "crystallization involves multiple ways of analyzing and presenting data. She suggests that there is a "need for at least one fairly standard form of analysis, such as thematic or narrative analysis, alongside at least one arts-based analysis technique" (p. 66). This offers a possibility of using a variety of ways in presenting research work under the constructivist grounded theory design.

Theoretical coding was a way of specifying possible relationships between categories I have developed in my focused coding. Glaser (1992) argues that these codes preclude a need for axial coding because they "weave the fractured story back together" (as cited in Charmaz, 2006, p. 63). Charmaz (2006) also contended, "You may clarify the general context and specific conditions in which a particular phenomenon is evident. You may be able to specify the conditions under which it changes and to outline its consequences... discover participants' strategies for dealing with them" (p. 63). I found it useful as an analytical framework to develop the theory. Therefore, I have used a modified axial coding framework to show the relationship between the categories along a coding paradigm – casual condition, core category, context, strategies and consequence.

In my study, I ultimately established six core categories out of 84 focused codes. The established theoretical codes were: (i) accountability as managing resources, (ii) accountability as exercising autonomy, (iii) accountability as empowering school actors, (iv) accountability as seeking integrity, (iv) accountability as displaying a two-way traffic relationship, and (vi) accountability as working in continuum of paradox. These core categories earned their way to develop a theory of understanding accountability with respect to my research questions. Theoretical codes also had their own code numbers and could be tracked back to the categories and down to raw data in constant comparison. At the same time, these theoretical categories formed the titles of my empirical chapters (Charmaz, 2006) since they represent the main themes of my research questions. A sample of theoretical coding is given in AnnexI.

The following table summarizes the numerical status of all three levels of coding in my study.

Table 3

Status of Different Levels of Coding

Data Episodes		Initial coding		Focused coding		Theoretical coding	
47	Codes	Categoriesz	Emerging cumulative concepts	Cumulative categories	Focused codes	Cumulative concepts	Core categories
	747 codes	339	035	84	26	98	6 core categories
	A1-LL47	Properties and dimensions					

(Source: Field data)

Memo Writing

Memo writing is a narrated record of analytical conversation between the researcher and the data. Analytic memos in grounded theory help to generate concepts and categories (Bryman, 2015). Memo writing is a reflective process that included the feelings and voices of the research participants throughout the analysis process (Mills et al., 2006). According to Charmaz (2014), "Memo writing encourages you to stop, focus, take your codes and data apart, compare them and define links between them" (p. 164). Saldãna (2009) is more elaborative in explaining the analytic memo. She admits that an analytic memo includes personalization of the event, relation with the research question/s, description of codes and emerging categories, theoretical concepts and connections, problems encountered, ethical considerations and future directions. By writing analytic memos continuously and even using them as data, the researcher explores the emergent patterns that lead to theory generation. As such, memo writing is a methodological practice that helps the researcher to increase the level of abstraction of his/her analytic ideas (Charmaz, 2006; Seaman, 2008). This analytic reflection of the context provides a sound basis for writing the research report later.

At the end of each data collection episode, I wrote an analytic memo in light of cumulative focused coding of the data and categories developed. In addition, the memo included the definition of a category, explication of the properties of the category, specification of the conditions under which the category arose, description of the consequences, and relation of newly created category to other categories (Charmaz, 2006, 2014). Memos are coded as M1-A, M2-B, M3-C…M47-LL. A sample memo is given in Annex II.

Constant Comparison Through Methodological Integration of Inductive, Deductive and Abductive Reasoning

In inductive reasoning, the conclusion is probably true in the condition that the premises are all true (Walton, 2004) implying that the more probable the truth, the stronger the inductive argument. Abductive reasoning is understood as inference to the best explanation. It is a form of explanatory reasoning in generating as well as justifying a hypothesis (Bryman, 2016; Charmaz, 2011; Walton, 2004). In this way, in inductive reasoning, conclusions do not seem to follow logically from the premises; whereas, in deductive reasoning, if the premises are all true, then the conclusion must be true. The premises force the conclusion to be true (Walton, 2004).

