COLLECTING PRIMARY DATA FOR ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN CRISIS-AFFECTED-REGIONS: CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Collecting primary data for research is one of the most critical stages in the research journey; it is the practical element of the research that requires access to data embedded in fieldwork. If the primary data is collected from a crisis-affected-regions, the fieldwork can generate a high risk to the researcher. The aim of this paper is to investigate the challenges of data collection in crisis-affected-regions. The personal experience of seven different PhD researchers who collected their primary data from crisis-affected-regions are presented and analysed in the paper. The findings suggest that the risks of collecting primary data from crisis-affected-regions can involve different challenges: some of them are related to the researcher, such as a lack of awareness around the aspects of the crisis context. Some other challenges are related to the research study, such as non-clarity of aims and objectives. Also, within the context of study the main challenge of collecting data is a lack of accessibility to data sources and documents. The paper provides different suggestions to improve the practices of collecting primary data from crisis-affected-regions. These are: providing supportive training to researchers who intend to research in crisis-affected-regions, networking with other researchers with the same interests, increased regular meetings with the supervisor, adapting an appropriate approach for collecting the data, and having a risk management plan.

Keywords: *Challenges; Crisis-Affected-Regions; Data Collection; Primary Data; Research Methodology.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Research is a complicated and systematic process of collecting, analysing, and interpreting data information in order to answer questions or enhance the understanding of a particular phenomenon. In order to complete research, the researcher needs to have a plan and the plan should follow up specific stages. Hence, conducting research in itself could be a great challenge, and such challenges can increase in less developed and poor countries where the possibility of political and finical crisis is high (Abreu et al., 2009).

According to Sarkar (2014), there are three main challenges in completing data collection processes in developing countries; namely, gaining the required permission for collecting data, recruiting intended participants and collecting survey information. Owlia and Mirzaei (2014) identified 17 different challenges experienced by researchers in biomedical science research in developing countries. Although, Owlia and Mirzaei (2014) did not specify data collection stages, they included a lack of an integrated strategy for managing research activities and a lack of an adequate holistic approach to collect the data. Litewka (2011) stated that cultural and logistical challenges in Latin America and the Caribbean were obtaining informed consent, which can be a critical issue during the data collection stage, therefore researchers need to understand the context of the research as well as ethical considerations, laws and regulations before starting the research. Rimando et.al. (2015) conducted a qualitative research study to examine the challenges experienced by early career researchers in health sciences during the data collection stage. The findings of the study suggested that 6 main challenges can be experienced by early researchers; namely, location, health literacy and language of

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the data collection instrument, the duration of data collection, researcher fatigue, and sensitive information. Despite the aforementioned studies, purity of literature has been evident investigating the challenges encountered by social science researchers in crisis-affected-regions. Accordingly, this paper investigates the challenges that may be experienced while collecting primary data in crisis-affected-regions.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Collecting primary data for an academic research study in the social sciences is a major stage of the research process. Blankenship (2010) identified the research process as a project that consists of a set of decisions that should be made from the start until the end to complete the research successfully. Therefore, these decisions are the basis that allows the researcher to undertake any research study in an efficient manner (Blankenship, 2010). In addition, Arthur and Hancock (2009) suggested that the research can be considered as a process of systematic investigation for the purpose of adding a contribution to knowledge around a certain subject area. Therefore, this meaning can be categorised into three main areas. Firstly, the investigation is planned and carried out systematically, by conducting research in a specific subject that leads to contribute to new knowledge, as well as increasing the researcher's understanding of the studied phenomenon. The research has to be carried out in stages in order to achieve the research aim and objectives in a systematic manner (Arthur & Hancock, 2009). Arthur and Hancock (2009) suggested that by following the research stages in a proper manner, the originality of the studied research would be achieved. Figure 1 below shows the main research stages.

