

Olivera Č. Knežević-Florić, Stefan R. Ninković  
Faculty of Philosophy, University of Novi Sad

UDK: 37.013.42:303.442  
37.013.42:303.022  
Originalni naučni rad

## GROUNDING THEORY AND SOCIAL-PEDAGOGICAL RESEARCH\*

Debates on the application of the quantitative, qualitative or mixed methodological approaches in social sciences are mainly driven by the need to justify meaning and scope of qualitative research in the context of modern science. In this sense, the aim of this paper is to discuss the possibilities of application of one of the qualitative methodological approaches to researching the problems of social pedagogy – the grounded theory research design. In the first part of the paper, the authors examine the development, constitutive properties and methodological assumptions of grounded theory by the authors Glaser and Strauss. The methodology and very design of the grounded theory are presented in relation to its main assumptions and key elements (phases): the collection of qualitative data, the constant comparison method, coding and theoretical sampling. In the second part, the authors explicate the methodologically concise but coherent interpretation of this type of qualitative research, which could have significant potential in the process of understanding social-pedagogical phenomena, in the way that enables generating more integrated theories and their greater applicability by social pedagogues/practitioners.

*Key words:* social pedagogy, grounded theory, school, qualitative research, research design.

## THE POSSIBILITIES OF THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH APPROACHES IN THE FIELD OF SOCIAL PEDAGOGY

In the last decade, we have witnessed great momentum in the application of qualitative research in social and humanistic sciences – in sociology, psychology as well as the field of education (Flick, 2006). It is believed that one of the main reasons for the methodological shift in social sciences is the crisis of representation, which is manifested through the departure of the period of “great theories” replaced by locally, temporally and situationally limited theories, individually lived and interpreted narratives (Ševkušić, 2006; Schwandt, 2007). On the other hand, the unique acceptance of qualitative research has been contributed to by

---

\* E-mail: florico@ff.uns.ac.rs

The paper is the result of research within project The importance of participation in social networks for adjustment to European integration processes (no. 179037) which is funded by Ministry of education, science and technological development of the Republic of Serbia

several factors that increased the pressure for pragmatism of science, i.e. the pressure to investigate the real and everyday problems of people (Flick, 2006).

If we position the objectives of contemporary education into the given framework, it could be argued that the current challenges of social pedagogy can also be met by qualitative research approaches. In this sense, the purpose of this paper is to consider the possibilities of one of the qualitative methodological approaches to educational research – the *grounded theory* research design. We believe that the grounded theory research design, as one of the qualitative approaches to research of social-pedagogical phenomena (Creswell, 2007), may have its place in the field of social pedagogy.

The goals of social pedagogy is, above all, to provide specific assistance in the education of individuals and groups of young people who have in postmodern social processes found themselves in situations in which their current strategies for coping with difficulties are insufficient for personal/social satisfaction of the shaping of their paths of life. In this sense, qualitative researches could have many advantages, especially from the aspect of usability, local validity and reliability, since they have no desire to obtain “universal” truths.

The starting points of qualitative researches are the practical, real, everyday problems of people (Rapuš Pavel and Kobolt, 2008). The goal of qualitative approaches is to observe in detail a respondent’s individual perception of the topic being researched; more precisely, to understand the meaning of individual actions. Qualitative approaches aim to penetrate the researched subject, generating as many ideas and concepts as possible, while the focus is on the interpretations of the respondents’ perspectives. As the basic characteristics of qualitative analyses in educational research Bouillet and Uzelac (2007) point out the following:

- grounding in the philosophical position of interpretivism,
- grounding in flexible and contextually sensitive methods,
- grounding in analysis methods that include an understanding of the complexity, detail and context of the studied phenomenon.