After each interview and observation, the codes and categories were constantly compared and continually modified in light of emerging theoretical concepts. This top-down and bottom-up process of data analysis enabled comparison of data and codes at various levels: data to data, code to code, category to category, category to data, category to code. Out of this comparison, focused coding emerged, core categories were identified as key theoretical constructs. Each core categories were further segmented into related sub-categories or its properties[5]. These properties, in turn, were described and interpreted in light of the information located in the original data set. The accumulated concept building from original data transcription to code, from code to category, and category to focused coding or theoretical coding was again reversed down from core category to sub-category, from sub-category to dimensionalised properties in the original data. It proved a rigorous process of the constant comparative method. This weaving back and forth between data and theoretical categories was an iterative process (Bryman, 2016).

Qualitative data texts or vignettes were collected and analysed simultaneously using the constant comparative method of grounded theory approach. I compared data of one episode to another episode to find out the similarities and differences of the concepts. For example, in episode-4(b), I compared the interview statement of the head teacher in the same interview episode. I found the head teacher kept his values intact in his different roles: as a student, teacher and the head teacher. This disposition helped him to demonstrate a value-based accountability role in his headship. I also compared this statement with other interviews and interactions held with him and other actors. A critical teacher from the urban school, for example, reacted to this value-based statement saying, "The HT is doing good for himself and the organization for the time being but whose interests is he serving is important to note" (Field Notes). Such comparisons supported me to go for theoretical sampling and advancing the theory constructions eventually. All codes and categories were given unique numbers so that they could be tracked easily. After having created the codes, categories and the provisional concepts and hypotheses, I moved back and forth between the data to codes, codes to categories and categories to the data to verify and test

the hypotheses generated through inductive, deductive and abductive reasoning. In the sub/-sections that follow, I provide a sample description of this integrative process.

Induction refers to the inference of conclusion from particular instances based on what is known or observed (Bryman, 2016; Charmaz, 2011). In inductive reasoning, I moved from specific instances into a generalized conclusion, formed a conceptual category gradually moving from data, initial codes to focused coding. To make the induction process clear, I present the concept in Figure 1 showing the analysis process analogically through cause and effect relationship of the codes and categories.

Premise 1 (Casual category): Head teacher has good coordination skills.
Premise 2 (Effect or consequential category): The school is resourceful.
Conclusion 3 (Rule or Hypothesis): School head teacher's social capital works as a school resource.

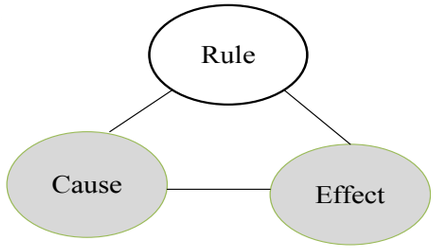

Figure 1. Premises of inductive reasoning exercised in grounded theory (adapted from Walton, 2004). (Source: Field data)

In Figure 1, I have presented an example of inductive reasoning from my data from episode-14. In inductive reasoning, a conclusion is derived from the data. Moreover, the construction of meaning could be found in the form of cause and effect relationship. That is to say, on the basis of interview and observation, I founded frequent instances of statements like 'the headteacher has good coordination skills' and 'the school is resourceful'. These two statements could be logically seen in cause and effect relationship. Based on several such instances, I came to draw a provisional hypothesis or a theoretical category that 'headteacher's social capital works as a good source of funding in the school'. After further investigation through constant comparison, this assumption earned its way to generate a theory 'being accountable means to be able to generate resources for the school'.

Similarly, the deductive analysis moves from generalized principles to a specific conclusion (Bryman, 2016; Charmaz, 2011). According to Walton (2004), "if the premises are true, necessarily the conclusion is also true" (p. 2). I have used the same data set for deductive reasoning in the following way.

Premise 1 (Rule or Hypothesis): School head teacher's social capital works as a school resource
Premise 2 (Casual category): Head teacher has good coordination skills.
Conclusion 3. (Effect or consequential category): The school is resourceful.