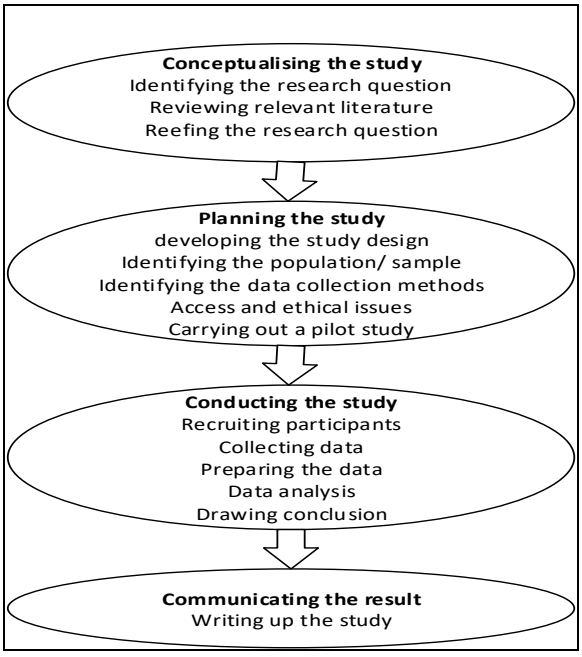

Figure 1: An 'Idealized' Perspective of the Research Process (Adapted from: Arthur and Hancock, 2009)

In the same vein, Blankenship (2010) added that research has steps, which are mainly related to the focus of the studied phenomenon, collecting the data to be analysed, coming up with conclusions, and ultimately evaluating the findings. These stages have been summarised in Table 1.

It can be seen that in Figure 1 the stages are categorised into four main categories; namely, conceptualising the study, planning the study, conducting the study, and communicating the results; under each category a set of steps is to be followed as shown in Figure 1. However, Table 1 shows that the research can be undertaken by following eight steps that have been identified in Table 1 regardless of the research type and orientation. Although, all these steps are important to complete any research in social science successfully, the data collection stage is considered as the most critical stage because the fundamental requirement of the research being valid and reliable is based on whether the data collection process was appropriate for the research that has been undertaken (Miles *et al*., 1994; Gerrish and Lacey, 2010). In the same vein, Keraminiyage (2009) highlighted that in order to achieve the research validity a proper research design, research approach, and data collection techniques should be considered.

Table 1: Steps of the Research Process (Blankenship, 2010)

Step	Example
1. Identify the problem or question	Childhood obesity
2. Review the literature	Look for similar studies that have been conducted
3. Clarity the problem-specifically identify the purpose of the study	The purpose of the study is to determine if walking 10,000 steps a day for three days a week improve a person's health
4. Clearly define terms and concepts	This is done so that the readers understand exactly what each term means
5. Define the population	Children who are 10 to 12 years old
6. Develop the instrumentation plan	Data will be collected on the variables at the beginning of the program and at the conclusion of the study
7. Collect data	Collect the data on the specified variables at the first and last sessions of the program
8. Analyze the data	Compare data gathered from each participant. The first measurements are compared to the second measurements to see if there is a difference. Report the results and the differences if there is any

Hoskins and White (2013); Dearnley (2005); Doody and Noonan (2013) stated that a lack of experience and skills in terms of conducting interviews and accessing qualitative data, is a crucial issue because a lack of adequate data will influence the validity and the credibility of the research.

As the literature review was conducted for this study, it became apparent that there is a dearth of research studies investigating the challenges that researchers face conducting research in crisis-affected-regions. The reality is that this gap is present not only for the focus of the topic, but also on the understanding of what the concept of crisis means or how the concept has been conceptualised.

Linguistically, the Oxford online dictionary identifies the word crisis as "a noun which means either "a time of intense difficulty or danger" or "a time when a difficult or important decision must be made" (Dictionary OED, 2017). Furthermore, Al-Dahash *et al.* (2016) state that crises "are generally associated with a system, organisation, and group of people or individuals. The key features of a crisis are uniqueness, danger, being troublesome or causing damage, being unexpected, and usually emotional". These meanings suggest that a country which experiences crisis is performing in difficult situations where people are not able to act as they normally would. According to Ford *et.al*. (2009), recently crises have increased in the world and affected many countries, which has impacted negatively on the daily life of people. They added that research becomes more complicated when it is conducted in crisis-affected-regions. Wood (2006) said that "The approval of and adherence to protocols is of course not sufficient to ensure adequate ethical judgment; such protocols cannot anticipate the many dilemmas other than issues of informed consent and data security that arise in the course of research", particularly in crisis-affected-regions. Campbell (2017) and Goodhand (2000) identified the challenges experienced by researchers in crisis-affected-regions as obtaining informed consent, researcher security, and suggested more training to be provided.

