

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Research methodology is defined as a system and principles that used in conducting a research study and the used of its methods depending on the focus of the research and question that need to be examined. Therefore, the focus of research is to develop a sustainability framework for waqf-based healthcare institutions by comparing the sustainability concepts and practices of identified social-based healthcare institutions in Malaysia. Figure 3.1 below represents the hierarchy of healthcare institutions in Malaysia.

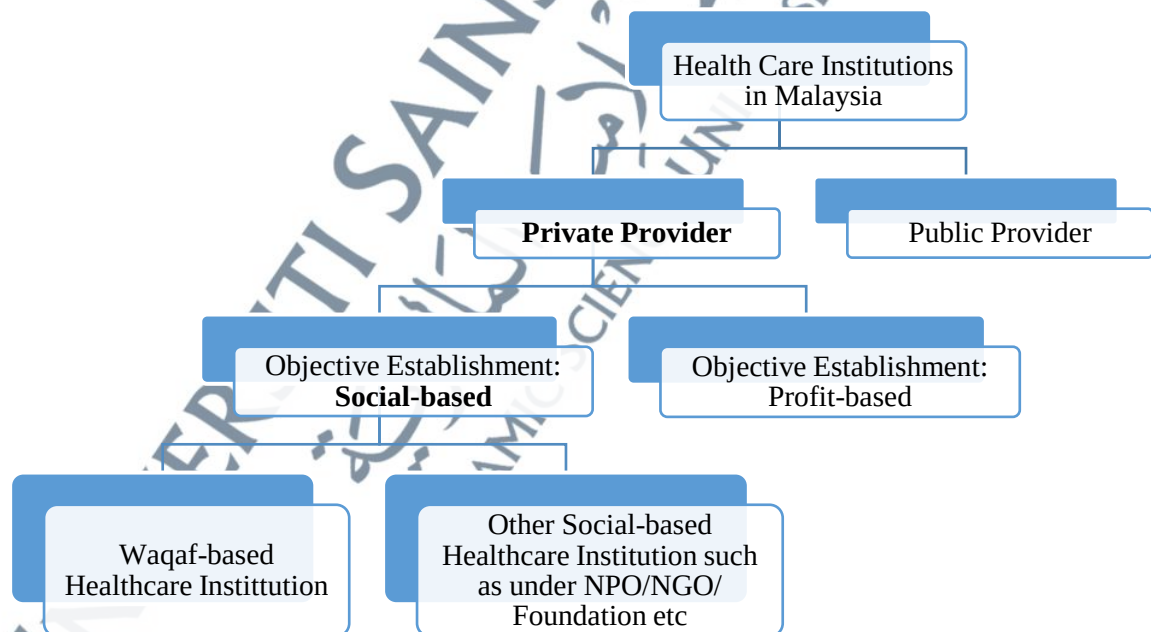


Figure 3.1: Hieracacy Healthcare Institutions in Malaysia

The selection of social-based healthcare institutions was made based on the fact that the institutions are established on social economic principles, implementing a philanthropic or volunteerism concept, or the fact that the aim and objective of the institutions are the fulfilment of the basic needs of society. Since this research is sought to reveal the philosophies that permeated the creation and development of the institutions, as well as the sustainability concept and practices held by the institutions, thus a qualitative research methodology will be used. This chapter aim is to outline the methodology adopted by this research that consists of the research paradigm, its underlying philosophical assumptions, and justification for adopting the qualitative method as a research methodology. It also elaborates the research design and strategies for data collection and analysis, as well as the research validity and reliability. Figure 3.2 below showed the outlined for this chapter.

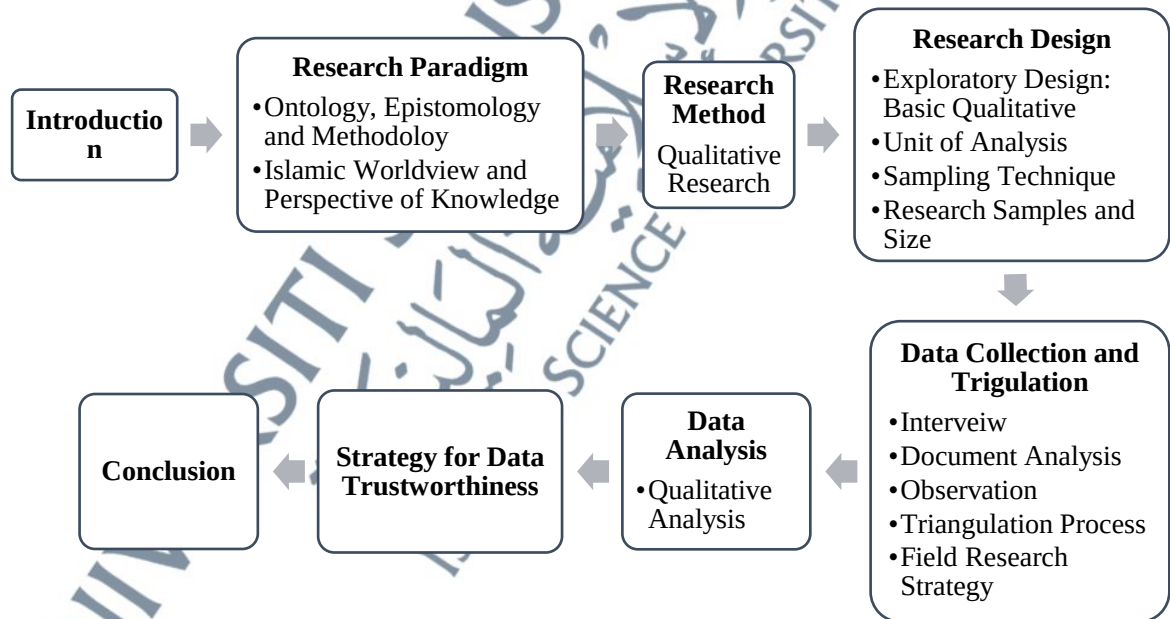


Figure 3.2: The Outline of Chapter 3

3.2 Research Paradigm

The word ‘paradigm’ has its etiology in Greek; it means pattern, and it describes a researcher’s ‘worldview’ (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). It is a basic set of beliefs or worldview system which based on ontological, epistemological and methodological assumption that guides research action or an investigation (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Khun, (1962:175) defines research paradigm as follows:

“Research paradigm is a set of common beliefs, values and technique which is shared by members of a scientific community and which acts as a guide or map, dictating the kinds of problems scientist should address and the types of explanation that are acceptable to them.”

For a research to be valid, all scholarly inquiries need to be supported by certain philosophical assumptions as they provide coherence, logics, and justifications (Merriam, 2016). This philosophical way of thinking (Khun, 1962) will develop the research paradigm, which acts as a conceptual lens through which the researcher examines the methodological aspects of their research, by determining the research methods that will be used and how the data will be analyzed (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Paradigm is important since it provides beliefs and dictates that influence a scholar on what should be studied, how it should be studied, and how the results of the study should be interpreted (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). It is an overall system of interrelated practices and thinking that defines the nature of inquiry along the three major dimensions of ontology, epistemology, and methodology.

However, there is no way to prove that one paradigm is superior to the others as supported by Gioia & Pitre (1990) that claim fundamental assumption about the nature of organizational phenomena (ontology), the nature of knowledge about those phenomena

(epistemology) and the nature of knowledge about those phenomena (methodology) there are differences. This section explain the ontological, epistemological and methodological of this research besides the Islamic worldview and perspective of knowledge in conducting this study.

3.2.1 Ontology, Epistemology and Methodology

The ontological paradigm means the nature of reality, which refers to the theory of existence or how existence can be understood (Hanapi & Alias, 2015). "Ontology is concerned with the nature of reality" as said by Sauders et al, (2009) which usually refers to the assumption of how the world operates and the commitment held to the particular observation (Rose Ruziana Samad, 2018). This term which originates from the Greek words ontos and logos (IdzamFautanu, 2012) is concerned with the nature of the world and human being in social contexts (Merriam, 2016; Bryman, 2012). It allows the researcher to examine the basic belief system and assumptions of philosophy, and the nature of existence and reality. It is a branch of philosophy that relates to the assumptions that we make to believe in something logical or real, or the nature or essence of a social phenomenon that we are investigating to give an understanding of the things that make up the world as it is known (Scott & Usher, 1996)

The ontological aspect aims to determine the true nature, or the basic concept, that forms the analyzed themes to understand the meaning embedded in the research data. Among the questions relating to the aspect of ontology are: Is there reality out there in the social world, or is it a construction created by one's own mind? What is the nature of reality? In other words, is reality of an objective nature, or the result of individual

cognition? What is the nature of the situation being studied? The philosophical assumptions about the nature of reality are important to make the collected data meaningful which means ontological belief or assumption defines the epistemology and methodology for the research.

