

Department of Geomatics Engineering
Schulich School of Engineering
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Position Yourself Ahead of the Crowd

The Case Study Method in Developing Land Registration Usage Theory

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Knowing to manage the territory, protect the environment, evaluate the
cultural heritage
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Outline

- Question: Why and how do people use /not use registration & other tenure information systems?
- Land tenure information systems scenarios
- Nature of theory
- Land registration usage theory
- Case study vs case description
- Case studies vs ethnography
- Two methods of qualitative case study approaches

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Land Studies

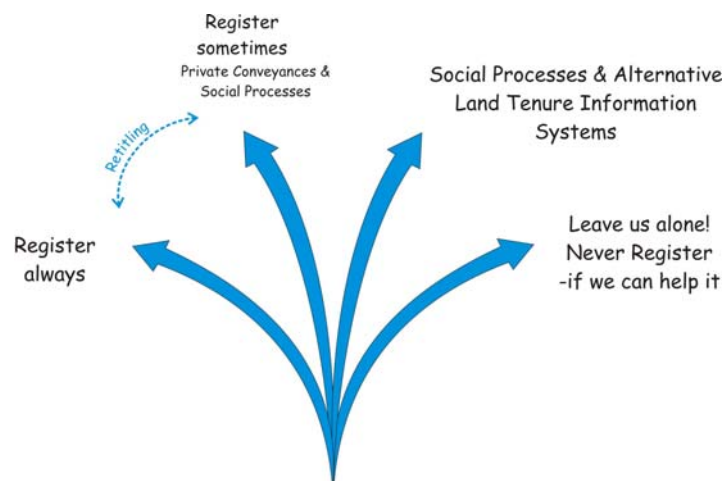
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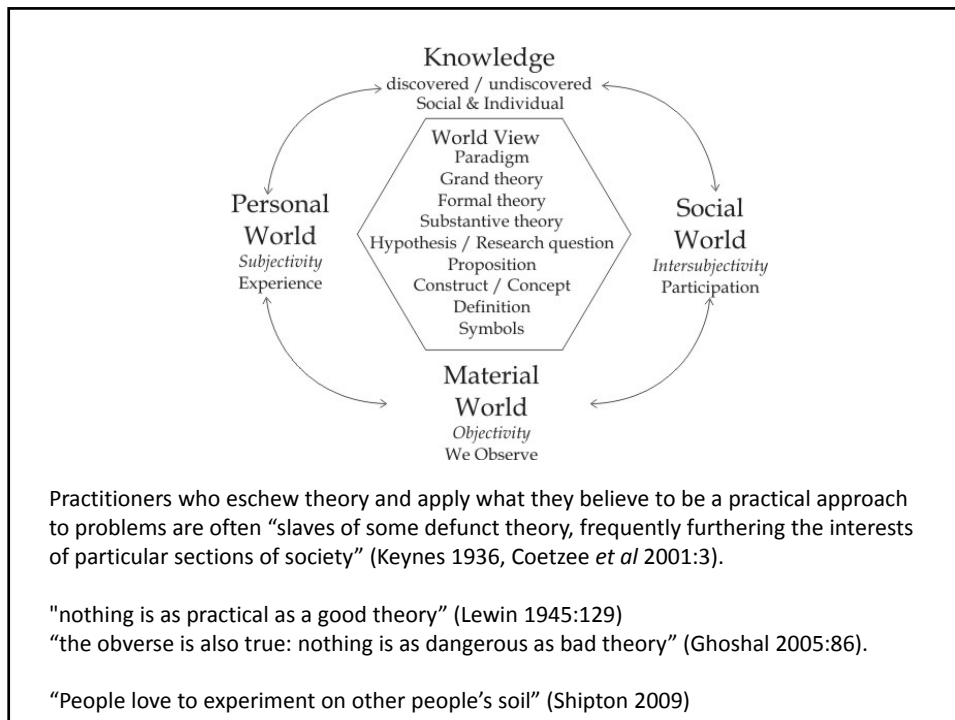
- Macro level focus on economic issues such as productivity and investment which seeks to influence policy
- Social process, social anthropology orientation which emphasises the “ambiguity and pervasive negotiability of customary tenure systems”
- Technical, functionalist approach to land administration design and practice
- Gap in micro-level theory - explain social processes with a view to informing land tenure administration design and development
- Design technical tools to improve tenure security

