

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY IN HALAL LOGISTICS AND SUPPLY CHAIN RESEARCH

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ABSTRACT

Rigorous research process is vital in conducting any academic research. This article describes methods available and steps in conducting qualitative research in the area of Halal logistics and supply chain study. Details explanation on related research strategy such as case study, interview survey, phenomenology, grounded theory, delphi method and focus group discussion are also provided in the figure form. Appropriate qualitative data analysis for each research strategy are also presented. The researcher also explains validation and verification criteria in qualitative study, as well as ethics procedure in performing Halal logistics and supply chain in general. This study also provides general discussion on past studies related to qualitative method in Halal logistics and supply chain in few countries namely India, Malaysia, United Kingdom, United Arab Emirates and Australia. This chapter concludes with future research recommendation in the area of Halal logistics and supply chain from methodology point of view.

Keywords: Halal logistics, Halal supply chain management, Qualitative, Grounded theory, Case Study, Focus Group Discussion

Introduction to Qualitative research method: Research strategy and Research process

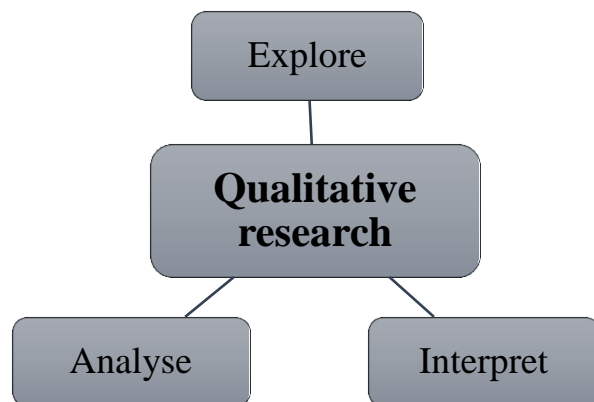
Qualitative study is a popular method that involved collecting and analyzing textual data from a person, as well as document which require reflection of the part of the researcher during conducting its research process. It is a method that allowing the researcher to explore a phenomenon with deep investigation in understanding the concepts, opinions, experiences and others (Rahman et al 2018). As highlighted by Miles and Huberman (1994), Mason (2002) and Klein and Myers (1999), the objective of qualitative research is to reveal subjectivity, complexities, nuances, uniqueness and details which usually ignored in quantitative studies. Miles and Huberman (1994, p.1) define qualitative research as a “*source of well grounded, rich descriptions and explanations of process in identifiable local context*”. A similar definition is provided by Bryman and Bell (2007) emphasizing detailed exploration of phenomena is the aim of qualitative study.

Qualitative method can be used in both technical and social science research. It is a popular method in social sciences subjects such as education, business and management study, marketing research, history, anthropology, sociology, health science, religious and other subjects. However, it is also used in engineering, design,

technical and architecture research. For instance, ethnography and grounded theory research application are increasingly used in architecture and design to explore and understanding the system behavior, the behavior of human designer, or a lifestyle of a specific group which helps the researcher to gain understanding of certain kind in that system (Ball and Ormerod, 2000). For instance, it allows a designer to think and develop appropriate design from the perspective user and provide more user friendly solution. Qualitative study in engineering and design also help the researcher to capture the nature of design process from diverse aspect such as experiential, organizational, cognitive, social and creative.

In qualitative research, the aim or the purpose of conducting qualitative study essentially related to three components namely exploring the phenomena, analyzing the phenomena and interpreting the phenomena (see figure 1 below). Essentially, the objective of qualitative research is to develop new concepts, generate new ideas, develop new theory, gather deep understanding of the phenomena, theory development, literature development, instrument development, method development and model development. This could be performed with the support of interview, observation, document review and others. In qualitative study, any form of qualitative research isrelates with questions to understand and explore problem with regards to perceptions, attitudes, belief, opinion and ideas.