As for the epistemology of a paradigm, it describes the nature of knowledge and how to obtain valid knowledge. The word epistemology originates from two Greek words, namely episteme, which means knowledge, and logos, which means theory or a study (Fanani, 2009). Epistemology is defined as the study of the nature of knowledge and justification (Schwandt, 1997), which is used to describe how to know something and how to know the truth or reality (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006), such as source, classification, specialization, and limitation of knowledge (Fadzila Azni Ahmad, 2008). It is important in helping the researcher to establish faith towards the data, and it influences the method used to uncover the knowledge in the social context that has been investigated.

The questions that relate to epistemology are: What is the nature of knowledge and the relationship between the knower and the would-be known? What is the relationship between the inquirer and what is known? Thus, in order to answer to the above questions, four sources of knowledge are identified. They are: 1) intuitive knowledge that relies on forms of knowledge such as beliefs, faith, and intuition; 2) authoritative knowledge that relies on data gathered from knowledgeable individuals, books, or leaders in organizations; 3) logical or rationalist knowledge, which emphasizes reason as the surest path to knowing the truth and; 4) empirical knowledge, which refers to the understanding that knowledge is best derived from sensory experiences, and that it is demonstrable, objective facts (Slavin, 1984).

Meanwhile, the methodology of a paradigm is defined as how researchers go about on finding knowledge (Merriam, 2016). Methodology is the broad term used to refer to well-planned research designs, methods, approaches, and procedures used in an investigation (Keeves, 1997). The methodology articulates the logic and flow of the systematic processes followed in conducting a research project, which includes assumptions made and limitations encountered, and how the latter are mitigated or minimized. According to Guba and Lincoln (1994), the relationship between research paradigm terms can be illustrated as in Figure 3.3 below.

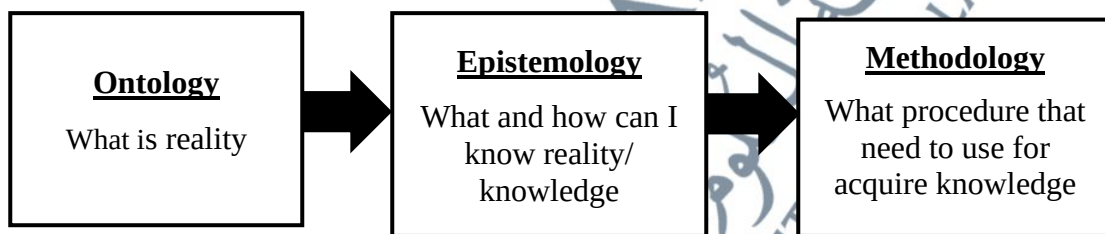


Figure 3.2: Research Paradigm Terms and Relationship

For this research, the qualitative methodology is used to address the research questions, which are generally inclined towards the inductive approach. This approach was selected for the purpose of conducting an in-depth study on the sustainability concepts and practices of selected social-based healthcare institutions (Neuman, 2014) and to generate theories and scientific supports necessary to advance the field (Nur Sa'adah, 2016). The main justifications of selecting a qualitative methodology are as below:

1. According to Merriam (Merriam, 2016), qualitative design is the most suitable for this particular study as it focuses on investigating processes and meanings, and gaining a deep understanding of the phenomenon;
2. Qualitative study is a flexible research design as it evolves, develops, and broadens along with the progress of the study (Trochim, 2006; Darusalam & Hussin, 2016:385); and
3. This type of research method is appropriate as there is still a lack of literature and conceptualization (Nur Sa'adah, 2016) for this research. The concept and definition of social-based healthcare sustainability are still vague and have yet to reach a clear mutual consensus among researchers.

3.2.2 Islamic Worldview and Islamic Perspective of Knowledge

Since this research compares between waqf-based and other social-based healthcare institutions, and the objective of this research itself is to develop a sustainable framework for waqf-based healthcare institutions, it is necessary to explain the research paradigm from the Islamic worldview and perspective of knowledge (its ontology and epistemology). The Islamic worldview, which is the Islamic vision of reality and truth (*ru'yat al-Islam li al-wujud*), revolves around the concept of Tawhid (the Oneness of Allah), and that human being submits to the will of Allah with the aim to achieve *mardhatillah* (the pleasure of Allah) and success both in the world and the hereafter (Al-Attas, 2010; M.Salleh et al., 2014). Islamic teachings relating to social reality must be based on the primary sources (the Quran and the Hadith), and as a Muslim, one must accept it without doubt, in accordance with the concept of Tawhid (Abdullah, Radzi, Johari, & Dastagir, 2014). Quran and Hadith

are the primary sources of knowledge, as affirmed by science, human intellect, and reasoning. (Al-Attas, 1990:2) interpreted the Islamic nature of reality (Ontology) as said in below quote:

“...a metaphysical survey of visible as well as the invisible worlds including the perspective of life as a whole, is not a worldwide that is formed merely by the gathering together of various cultural objects, values and phenomena into artificial coherence.”

(Al-Attas, 1990:2)

The concept of Islamic economics comes from the Quran and Sunnah of the Prophet (S.A.W). These sources are divine in nature and carry only the truth (Khan, 1989). The role of the principle of Tawhid or Rabbani is to unite the views of knowledge in order to understand nature or act as the center of knowledge, whether it is limited to the physical world (*'alam al-syahadah*) or transverse the metaphysical realm (*'alam al-ghayb*) (Abdul Rahman Abdullah, 2005). The ontological concept from an Islamic perspective encompasses and is associated with the existence of Allah SWT through the signs that portray His supreme qualities (Hanapi & Alias, 2015).

West interpretative paradigm recognizes the ontological assumption as multiple realities that can all be perceived as truth which usually based on human understanding, perspectives, or perceptions of what they may consider as the truth; they vary depending on each individual's experiences, reasoning, and knowledge (Nur Sa'adah, 2016; Al-Attas, 1990). However, the Islamic paradigm, as prescribed by divine revelations, recognizes only an ultimate truth or reality (*haqiqah*), which means that only Allah s.w.t knows the truth (Nur Sa'adah, 2016). Allah SWT portrays signs of His supreme qualities through two types of verses. The first is the *Qur'aniyyah* verses, which refers to the narrations of Allah SWT

on matters contained in the Qur'an. The second is the *al-kawniyyah* verses, which refers to Allah's creations in the universe that is visible and discernible by man.

This knowledge is related or obtained through the natural sciences and humanities, just as all knowledge derived from the Qur'an, and would eventually drive humankind to get acquainted with Allah SWT (Mohd. Kamal Hasan, 2010). Thus, the concept of Islamic ontology always ensures that every scientific explanation found in empirical research does not contradict with Islamic *Tasawwur*, which upholds *Tawhid* (monotheism) (Ghazali Basri, 1984), because the *Tasawwur* aspect itself is closely related to a person's view about life (Hanapi & Alias, 2015).

While for epistemological assumption, it refers to the way knowledge is acquired (Bryman, 2012). It is the in-depth discussion on the processes that bring about the addition of knowledge (Roziah Sidik, Zulkarnain Mohamed & Nasruddin Yunus, 2011:47), or also known as *nazariyyat al-ma'rifah* in Islamic traditions of knowledge (Hanapi & Alias, 2015; Mutahhari, 2011: Mohd Radhi Ibrahim, 2003). Islamic philosophy is born and bred on certain foundations related to the theory or the origins of Islamic knowledge, which is known as Islamic epistemology (Al-Attas, 1990; Baba, 2004). In Islam, there are two main sources of knowledge: the *naql* (divine revelation) and *'aql* (ijtihad or reasoning on the basis of Qur'an and al-Sunnah). Sources of *naql* are Qur'an, or *al-wahy al-matlu* (divine revelation that is read), and al-Sunnah, or *al-wahy ghayr al-matlu* (divine revelation that is not read). Both are recognized as *al-adillat al-qat'iyyah*, that is, legitimate and unchallengeable proof (Hanapi & Alias, 2015). Meanwhile, there are a number of *'aql* sources, but the ones agreed upon by scholars are *al-ijma'* and *al-qiyas*, both of which are

known as *al-adillat al-ijtihadiyyah*. Knowledge produced from these sources are formed after some laborious and intense thinking.

