

The Value of Case Study Research in Practice: A Methodological Review with Practical Insights from Organisational Studies

Sanmugam ANNAMALAH

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9438-2710>

Graduate School of Business/ Research and Innovation Management Centre
SEGi University, Malaysia

sanmugam@segi.edu.my sanmugam1@gmail.com

Article's history:

Received 29th of September, 2024; Received in revised form 24th of October, 2024; Accepted 29th of October, 2024; Available online: 1st of November, 2024. Published as article in the Volume XIX, Winter, Issue 4(86), 2024.

Copyright© 2024 The Author(s). This article is distributed under the terms of the license [CC-BY 4.0.](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits any further distribution in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Suggested citation:

Annamalah, S. (2024). The value of case study research in practice: A methodological review with practical insights from organisational studies. *Journal of Applied Economic Sciences*, Volume XIX, Winter, 4(86), 485 – 498. [https://doi.org/10.57017/jaes.v19.4\(86\).11](https://doi.org/10.57017/jaes.v19.4(86).11)

Abstract:

This research provides an in-depth review of the literature on case studies as a strategic qualitative research methodology. While case studies have faced criticism for lacking scientific rigor and failing to address generalizability, this research underscores their value when examining complex, real-life processes or activities in great detail. Case studies have been widely used in social sciences, such as sociology, industrial relations, and anthropology, though they are sometimes considered an underutilized approach. This research explores the general concepts, strengths, and limitations of the case study method, noting its theoretical richness and ability to generate data that is contextually and empirically rich. It emphasizes the versatility of case studies in creating a more holistic understanding of the subject matter. Based on a study involving four organisations and the researcher's practical experience, the article details how case studies were conducted, how access to organisations was gained, and how data collection was systematically managed. The research also highlights the use of triangulation employing multiple data collection techniques, including observations and document analysis, which enhances the reliability and validity of findings.

Keywords: case study research, qualitative methodology, triangulation techniques, data collection, validity and reliability.

JEL Classification: C18, C93, L29, M10.

Introduction

In the field of qualitative research, case studies have emerged as an important methodology that offers nuanced insights into complex phenomena, particularly within social sciences (Paparini et al., 2020). This method allows researchers to explore and analyse intricate real-life processes in a detailed and contextually rich manner. Case studies have gained prominence in fields such as sociology, anthropology, education, and industrial relations, where understanding the intricacies of human behaviour and organisational dynamics is essential (Perkumiene et al., 2023).

Despite criticisms regarding scientific rigor and generalizability, case studies remain invaluable tools for examining diverse contexts and generating rich qualitative data, with their selection as a research methodology fundamentally influenced by the nature of the research problem at hand (Lim, 2024). Alvesson & Sandberg (2024) assert that the appropriateness of a research method derives from the social phenomena being investigated, underscoring the need to align research strategies with the characteristics of the subjects under study. The methodological landscape of social science research typically encompasses two primary paradigms i.e., positivism and interpretivism. Positivism emphasizes an objective stance, prioritizing observable and quantifiable data to explain social phenomena through causal relationships, often using quantitative methods to achieve generalizable and replicable results (Tabron & Thomas, 2023).

In contrast, interpretivism acknowledges the socially constructed nature of reality, asserting that individuals assign varied meanings to their experiences. Within this paradigm, the researcher's role extends beyond gathering and measuring facts to understanding the subjective interpretations and constructions of meaning inherent in human behaviour (Dahal, 2023). This perspective emphasizes the importance of context and the complexity of social interactions, leading to the recognition that the world is not fully knowable through empirical observation alone. Interpretivism approaches align seamlessly with qualitative research, which emphasizes the exploration of complex, dynamic human behaviours and experiences that cannot be easily quantified (Yao et al., 2024).

Case studies serve as a powerful qualitative methodology, allowing researchers to delve deeply into the intricacies of social phenomena within their natural settings. This approach provides a unique opportunity to capture the richness and complexity of real-life contexts, facilitating a focused examination of specific instances. Through case studies, researchers gain access to insights that might remain hidden with other methods, offering a depth and authenticity that enhance the understanding of the phenomena under study (Alam, 2021). Case studies are particularly adept at investigating how and why specific phenomena occur, offering insights into the processes, interactions, and contextual factors that shape organisational behaviour (Welch et al., 2022). The integration of multiple data sources such as interviews, observations, and document analyses allow for a more comprehensive and robust understanding of the subject matter (Burnard, 2024). By employing triangulation, researchers can enhance the validity and reliability of their findings, providing a more holistic view of the phenomena under investigation (Cornelissen, 2023). For a study that examines the implementation of sustainable practices in a manufacturing firm, a researcher might combine interviews with key stakeholders, observations of production processes, and analysis of company documents to create a multi-faceted understanding of the challenges and successes encountered during the transition (Dunwoodie et al., 2023).