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Evolving Land Tenure Security Strategies Land Tenure Information Systems

1. Coherent and universal core cadastral theory and related research methodology.
2. Different, rival, schools of theory should emerge that reflect different political and economic development philosophies and different philosophical and methodological orientations



Theory Purposes

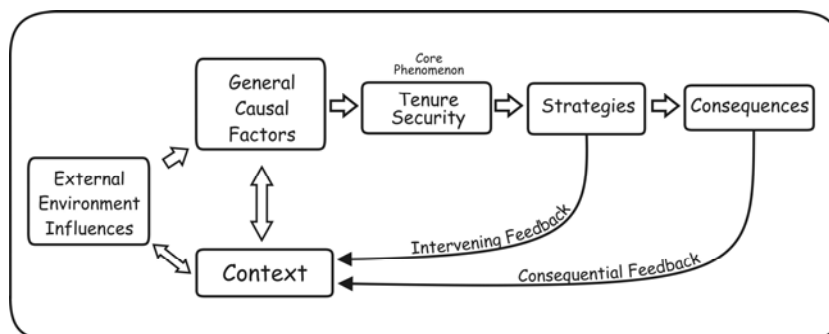
- theory for analysing phenomena
- theory for explaining
- theory for predicting
- theory for both explaining and predicting
- theory for design and action

(Gregor 2006)

Case Studies

- Good for why and how questions - substantive level theory that explains phenomena
- Be guarded in assuming a sequential causal system:
 - explanation → prediction → design and action
- Use all data available; not bounded by data collection & analysis method, nor philosophical world view

Securing Tenure Causal–Process Model



Land Registration Cases: General how to's

- Know purpose at outset - what theory am I developing?
- Awareness of philosophical orientations to social science - e.g. positivism, social constructivism, pragmatism, post-modernism
- Establish boundaries to case early on
- Negotiate access - can take months; contingencies if access refused.
- Literature - be critical of theory without empirical support - may be speculative or no more than a good idea.
- Interview outsiders first; write up a situational / contextual description before field work

Case Study: Field Work - General Good Practice

- Write memos' and codes at the end of each day in the field. Themes that emerge, questions to be explored further, questions that don't fit.
- Validation - triangulation, member checking
- Bounce ideas about methodology and validity of findings off different experts from different disciplines - geographers, planners, social anthropologists, sociologists, political scientists, officials, land lawyers.