Having synthesised the literature, the next section discusses the research methodology adopted for the study.

3. METHODOLOGY

To understand the nature of the interaction between the studied social phenomenon (the challenges that can be faced while conducting research in crisis-affected-regions) and the related theory required the following methodology. An examination of the experiences of social science researchers during the data collection stage of their study was conducted. Hence, in terms of the philosophical stance of this research, an interpretivist assumption has been taken, because this research tends to understand a phenomenon from the perspective of the individuals who interact with the phenomenon and their experiences, opinions, and interpretations. Accordingly, this investigation of the real situation is based on a pure qualitative approach in order to obtain the real situation in depth and provide rich insights into people's views. Therefore, based on the fact that this research falls under a qualitative approach, an understanding of the studied phenomenon will occur once the meanings and opinions of the studied phenomenon have been collected from the participants. Since this research takes an interpretivistic stance, an ethnography strategy has been selected. Interestingly, O'reilly (2012) considered ethnography as a theory of practice which is the result of the human interaction through their experiences in their everyday life. Furthermore, LeCompte and Schensul (1999) highlighted that conducting ethnography is effective in terms of describing the problem in a specific and local population;

understanding in depth the causes and therefore, the prevention of a particular issue. Hence, ethnography has been chosen because the focus of this research is on investigating, in-depth, the experiences which researchers face during collecting data in crisis-affected-regions.

In terms of data collection techniques, unstructured face-to-face interviews have been conducted in this research. Wildemuth (2016) argued that the unstructured interviews method is commonly used in ethnographic studies in order to examine people's life experience. And it can be the same concept of informal conversational interview, in-depth interview, non-standardised interview, and ethnographic interview (Wildemuth, 2016). Such interviews are typically directed by the informant rather than by a set of questions (Longhurst, 2003; Wethington & McDarby 2016). Furthermore, Punch (2013) explained unstructured interviews as a way to understand the complex behaviour of people without taking or supposing any prior categorisation while they are talking about their experience in a specific phenomenon in a period of time.

In terms of the participants, researchers who have conducted their data collection in crisis-affected-regions have been considered. The implications of the research have been fully explained to potential participants, as some may not feel comfortable with this level of intervention into their experience of life. In terms of sample size, Kumar (2011) stated that the selected size of the sample in qualitative research is less important than in quantitative research as qualitative research is more about quality rather than quantity. Also, Francis *et al*. (2010) suggested that "In interviews studies, sample size is often justified by interviewing participants until reaching data saturation". That means that interviews will be conducted until no new ideas emerge, in other words, when data saturation is achieved.

In this study, the samples were purposely selected because the nature of the studied topic required participants to 'open up' and to have the desire to cooperate. Additionally, in qualitative research the decision made on sample size is complex in nature; the researcher has to be considered when choosing the sample size in such a type of research. The interviews were conducted in Arabic; thus translation was required. Face-to-face unstructured interviews were conducted with 7 participants who have undertaken research in a crisis-affected-region. It is vital to mention that the code N (followed by a number) refers to the interview from which the evidence quotations were extracted, thus indicating from which interviews the quotation was taken from out of the 1–7 interviews. For instance, if a quotation was extracted from interview 2 then the presentation in the text will be such: "the quotation"(N -2).

4. FINDINGS

It was found in this study that the challenges related to data collection are not limited to the stage itself, rather to the whole process of the research, among three different categories, which are: before collecting the data, during collecting the data and after collecting the data. Among all three categories, three different elements in interaction constantly are: the researcher who needs to interact with the context to answer the aims of the research.