While some scholars contend that Islamic epistemology is divided into five sources, which are divine revelation (*wahy*), inspiration (*ilham*), intuition, intellect (*'aql*), and senses (Awang, Mujani, Sidek, & Abd, 2012; Fadzila Azni Ahmad, 2008). There are also four elements that form the platform or basis of Islamic epistemology, which are belief (*'aqidah*), which is the main element of the four, worship (*'ibadah*), ethics (*akhlak*), and Islamic legislation (*syari'ah*) (Baba, 2004). Salleh, (2011) has critiqued the West social science methods, which he viewed as having insufficient tools of analysis to understand social reality. He reasoned that some Western thinkers, especially those from the positivistic paradigm, deny the existence of the metaphysical realm and the power of God that structure the natural world (Zain, 2000). Therefore, such scientific research philosophy has limitations in understanding social reality, especially of the Muslims (Fadzila Azni, 2012)

In order to conduct a research relating to Islam, the research methodology should fulfill two basic criteria: 1) it should be anchored on Islamic philosophy, comprising components such as Islamic *Tasawwur*, Islamic epistemology, and Islamic ontology; and 2) it combines *daruri* knowledge and propositions based on reasoning (*'aql*) with *nazari* knowledge and propositions based on the Qur'an and Hadith (*naql*) (Salleh, 2011). Since this research aims to develop a sustainability framework for waqf-based healthcare institutions, it needs to integrate both conventional and Islamic research paradigms. The following Table 3.1 summarizes the research paradigm and the philosophical stance of this study.

Table 3.1: Research Paradigm

Feature	Description	Interpretative – Qualitative Approach/Assumption (adopted for this research)	How it was addressed in this research
Purpose of this research	What the research is about?	Understanding a social situation from participants' perspective/view.	This research aims to understand the sustainability concepts and practices of various waqf and social-based healthcare institutions.
Ontological Position	What is reality? What is out there to know? What do we believe constitutes the social reality? Different understandings/perception of social reality.	Different understandings/perceptions of social realities.	There may be no consensus, as the views among the participants/ institutions may vary.
Epistemological Position	What and how can I know reality/knowledge? What can we know (the theory of knowledge) and how can we know what we know? What do we accept as a valid evidence of that reality?	Diverse perspectives and evidence	Examined the relationship between knowledge and researcher during the discovery period through various sources of past research on the studied topic.
Methodological Position	What procedure must be used to acquire knowledge? How can we go about acquiring the knowledge?	Strategies are flexible and changing as data are collected. The method is inductive in nature.	Qualitative methodology was employed.

(Source: Adapted from Abdullah, Radzi, Johari, & Dastagir, 2014; Nur Sa'adah, 2010)

3.3 Research Method

3.3.1 Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is an exploratory work that investigates a new or rare social phenomenon about which there is little information and this type of study allows researchers to gain focus and comprehensive understanding on a phenomenon by conducting an in-depth research, as well as observing and examining issues and problems that occur in the real environment (Rose Ruziana Samad, 2018; Merriam, 2016; Holmes et al., 2005; Sekaran, 2003). The aim of qualitative research itself is to portray the reality of the area of study to gain a full understanding of certain phenomena, meanings, and values attributed to the situation (Nur Sa'adah, 2016). Although this method does not have well-defined and well-structured protocols (Yin, 2015) but this approach is appropriate to get a new perspective on something that is already known but to get a more in-depth information dishonour difficult to be expressed quantitatively (Rose Ruziana Samad, 2018; Holmes et al., 2005).

Besides that, this research design usually referred as based on 'by word' and 'picture' (Miles & Huberman, 1994), or a study that uses verbatim description (vernacular or verbal) without any statistical observations (Ghazali Darussalam & Sufean Hussin, 2016), which is based on interpretivism (Altheide & Johnson, 1994; Secker, Wimbush, Watson & Milburn, 1995) and constructivism (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). As for this study, this research design is best used to provide a deeper understanding on the social-based healthcare institutions' philosophies and their concepts and practices towards institutional sustainability since the aim of this study is to understand and develop a framework for the

sustainability practices through an in-depth interview session with the representative of selected healthcare institution.

The research process involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant's setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes and the researcher interpreting the meaning of the data. Based on Creswell, Hanson, Clark Plano and Morales (2007), those who engage in this form of inquiry support a way of looking at research that honours an inductive style, a focus on individual meaning and the importance of rendering the complexity of a situation and this will allow the researcher to have a flexible structure on final writing report. Since the actual aim for a qualitative researcher is to reveal the knowledge of how the respondents' feelings and thoughts in the situation and scope of study, this type of research method is used to lead to a more accurate understanding of individual feedback. For the context of institutional or organizational research, two most prominent methods of data collection used are participant observation and semi-structured interviewing which qualitative research tends to be unstructured in order to capture people's perspective and interpretations (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Thus, as proposed by Merriam (2009), this research adopts the qualitative method which involves the following criteria.

- i. Focus on meaning, understanding and process
- ii. Purposeful samples
- iii. Data collection via interviews, observation and document
- iv. Data analysis is inductive and comparative
- v. Finding are richly descriptive and presented as themes and categories.

3.3.2 Research Design

The objective of research design is to guide the researcher in the process of collecting, analysing and interpreting the observations. It also reflects the purpose of the study, the type of investigation, the extent of researcher interference, study population for the research, research setting and the time horizon of the study (Rose Ruziana Samad, 2018; Cavana, Delahaye, & Sekeran, 2001). According to Nachmias and Nachmias (1992) research design is a logical model of proof that allows the researcher to draw inferences concerning causal relations among the variables under investigation. Thus, the aim of this research is to develop a sustainability framework for waqf-based healthcare institutions by comparing the sustainability concepts and practices of various Malaysian social-based healthcare institutions in order to investigate and evaluate the best practices for a sustainability framework that is feasible for waqf-based healthcare institutions in Malaysia. This section discusses the overall research design of this research, including the research approach, unit of analysis, sampling technique, and sampling size.

3.3.3 Exploratory Design: Basic Qualitative Study

In research, the collection of data is an important process to achieved the objective of study. Through this process, it will determined the ability of the researcher to gather all the information needed in order to answer the research question (Airasan & Gay, 2003). As the aim of exploratory study is to determine and understand the nature of problem, thus the process of this research is not necessarily intended to provide a definitive and conclusive answer to the question of the investigation or even a concrete proof for the study but simply to explore the research topics with varying degrees of depth (Rose Ruziana Samad, 2018).

This will help the researcher to be more flexible and willingly to accept and change as a result of the finding of data or new insights (Sauders et al., 2007).

The selection on the qualitative design also considering that the participants of this study, which are social-based healthcare institutions, vary in shape and setting, it is necessary to conduct an exploratory study that aims to gain more understanding on the studied phenomena, to explore the process or the form of practices, to gather a rich and detailed information, and to have an in-depth understanding on the processes or types of practices (Creswell, Hanson, Clark Plano & Morales, 2007). Qualitative research is the umbrella term and qualitative researchers have organized the diversity of forms of qualitative research in various way such as Patton (2015) has discussed that qualitative research has sixteen theorithical traditions, Creswell (2013) present five approaches, Tesch (1990) listed 45 approaches while Merriam (2016) has listed out six commonly used approach in qualitative research which are basic qualitative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, narrative and qualitative case study (Merriam, 2016).

