

Case Studies are the most effective research methodology when analyzing major corporate events.

".. A case study is an examination of a specific phenomenon such as a program, an event, a person, a process, an institution or social group. The bounded system, or case, might be selected because is an instance of some concern, issue or hypothesis." (Merriam, 1988)

Why the case studies are to be conducted? - There are several reasons.

First of all, the main purpose of conducting the research is to answer "How" and "Why" questions. E.g.: Why this or that even takes place within the organization? How does it influence the corporate strategies or future trends?

Answering such questions is the way to identify, analyze and summarize the major causes and effects of an event and to explain linkages between causes and effects (Yin, 1993). Besides that, in order to determine appropriate research questions, or concern we completely describe a phenomenon in its own context and explore a question, program, issue.

According to Feagin, Orum, and Sjoberg (1991) Case Study is an ideal methodology when a holistic, in-depth investigation is needed. Case studies have been used in varied investigations. Yin, Stake, and others who have wide experience in this methodology have developed robust procedures. When these procedures are followed, the researcher will be following methods as well developed and tested as any in the scientific field. Whether the study is experimental or quasi-experimental,

the data collection and analysis methods are known to hide some details (Stake, 1995). Case studies, on the other hand, are designed to bring out the details from the viewpoint of the participants by using multiple sources of data.

Yin (1993) has identified some specific types of case studies: Exploratory, Explanatory, and Descriptive. Exploratory cases are sometimes considered as a prelude to social research. Explanatory case studies may be used for doing causal investigations. Descriptive cases require a descriptive theory to be developed before starting the project. Pyecha (1988) used this methodology in a special education study, using a pattern-matching procedure. In all of the above types of case studies, there can be single-case or multiple-case applications.

Case study research is not sampling research; that is a fact asserted by all the major researchers in the field, including Yin, Stake, Feagin and others. However, selecting cases must be done so as to maximize what can be learned in the period of time available for the study.

The unit of analysis is a critical factor in the case study. It is typically a system of action rather than an individual or group of individuals. Case studies tend to be selective, focusing on one or two issues that are fundamental to understanding the system being examined.

Yin (1994) presented at least four applications for a case study model:

- To explain complex causal links in real-life interventions

- To describe the real-life context in which the intervention has occurred
- To describe the intervention itself
- To explore those situations in which the intervention being evaluated has no clear set of outcomes.

Compared to other approaches, case study knowledge is more concrete and more contextual, more developed by reader interpretation, and based more on reference populations determined by the reader (Stake, 1981).

Of course, like any other methodologies, Case Study has its advantages and disadvantages. The good thing about it is that this methodology provides an in-depth view into the subject of study, elaborates quantitative questions and explores all the sides of the event. Besides that Case Study involves a wide range of audiences in data gathering and research conducting. This methodology gives an opportunity not only to see how the theory applies to reality, but also how data is often ambiguous or not clearly defined in many situations.

Cases in which a decision is required can be used to explore viewpoints from multiple sources and see why people may want different outcomes. It can be observed how a decision will impact different participants, both positively and negatively.

Cases usually require analyzing data in order to reach a conclusion. Since many assignments are open-ended, choosing appropriate analytic techniques can be practiced as well.

Many cases require pulling in different analytic techniques and information from different areas of the course in order to

provide an effective solution to the problem. In addition, a case assignment can require an initial statement of the facts and techniques used to reach the conclusion.

But on the other hand Case Study Methodology is very time consuming (often continues for many years) and labor intensive, it cannot generalize outside of the sample studied. Some consider it to be less rigorous than other methodologies and subjective with "wrong" evaluators.

But still Case Study Methodology gives an opportunity to learn a wide range of information in order to make a correct conclusion about the cause and effect of the event because there are many factors which make their impact into corporate processes are need to be considered and analyzed.

Case study research excels at bringing us to an understanding of a complex issue or object and can extend experience or add strength to what is already known through previous research. Case studies emphasize detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and their relationships. Researchers have used the case study research method for many years across a variety of disciplines. Social scientists, in particular, have made wide use of this qualitative research method to examine contemporary real-life situations and provide the basis for the application of ideas and extension of methods. Researcher Robert K. Yin defines the case study research method as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries

between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin, 1984, p. 23). Though case studies are complex because they generally involve multiple sources of data, may include multiple cases within a study, and produce large amounts of data for analysis, researchers from many disciplines use the case study method to build upon theory, to produce new theory, to dispute or challenge theory, to explain a situation, to provide a basis to apply solutions to situations, to explore, or to describe an object or phenomenon. The advantages of the case study method are its applicability to real-life, contemporary, human situations and its public accessibility through written reports. Case study results relate directly to the common reader's everyday experience and facilitate an understanding of complex events and situations.

Anyway, due to wide range of information to be gathered while conducting a research and various advantages have been stated above Case Study Methodology is a careful study of the social unit (as a corporation or division within a corporation) that attempts to determine what factors led to some event, to success or to failure.

References

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