4.1. BEFORE STARTING THE DATA COLLECTION

As can be seen from Figure 2, researchers in social science might face challenges that influence collecting primary data from the beginning of the research. The challenge might come from the topic of the research which can be risky (See Figure 2). One of the participants stated *that "My topic itself is risky … I am studying the security companies in my home country. As you know not all topics have the same level of risk, some topics are riskier than others (laughing). Mine is one of those highly risky topics"* (N-2), and when she was asked what she did to control such risk, her response was "*talking to other researchers in my topic area helped me gain a deeper understanding to my topic. I was able to identify the possible risks; knowledge is power*" (N-2). Another researcher argued *"social science research is risky itself because your data is dependent on the participants, who in my case are living in a war-zone"* (N-5), and when she was asked how she controlled the risk she answered "*We are talking about social science research in crisis zones, control is very much related to knowing what is happening in your context before you go. If you do not know what the crisis is and the detail about the war zone you will be at high risk*" (N-5). From the literature, Wang *et al,* (2016) defined crisis areas as the places where people live in an environment considered to have high uncertainty and risk which is accrued by a series of adverse events that are commonly understood as crises or disasters.

Interestingly, one of the participants was asked if she received any training, the researcher said *"I am an independent researcher doing research to develop educational practices for children. I have done a lot of research before, I mean I knew what I was doing in terms of collecting the data with well-skilled researchers, but I think training new researchers is very important, and I would suggest training courses for researchers who conducting a research in crisis regions in order to learn more about how to complete a PhD successfully*" (N-6). In this vein, Zamoum (2013) argued that managing in a crisis needs a variety of skills and experience before being involved in such a situation. Furthermore, planning is one of the most important elements that should be undertaken and considered with crisis management. Thus, Zamoum (2013) added that in order to have an achievable plan, three main issues should be undertaken, those issues are: the nature of the crisis should be defined and understood; seeking the proper strategy to manage the crisis; and developing different ways of communication.

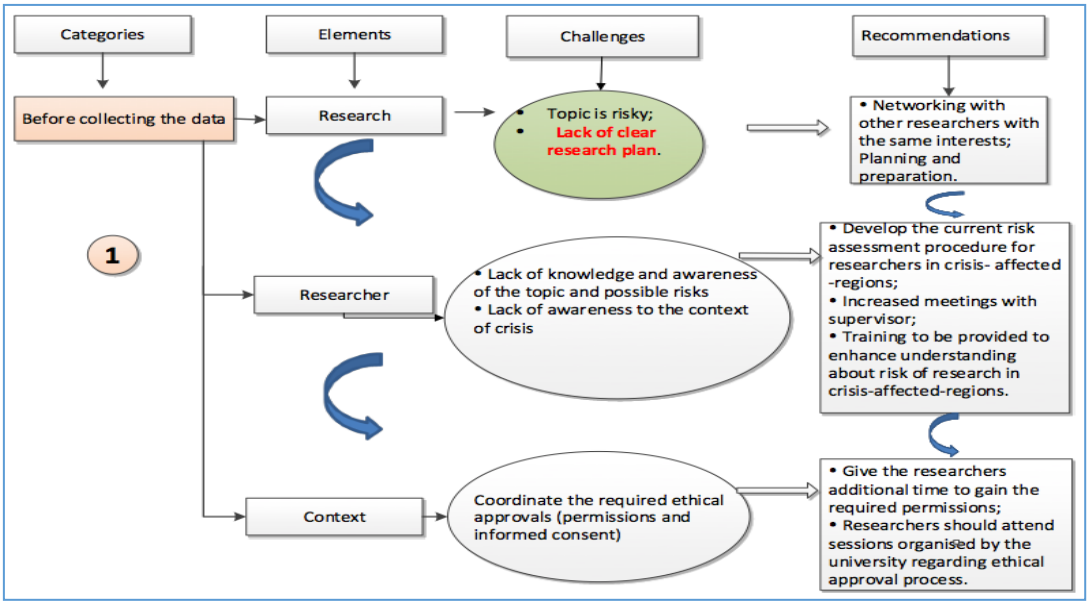

Figure 2: Before Collecting the Data: Cycle of Challenges Associated with Recommendations