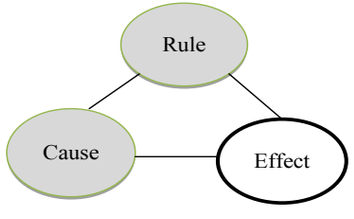

Figure 2. Premises of deductive reasoning exercised in grounded theory (adapted from Walton, 2004). (Source: Field data)

As Figure 2 shows, a theoretical assumption or hypothesis was created by way of inductive reasoning. I further investigated this hypothesis against the existing data set, as well as the new data gathered through theoretical sampling. The two premises – cause and rule –were already verified and true. Based on the theoretical assumption 'the head teacher's social capital works as a school resource' and its cause 'the head teacher has good coordination skills' I concluded that 'the school is resourceful'. It was a result of two verified or true premises established during the inductive reasoning.

Abduction is "a kind of reasoning used in the construction of hypothesis in the discovery stage of scientific evidence" (Walton, 2004, p. 4). In abduction, a plausible hypothesis is formed which is tested by further investigations leading to supporting or refuting the hypothesis (Walton, 2000, p. 5). Regarding CGT, Charmaz (2011) maintains that abductive reasoning is a process of identifying surprising findings or assumptions during the inductive data collection and testing these theoretical explanations with new data. Talking about thinking abductively in qualitative research, Saldaña (2009) considers abductive reasoning as a way of deduction. "Abduction is good thinking for inquiry because it asks you to consider multiple possibilities before you reach a deductive conclusion" (Saldaña, 2009, p. 25).

For example, during the inductive process in data collection in episode-24 (X), I came across surprising events while interacting with the parents. The discussion went about the role of headteacher and SMC on the utilization of funding obtained for the school. In response to my query 'Are you well aware of the funds expended in the school construction or other activity?', one of the parents remarked with discontent. He added, "Can you count the cement bags or iron rods used in the construction?' Other participants remained silent just nodding their heads in affirmation. This question struck me. I coded that as 'misuse of resources' and put it under the category 'discontent of school actors'.Moreover, I decided to diagnose the issue for its possible solutions from the existing data. As before, the situation could be shown in the following figure.

Premise 1 (Effect or consequential category): School actors are not content on head teacher's behavior.

Premise 2 (Rule or Hypothesis): Head teacher is imposing his dictatorship.

Conclusion 3(Casual category): School actors are involved in malpractices behind the mask.

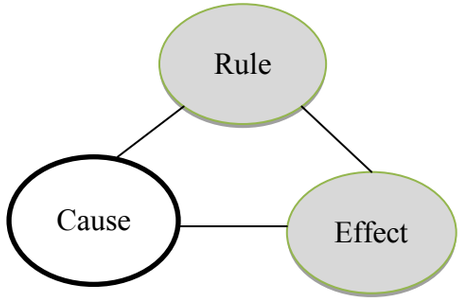

Figure 3. Premises of abductive reasoning exercised in grounded theory (adapted from Walton (2004). (Source: Field data)

As Figure 3 shows, after diagnosing and observing symptoms like a medical doctor, I found several possible solutions from the existing data. For example, school actors were not empowered for school activities [code 24-X (1) 2,4,6,12], parents' participation in school activities was very weak [code 24-X (2) 1,3], headteacher imposed his dictatorship on others [code 24-X (4) 10,11], and school actors were involved in malpractices behind the mask [code 24-X (3) 7,8,9]. Among these, I found 'school actors were involved in malpractices behind the mask' as a plausible cause of the problem. I accepted it as a provisional hypothesis to guide further investigation (Charmaz, 2011; Walton, 2004). I, at this point, also realized that abductive reasoning was a process of theorizing through limited data.