According to her, these types of qualitative research have some attributes in common thus fall under the umbrella concept of 'qualitative' but each have some different in focus resulting in variations in how the research question may be asked, sample selection, data collection and analysis and write-up. The term basic qualitative study was given by Merriam since usually all qualitative research is interpretive, and "generic" that they usually doesn't convey a clear meaning. These diversity of views indicates that in qualitative studies, there is no consensus on how to classify the baffling numbers of choices or approaches (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2016) thus researcher should choose the suitable approach for their study with clear and robust justifications without prejudist.

As the different between basic qualitative approach and qualitative case study that may often be considered as the same, lay on its unit of analysis where qualitative case study is a bounded system or a case such as a person, program or an event which usually label such a study as “qualitative case study” (Merriam, 2016). Other justifications for choosing this type of study are based on the preliminary research done before the field studies and it is found that this study design is more suitable which helps in determining the sampling methodology and data collection method (Singh, 2007). Although the measurement of organizational or institutional sustainability can be done through either the evaluation of economic or non-economic factors through a quantitative, or at least qualitative, approach (Sebhatu, 2009), but as this research is aim to have an in-depth understanding, thus basic qualitative research through exploratory design is the best method to be used. The exploratory research will lead to a variety of alternatives for solving specific problems, while the final of research will identify the information which the last is the only solution to the research problem (Sandhursen, 2000). Furthermore, exploratory study do not have a rigorous methodology as used in conclusive study besides the sample size is more smaller (Nargundkar, 2003).

3.3.4 Unit of Analysis

In any scientific research, the unit of analysis needs to be clearly identified because it sets the boundary of data collection, thus preventing the researcher from deviating from the focus of research (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The main unit of analysis of this research is the institution, which involves several social-based healthcare institutions that have different settings of establishment. Their sustainability concepts and practices are analyzed

comparatively. The participants is the institution's representative. They are the key person of the institution who provide information about their respective institution. Thus, in this research, both the unit of analysis and the participant are the institution and its representative.

3.3.5 Sampling Technique

Malaysian health providers can be categorized into two types: government or public healthcare provider and private healthcare provider. The sample for social-based healthcare institutions, which include waqf-based organizations, was drawn from the private healthcare institution population, since in Malaysia, they are usually categorized under the private healthcare sector. As stated by Bennett (1991), a private healthcare provider is defined as all organizations and individuals working outside the direct control of the state, comprising both for-profit companies and individuals or not-for-profit private organizations.

This research used the theoretical or purposeful sampling technique design (Eisenhardt, 1989; Weerawardena et al., 2010) to provide examples of polar types and to draw the type of cases from the population. The selection of the purposive sampling technique is based on the emerging theory and insight of the researcher, which provide the reason for selecting certain groups and themes (topic) for detailed analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Weerawardena et al., 2010). Besides that, purposive sampling helps the researcher to determine the criteria or make a judgment on the selection of institutions that are suitable for this research sample (Fadzila Azni, 2010; Marican, 2005; Faisal, 1990). This type of sampling technique is suitable for an exploratory research that has a big

population (Idid, 1993). Some of the reasons in selecting this type of sampling technique, as stated by Fadzila Azni (2010) are: 1) difficulty in identifying all populations of the study; 2) focusing on sample that have certain characteristics; and 3) referring to the main objective of the study, which is to obtain detailed information on the sample of the study.

These social-based healthcare institutions were selected based on their aim of focusing on social objectives and their establishment on philanthropy concepts such as waqf, foundation, social enterprise, etc. Most of these institutions classify themselves as a non-profit organization. Initial information on the institutions' backgrounds was taken from their respective official websites, besides annual reports, evaluation reports, and any other documents that could be retrieved from the websites. The information from these sources is important to support the information during the interview session, to fill in gaps, and to obtain further insight (Savaya et al., 2009).

3.3.6 Research Sample and Sample Size

To determine which social-based healthcare institution should be selected as the sample, it should fulfil at least one of the following criteria:

1. The social-based healthcare institution has social aims, that is, to serve the community and to solve, ameliorate, and provide an alternative for unfortunate groups, such as the poor and homeless, in fulfilling their basic needs for healthcare services.
2. The initial establishment of the healthcare institution should be based on social economic principles, implementing a philanthropic or volunteerism concept which

can either be waqf, endowment, non-profit or non-government organization, or social enterprises.

Table 3.2 shows the list of social-based healthcare institutions, including waqf. These criteria are important to be listed out in order to distinguish between social and for-profit healthcare institutions which usually lies in the purposes and goals of the organization that place the objective of serving the public as the ultimate goal rather than maximizing profit.

Table 3.2: Sample of Social-based Healthcare Institutions in Malaysia

No	Healthcare Institutions Category/ Name	Year Establishment	Period of Establishment
1	Waqf An-Nur Hospital	1998	22
2	USIM Health Specialist Centre	2015	5
3	PUSRAWI Hospital	1984	36
4	MUIP Healthcare	2003	16
5	Hospital Fatimah	1974	46
6	Mount Miriam Cancer Hospital	1976	44
7	Penang Adventist Hospital	1924	96
8	Assunta Hospital	1954	66
9	Mawar Renal Medical Centre	2008	12
10	Tung Shin Hospital	1881	139
11	Al-Islam Specialist Hospital	1996	24
12	NS Chinese Maternity Hospital	1932	88
13	Kinta Medical Center	1980's	40
14	Perak Community Specialist Hospital (PCSH)	1904	116
15	Lam Wah Ee Hospital	1876	144

The amount of sample in this research is consistent with Eisenhardt's (1989) suggestion, that a range of four to ten cases is necessary for the development of theory. A small number of cases will help the researcher to make limited generalizations, be more

particular, and see each healthcare institution as unique. As this research involves a small population, all fifteen social-based healthcare institutions are considered as the research sample. The fifteen healthcare institutions have been identified from secondary sources based on the a fore mentioned criteria. For the preliminary investigation, the information for each healthcare institution's background was taken from its official website, annual reports, evaluation reports, and other documents relating to the institution. As suggested by Yin (1994), it is important for a researcher to develop cases from various sources of data.

The initial information and list of these hospitals were gathered from the Malaysia Medical Resources website. In a sustainability study, the period of establishment or operation is strongly associated with the survival of an institution, program, or organization. However, in this research, there is a waqf-based healthcare institution that is established only recently, which is the USIM Specialist Clinics. The clinic, though, has operated for almost five years, which is the minimum required period for sustainability assessment. Weerawardena et al. (2010) argued that an organization is identified as enduring if it has existed for about five years or more. Following this justification, this healthcare institution is included as a sample for this research. Furthermore, the purposes of this research itself are to investigate the sustainability concepts and practices of each healthcare institution and to gain a better understanding on the element of sustainability that contributes to the survival of healthcare institutions. Past research has compared the sustainability of existing and terminated programs.

For example, Savaya et al. (2008) conducted a comparative sustainability analysis between sustaining and unenduring or terminated social programs. The sampled institutions varied in terms of its management philosophy, organizational structure, size, and the nature

of activities undertaken, and therefore satisfy the criterion of maximum variation (Patton, 1990; Weerawardena et al., 2010). The sampling proceeded until a theoretical saturation was achieved, as suggested by Weerawardena et al., (2010). The theoretical saturation process is defined as a process in which themes and constructs from a case are substantiated by the evidence of another case, and the sampling proceeds until no new issues or constructs are introduced (Hirschman, 1986).

3.4 Data Collection and Data Triangulation

In qualitative research, interview is the most widely employed method in gathering the data, while data triangulation processes will support the overall validity and quality of the research (Flick, 2007; Merriam, 2016). The interview process is a technique of questioning the participants of the research and getting them to react verbally, while the triangulation process is done by cross-checking the collected information with data gathered using other techniques, such as document analysis and observation (Phillips, 2016). In this research, the two main data collection techniques employed are in-depth interview and document analysis. The former is used to gather information from the participants, who are representatives of the social-based healthcare institutions, while the observation technique is used to enrich the analysis and understanding of the research data. All data collected using the main data collection techniques focus on information related to sustainability concepts and practices, which begins with the creation and development of the institutions.