In terms of the ethical approval process, a PhD researcher argued "*I will be very honest with you, some of supervisors are unaware about what is happing there, I mean in our war countries. Even the research office all they are worried about is bureaucratic procedures of ethical approval (silent) they do not really care*" (N-7). Moreover, another researcher suggested on this matter "*I think a different set of rules and ethical approval should be made for researchers who are planning to conduct research in crisis zones*" (N-1). From the perspective of the literature, the issue of gaining ethical approval for non-medical research was addressed by Cairns and Gilhooly (2011) who stated that gaining ethical approval can be a long journey of 16 months. Lowton (2016) added that "*in the UK at least, the bureaucracy of ethics review and the charge of 'ethics creep' has led some academics to decide not to conduct the projects they believe in passionately, since they perceive that approval will not be forthcoming or be too time consuming to obtain*" So, the bureaucracy in obtaining ethical approval for social science research influences the motivation of the researcher who might dispose of a great chance to conduct creative research. The influence would be greater on the researcher who intends to carry out research in crisis-affected-regions and the topic itself could be risky, combined with a lack of experience in research alongside other challenges international researchers in the UK are experiencing. Due to the time taken for the ethical approval process (due to the aforementioned bureaucratic nature), the researchers need to plan it carefully, keeping time for obtaining the relevant documents from the case study organisations (if needed), and for the extensive time taken to obtain the ethical approval from the university. Therefore, researchers are strongly advised to attend training sessions that explain how to apply for ethical approval which are regularly organised by universities.

Planning and preparation before the data collection stage is vital before going to the fieldwork to conduct research, especially in crisis areas, one of the researchers said "*I can say that (before the data collection journey) or the 'Planning stage' is a very important step that should be undertaken, especially for choosing the proper data collection method".* Also, thinking of the issues that are related to travelling to the study area such as expenses and the security situation (N-4). For example, before the data collection, researchers need to

plan the sequence of data collection - whether to do it sequentially or parallel, based on the context/accessibility. A researcher conducting research in crisis-affected-regions may decide to travel several times to implement different data collection techniques (questionnaire survey, interviews), yet this might not be practical due to security reasons. So researchers should have a plan B in case they are not able to travel again to the studied context, so it is very important to keep in touch with the participants and maintain the connections with them in order to continue collecting the data as well as reaching the validation stage.

Other findings suggested that the purpose of the data collection is mainly based on the researcher's motivation, the aim of the research study, and the accessibility to the studied context. In fact, the research that explores certain phenomenon in a settled context is unlike a research aim with investigation of issues in a crisis area, as this directly influences the data accessibility. Interestingly, the challenges identified during the time before data collection are all linked to each other. Therefore, it is important to have training, planning, and communication (networking) before starting collecting the data.

4.2. DURING COLLECTING DATA

When it comes to the stage where the researcher starts collecting data (See Figure 3), the level of anxiety will increase, *"how will I know that I have collected enough data, I was very worried, all the time worried*" (N-7). Another researcher said "*you will ask yourself every minute if you collected enough information and you know that you might not be able to come again to redo your research or to collect more data, do you know how frustrated I was, I was not able to sleep at night*" (N-2). Another researcher who conducted a research in crisis region said "*I had to leave my house early every day in the morning, there was a lack of petrol and the security state of the country was very bad. I read all the prayers I knew before leaving my house, I was motivating myself I did not want to give up on my research. (Silent), yes I did not want to fail*"(N-1).

The issue of time was also raised during the interviews, collecting the research on time is a crucial point, especially for those researchers who are sponsored. Again, motivation is the principle driving the researcher to complete the research in a certain timeframe. Motivation is very much related to the attitudes of the researcher and to what extent they are ready and prepared psychologically. From the point view of the literature, Wang *et al.* (2016) stated that individuals should maintain a positive attitude and stay strong throughout crisis-affected-regions, and they categorised crisis management strategies into three main categories, which are: fighting, compromising, and avoiding. For instance, in the fighting category, Wang *et al*. (2016) suggested that a strategy can be enhancing the communication with professional networks, keeping going, and being motivated while resolving issues. Furthermore, the strategies in the compromising category can be keep learning and benefiting from others' experiences, being flexible and adapting the reality. In the avoiding category, Wang *et al*. (2016) mentioned that the main strategy is seeking help from a higher authority when a crisis event has occurred.

Also, issues such as receiving support from the academic environment, and the positive interaction with the participants. Accordingly, N-1 pointed out that motivation to carry out my research came from the encouragement that I received from my supervisor as she directs me to the safer side, unlike other supervisors who guide their students without considering the situation. So her support made me more motivated and confident. Also, the interaction of the interviewees and their desire to share their experience and knowledge was helpful. Moreover, motivation can be the reason behind taking a risk while collecting the data as N-1, who is female, added: I remember that one of my tough experiences was that I had to do one of the interviews on a Saturday, which was the weekend, and the institution was empty and I was frightened, however, I had no other chance, it was important to collect information from this specific person who was only available during the weekend (N-1).