I experienced that deduction, induction and abduction were three fundamental forms of inferences in the grounded theory research. I have also seen these are combined to achieve a theoretical category in an integrative way. In the above examples, for instance, during induction process we can abduct some explanation for the surprising data or induce a hypothesis based on repeated events of data. Having induced such an explanation for it, I deduced a rule which could further go into investigation against further data. Again, I follow the process of abduction, induction and deduction in a cyclical process. Bryman (2015) also acknowledges that "deduction entails an element of induction; and inductive process is likely to entail a degree of deduction" (p. 22). In like manner, induction provides an empirical basis for abductive process. "The great difference between induction and abductive hypothesis is that the former infers the existing phenomenon while hypothesis supposes something of a different kind from what we have directly observed. (Peirce, 1965, as cited in Walton, 2000, p. 12). It implies that induction provides the observational categories of the phenomenon being studied. Deduction facilitates the process of drawing the best and plausible hypotheses from the provisional categories developed during the inductive process. This hypothesis is further verified through the deductive process; and thus, earns its way to theory development.

Generation of Theory

Theory generation was accomplished by the methodological integration of induction, deduction and abduction within the framework of constant comparative inquiry. That is to say, once a preliminary assumption or category was developed through induction, it was justified by the best possible explanation through an abductive process. An assumption or a hypothesis thus refined was verified or tested against further data texts using the process of deduction. In this way, a provisional category emerged out of the inductive process developed into a conceptual category which, in turn, earns its way to generation of theory.

Conceptual categories are the key ingredients and building blocks of theories (Bryman, 2016; Neuman, 2016). For Neuman (2016), a theoretical concept is an idea that can be expressed as a symbol or in words. Neuman focuses on clear, explicit and precisely defined

concepts for generation of knowledge. With regard to grounded theorizing, Charmaz (2006) maintains that a grounded theory includes "a description, an empirical generalization, relationships between variables, and an abstract understanding of relationship between the concepts" (p. 133). It implies from this that development of a grounded theory requires the generation of conceptual categories and defining those categories in light of their interconnected relationships to one another.

In building a theory, Charmaz (2014) assumes the axial coding paradigm as an analytical framework since it can help to show the relationship between dimensions and properties of the core category. It follows from this that the consequences of one type of category can set the conditions and context for the other. That is to say, all pertinent concepts interwoven into a string of theory are contributive to making of a whole theory. This justifies that constructivists study 'how' and 'why' participants construct meaning and actions in a specific situation (Charmaz, 2014). The conditions and contexts of the study provide essential explanations for 'how' and 'why' about the generation of the theory.

Following the canons of constructivist grounded theory, I developed a data indicated theoretical framework and generated six core theoretical categories of understanding accountability in my study. Those core categories were: accountability as managing resources, exercising autonomy, empowering actors, seeking integrity, building proactive relationships and accountability practice in paradox. The categories were further elaborated with their respective properties or subcategories. Putting the core category at the centre, I have analysed the status and relation of other sub-categories or properties of the categories in terms of their core category, conditions and context, strategies and consequences. Condition was what gave rise to the core category of understanding accountability, context implied the socio-cultural environment or the social relationship regarding the operationalization of the theory of accountability, strategies were the actions taken by the participants to make the core category happen, and finally consequences were the results or output of the implementation of the theory. It is diagrammatically presented as under.

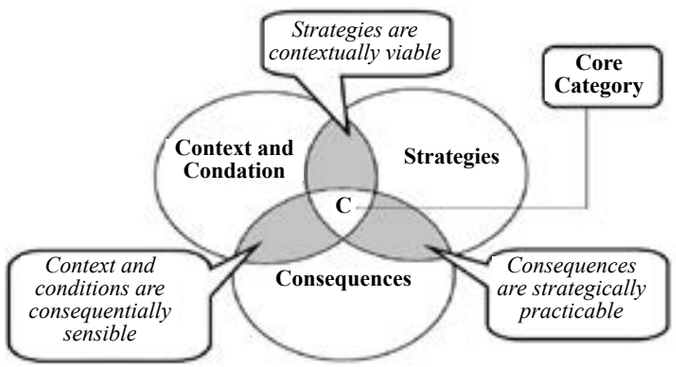

Figure 4. Analytical framework of constructing grounded theory. (Source: Field data)

In Figure 4, the core category (C) is at the centre of the vein diagram. The headteacherimplemented the core category using strategies or actions in a particular condition or context which eventually produced consequences. Three intersections showed the nature of the relationship between the variables. For example, the intersecting portions showed that strategies were contextually viable (between the context and strategies); consequences were strategically practicable (between strategies and consequences); and context and conditions were consequentially sensible (between consequences and conditions). For example, I am going to elaborate on this relationship in terms of a core theoretical category 'Accountability as Managing Resources' using the matrix in Table 4.