The iterative nature of case study research allows for ongoing refinement of research questions and methods as new insights emerge. This flexibility is a significant advantage in dynamic environments where contexts can shift rapidly. Well-defined research questions are crucial for guiding the data collection process, ensuring that the study comprehensively addresses its objectives (Fife & Gossner, 2024). The research design can evolve as the study progresses, allowing for deeper exploration of unexpected themes or issues that arise during data collection. In addition to their practical applications, case studies have substantial potential for contributing to theory-building within the social sciences, as focusing on specific cases allows researchers to derive insights that inform practice and enhance theoretical understanding (Eisenhardt, 2021). Case studies in educational settings can reveal the efficacy of specific teaching strategies or curricula, leading to broader discussions on educational reform, and this capacity to generate contextually rich and empirically grounded insights positions case studies as a vital component of qualitative.

Furthermore, the narratives produced through case study research often resonate with practitioners, policymakers, and educators, bridging the gap between theory and practice by providing compelling accounts of experiences that can drive change and inspire innovation within organisations (Savin-Baden & Major, 2023). Case studies documenting successful community health initiatives may serve as blueprints for similar studies in different contexts, illustrating the applicability of theoretical insights to real-world challenges. Ultimately, this exploration seeks to illuminate the significant role of case studies in advancing knowledge within qualitative research. By showcasing the ability to generate deep, nuanced insights into complex social phenomena, the article aims to advocate for a more widespread and rigorous application of case studies in research endeavours across various disciplines. In doing so, it underscores the importance of recognizing case studies not as isolated methods but as integral components of a broader methodological framework that values depth, context, and the richness of human experience. This research will detail methodologies employed in conducting case studies, the process of securing access to organisations, and the systematic management of data collection, ultimately contributing to the growing discourse on the value of case studies in qualitative research.

1. Research Background

Case study research is a qualitative methodology that enables the investigation of complex phenomena within their real-life contexts and has gained prominence across various disciplines, including social sciences, business, education, and health, due to its ability to provide nuanced insights that quantitative methods often overlook (Cole, 2023). By focusing on specific instances or cases, researchers can explore the details of human behaviour, organisational dynamics, and social interactions, yielding a rich understanding of the phenomena under study. At its core, case study research seeks to answer "how" and "why" questions about a phenomenon rather than simply quantifying it, which is particularly important when examining multifaceted and context-dependent issues (Pu & Lam, 2023).

Case studies can involve individuals, groups, organisations, events, or even entire communities, offering flexibility in scope and focus, while researchers utilize various data collection methods, including interviews, observations, document analysis, and surveys to triangulate findings and build a comprehensive picture of the case (Yin, 2018). This method allows for a depth of inquiry that is often unattainable through traditional quantitative approaches. The strength of case study research lies in its capacity to capture the complexity of real-life situations. Unlike experiments that seek to control variables and isolate phenomena, case studies embrace the messiness of reality. They acknowledge that human behaviour and organisational processes are influenced by a myriad of factors, including cultural, social, political, and economic contexts. By embedding the research within these contexts, case studies enable researchers to understand the interplay between various elements, ultimately enriching their analyses and interpretations.

One of the primary advantages of case study research is its methodological flexibility, allowing researchers to adapt their designs and data collection methods to suit the specific needs of their study (Wood et al., 2020). Researchers might start with qualitative interviews to explore participants' experiences and then follow up with quantitative surveys to quantify certain aspects of those experiences. This iterative process allows researchers to adjust their focus and delve deeper into emerging themes, leading to a more thorough understanding of the phenomenon. Moreover, the use of multiple data sources in case study research enhances the credibility and richness of findings. Researchers often employ triangulation, which involves comparing and contrasting data from different sources to validate conclusions, thereby mitigating potential bias and fostering a more nuanced understanding of the case (Flick, 2022). Case studies on organisational change might include interviews with employees, analysis of internal documents, and observation of meetings, allowing the researcher to cross verify insights and draw more robust conclusions.