In terms of the participants, it is important to collect enough data to reach a valid number in order to achieve a valid result, regardless of the research type - whether qualitative or quantitative research. One of the interviewees said that I had arranged to meet with my friends who have experience in the studied field, and through them I have reached the proper sample numbers of the questionnaires. Also, interpersonal relationships are one of the most important factors, especially in an unsettled context like Libya (N-2). He added that I decided to distribute electronic questionnaires and this decision was made based on the fact that even though the process of distributing the questionnaires took longer, it was much better than travelling to Libya for data collection, as it is in a crisis situation (N-2). One of the interviewees mentioned the decision of selecting the data collection methods was influenced by the studied context, mainly where the crisis is recorded. In this vein,

N-3 said "*I totally believed that the studied context highly influenced selecting data collection methods, especially in regards to the accessibility as each step has got a limitation. As a researcher, I must have a clear plan how I would be able to go back to my participants as needed. In my case I asked all the participants to provide me with different contact information*". Therefore, in terms of the accessibility to the context and creating the network connections, the researcher who undertakes research in crisis areas should be aware before collecting the data of the situation and have a strategy from the early stages in order to accomplish the research aim and objectives. Accordingly, Cohn *et al*. (2000) and Speth and Zinn (2008) all agreed that efficient crisis management needs a high acceptance of uncertainty and ambiguity with high self-awareness. Hence, it requires high morale and awareness from researchers who conduct research in crisis areas.

According to the findings of this research study, considering the attitudes in terms of psychological acceptance is essential. Berinato and Allen (2010) defined psychological attitudes as how individuals make sense and seek meaning out of crisis and take action towards resolving the situation. In addition, Comer (2010) added that psychological attitude *"acceptance will allow them to anticipate and get ready for worst-case scenarios; to understand risk and take it seriously, rather than to underestimate and dismiss it; and to weigh the interests of all who would be affected by the repercussions of a crisis*". Furthermore, from the suggested findings, conducting research in crisis-affected-regions requires the flexibility to adapt, which is linked mainly with the understanding of the meaning of crisis in order to be able to deal with such a situation and achieve the aim of the studied context. Accordingly, Comer (2010) identified crisis as "*a low-probability high-consequence event*". Furthermore, Comer (2010) extended the concept of crisis into two categories, where the first concept of crisis underlines preparedness, the other one emphasizes responsiveness. It seems that during the data collection stage, great pressure is on the researcher who should know how to control the risk, and seek the required support to keep the level of motivation up. Being prepared and trained and creating a well-established communication level with the supervisor, as well as with participants, to control the possible risks which might appear after collecting the data, is also essential.