3.4.1 Interview

In-depth face-to-face interview with the representative of each social-based healthcare institution is the main method of data collection for this research as it is an appropriate method for the exploratory study (Rose Ruziana Samad, 2018). According to Marshall and Rossman (1989), the used of qualitative methods is to enable researchers to ask more questions to explore the context of the study in greater detail. As for this research, interview protocol that is semi-structured is utilized. This semi-structured interview consists of a list of open-ended questions based on the topic of the research (Phillips, 2016). According to Fadzila Azni, (2012) researchers consider semi-structured interview as the best, most complete, and most quality method for primary data collection in qualitative research, especially when it involves a small sample. Through the implementation of semi-structured interview, the process of data collection can be done objectively and with focus (Lebar, 2006; Wisker, 2001), allowing the interviewer to probe when the interviewee has a difficulty in answering the question. Although Bryman (2012) has suggested a more structured list of issues to be addressed or questions in semi-structured interviews, the research questions should not be too specific to avoid the closing-off of probing questions that may arise during field data collection.

The development of this research instrument which is a semi-structured interview protocol or guideline was guided by the conceptual framework (see Figure 2.7) of this research that has been build based on research theories that consists of institutions theory, stakeholder theory (SHT) and leadership (LST) theory from both conventional and Islamic perspectives; and the sustainability framework for healthcare proposed by Olsen (1998).

Table 3.3 presents the interview protocol or guideline for the interview sessions that cover

questions based on the objective of this research, beginning with the philosophy that underlie the creation of each institution, followed by its understanding and implementation of sustainability concepts and practices.

Besides that, during the interview process, it not only recorded but for some important details, it was written as a notes. Two main languages were used by the reseacher which are Malay and English language to communicate with the respondents to provide comfort and help to facilitate a more relaxed and friendly conversation between researchers and respondents. However, most conversation likely used Malay languages as the medium of communication except for Adventist Hospital representative. The used of flexible language communication that suitable with the respondent is to help them to delivered their explanation more clear and transparent. While for some important words require an accurate translation, the words are given to a bilingual expert to confirm the translation as well as go through the proofread process. As suggested by Merriam (2016), if the interview was conducted in other languages, reseacher can choose either two steps below, which are;

- i. Transcripts can be provided in the language and then translated verbatim into English. Data analysis is then done in English.
- ii. Transcripts and analysis data can be provided in the language and then translate verbatim into English.

Table 3.3: Interview Protocol /Guideline

No	Objective	Interview Protocol
1	RQ1: To examine the philosophies that underlie the establishment of each social-based healthcare institution	What is the story behind the creation of your institution? What is the form of your organizational structure? What is your institution underlying philosophy? (e.g. specific belief/ritual/cultural) What drives your institution towards achieving its mission and vision?
2	RQ2: To investigate the sustainability concept of each social-based healthcare institution.	Base on your understanding, can you explain about the sustainability concept within the health sector?
3.	RQ3: To investigate the sustainability practices in the management framework of each social-based healthcare institution.	What are the sources of financing that your healthcare institution currently have? How can you explain the financial distribution practices of your healthcare institution, such as for the hospital operational costs, investment strategies, administration procedure? Who make the decision? How can you explain about your healthcare institution governing body or a trustee board? How can you explain about your institution's current leadership? What are the current practices of your environmental management system to ensure the environmental sustainability for your healthcare institution? What type of facilities or services are offered by your healthcare institution? How can you explain on your healthcare institution staff training or expertise building programs? What is the current ratio of medical staff/expertise in your healthcare institution? How does your healthcare institution build up a relationship with your employees, patients, and local community? How does your healthcare institution develop the values and share them with the staff and local community? How far is the community participation and acceptance of the activities and services provided by your healthcare institution?

However, before the real field study on the samples is carried out, this research has going through the process of ethical committee both at the level of faculty committee approval and university committee approval. This process is one of the strategies to seek and increase data trustworthiness and rigor, otherwise known as a peer review strategy, as suggested by Guba (1981) which involves the support from other professionals who are able to provide scientific guidance, such as academic staff members or post-graduate dissertation committees and departments, to improve the quality of the investigation (Anney, 2014). Besides the process of ethical committee at the level of faculty and university, this research also going through the ethical committee procedure for Adventist Hospital and CKAPS, MOH. All this ethical procedure are mandatory term for the interview session obtaining approval from the institutions representative which aims to ensure that this study is appropriate and does not violate the privacy of the institution.

Besides that, the reason for interviewing the representative from the Medical Practice Division of the Ministry of Health Malaysia is to gain different perspectives on the research with the opportunity to test the rising views and exposure to find the validity of the question (Guba, 1981) and to provide critical assessment to increase the trustworthiness of this investigation. Its due to that the Ministry of Health offers a regulator's perspective on the establishment and sustainability of private, and social, healthcare institutions in Malaysia. Among the information needed during the interview session with the MOH are the standard operating procedures (SOPs) and laws relating to the establishment of private hospitals in Malaysia. All of the ethical procedure's processes were explained in the following chapter of this research, Chapter 4, because these procedures involve different processes for each phase and institution.

3.4.2 Document Analysis

In this research, besides interview sessions, documents related to the institution, such as recent annual reports, are analyzed. Document analysis is a recording of one's thoughts, actions, or creations which can be used to examine and investigate past patterns and trends and to provide confirmatory evidence of the information obtained from interviews and observation (Philips, 2016; Potter, 1996). The information gathered from document analysis are the general description of the institution, such as the underlying philosophy, history that relates to the creation of the institution or stakeholder information, audited statements of income, financial position, and notes to the statements, all of which provide details for various line items related to the sustainability process of the institution. Since the process of document analysis itself is to strengthen the validity of the in-depth interview findings, the analyzed documents should be related to the interview protocol or guideline. Among the information sources that has been investigated are the institutions' official websites, annual reports, bulletins, photographs, letters, memos, newspaper articles, or any other documents published by the institution. All this documented information has been accessed subject to the permission of the healthcare institution.

3.4.3 Observation

Philips (2016) described observation in qualitative research as a technique of obtaining data through direct contact with a person or a group of persons. This technique is used to achieve a deep understanding on the studied phenomena. The researcher needs to observe the group or object of study in its natural state, as undistributed as possible (Christian & Carey, 1989; Smith, 1987). Through observation, an in-depth understanding

on sustainability practices can be achieved. Physical observations has been done by observing the subject at their natural settings, such as at hospital administration office, statement boards at the hospital, and hospital representative behavior while providing information. In this research, healthcare institutions should exhibit sustainability practices that involve all of financial, environmental, and social aspects. Moreover, observation is a technique to validate the information gathered from interview sessions and document analysis. This validation technique is called the triangulation process, which means that the information gathered during the interview process and document analysis should be in line with the researcher's observation.

3.4.4 Triangulating Process

Triangulation process in qualitative research is used to support the overall validity and quality of the research (Flick, 2007; Merriam, 2009; Nur Sa'adah, 2016). The term itself emerged from navigating and surveying professions, in which it is used to describe how two known points are used to find the location of a third unknown point (Farmer, Robinson, Elliott, Eyles, Farmer & Elliott, 2008). In his seminal work, Denzin and Lincoln (2005) described four types of triangulation: methodological, data, theoretical, and investigator. The use of multiple methods can also include "combining analytic approaches (e.g., constant comparison, immersion/crystallization, matrices, manual analysis, and computer-assisted analysis), and/or analyzing the same data with two different methodological approaches" (Morse, Swanson, & Kuzel, 2001).

Thus, the use of multiple data analysis techniques is also a form of triangulation. (Humble, 2009) such as the used of interview, document analysis, and observation in this

study are aim to strengthen the findings obtained from the qualitative method by cross-checking the collected information. Research findings that derive from many different sources will be more convincing than those from only a single source (Potter, 1996). Thus, this research has used various data collection strategies to converge the findings into a single interpretation in order to achieve the aims of the study and increase the credibility of the interpretation of the findings.

3.5 Field Research Strategy

The field research process for this study was the process of raw data collection outside a laboratory, library, or workplace setting and was conducted at an identified healthcare institutions for 8 months, beginning from December 2018 until July 2019 while for CKPAS, MOH Putrajaya premise was held on January, 2020. The long period of time taken due to the ethical procedure for every institutions are vary and for the first step in this field research strategy is to obtained an approval from the faculty and university ethics committees (refer to Figure 3.4). Each process of ethics committes approval are interrelated and compulsory. After gaining USIM ethics committess approval, permission letter for an interview session with all selected healthcare institutions has been distributed in October 2018 while for CKAPS, MOH the application process began with the process of gaining the Medical Research and Ethics Committee (MREC) approval through the application on the National Medical Research Register (NMRR) website.