In addition to providing rich empirical insights, case study research plays a crucial role in theory building and by investigating specific cases, researchers can identify patterns, generate hypotheses, and develop theoretical frameworks that contribute to a broader understanding of the studied phenomena (Vila-Henninger et al., 2022). This aspect is particularly valuable in fields where established theories may be lacking or where existing theories do not adequately explain observed phenomena. The inductive nature of case study research allows for the emergence of new theories grounded in real-world experiences (Lloyd, & Gifford, 2024). Researchers can build upon existing literature, while simultaneously contributing novel insights that challenge or expand theoretical boundaries. Case studies examining the impact of leadership styles on employee motivation may reveal new dimensions of motivation that existing theories fail to address, prompting further investigation and refinement of motivational theories. Furthermore, the practical implications of case study research cannot be understated. The insights derived from case studies can inform practitioners, policymakers, and organisations by providing evidence-based recommendations tailored to specific contexts (Melchert et al., 2024). Case studies on successful educational interventions can guide educators in implementing effective strategies in their classrooms. Similarly, insights from case studies in business can help organisations navigate complex challenges by offering real-world examples of successful practices and lessons learned.

Despite its strengths, case study research is not without limitations. One of the primary criticisms of case study research is related to generalizability, as critics argue that findings derived from a limited number of cases may not be applicable to broader populations or different contexts; this concern is particularly pronounced in disciplines that prioritize quantitative measures and statistical generalizations (Smith, 2018). While case studies provide deep insights into specific instances, the question of whether these findings can be extrapolated to other situations remains contentious. Moreover, the subjective nature of qualitative research can introduce challenges regarding reliability and consistency. The interpretation of data is often influenced by the researcher's perspectives, which may lead to bias and affect the validity of conclusions drawn (Johnson et al., 2020). To address this concern, researchers must employ rigorous methods of data collection and analysis, and clearly articulate their analytical frameworks to enhance transparency and reliability. The potential for case study research to become overly descriptive is another notable drawback. Without a clear theoretical framework guiding the analysis, researchers risk producing rich narratives that lack analytical depth (Collins & Stockton, 2018). Therefore, it is crucial for researchers to remain focused on their research questions and employ systematic analysis to ensure that findings are not merely anecdotal. Additionally, the intensive nature of case study research can be resource-consuming, often requiring significant time and effort to collect and analyse data.

To mitigate the limitations associated with case study research, researchers can adopt several strategies. Employing a clear theoretical framework at the outset can guide the research process and enhance the depth of analysis. This framework provides a lens through which to interpret findings, ensuring that insights are contextualized within existing literature and theories. Researchers should strive for methodological rigor by employing triangulation and member checking. Triangulation involves using multiple sources of data to validate findings, while member checking entails seeking feedback from participants to verify the accuracy of interpretations. These practices enhance the credibility of case study research and help address potential biases. Additionally, researchers should transparently report their methodologies, including sampling strategies, data collection methods, and analysis processes. Clear documentation of the research process allows readers to assess the rigor and reliability of the findings, ultimately strengthening the contribution of the research to the field. Case study research is a powerful methodology that offers unique advantages in understanding complex phenomena within their real-life contexts. Its ability to generate rich, nuanced insights and contribute to theory building makes it an invaluable tool across various disciplines. By adopting rigorous methodological practices and clearly articulating their theoretical frameworks, researchers can maximize the contributions of case study research to both academic literature and practical applications.

2. The Choice of Research Methodology

The selection of a research methodology is contingent upon the nature of the research problem. As Amadi (2023), argue, the suitability of a research method is fundamentally derived from the nature of the social phenomena being explored. Social science research typically follows two major methodological traditions which is positivism and interpretivism. Positivism emphasizes the natural science model of research, where the researcher adopts an objective stance, collecting facts about the social world and explaining social life through a causal chain of events. This approach prioritizes observable and measurable facts, aligning closely with quantitative methods (Masuku, 2024). Positivism is concerned with gathering and measuring data that lead to generalizable and replicable results. As such, it is often used for hypothesis testing, seeking causal explanations (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In contrast, interpretivism, or phenomenology, posits that reality is socially constructed rather than objectively determined. The role of the researcher in this paradigm is not to merely gather and measure facts but to understand the various constructions and meanings individuals assign to their experiences (Wieland et al., 2024). Interpretivism thus aligns with qualitative research, which focuses on understanding the subjective nature of social phenomena. This approach is used when studying complex, dynamic human behaviours, processes, or experiences that cannot be easily quantified (Kogetsidis, 2024).