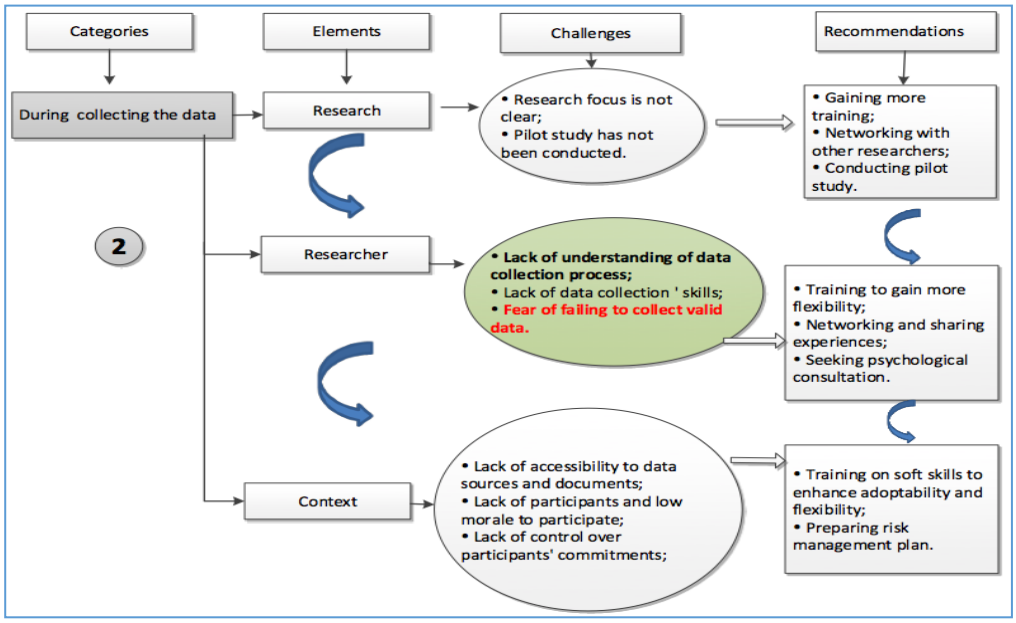

Figure 3: During the Data Collection: Cycle of Challenges Associated with Recommendations

4.3. AFTER THE DATA COLLECTION

After collecting the data (See Figure 4), it is very important that the researcher is continuously motivated as well as satisfied with the results. Accordingly, one of the interviewees mentioned that I was satisfied with my collected data so far, and I only faced a difficulty in the translation to find a proper translation for the terminology. For example, with the term (constant explosions), I faced difficulties in finding the right meaning for this term (N-1). Furthermore, from the findings it has been emphasised that being motivated before, during, and after the data collection process is vital especially for researchers who carry out research in crisis-affected-regions. N-7 agreed and says "*I remember that from when I started my PhD until I finished I was persistent and motivated. [Silent] Although I had many challenges related to personal challenges, for example, family*

responsibility, financial issues, etc or related to the studied context in terms of a risky situation in collecting data and the accessibility to data, as well as the arrangements with the participants, my motivation to continue the research and reach the goal was high". Interestingly, from the findings it has been illustrated that the supervisor can play a positive or negative role in keeping the motivation continuous, especially when undertaking research in crisis-affected-regions. In this vein, N-1 said I would like to insist that from my experience the most important thing is to be continuously motivated before, during, and after data collection, it was the encouragement that I received from my supervisor as she directed me throughout the study. So her support made me more motivated and confident. Also, the interaction of the interviewees and their desire to share their experience and knowledge was helpful. Interpersonal relationships are very important in this case. Also being diplomatic and flexible in the conversation from both sides.

Furthermore, achievement of richness and valid data is the target of any successful research study, from the analysis of the information received in the interviews. In the last category, which is after the data collection journey, the interview findings suggested that valid data achievement is one of the most important challenges in conducting research in crisis-affected-regions. Accordingly, the researcher who conducts research in crisis-affected-areas, after accomplishing the data collection stage, should feel satisfied with the collected data and believe that the data is rich and valid, and have answered the research questions. One of the interviewees said I believe that collecting rich data is not affected by the crisis, rather the chosen participants and their willingness and desire to share their experiences and give more information, which is related to the studied focus and therefore will help the researcher to gain rich data in order to answer the research questions effectively (N-3).

The main issue that has been highlighted within this stage was the level of achievement that the researcher attains while conducting research in crisis-affected-regions, in terms of obtaining richness and validity of the data, and to what extent the researcher can learn from this critical experience. Comer (2010) suggested that individuals who are working in crisis situations should be allowed to translate the task that should be undertaken in crisis arears into meaningful knowledge, skills, and abilities. Regardless of the type of tasks to be done, this research focuses on the challenges that may be faced when the researcher conducts a research study in crisis areas and therefore there are lessons that can be learned from this critical experience. Comer (2010) mentioned that people who are working on or dealing with crisis events should be thinking of what lessons can be taken. Gottschalk (2000) stated that recognizing the need to open and maintain communication channels with others is one of the most important lessons to be learned especially where crisis events are recorded, as well as building up networking and interpersonal relationships. Also, increasing the level of awareness where the crisis is recorded is crucial, much more so than in a settled context.

