A Journey to the Qualitative Wonderland: Lessons Learned for Novice Researchers

Kuan Chen Tsai
University of the Incarnate Word, Texas
ktsai@student.uiwtx.edu

Abstract
It is believed that through a journey of being a good researcher, it is beneficial to appreciate two different values drawing from two opposite paradigms, which in turn familiarizing oneself with two distinct conceptual frameworks thereby strengthening individual’s research capacity. In this paper, a novice qualitative researcher shares four lessons learned from the process of conducting his first qualitative study. The lessons are: (a) Do your homework on the literature; (b) Carefully read regulations of Institutional Review Board; (c) Any confusion, ask the experts first; (d) If possible, try to use qualitative data analysis software; and (e) Reflect and challenge your assumptions all the time.

Keywords: qualitative methodology; research process; advice; novice researcher.