The given characteristics are in fact methodological assumptions of research which seeks to understand the living position of the people we wish to help. The postmodern approach advocates for respecting the uniqueness of each individual and the context of their life. The questions of social pedagogy are highly specific and penetrate into the knowledge and understanding of each individual and the respect of their rights. In this sense, the advantages of qualitative research with children and young people who exhibit disorders in social behavior are, among other things, the opening of new research questions, the value of the obtained data, as well as the possibility of balancing the respondent’s and the researcher’s benefits. Some authors feel that qualitative research is most often applied when we wish to get closer to the participants in a study, when we explore the practical, real and everyday problems of people (Rapuš Pavel and Kobolt, 2008). Likewise, the ideas of postmodern research practice emphasize the importance of relations and interaction processes between the educator and the young people at risk or

who exhibit disorders in social behavior. In this sense, the actuality of qualitative researches, which change the position of the respondent who becomes a participant expressing his or her own perspective, comes to the forefront.

Apart from this, in qualitatively oriented approaches the research is positioned as a process of knowledge co-construction, in which the researcher chooses to minimize their distance from the participants. During all phases, the researcher attempts to create an informal, unobtrusive atmosphere that encourages the participants to tell “their story”. The researcher’s approach in qualitative research is affirmative and reflexive, focused on dialogue, listening and the expressing of one’s own perception of the situation. We believe that this research approach contributes to the development of reflexivity of professionals, and thus develops their sensitivity to discursive elements in their interaction with the participants. This creates space for new perspectives on dealing with certain school situations, in order to develop a new, commonly perceived understanding of narrative, of which the educator becomes a part.

### DEVELOPMENT OF *GROUNDED THEORY*

In 1967, encouraged by the insight that students of social sciences are only taught and prepared to test the theories developed by others, sociologists Glaser and Strauss suggested the *grounded theory* as a set of flexible procedures that can be used to develop a new theory or explanation of a social phenomenon. Their well-known work *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*, published in 1967, opened up a new direction of development of qualitative research, primarily in sociology, psychology and education. The qualitative *grounded theory* research design relatively quickly gained great favor of researchers, and it is today seen by many as the best operationalization of the interpretive paradigm in the field of study of human behavior (Fajgelj, 2010).

As in most discussions on the understanding of *grounded theory* (also possible are concepts of various scopes which position the *grounded theory* as a *method* or a *result* of research), this paper will also define the *grounded theory* as a special type of qualitative research (*research design*), which implies the process of generating a theory from data, i.e. its establishment on data that is obtained through inductive methods (Charmaz, 2005; Borgatti, 2006; Fajgelj, 2010). The grounded theory methodology is specific, and although the emphasis is on the analytical phase of research, in the grounded theory research design the collection and analysis of data are intertwined. The *grounded theory research design* persuades the researcher to actively participate in the systematic comparison of data and the development of a theory. In this sense, the basic, constitutive properties of the *grounded theory research design* would be:

- selective sampling
- *in situ* data collection,
- coding,

- narrative presentation of results,
- theoretical sampling,
- recording memos.

In addition to the given elements, a prominent feature of the *grounded theory research design* is the researcher's openness to data, or his *theoretical sensitivity*. Theoretical sensitivity is defined as the ability of a researcher to identify the important characteristics of the collected data and attribute meaning to them (Borgatti, 2006); it is in fact a researcher's potential to give meaning to data. When speaking of theoretical sensitivity, Glaser and Holton (2004) state two requirements that a researcher should fulfill in order to maintain their theoretical sensitivity:

- the ability to tolerate confusion of data and maintain trust during the process of development of a theory,
- the ability to conceptualize data.

The usual/traditional course of empirical research directs researchers to set hypotheses based on their knowledge of theory, which are then on the basis of the obtained results verified or rejected. When we research in such a manner, we enter into the research process in a certain way "sure". This sureness derives from a certainty in terms of the results of our research. A researcher who seeks to establish theory on data is devoid of such a position. In this context, the literature also contains the expression of a *position of lack of knowledge*, or the intentional securing of areas in our mind that are reserved for new, perhaps even unexpected ideas that will occur during the research (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Borgatti, 2006). The requirement that the researcher enters the research with as few expectations as possible in order to be sensitive to the data, in terms of their collection without "filtering" them through previously formed assumptions, can be achieved in different ways. One of the most important is through reflexivity, or the awareness of the potential effects that prior knowledge could have on the research process. It is considered that highly reflexive researchers will be very aware of how their perception, selectivity or paradigm will shape a given research.