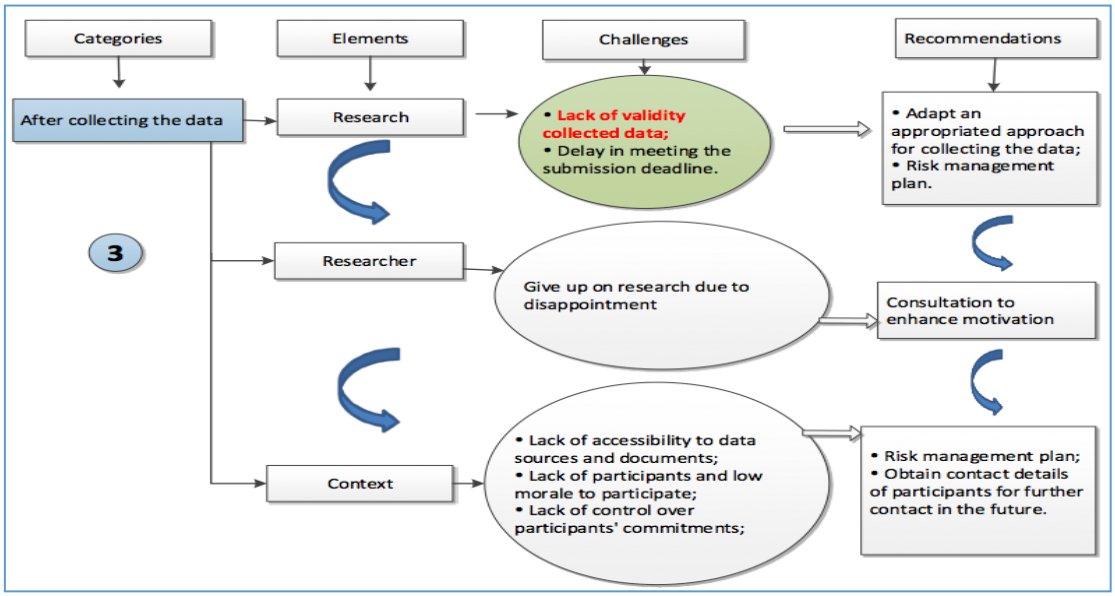

Figure 4: After the Data Collection: Cycle of Challenges Associated with Recommendations

According to Vose and Cervellini (1938, p. 40) "some of the problems of scientific research in developing countries, such as creating an increased pool of trained people, providing more resources and strengthening

the whole national infrastructure, can only be solved through time". However, such problems can be more complicated in countries that experience conflict or war, in other words, countries in crisis situations.

Having discussed the findings that were collected from seven participants who conducted research in crisis-affected-regions. Figures 2, 3, and 4 illustrate the interaction among all three categories (before, during, and after collecting the data) including the research elements, challenges, and recommendations. For instance, if the researcher has an unclear research plan before collecting the data towards deciding upon which data collection instruments that will be used, this will affect the data collection during stage in terms of gaining richness and valid data. Consequently, this will have an impact on the reliability and validity of the conducted research.

5. CONCLUSIONS

To sum up, academic research can be defined as a systematic approach, which consists of logical processes that should be followed to meet the research aim and objectives. While all the research stages are significant, collecting primary data is more critical because of the research validity and reliability. As mentioned above, achieving the validity and reliability links strongly within the proper choice of data collection methods and techniques. Accordingly, this paper has discussed the challenges that researchers face while collecting primary data for academic research purposes in crisis-affected-regions.

As a result of conducting this research, the findings suggested that there are challenges related to the data collection stage, including three different categories, namely: before collecting the data, during collecting the data and after collecting the data. With all the categories, three different elements are linked interacted constantly; those are: research, researcher, and context. As a result, the authors identified a set of challenges associated by a set of recommendations. Therefore, some of challenges are related to the researcher, such as a lack of understanding of the data collection process. Some other challenges are related to research, such as a lack of validity in the collected data. Also, within the context of study, the main challenge of collecting data from crisis-affected-regions has been revealed as a lack of accessibility to data sources. The paper provides different recommendations to improve the practices of collecting primary data for researchers collecting data from crisis-affected-regions, such as: providing supportive training to those who intend to research in crisis-affected-regions, networking with other researchers with the same interests, increasing the number and frequency of meetings with the supervisor, adopting an appropriate approach for collecting the data, and having a risk management plan.

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