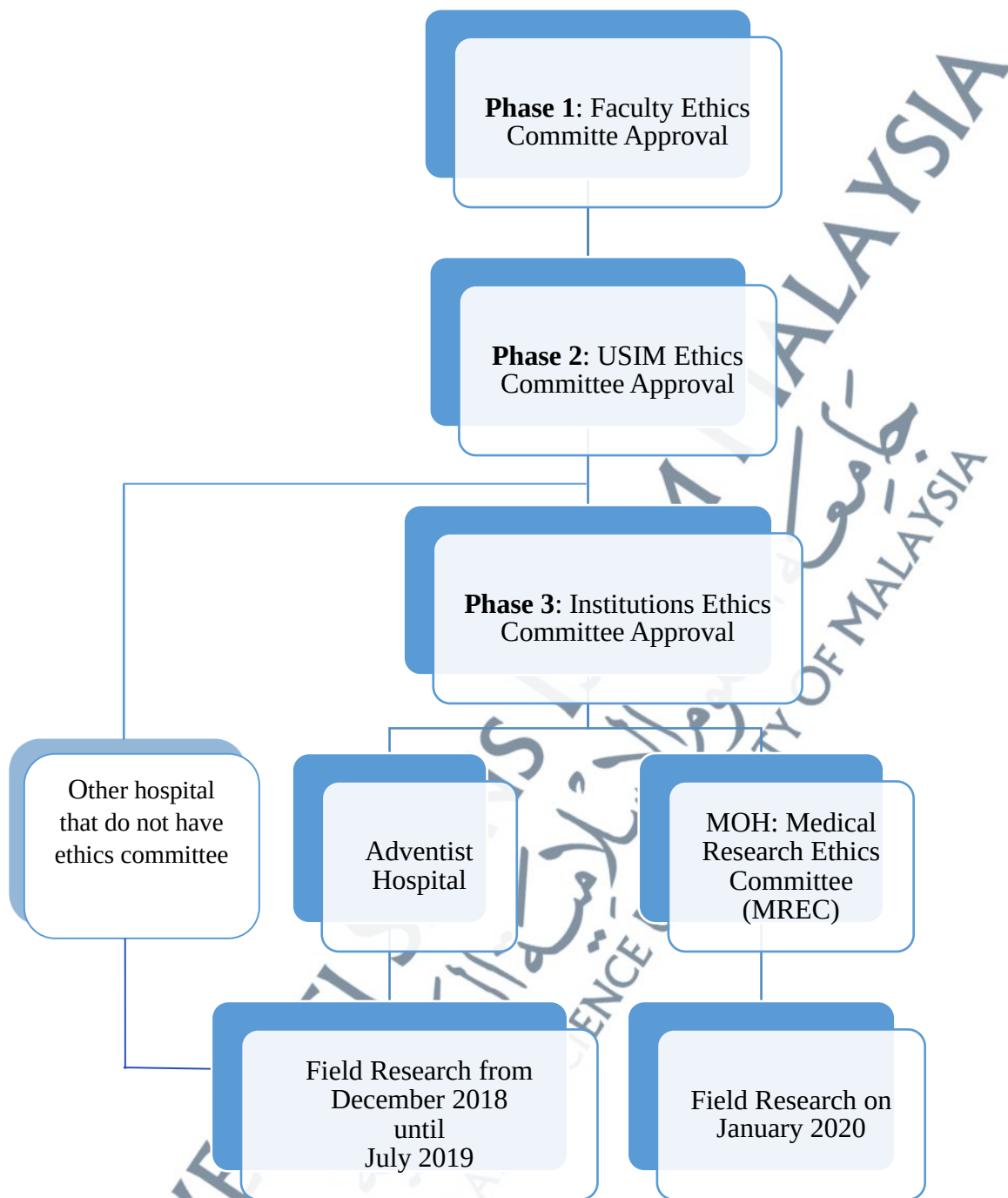


Figure 3.3: Field Research Strategy

This website is a tool designed to support the implementation of National Institute of Health (NIH) guideline in performing any research which related to the Ministry Health of Malaysia (MOH). The process for obtaining MREC approval will be elaborate in details in Chapter 4 of this research. Attached along with the application letter are a brief summary of the research and a draft of the interview protocol in a form of semi-structured questionnaire. After receiving consent from each healthcare institution, a field study process were conducted. However, this research only interviewed selected healthcare institutions that provide feedback within the predetermined period of study, considering the researcher's time constraints as a graduate student. Any responses received outside of the time period was not be considered as a sample of the study.

3.6 Data Analysis

This section explains the process involved during the data analysis stage of this research, consisting of the description on the procedures and tools that used to analyze the data. In qualitative research, the analysis and interpretation of data usually inductive and comparative which represent the application of deductive and inductive logic (Rose Ruziana Samad, 2018). As describe by Flick (2014) below:

“...the process of data analysis is the classification and interpretation of linguistic (or visual) material to make statements about implicit and explicit dimensions and structure of meaning-making in the material and what is represented in it”

(Merriam, 2016, pg:195).

The data is often classified by a subgroups and then examined and analyzed in terms of comparison between the more homogeneous segments within the group by comparing

with the external criteria (Rose Ruziana Samad, 2018). While for the final result, it may be a new principle or generalization. In this research, constant comparative analysis method was used as the research approach. Although the constant comparative analysis (CCA) method is synonymous with grounded theory (GT) research, but it has been used throughout qualitative research without building a grounded theory (Merriam, 2009). In fact, it has become the most widely used framework in analyzing qualitative data (Fram, 2013). O' Connor et al. (2008) stated in the below quote:

“It must be clear that constant comparison, the data analysis method, does not in and of itself constitute a grounded theory design. Nor does the process of constant comparison ensure the grounding of data whether “grounding” is used in a positivistic or interpretive sense. Simply put, constant comparison assures that all data are systematically compared to all other data in the data set. This assures that all data produced will be analyzed rather than potentially disregarded on thematic grounds. It is the time and the process of this constant comparison that determines whether the analysis is deductive and will produce a testable theory or whether the analysis is inductive and will build a theory for a particular context.”

(O' Connor et al., 2008)

As Fram (2013) said above, the use of CCA is not necessarily exclusive for GT, but how the method is used and adapted determines what methodology can support. In addition, the comparison method is also a key principle in the analytical process of other qualitative methodologies because by using the method, researchers are able to do what it takes to develop the theory indisputably, beginning from categorizing and coding up to outlining the categories and connecting them (Kolb, 2012). Indeed, a criteria for qualitative research is to describe and conceptualize the variety that exists within the subject under study by looking at the commonalities among the ranges or variations (Boeije, 2002). Through this

method, systematic data collection, coding, analysis will be combined with theoretical sampling (Conrad, Neumann, Haworth & Scott, 1993).

All collected data was inductively analysed using fixed comparison methods (Strauss & Corbin, 2008; Fram, 2013) to derive general themes, patterns, or categories that encompassed the data. The process includes open data coding of each research query, as well as determining the emerging categories and subcategories that each belong to the data code. These categories will serve as the foundation for the major themes that will be presented as the findings of this research. Analyzing qualitative data through the comparative method is done by enclosing the collected information into emergent themes or codes (Hewitt-Taylor, 2001). For a difficult disbanding contrast, the study are analyzed using the ideal type generalization comparison method introduced by Max Weber where this method is built based on the sociological explanations that in every existing relationship, the differences on the important unit may exist in different communities, showing the uniqueness of each relationship (Fuadah & Patmawati, 2010; Neuman, 2014). Following the generalisation stage, the sustainability framework is evaluated by waqf and social-based healthcare institution operators to confirm its feasibility.