### SELECTIVE SAMPLING

The selection of participants in qualitative research is always based on selective sampling. In this type of sampling, the selection of participants does not aim to achieve *representativeness*, but instead *relevance* for understanding of the phenomenon that is being studied (Schwandt, 2007). This relevance may be a matter of selection of the sample because a researcher knows that there are extreme, typical, deviant or particularly significant cases that will illuminate the problem that is elaborated by the study. On the other hand, the relevance may be a matter of the choice of different places, cases or persons, which allows for comparisons that reveal the expected contrasts or similarities.

The grounded theory research design does not fall into the category of qualitative methodological approaches that reject every kind of generalization. Unlike

these approaches, representatives of the grounded theory advocate a *transferability* of findings and speak of *analytical generalization* (Schwandt, 2007). According to this view, a thoughtful comparison of cases is the responsibility of the percipient of the research. It is the researcher's responsibility to develop a rich interpretive report in order to enable the reader to participate in a meaningful but moderate speculation about whether the obtained findings are also applicable to other cases with similar predictors. Many advocates of the qualitative approach place this general idea in the function of interaction between the reader and the author of the article, pointing out that only in this interaction is the final meaning of any text created, even one that represents the results of a research.

### IN SITU DATA COLLECTION

Unlike quantitative researches in which the hypotheses are set in advance and in which repetition and deviation from the plan occur only if it is a must, qualitative researchers flexibly adapt their research design in order for it to be relevant in the new situation (Schwandt, 2007). It can be said that qualitative research is characterized by *emergent research designs*. The point is that designing qualitative researches is significantly different in comparison to quantitative designs.

In studies of subjective experience of reality, the most widely applied source of data collection is the interview. Two-way communication and personal contact provide a sense of security and acceptance, which represents a fundamental condition for self-revealing (Rapuš Pavel and Kobolt, 2008). The general rule is that the more intensive the contact between the researcher and participants and the more open the questions, the greater the likelihood of obtaining relevant data. Strauss and Corbin (2008) propose a *funnel strategy*, i.e. a sequence of questions that allows for the establishment of open contact with the respondent. In addition, the quality of the data collected by interviewing, as well as the clarity and focus of the topic, are influenced by numerous factors which Rapuš Pavel and Kobolt (2008) classify into 4 groups:

- during the process of abstracting data it is always possible to reduce the data to an inappropriate level
- the interview technique is very time consuming,
- interview questions can be very directive, and as such can direct the answers,
- the obtained information cannot be complete because the majority of the subjective views that we wish to reveal are very implicit.

Although interviewing in the *grounded theory* research design does have certain common features with phenomenological studies, the *grounded theory* is not primarily interested in the subjective experience of an individual *per se*, but in his abstraction into theoretical statements on the relations between concepts (categories, topics). Therefore, raw data must be attributed with conceptual terms (Glaser and Holton, 2004). The differences between these two approaches are also visible in the interview method. In phenomenological studies, an in-depth interview is

the primary means of studying the subjective experience of individuals. In this sense, phenomenology is interested in researching the “lifeworlds”, and the data are normally exhibited in their raw form (Creswell, 2007). Interviewing in the *grounded theory research design* is not primarily aimed at constructing the narratives themselves. They are, primarily, a means of gaining information about the social process that is being studied.

## CODING

In the *grounded theory* methodology, there is constant mutual influence between the collection and analysis of data. Overlapping of data collection and analysis implies *iterativity* and *recursivity*. The *grounded theory research design* is essentially an iterative process in which the analyst becomes more and more “immersed” into the data, while at the same time developing ever richer concepts regarding the nature of the studied phenomenon. In other words, the data analysis starts at the beginning of the research. After the first few interviews their transcript is prepared, which is then coded in order to discover the basic concepts and categories. This usually leads to the need for new interviews, while it often also leads to expansion of the sample. The understanding of the situation that has been reached in one phase of the research is then used to prepare the next (Fajgelj, 2010).