Table 4

Relationship Among Theoretical Ingredients of Core Category Accountability as Managing Resources

Core category: Accountability as…	**Context and conditions**	**Strategies**	**Consequences**
Managing resources	Exercising autonomy Empowering actors Seeking integrity Building proactive relationship Identifying potential source of funding	Exercising social capital Manipulating the minds Seeking convergence of ideas Playing with parents' sentiments	Building Social Capital or Creating a Nexus of dominance? Strengthening Academic Excellence of Developing Docile Followers? Seeking Consensus or Imposing Cut and Dried Recipe? Striving for Service or struggling for survival?

As Table 4 demonstrates, the core category had its own properties or subcategories as strategies. All categories also functioned as contexts and conditions for the core category put in the center. The core category was implemented through the strategies which, in turn, produced the contradictory consequences. The intersection showed that strategies were contextually viable. For example, the strategy 'exercising social capital' was possible when the headteacher had autonomy in doing things. He manipulated the teachers only after he empowered them and built proactive relationship with them using the local mechanism of accountability. The headteacher played with the parents' sentiments of finding private school-like facilities in a community school. Similarly, consequences were strategically practicable in that the headteacher exercised his social capital creating a nexus of like-minded people and exerted dominance over other actors. Likewise, using the

academic potentiality of teachers through creating a competitive work context, the head teacher created a group of followers who were obedient to him. Similarly, the context and conditions were consequentially sensible. For example, in the same case of manipulating the minds, the headteacher did so by providing the teachers with trainings on the use of ICT and soft skills. More so, he delegated authority to the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) for supervision. However, in the name of consensus building, he was found imposing a readymade decision on the PTA. It could otherwise make a sense if he had empowered them with basic technical capacities. This is how the relationship between the categories and variable were established that eventually shaped the theory of understanding accountability.

At this level, a theoretical category grounded in the data was developed without any contamination of extant theoretical perspectives. However, at the level of discussion and interpretation, I have used structure-agency, principal-agent and knowledge-power theoretical perspectives to substantiate the findings. It was a process of weaving both 'talking' (theoretical analysis) and 'showing' (empirical data) together in writing a grounded theory (Locke, 2001). Eventually, the theory construction under constructivist grounded theory was accomplished using the integration of two streams of analysis and interpretation: the analysis based on data indicated theory and the interpretation using extant theoretical concepts. It is shown in the Figure 5 below.

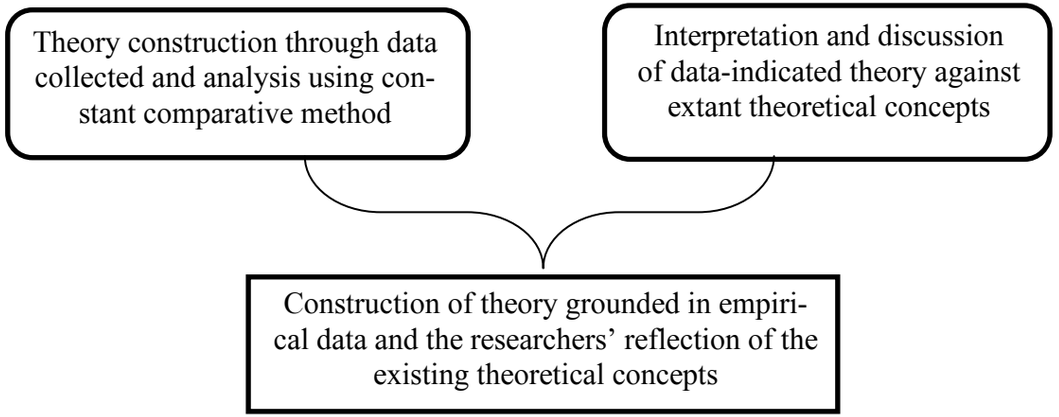

Figure 5. Construction of grounded theory. (Source: Field data)