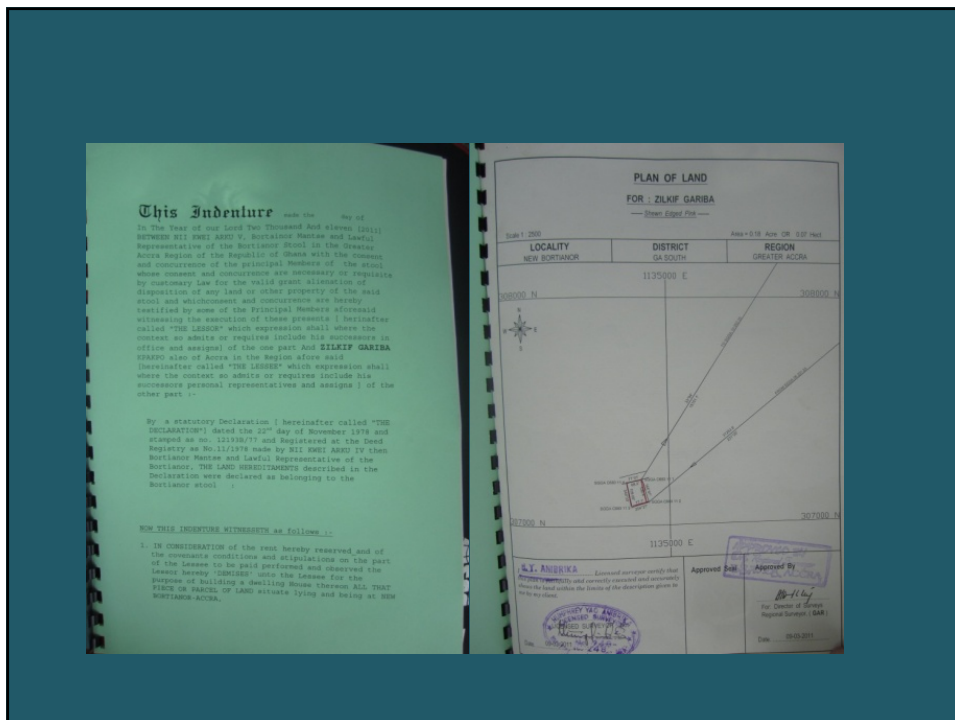
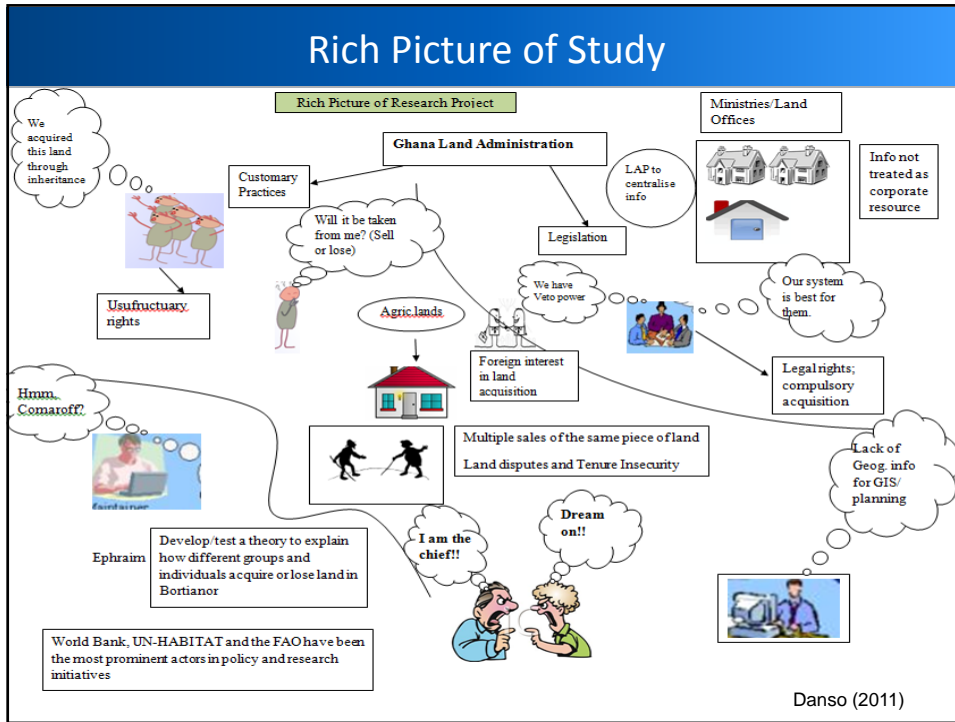






Land Registration South Africa





Continual Hypothesis Building approach

- Develop hypotheses before field work from literature, officials, key-informants - abductive & deductive reasoning
- Generate more during field work; reject some as you go along.
- Move back and forth among data collection, data, analysis, study design and focus, and emerging theory.
- Support for a particular hypotheses classified as (1) conclusive, (2) persuasive, or (3) speculative

After a period of 7 years, non-usage of the rental registration system was reflected in a mismatch of approximately 10% between the names on the official rental register and the de facto occupants of the parcels. The following three hypotheses were put forward by officials working in the case study community explaining why people did not use the local registration system:

- *Informal sales or transfers to strangers;*
- *Informal transfers or sales to family members; and*
- *Incorrect adjudication and registration of original lessees.*

The following hypothesis, derived from the discussion in (earlier) sections, and the data collected in this research may explain why informal transfers take place:

- *High financial costs or other impedances in using the local registration system discouraged residents from using it.*

Further hypotheses that may explain this non-usage of the local rental system is:

- *A culture of non-compliance with local or national government systems, rules and regulations that carried over from boycotts and revolutionary activities in the 1980's.*
- *Attitudes to land registration systems are positive, but landholders believe that it is not necessary to register every transaction in land and the implications of using or not using land registration are not fully understood;*
- *Residents may not have used the system as they saw no benefit in using it;*
- *Residents may have avoided using the system to hide the transaction from factions within the community such as street committees and warlords for a variety of reasons.*

USING TECHNIQUES FROM GROUNDED THEORY

- Social constructivist approach, a form of interpretive research worldview, which assumes that people negotiate meanings subjectively through social and historical interactions
- Hypotheses not constructed *a priori*, emerge from the data and postulated as case progresses using inductive reasoning.
- Grounded theory coding and constant comparison techniques were used to analyse the embedded phenomena.

Grounded Theory

- First labelled by Glaser and Strauss 1967 – “negotiated order” - but evidence of method appeared in 1930’s. - “true grounded theory” is strongly contested
- Inductive methodology - develop theory directly from empirical data;
 - theory grounded in the data. Cyclical, not linear theory development.
- No preconceived theoretical ideas should guide or force the research
- Does not start with a literature review to develop a set of *a priori* hypotheses –literature defines questions
- Hypotheses or theories in grounded theory emerge from the data collected in a particular study – then compare with existing theory

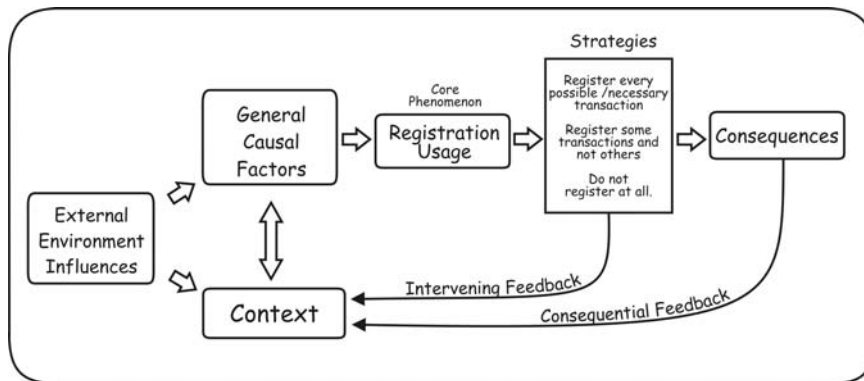
Grounded Theory

- Initial questions are open ended; non-specific and broad
- Data collection: Note taking, videos and recordings
- Transcribe interviews at end of the day
- Analyse / “open code” interviews right away.
- Abstraction - -develop concepts / constructs and relationships between them – inferred from observable variables
- Examine the themes that emerge
- Revise questions for next day

Method 2 continued

- Coding is the first level of abstraction and the data are segmented and labelled in a process of simultaneous categorisation and summarising
- Throughout the analysis process the coding and categories are compared constantly so that the significant categories emerge and evolve as a theory
- Analysis streams of the context, the behaviours (off-register and registered transactions) and the behaviour sequences (the combination of transaction strategies). The analysis streams are interrelated and not isolated and are examined holistically. Thus, as the analysis proceeds, the three streams converge to construct theory related to each case.
- cross case analysis should establish if the theory emerging from each case can be considered more general than substantive

Registration Usage Causal–Process Model



Comparison

- Method 1 is likely to produce results more quickly if objectives are clear at the outset - good for case study beginner.
- Carry hypotheses forward from case to case - cross case analysis “on the fly”
- However, we caution that important data or evidence may be omitted and a study that is too narrowly focussed may generate spurious results.
- Metrics that address Ghoshal’s (2005) cautions about bad, narrowly focussed theory should form part of the case study design. i.e. validation.
- Method 2 is far more detailed and rigorous as an explanatory theory building process and complies with main stream qualitative research methodology.
- No initial premise that any design or action might flow from such a study.
- Much richer, deeper explanatory theory
- Can take an inordinate amount of time to complete a case.
- Can use aspects of both methods

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