An important role in the processing of data is held by the *constant comparison method*. This procedure rejects the positivist assumption of a clear separation between the data collection phase and data analysis phase. In *grounded theory* methodology, the data analysis process has the shape of a spiral in which the researcher is constantly moving from data collection to analysis, and then back to data collection. Through the process of development of the theory, we can distinguish between three levels of comparison (Glaser and Holton 2004):

- events are compared to events, which leads to the creation of codes and concepts
- the concepts are then compared to new events in order to achieve conceptual saturation,
- concepts are compared with other concepts in order to reach a higher conceptual level.

In grounded theory methodology, data analysis is *coding*. Data coding is the common denominator of all qualitative analyses (Fajgelj, 2010). Coding is the procedure of disaggregation of data into meaningful segments and the naming those segments. The goal is to create order out of the initial disorder, to choose from the large number of concepts the ones that are relevant to the problem and purpose of the research. The grounded theory’s logic is that the theory is hidden in the data. Through coding, certain elements of the theory actually become visible (LaRossa, 2005).

Data analysis begins with open coding. Glaser defines open coding as keeping data open, while Strauss and Corbin believe that it is “breaking data into pieces” (Strauss and Corbin 2008). Open coding is based on the *concept-indicator* model. The basic process of the concept-indicator model is the *constant comparison* of

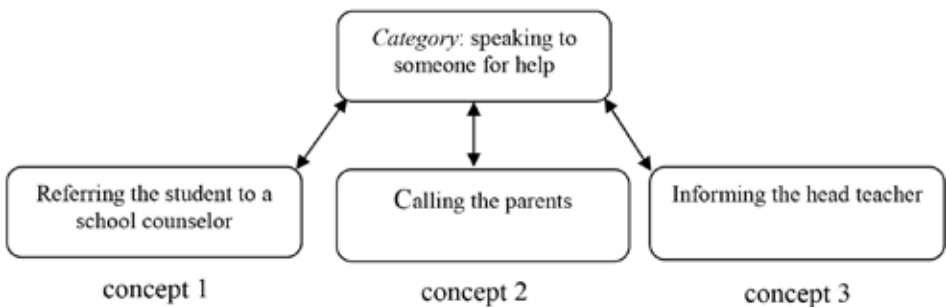
the events, developments, and statements of the participants. The *indicator* represents a word, phrase, sentence or array of sentences (in the interview transcript). The concept (code) is the name or label that is assigned to a group of similar indicators. Aggressiveness is a concept, and so is gender, motivation, etc. (Figure 1).

Interview question	Interview transcript	Concept (CODE)
<p>How would you react in the following situation:                      During class, a student tells another student “if you don’t give me your marker, I won’t call you to my birthday party”?</p>	<p>I would tell the child that this should not particularly disturb him and that he should “get over it”. I would try to explain to him that his friend did not really mean what he said.</p>	<p>Supporting the reaction “be strong”</p>

Figure 1: Open coding

At the beginning of the analysis (coding), one indicator may induce the researcher to introduce a particular concept. When deciding on how abstract a concept should be, Glaser and Strauss (1967) suggest the following rule: if the conceptual label is not sufficiently abstract and general, the conceptualization will not occur. In such cases, the concept merely repeats and paraphrases the data. The concepts are not only labels of the events, but they must generalize and abstract them. In order for a conceptual label to “function”, it must be at a higher level of abstraction in relation to its indicators (LaRossa, 2005).

With the development of the concepts, open coding also implies generating categories. Categorization is the grouping of similar concepts. The categories are at a higher level of abstraction and generalization than the concepts. An observer, for example, can group birds, airplanes and kites into flying objects. In a study of teacher reactions to violent student behavior as one of the forms of active social behavior disorders in young people (Bouillet and Uzelac, 2007), the category of “speaking to someone for help” can include the concepts of “referring the student to a school counselor”, “calling the student’s parents”, and “informing the home-room teacher” (Figure 2).