Conclusions

The central concern of this article was to extend the application of constructivist grounded theory in areas of accountability inquiry. Since accountability denotes performance in action, the constructivist version of the grounded theory has been found suitable for inquiring the process of understanding and building accountability relations in school. Although the constructivist grounded theory shares common features of classic

grounded theory, it differs in its ontological and epistemological premises. For example, based on my empirical practices, I argue that it is not the saturation of the data as such but the satisfaction level of the researcher which decides the termination of data collection and analysis in constructivist grounded theory. I experienced that the data were never saturated. The deeper we go, the more curious we are about our inquiry.

In addition, a prior version of grounded theory used axial coding a framework to synthesize the data. In my use of constructivist grounded theory, I preferred a modified analytical framework consisting of core category, context and conditions, strategies and consequences for grounded theorizing. The core theoretical category of accountability emerged out of the cumulative analytic process rather than influenced by the extant theoretical lens. The role of the extant literature or theories is restricted to substantiation and theoretical discussion once the core theoretical categories are developed. Likewise, analytic memos serve not only the theoretical account of the inquiry process, but also facilitate the levels of conceptual abstractions leading to theory construction.

I also argue that the construction of knowledge in constructive grounded theory is the result of complementary integration of induction, deduction and abduction. In other words, the assumptions created by inductive reasoning are verified against the best possible options through abductive reasoning which in turn becomes the theoretical assumption for the deductive reasoning for further verification through theoretical sampling. Finally, I conclude that theory development under constructivist grounded theory takes place through constant comparison of not only the data and categories developed but also the interaction between the field data and the existing literature. All this implies that the constructivist grounded theorizing could be a viable methodological instrument for exploring accountability relationships among the local school actors as well as devising mechanisms of accountability in the context of decentralized educational governance.

Notes

[1] An episode was an event of data collection either through interview/discussion or observation. After each episode, data were transcribed and coded, theoretical categories were cumulated to focused coding and an analytic memo was written leading to further episode through theoretical sampling

[2] Properties were the attributes of a category whereas the dimensions were the actual locations where this category is operationalized (Creswell, 2014).

[3] According to Bryman (2016), concepts are the way of making sense the social world. Moreover, concepts are key ingredients or building blocks of theories. Concepts represent key areas around which data are collected. "As a result of collecting and interpreting data, we possibly revise those concepts or new ones emerge through our reflections" (p. 6).

[4] I provided the code numbers to each data episodes. They range from episode M1-A to M47-LL where M1 stands for 'memo no. 1' and 'A' stands for 'data transcription code'. I arranged my data

in altogether 47 memos and transcriptions. I have levelled these episodes of data collection.

[5] According to Creswell (2014), properties are subcategories generated during open coding process and provide more details about the category. Each property, in turn, is dimensionalised in grounded theory. "A dimensionalised property means that the researcher views the property on a continuum and locates in the data" (Creswell, 2014, p. 439). Likewise, according to Glaser (2002), categories are generated from data and properties are generated concepts about categories.

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Annex I: A Sample of Theoretical Coding