Figure 1: Qualitative research aim

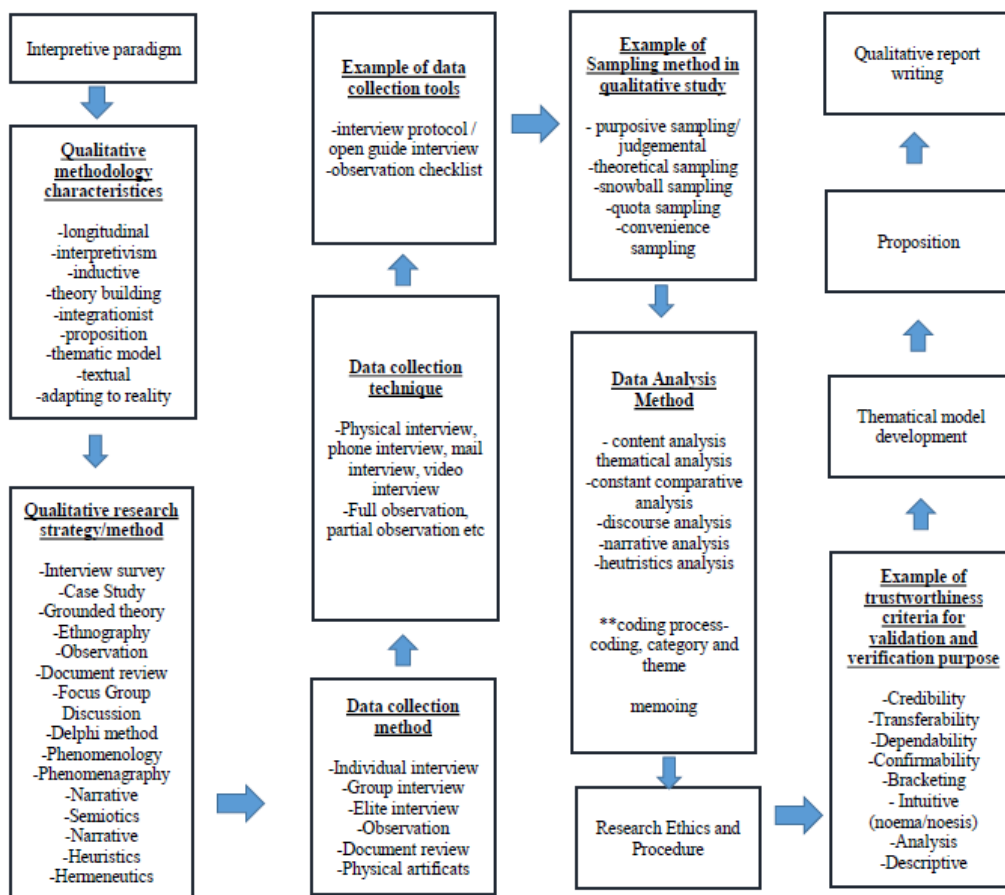


Source: Develop by author

It is recognized that qualitative methodology is connected to interpretive paradigm. It refer to “*the researcher view’s regarding what constitutes acceptable knowledge*”(Saunders et al., 2009, p.119). It is connected to subjective meaning of one

phenomena, the details of it, the meaning and reality behind these details. In qualitative study, it is vital for every researcher to comprehend the process involved in conducting qualitative study. Figure 2 below illustrated process involved in conducting qualitative study: starts with interpretive paradigm; qualitative study design; understanding qualitative study criteria; method or research strategy available in qualitative study; data collection and techniques in qualitative; population and sampling in qualitative study; methods, techniques and tools in qualitative study; ethics in collecting and analyzing data; validation, verification and trustworthiness principles in qualitative research. Below figure 2 explains the process in performing qualitative study and related method or research strategy involved.

Figure 2: Qualitative research process



Source: Developed by author

As shown in figure 2, every qualitative research starts with researcher's paradigm. Interpretive researcher is connected to qualitative research activities. There are many type of qualitative research strategy such as qualitative case study, interview survey, ethnography, grounded theory, phenomenology, ethnography, discourse, narrative, observation, document review analysis and many more. Every qualitative researcher need to identify their method, strategy and technique in each of data collection and analysis method. As explained by Abdul Rahman (2012), there are two types of qualitative case study research namely single case study and collective case study. Collective case study also known as multiple case study. Qualitative researcher also need to explain on related protocol, sampling procedure and research ethics performed in their study. Process of coding and deriving the themes from data analysis stage also need to be discussed in qualitative study. From the qualitative findings, the researcher will then develop their thematical model, proposition and also proceed with qualitative report writing.