Open coding develops concepts and categories, which prepares the data for *axial coding*. It can be said that axial coding is not the analysis of raw data, but the analysis of concepts and categories. Axial coding represents the bringing of categories into relation with their *subcategories*. These relationships are then tested with new data. In this phase of analysis, the researcher focuses on one category and sets a series of questions relating to that category: “When?, Where?, Why?, Who?, How?, With what consequences?” Therefore, subcategories are the categories that provide answers to the set questions regarding the category that is currently the center of analysis.

In essence, axial coding concerns the *formulation of hypotheses*. For example, in the research that deals with teachers’ reactions to incidents of student bullying, the interviewed teachers were asked about how they react to different forms of bullying. Through open coding, the following categories were developed: *ignoring, discussing with students, providing support to the victim, speaking to someone for help*. Early on, the researcher begins searching for connections between the categories. The focus of the analysis is “ignoring”. The question “Why?” induces an analysis of the causes that lead to the lack of reaction from the teachers. Why do teachers ignore the social exclusion of students? The questions that still impose themselves are: Does a lack of empathy for the victims of social bullying affect the lack of a reaction? Under what conditions do teachers fail to respond to social exclusion? What are the consequences of such a “reaction” of a teacher?

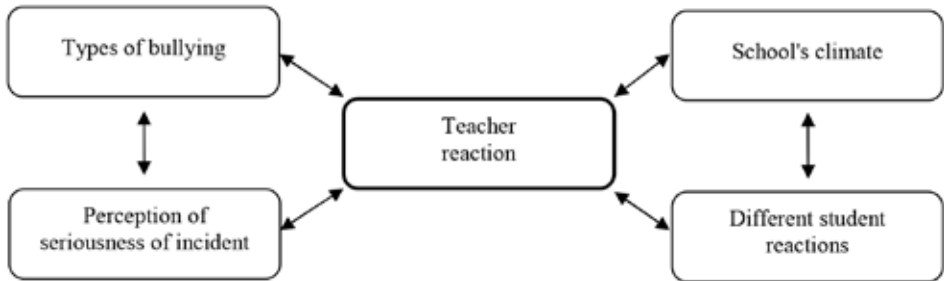
When should axial coding be applied? It is believed that premature initiation of axial coding can lead to the “extortion” of pre-generated conclusions (Glaser and Holton, 2004). In contrast, the connections between categories should *emerge*. Of course, it is not mandatory to limit axial coding to later phases of the analysis process. The researcher may, very early on, wonder what kind of connection does, for example, gender have with the other categories, because his or her research culture imposes the belief that gender is practically always an important intervening variable. The researcher may wonder whether the teachers apply the same strategies in their reactions to social exclusion. What are the consequences of various response strategies?

A very important question is the question of when to *consult the literature* in grounded theory methodology. A *grounded theory research design* is often linked to “abstinence” from the study of literature on a particular field. This requirement is derived from the demand for theoretical sensitivity of the researcher and his openness to data. In this regard, it is believed that the reading of previous studies would hinder the researcher to fulfill this requirement. In relation to this, it should be noted that the implementation of a grounded theory research design does not imply the complete absence of the influence of consulting literature. In other words, the criticism is directed towards the traditional notion of literature review. In grounded theory methodology, the consultation of literature is viewed as an interpretative undertaking of reviewing the existing studies, which calls into question what is already known.



