CASE STUDY

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Reference this article

Abstract / Definition
Case studies involve the documented history and comprehensive analysis of a situation concerning subjects such as industries, organizations and markets. The distinguishing factor of the case study methodology is that it aims to bring out unique characteristics and interesting differences in the situation under observation. The case study approach is typically used for idiographic research, which means it focuses on atypical circumstances and distinctive outcomes as a subjective phenomenon. Another application of case studies is for nomothetic research aimed at building new theory, typically through the analysis of multiple cases and large sets of data within each case. The main types of case studies are unique, revelatory, critical instance, longitudinal and comparative. Rich case studies employ both qualitative and quantitative data. The strong point of case studies is the depth of analysis that they offer. The narratives in case studies offer detailed, rich descriptions of situation and their context. More experienced researchers have shown that multiple case methodologies can be used to build theory via replications logic. Each case serves as a separate experiment that stands on its own as a discrete unit of analysis. Multiple cases can be viewed as distinct experiments, very much like a series of laboratory experiments, which meet the criteria of reliability and generalizability of emerging theory.

Keywords
Case study, qualitative research, idiographic research,

Link to publication