Core theoretical category 1: Accountability as managing resources

Properties	Dimensions or strategies	Related cumulative categories (focused coding)
Exercising social capital	Identifying potential sources of funding.Making relations with local agencies and individuals Allocating and utilizing resources in economic way. Compromising and negotiating for resource generation	1. Getting support from local official, cooperation and coordination. [A2, C20, E4, G20, I10, S7, S8, U11, FF2] 2. Getting synergy of political interests. [A4, B7, C5, A5, G13, I17, J8, J11, K3, M11, P4, Q10, S6, U5] 3. Identifying and utilizing resources. [A15, A16, B5, C7, C13, D9, E2, F14, G2, H2,I2, I3, I4, J1, K28, P25, Q8, U4] 4. Seeking consensus and negotiation [C19, Q17, EE2]
Manipulating the minds	Hiring competent and motivated teaching force through coordination. Creating a challenging work context between the temporary and permanent teachers. Motivating teachers for collective responsibility	5. Competing with and learning from other schools. [F1, G8, G17] 6. Catching parents' sentiments, choice and expectation. [F6, G7, P2, Q14, R2, U14,] 7. Giving collective credit. [19, P7] 8. Building community relations. [G16, I1] 9. Balancing free or quality education. [G18, O1]
Seeking convergence within divergence	Aligning political ideas and creativity for organizational change Keeping party politics away from the school environment Utilizing professional unions as platform for individual and organizational transformation Enhancing collective thinking and team work through like-minded team of formal and informal channels	10. Winning trust from result. [I11, K4, K12] 11. Addressing parents' needs and interest. [J2, K17, K29, N1] 12. Addressing parents' need for community school. [J3, M7] 13. Having trust on competent teachers for change. [J15, J26, K20, K26,] 14. Being sensitive to public resource use. [J12 15. Motivating students [Y3] 16. Demonstrating/mobilizing social/ cultural capital [AA4, BB1 17.Teachers as change agent [II1
Playing with parents' sentiments and expectations	Reflecting on past experiences and learning from the context Understanding parents' expectations and sentiments. Providing choices to the parents and students Building mutual respect and cultural harmony among diverse cultural practices.	

Annex II: A Sample Analytic Memo [Memo 16 (P)]

Date: March 16, 2018 Location: Premises of the Urban School

Today, I observed school's farewell function; and interacted with the students and the teachers about how the head teacher and other actors performed their duties in the school. The head teacher has distributed different tasks of organizing co-curricular activities in teams or committees. Teams worked cooperatively. Head teacher's strict instruction on task competition and his support indicated that he has maintained balance between task and relationship behaviour among the staff. The situation reminded me of my days I worked in the educational training centre where I had realized that proactive initiative of an instructor induced creativity in the trainees. What strategies did the head teacher adopt? How was he making others accountable for their assigned task? With these questions in mind, I theoretically sampled the SMC chair—popularly working as a SMC chair for long—for further information.

I really found him a dutiful actor of the school devoted to school development. Out of the conversation with him, I created twenty-three codes. Most of the codes were process and attribute codes. Based on the codes, I further developed twelve categories. They were: building trust and integrity, catching parents' sentiments, making teacher and SMC responsible, making use of teacher politics, managing personal ego of the school actors, giving head teacher autonomy and power, developing collective commitment, making decision making participative, balancing service and survival of the school, and making social audit meaningful.

Alongside the categories there emerged some theoretical concepts as well: parents' choice of private school: is it a choice or obligation? Head teacher's accountability seen in apendular movement of democratic decision making and autocratic implementation, head teacher's integrity is seen as foundation of accountability, trust and good will pays for long, a proactive or creative mind has no barrier. These concepts worked as properties and dimensions of the categories emerged. These categories were related to previously created categories of the cumulative focused coding. For example, the category 'making SMC and teacher responsible' could be related to focused coding cumulative category 'empowering and getting stakeholders' involvement'. Likewise, another category 'balancing service and survival' is related to 'focused coding' category of 'building trust on community school' and so on. Head teacher's accountability features were attributed to these categories. These attributes have been developed, and sustained because the parents were cooperative and well aware of the school. In addition, people trusted the school. It might be the reason that the government has recognized the school for its improved performance. Another casual condition for these categories could be the special incentives to be provided to the community school graduates in higher studies and civil services.

Consequently, the head teacher or the school was obliged to address the need of parents' choice. The survival strategy of school in competitive context is making the school prone to transforming into a semi-private school in future. I took this as an issue to be discussed further. How is school being accountable to diverse needs of the people? How can an accountable school head maintain balance between diverse parents 'needs sticking on service intent of the school? Based on the discussion I assumed that a creative head teacher uses the situation strategically for the good of the school (abductive reasoning). I have decided to test this hypothesis with another experienced ex-SMC chair on the following day (deductive reasoning).

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