SELECTIVE CODING (NARRATIVE STORY)

That is the last phase of data analysis in the grounded theory research design, in which the theory – explanation of the phenomenon occurs. Linking of categories is crucial to the narrative of the story “regarding what happened”. An important role in selective coding is played by conceptualization (Glaser and Holton, 2004), which represents an analytical procedure that detects relationships between categories (topics), and which surpasses the level of description. Selective coding is based on the selection of a central category (of the phenomenon being explained). The central category represents “the sun that stands in systematic order with its planets” (Fajgelj, 2010, p. 314). Its main function is integration of the theory. A central category should be common, conspicuous and associated with all of the other categories. Strauss and Corbin (2008) establish this systematic order, which brings the central category into relation with the other categories, on the basis of the so-called *paradigm model*. The paradigm model consists of: the causes, the central category (phenomenon), context, intervening conditions, strategies, actions and consequences of those actions. Let us illustrate this model with a previously used example (Figure 3).



How to explain the **teachers’ reactions** to violent student behavior (CENTRAL CATEGORY)? Perhaps the **form of bullying** is a decisive factor (CAUSE). Concerns on how to react and the **perception of the seriousness** of the incident determine the teachers’ behavior (INTERVENING CONDITION). When a teacher sees physical bullying he or she feels obliged to try to prevent it. A teacher who witnesses physical bullying can testify to its cruelty. Consequently, teachers have no dilemma regarding the direction of action. This, for example, also occurs in cases of verbal bullying. One of the most common ways of reacting is to **stop the violent behavior** and point out its unacceptability (STRATEGY).

Teachers are far less clear when it comes to indirect bullying and often have a difficult time detecting it. When a teacher observes a student whose peers are constantly excluding him or her from their activities, they are not sure how to react. Teachers lack self-confidence and are afraid of causing a counter-effect. Some may believe that by reporting an incident they will be seen as incompetent. Teacher reactions also depend on the **school’s climate** (CONTEXT), i.e. the fact whether

the school has adopted an explicit policy against bullying which does not tolerate any form of peer victimization. Many schools have not introduced anti-bullying programs that would encourage the identification of indirect forms of bullying. Of course, this leads to a **lack of teacher reactions** to implicit forms of bullying (STRATEGY). Different attitudes and forms of behavior of teachers lead to a case in which **students apply different strategies and suffer different consequences** (CONSEQUENCES).

The presentation of results in grounded theory methodology is narrative. The act of writing a report on the research is interpretive, inventive and intuitive. The writing of a report on a qualitative research does not represent mere reporting of the facts, or in the case of a *grounded theory research design*, reporting on the causes, central category, context, strategies and consequences. It is a delicate act of preserving the experiences of the respondents visible (Charmaz, 2005). It is the duty of the researcher to conceptualize, in the truest possible manner, the experiences of the respondent. Writing leads to new discoveries and deeper insights. Many researchers wish to tell it all, but of course, they fail. Many qualitative researchers strive to give “dense descriptions”. To describe a selected phenomenon means to interpret it through the documented circumstances, meanings, purposes, and action strategies of individuals. The interpretation is what makes a description “dense”. It can be said for the *grounded theory research design* that it not only strives for “dense descriptions”, but also “conceptual density”.

## THEORETICAL SAMPLING

Sampling in the *grounded theory research design* is multi-phase; it begins with selective and continues with theoretical sampling. While theoretical sampling is guided by the theory that arises, purposeful (intentional) sampling is the selecting of persons who will participate in the study. Glaser indicates that theoretical sampling occurs when the researcher, while analyzing the data, decides which information he still needs and where he can find it, in order to integrate the theory that is being generated (Glaser and Holton, 2004). Therefore, theoretical sampling can be achieved by interviewing additional participants, as well as re-interviewing the same participants in order to clarify the collected data. Sampling in the theoretical sense can also refer to the returning to the existing data in order to link the information collected from other sources such as literature, researcher memos and feedback from the respondents. Therefore, additional (theoretical) sampling is not always based on the interviewing of new participants. The main characteristic of theoretical sampling is expansion of the sample during the research process.

After conducting the first few interviews and coding their transcripts, a need usually arises for new interviews, or even new respondents. For example, if the investigated problem is the manner in which teachers respond to violent student behavior in school, prior to making conclusions about the teachers' reactions, the researcher wants to make sure that he has studied the problem in different set-

tings (hall, classroom, school courtyard), that he has included different events (reactions to different types of bullying), or that he has taken into account teachers of a different gender, years of employment, etc.