Qualitative study in Halal Logistics and Supply Chain

Having reviewed the past literature, there are a number of study that opting for both quantitative and qualitative research method in the area of Halal logistics and supply chain. However, the number of qualitative study in halal logistics and supply chain research are still low compared to quantitative method even Halal logistics study has emerged since 2010. Most study performed in the area of Halal logistics and supply chain are aimed to develop new concepts and items in the area, and generate new ideas and discussion in the Halal logistics field (Rahman et al; 2018; Khairuddin et al; 2018; Rahim et al., 2018). According to Haleem et al (2020), Halal logistics and supply chain is a popular area to be studied in this era as the demand of Halal food at retail and Halal transport is increasing worldwide. As mentioned by Talib et al (2020), this area is still under developed and more study are needed to get deeper understanding on the issue related to transportation, warehousing, retailing throughout the Halal supply chain. This is also supported by earlier researcher (Khairuddin et al, 2018). Below table show some of the study in Halal logistics and supply chain performed utilizing qualitative research strategy.

From the general review on some article published in the area of Halal logistics and supply chain, the researcher found that they are a group of researcher that utilizing document review or content analysis as their qualitative research strategy in analysis issue relating to Halal logistics. For instance, a study from Talib and Hamid (2014), came out with SWOT analysis finding from document review activity on understanding the Halal logistics industry in Malaysia. They have come out with a set of variables explaining the Halal logistics industry challenge in Malaysia with listing a number of factor under strength, weaknesses, opportunity and threats category. Recently, in year 2019, Abdul Majid et al (2019) are also opting for document review and content analysis

qualitative strategy in exploring issue with regards to Halal integrity in Halal supply chain.

A study from Rahman et al (2018) utilizing single case study method in exploring halal air cargo warehouse implementation in the aviation industry. Similar to this, Khairuddin et al (2018) also study on Halal warehousing and adopting interview survey in understanding challenges in implementing Halal warehouse in Malaysia. Zulfakar et al (2018) also used interview survey to gather deep understanding in investigating Halal supply chain from Australia context. On the other hand, Shahbaz et al (2019;2019b) study on Halal supply chain issue in India country. Both are using expert discussion method to build a theory on Halal supply chain study with opting for Delphi method with panel expert discussion, as well as Fuzzy Delphi method. Details of each study related to qualitative method in Halal logistics and supply chain are shown in below Table 1.

Table 1: Previous study on Halal logistics and supply chain with Qualitative method

Author / Year	Journal	Area of study	Countries	Qualitative method used
Talib and Hamid (2014)	Journal of Islamic Marketing	Halal logistics	Malaysia	Content analysis
McElwee et al (2017)	Food Policy	Halal supply chain	United Kingdom	Interview survey
Rahman et al (2018)	Journal of Islamic Marketing	Halal logistics (air cargo warehouse)	Malaysia	Single case study and phenomenology
Khairuddin et al (2018)	International Journal of Supply Chain Management	Halal logistics (warehouse)	Malaysia	Interview survey
Zulfakar et al (2018)	Journal of Islamic Marketing	Halal supply chain	Australia	Interview survey
Abdul Majid et al, 2019	International Journal of Supply Chain Management	Halal logistics	Malaysia	Content analysis
Randeree (2019)	British Food Journal	Halal supply chain	United Arab Emirates	Ethnography and grounded theory
Shahbaz et al (2019)	Journal of Islamic Marketing	Halal supply chain	India	Expert assessment Fuzzy Analytics Delphi method
Shahbaz et al (2019b)	Journal of Modelling in Management	Halal supply chain	India	10 expert discussion

Source: The author

Future Research Recommendation and Conclusions

Despite a number of qualitative research in area of Halal logistics and supply chain research has been studied, there are still a number of opportunity for future research in Halal logistics and supply chain to be explored. For instance, a review on qualitative sampling in Halal logistics study, a review on specific qualitative method used with different objectives and issue investigated, and many others could be performed by future scholars. Knowing limited study in qualitative research in the area of Halal logistics and supply chain, future research could also utilize qualitative strategy with adopting phenomenology, grounded theory, case study, ethnography, focus group discussion, Delphi method and other qualitative strategy in study Halal transportation issue, Halal warehousing issue, as well as Halal retailing issue. Future research on qualitative study could also use a proper systematic or review method in analyzing qualitative journal, such as bibliometric analysis in the area of Halal logistics and supply chain with using appropriate computer software or tools such as VOSviewer.

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