3.6.1 Qualitative Analysis

Since all qualitative data analysis methods involve coding data into themes, and then categories, to form a conclusion (Jasper, 1994; Hewitt-Taylor, 2001), the data in this research has been analyzed inductively using the constant comparative analysis method (Strauss & Corbin, 2008; Merriam, 2016; Nur Sa'adah, 2016). All notes ensued throughout the course of the research, including documents, interview transcripts, observation notes,

and notes taken during the interview sessions, are being coded. This coding process was being carried out by reading each of these documents and attributing a code that represents a theme or idea to which each part of the data is associated (Hewitt-Taylor, 2001).

As for this research, data obtained during the field study process has been analyzed through a step-by-step process, as suggested by Philips (2016). The data analysis process is began from the familiarization stage, transcription, data organizing, coding, and end at report writing. During the analysis process, the raw data has gone through four stages: 1) comparing incidents applicable to each category; 2) integrating categories and their properties; 3) delimiting the theory; and 4) writing the analysis or theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This research has go through a rigorous analysis process. Categories or concepts that emerge from one stage of analysis are compared with those that emerge from the previous stage. This process is repeated until saturation is attained and no new significant categories or concepts emerge. The details are as follow:

3.6.1.1 Analyzing Primary and Secondary Data

In this research, the process of constructing a category begins by reading the first interview transcript, field notes and document collected which including photographs, letters, memos, newspaper articles and any other relevant historical and contemporary documents. All related items mentioned above are analyzed and all notes, comments, observations and queries are written in the margin section. Theses notations are next to bits of data that potentially relevant or important for answering the research question of this study which Merriam (2016) called as a coding. During this stage, any segment of data that might be useful and related to the research study was being coded. These codes are then

grouped into categories based on theory. The process of grouping these codes into their categories is sometimes referred to as axial coding (Charmaz, 2014; Corbin and Strauss, 2015; Merriam, 2016) and some have even termed it as analytical coding (Merriam, 2016). This step then is being repeated for the next data set and so on.

3.6.1.2 Writing Rich Description of the Institution Background

Based on the primary and secondary data gathered, the data was arranged and presented and written as the institutional background which consists of the historical account, vision and mission and service and achievement in chronological order. This section were presented in Chapter 5 and the writing was present in reporting style, with minimum interpretation. Source of each data were duly cited throughout the reporting while important points were also quoted in verbatim. The information on the background of each healthcare institutions served as the basis for the next levels of analysis which were later presented in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7 of this research.

3.6.1.3 Finding and Organizing Ideas and Concepts

The next step in this research is to look for the various responses for one particular question by searching for the specific words or ideas that related to the research objective of this study. In qualitative analysis, the term that usually used to describe texts dealing with the basic data analysis is called category. The term category is the same as a theme, pattern, finding or answer to a research question (Merriam, 2016). Categories was visualized as buckets or baskets into which segments of text are placed (Marshall and Rossman, 2016). According to Creswell, et al., (2007), at the early stage of data analysis,

there will be 25 to 30 categories formed and this categories will be reduced to five or six themes. The data analysis process in this step is illustrated in Figure 3.5. In order to form this categories, Guba & Lincoln (1981) and Rose Ruziana Samad (2018) have proposed four guidelines to develop a comprehensive and clear category as below:

- i. Firstly, the number of people who mention something or frequency of something arises in the data which is evident.
- ii. Second, viewers can determine what is important – that is some categories will appear to a wide range of audiences as less reliable.
- iii. Third, some categories are prominent because of its uniqueness and should be maintained.
- iv. Fourth, certain categories may expose “unfamiliar investigation areas” or “give unique leverage to common problem”

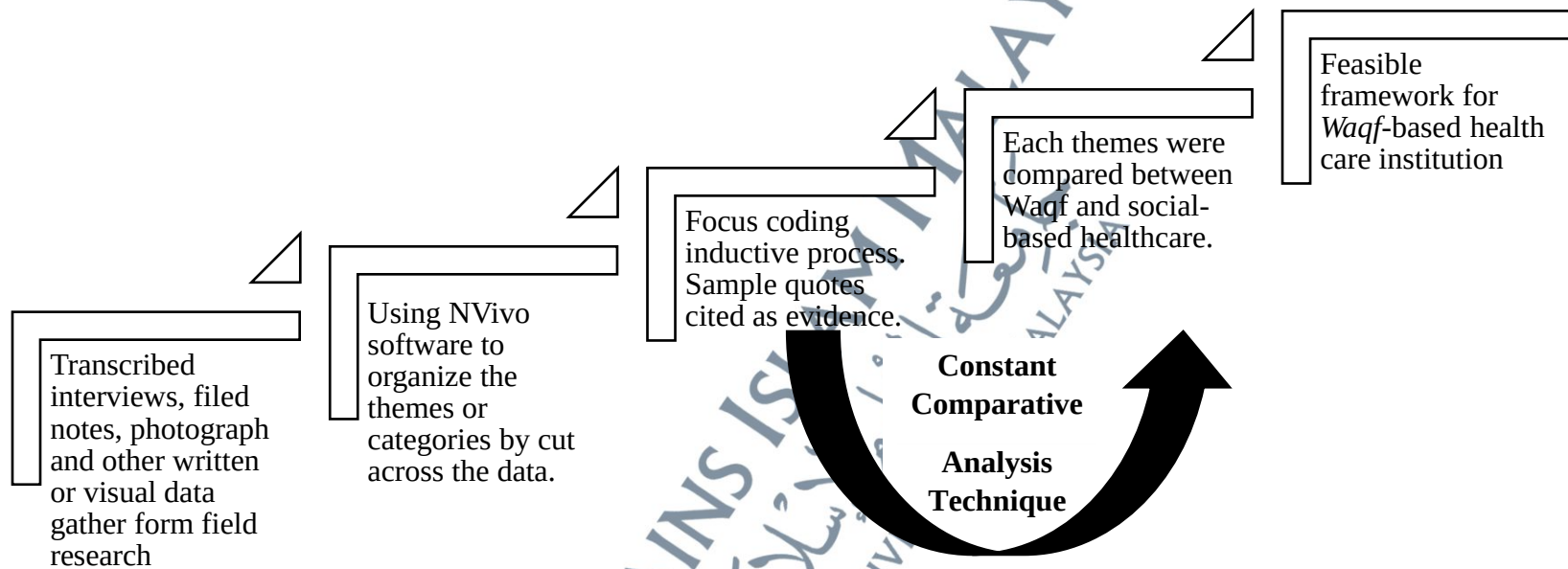


Figure 3.4: Qualitative Data Analysis Process

3.6.1.4 Comparative Analysis

In this research, thematic analysis which permits the researcher to report the experiences of the study participants which capture during the interview process were form. Through this thematic analysis, the data collected can be identified, analyzed and reported in the form of patterns (themes) through which it can provide rich, detailed and complex data accounts as well as a more flexible and effective analysis method for interviews because it does not include a pre-existing theoretical framework (Cassell et al., 2005; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Rose Ruziana Samad, 2018). These main ‘theme’ that construct were brought together and compared with each other. This process is called as comparative analysis and were use to analyze the findings of this research. It is being done through the concept of ideal type of comparative as suggested by Fuadah and Patmawati (2010) where the features that have been selected based on the similarities and differences between waqf-based and other social-based healthcare institutions, as proposed by Max Weber (Fuadah & Patmawati, 2010). At this stage, the emergant constructs were also affirmed through iterating the extant theory and data. The findings were again presented as an aswer to the research question in Chapter 5, Chapter 6 and Chapter 7.

3.6.1.5 Writing Conclusion

At the final step of this research, the overall interpretation were concluded in order to come out with the main findings. The writings in this chapter were organized based on each research questions and followed with the emergent conceptualization based on the initial conceptual framework of this study.

3.6.2 Qualitative Analysis Tools

In qualitative research tradition, researcher is the primary instrument of the data collection and analysis process (Nur Sa'adah, 2016). According to Merriam (2016) qualitative researcher have three ways in analyzing their data, 1) they can do it manually as it the way that some qualitative researcher usually do; 2) using computer software such as CAQDAS, ATLAS.ti or Nvivo; and 3) the analysis can be done in both ways. Although the used of computer aided qualitative analysis software and tools can help the researcher to archiving and managing data including retrieving and simplyfying the presentation of usually complex data, but the use is much different from quantitative data analysis which is automated and fully computerized (Nur Sa'adah, 2016; Merriam, 2016).