The criterion for assessing when to stop with the theoretical sampling is *theoretical saturation* or *saturation*. Glaser and Strauss (1967) speak of saturation in the case when no new categories can be developed from the data. Generally speaking, it is necessary to interview/collect data as long as we hear something new. When it can be seen that a certain category has been repeated enough times, the researcher can be sure that it is saturated.

### MEMO WRITING

The *grounded theory research design* is explicit in stating the procedures that make the researcher reflexive. Writing of memos is present throughout the entire research process. Writing of memos refers to the recording of emerging ideas, assumptions, suspicions, insights, feelings and decisions, thus memos contribute to the general transparency of the research process. Memos represent an integral part of the data being analyzed and are included in the final theory. Memos are conceptual in their intent, different in scope, and the researcher writes them for himself.

Writing memos is the fundamental analytical rule of qualitative data analysis, and in this sense useful is the practical instruction of Glaser and Strauss (1967): stop and record!. Writing notes forces the researcher to record all of the ideas that come to him, so that they would not become lost during the later phases of research. Some authors refer to memos as notes that a researcher writes to himself, thus throughout the entire research process he communicates with the data, but also with himself (Borgatti, 2006). Recording notes slows the researcher down and forces him to review the categories and their relevance to the theory; Glaser and Holton (2004) even point out that notes should be kept during the course of an interview, because according to them, an interview should not be recorded. Of course, this is a skill that is characteristic of experienced researchers and scientists.

### DIFFICULTIES IN APPLICATION OF THE GROUNDED THEORY RESEARCH DESIGN

The growingly frequent application of the *grounded theory research design* has contributed to the observation of both its advantages as well as significant limitations. Given that the essence of this qualitative approach is that theory emerges from data and that it is based on it, it goes not without its critics. Moreover, the *grounded theory research design* is criticized by quantitative researchers who see it as insufficiently reliable and verifiable, but also by qualitative researchers who see in it post-positivistic elements such as the establishment and verification of hypotheses (Charmaz, 2005).

The grounded theory methodology is appropriate as a theory development research design (versus verification) and in situations where little is known about the studied phenomenon. Fassinger (2005) observes that the *grounded theory research design* particularly appeals to young qualitative researchers with its high structuralism and pragmatism. However, even Glaser and Holton do not recommend this approach for young researchers who have not yet developed the ability of conceptualization, and who are not yet capable of raising the data analysis above the level of description (Glaser and Holton, 2004). Apart from this, the grounded theory methodology is very demanding. Qualitative researchers who apply the *grounded theory research design* are faced with an abundance of data. Moreover, researchers who lack the ability of conceptualization often “seek” the theory in the research participants, forgetting that the research participants are in fact data sources and not theorists (Glaser and Holton, 2004). One of the ways of dealing with the difficulty of too much data is the use of computer programs that are designed for data analysis in qualitative research (Atlas-Ti, Etnograph etc.). However, the use of computers is not universally accepted, while critics suggest that interpretive work cannot be replaced by a mechanical application of an array of procedures (Charmaz, 2005).

## CONCLUSION

Explicating the fundamental assumptions of the *grounded theory* methodology, an attempt was made to contribute to their more comprehensive understanding, but also their applicability in the field of the school bullying. At the same time, an attempt was made to point out the need to intensify the integration of qualitative approaches into educational research.

Application of the *grounded theory research design* in researching the problems of school bullying carries with it many challenges. First of all, inductivity, which is characteristic of the grounded theory research design, requires researchers to not only be open to the data, but be prepared to describe their own personal perspective; and very often to place their potential bias at the level of the data source, which would give it cognitive meaning. Such self-reflection is not only desirable but necessary, considering that dealing with active and passive social behavior disorders in young people requires the researcher to become a part of the context, of the environment which he is exploring. In addition, the *grounded theory* methodology has significant potential in the process of understanding social behavior disorders in young people, in a way that enables for the generation of integrated theories and their greater applicability by the educator. The grounded theory methodology, its focus on generating a theory with respect to the social context of each individual, as well as its applicability in the research of a wide range of phenomena, can develop it into a relevant qualitative research design which, we believe, offers many possibilities in the process of understanding and study of the current problems of school bullying.

## REFERENCES

- Borgatti, S. (2006). *Introduction to Grounded Theory*. Retrieved on January 15<sup>th</sup> 2012 from <http://www.analytictech.com/mb870/introtoGT.htm>
- Bouillet, B., Uzelac, S. (2007). *Osnove socijalne pedagogije*. Zagreb: Školska knjiga.
- Charmaz, K. (2005). Grounded theory in 21st century. In Denzin, N.K., Lincoln, Y. (Eds.), *Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry* (pp. 203-241). London: SAGE Publications.
- Clark, A.E. (2003). Situational analysis: Grounded theory mapping after postmodern turn. *Symbolic Interaction*, 26 (4), 553-576.
- Creswell, W.J. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: choosing among five approaches*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Fajgelj, S. (2010). *Metode istraživanja ponašanja*. Beograd: Centar za primenjenu psihologiju.
- Fassinger, R.E. (2005). Paradigms, Praxis, Problems, and Promise: Grounded Theory in Counseling Psychology Research. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52 (2), 156–166.
- Flick, U. (2006). *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Glaser, B.G., Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: strategies for qualitative research*. New Jersey: Aldine Transaction.
- Glaser, B.G., Holton, J. (2004). Remodeling Grounded Theory. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 2: Art. 4.
- LaRossa, R. (2005). Grounded theory method and qualitative family research. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 67 (4), 837-856.
- Rapuš Pavel, J., Kobolt, A. (2008). Iskustva sa kvalitativnom analizom na području socijalno-pedagoškog istraživanja. In Koller-Trbović, N., Žižak, A. (Eds.), *Kvalitativni pristup društvenim znanostima* (pp. 98-117). Zagreb: Edukacijsko-rehabilitacijski fakultet.
- Schwandt, T. (2007). *The SAGE Dictionary of Qualitative Inquiry* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition). London: SAGE Publications.
- Strauss, A.L., Corbin, J. (2008). *Basics of qualitative research: techniques and procedure for developing grounded theory* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition). London: Sage Publications.
- Шевкушић, С. 2006. Основне методолошке поставке квалитативних истраживања. *Зборник институтна за педагошка истраживања*, 38 (2), 299-316.

Оливера Ч. Кнежевић-Флорић, Стефан Р. Нинковић  
Филозофски факултет Универзитета у Новом Саду

## УТЕМЕЉЕНА ТЕОРИЈА И СОЦИЈАЛНОПЕДАГОШКА ИСТРАЖИВАЊА

## РЕЗИМЕ

Дебате о примени квантитативних, квалитативних и микс-методских методолошких приступа у друштвеним наукама, углавном су вођене потребом да се оправда смисао квалитативних истраживања и њихов простор у контексту модерне науке. У том смислу, циљ овог рада јесте разматрање потребе за применом једног од квалитативних методолошких приступа у истраживањима проблема социјалне педагогије – нацрта *утемељене теорије*. У првом делу рада, аутори сагледавају развој, конститутивна својства и методолошке претпоставке утемељене теорије, аутора Glasera и Straussa. Методологија и сам нацрт утемељене теорије представљен је у односу на своје главне претпоставке и кључне елементе (фазе):

прикупљање квалитативних података, методу константног упоређивања, кодирање и теоријско узорковање. У другом делу рада, аутори експлицирају методолошки сажету, али кохерентну интерпретацију ове врсте квалитативног истраживања која има значајан потенцијал разумевања социјалнопедагошких феномена, на начин који омогућава генерисање интегрисаних теорија и њихову већу апликативност од стране социјалних педагога/практичара.

Кључне речи: социјална педагогија, утемељена теорија, школа, квалитативна истраживања, нацрт истраживања