In other words, this qualitative analysis software is only used to aid data management and help to speed up the process of data analysis but overall the qualitative analysis process still needs to be done manually by the researcher. Thus for this research, I have chosen to use NVivo software to help me in speeding up the process of analysis rather than to depend on the manual process alone. However, the manual analysis still became the core process of the analysis because it is more precise where the researcher can review the interview sessions, the information received and integrated all these data with the secondary data (Rose Ruziana Samad, 2018; Merriam, 2016). Figure 3.5 shows the illustration of qualitative data analysis process for this research.

3.7 Ethical Consideration

Ethical process for this study were presented in detailed in Chapter 4 of this research. Since this research involves healthcare institution in Malaysia, thus ethical process is

mandatory. As explained earlier in the sub-topic “*Interview*” and “*Field Research Strategy*” besides illustrated in Figure 3.4 of this research, the ethical process involved three stages which are faculty ethical committee, USIM ethical committee and institutions ethical committee consists of Adventist Hospital ethical committee and MOH ethical committee. However in Chapter 4, the ethical procedure highlight in detail only involves ethical processes involving MOH since to conduct a research in the Ministry of Health Malaysia (MOH) facilities, it is needed for a researcher to gain approval from the MOH’s ethics committee as outlined by the National Institute of Health (NIH).

3.8 Strategies for Validity and Reliability: Trustworthiness and Rigor

Among the issues related to qualitative research are data validity and reliability. Both criteria are important in establishing and assessing the quality of the research (Bryman, 2012) and to ensure that the data can be defended when challenged (Philips, 2016). However, in qualitative research, both terminologies are usually recognized as trustworthiness and rigor to distance qualitative research from the positivist paradigm (Nur Sa'adah, 2016; Merriam, 2016; Shenton, 2004). The positivist criteria (such as internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity) are not relevant for assessing the rigor of naturalistic inquiry in qualitative data, since it carries different ontological and epistemological assumptions (Wallendorf & Belk, 1989; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Thus, to assess the trustworthiness and rigor of qualitative data, the data must be plausible, credible, and reliable. Guba and Lincoln (1994) have proposed four criteria to assess the trustworthiness of qualitative data. They are described in the following subsections.

3.8.1 Credibility and Consistency

Credibility in qualitative research is synonymous with internal validity in quantitative study. It has been defined as the confidence level that can be placed in the trustworthiness of qualitative research findings (Holloway & Wheeler, 2002; Macnee & McCabe, 2008). In other words, credibility determines whether the findings are the correct interpretations of the data or vice versa (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Some strategies has been proposed to assess the credibility of the data, including prolonged and varied field experience, time sampling, reflexivity (field journal), triangulation, member checking, peer examination, interview technique, establishing authority of researcher, and structural coherence (Anney, 2014). As for this research, the strategies that has been adopted are triangulation and members checking. Each strategy is discussed further below:

- i. **Data Triangulation:** It is a multi-method approach for data collection and data analysis involving the cross-checking of information obtained through various data sources (Philips, 2016). The purpose of data triangulation is to gain an in-depth understanding of the studied topic and to help researchers reduce their bias and traverse the integrity of the participants' responses. This strategy involves the use of different methods, investigators, resources, and theories to get stronger evidence (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007). Three major triangulation techniques are: 1) Using multiple researchers to investigate the same problem, bringing different perceptions about the investigation and reinforcing the integrity of the findings; 2) triangulated data/triangulation of informants, which is the use of different data sources or research instruments, such as interviews, focus group discussions, or participant

observations, or using different informants to improve the quality of data; and 3) methodological triangulation, which is the use of different research methods (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Patton, 2002; Phillimore & Goodson, 2004). This study has adapted the second technique, that is, using various data collection strategies such as interview session, document analysis from annual report, document Act 586 and other related document to converge the findings into a single interpretation in order to achieve the aims of the study and to improve data trustworthiness.

- ii. **Member Check:** Another strategy to improve qualitative data quality is to use member checks. Member's examination means "data and interpretation will be tested continuously as it comes from members of the various audiences and groups from which data is obtained" (Guba, 1981). It is an important process that qualitative researchers need to do as it provides credibility for the data (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007). The purpose of conducting a member's inspection is to eliminate the bias of the investigator in analyzing and interpreting the outcome. Participants should evaluate the interpretation made by the researcher, and they may accept or reject it either because it is socially undesirable or because the interpretation is inaccurate (Schwandt, Lincoln, & Guba, 2007). A member's check strategy involves the establishment of structural or structural adjustments, testing all data to ensure the absence of internal conflict or inconsistency, and establishing reference sufficiency e.g. test analysis and document interpretation during data collection before producing final documents

(Guba, 1981;Anney, 2014). In this research, the sustainability framework derived from the comparative analysis of the data is being evaluated by the operators of waqf and social-based healthcare institutions to verify that the framework is feasible for them.

3.8.2 Transferability

Qualitative transferability is the extent to which the results of qualitative research can be transferred to other contexts with similar respondents, equivalent to generalization (Bitsch, 2005; Tobin & Begley, 2004). It also synonymous to the realibility process in quantitative research. Transferability is established by providing readers with evidence that the research findings can be found in other contexts, situations, time, and other populations. In other words, the findings can be replicated. According to Bitsch (2005), "researchers facilitate the smoothing of transferability by potential users through 'thick descriptions' and 'sampling purposes'". Thick description involves the researchers' explanation of all research processes, beginning from data collection, the context of the study, until the production of final reports. Such description can assist other researchers to replicate the study in other contexts (Anney, 2014). The thick description contains rich cultural details that provide a solid and detailed experience about the researcher's experience during data collection, and is usually used in ethnographic research (Bryman, 2012). Therefore, in order to ensure the transfer of qualitative inquiries, researchers must collect thick descriptive data which allows "comparing this context to other transferable contexts which may be considered" and produce in-depth knowledge of the context to make judgments about it vis-à-vis with other possible contexts (Guba, 1981; Anney, 2014). It is the role of

qualitative students to provide bold explanations in their research to ensure its transferability. As the aim of this research is to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of sustainability concepts and processes, and not what is generally true of the many (or in other words, generalizability), distinct organizations are chosen to ensure variation and thick description.

3.8.3 Dependability

Dependability of data refers to the stability of findings over time, which involves the participants' evaluation of the findings, interpretations, and recommendations of the study to ensure that they are all supported by the data received from the informants (Bitsch, 2005; Cohen et al., 2011; Tobin & Begley, 2004). It also akin to the reliability process in quantitative research. Among the strategies in accessing the dependability of data in qualitative study is through the use of an audit trail, a code-recode strategy, stepwise replication, triangulation, and peer examination or iterator comparisons (Ary, Jacobs, & Sorensen, 2010; Chilisa & Preece, 2005; Krefting, 1991; Schwandt et al., 2007). For the purpose of this research, triangulation strategy has being adopted. The goal of this strategy is to establish confirmability of the study (Guba & Lincoln, 1981; Tobin & Begley, 2004). All the documents such as raw data, interview and observation notes, documents and records collected from the field, test scores, and other data involved in the process of field research were kept and used to cross check the inquiry process.

3.8.4 Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the degree to which the results of the investigation can be confirmed or corroborated by other researchers (Baxter & Eyles, 1997). It is about how to emphasize that the results of the study has gone through the prescribed method of research and is not the result of the researcher's imagination (Tobin & Begley, 2004). In order to achieve these objectives, several methods have been identified, including audit trails, reflexive journal, and triangulation (Bowen, 2009; Koch, 2006; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). As for this research, the member check processes was used to confirm the validity of the findings. The analysis of this research, particularly the background of the selected healthcare institutions in Chapter 5, has been returned to the institution representative for review and verification to confirm and validate the information that had been written.

3.9 Conclusion

This chapter has elaborated the research methodology employed for this research. Overall, this research adopted a qualitative methodology with basic qualitative design as research approach. The unit of analysis for this research is healthcare institutions, while the sampling technique that was used is purposive sampling technique that is based on the determined criteria. The next chapter discussed more detail on the research ethical procedure and findings on the interview session with regulator and selected social-based healthcare institutions.