According to Rahimi (2024), qualitative research emphasizes the processes and meanings that are not rigorously measured in terms of quantity, amount, intensity, or frequency. In qualitative research, methods such as observations and document analysis are preferred when the goal is insight, discovery, and interpretation rather than hypothesis testing. These methods provide a direct means to explore individuals' perspectives, experiences, and interpretations, offering rich, in-depth data (Hendren et al., 2023). When combined with other techniques, such as document analysis, observations form part of a triangulated approach, which increases the robustness and credibility of research findings (Riazi et al., 2023). In case studies, researchers are able to delve deeper into the context and complexity of real-life situations, making this method particularly suitable for studying processes in-depth (Cleland et al., 2021). The combination of methods strengthens the findings by incorporating multiple data sources and perspectives, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem (Alejandro & Zhao, 2024). Overall, the choice between quantitative (positivist) and qualitative (interpretivism) methodologies depends on the research question and the nature of the phenomena under study. When the focus is on understanding subjective meanings and experiences, qualitative methods such as case studies offer invaluable tools for generating deep, nuanced insights (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Thumvichit, 2024).

Formulation of Research Questions

The formulation of research questions is a critical step in case study research. Developing a set of well-defined research questions helps to guide the data collection process and ensures that the study addresses its objectives comprehensively (Naeem et al., 2023). These questions should be designed to explore the specific phenomena in detail, focusing on aspects that are central to understanding the case under investigation. Research questions in case studies are often open-ended and exploratory, allowing for a deep dive into the complexities of the subject matter. This open-ended nature encourages researchers to consider multiple dimensions of the phenomenon, leading to a richer understanding of the context. Questions must address how particular factors influence outcomes, what processes are involved in specific events, or how stakeholders perceive and interact with the phenomenon under study.

Moreover, the formulation of research questions should reflect the theoretical framework established during the literature review and consultation phases, ensuring that the questions are not only relevant to the specific case but also grounded in existing knowledge (Wallwey & Kajfez, 2023). By aligning the research questions with the theoretical framework, researchers can better connect their findings to broader theoretical discussions and contribute to the academic discourse surrounding the topic. In addition, it is essential to refine research questions iteratively as new insights are gained throughout the research process. This flexibility allows researchers to adapt their inquiries based on initial findings and emerging themes, leading to a more nuanced exploration of the case. Ultimately, well-formulated research questions serve as a roadmap for the entire study, directing the focus of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. By ensuring that the questions are clear, specific, and aligned with the study's objectives, researchers can effectively explore the complexities of the phenomenon and generate meaningful insights that enhance understanding within the field.

Framework Development in Case Study Research

An extensive review of existing literature is foundational to case study research as this process involves both computer-based and manual searches to gather relevant theories, findings, and methodologies related to the research topic (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Farquhar et al., 2020;). The literature review serves multiple purposes as it helps identify gaps in current knowledge, refine research questions, and establish the theoretical underpinnings of the study. By critically analysing existing studies, researchers can pinpoint areas where further investigation is needed and frame their research questions accordingly.

Following the literature review, consultation and framework development are essential. Engaging in discussions with academicians and professionals in relevant field provides valuable insights and helps in refining the research framework (Mäkelä et al., 2024). This stage involves constructing a theoretical framework based on the insights gained from the literature review and expert consultations. The theoretical framework guides the entire research process, providing a structured approach to exploring the phenomena of interest. In addition to consultations, data collection methods in case study research are diverse and include observations, document analysis, and artifacts. Observations allow researchers to gather real-time insights into processes, behaviours, and interactions within their natural context (Nordfält & Ahlbom, 2024). Document analysis, involving the review of official reports, policy documents, and organisational records, helps corroborate data from other sources and provides a historical or contextual background to the case (Erükçü Akbaş & Karataş, 2024).

Artifacts, such as tools, technology, or products relevant to the case study, offer tangible evidence that contributes to the richness of the data (Nisar & Masood, 2024). The combination of these methods enhances the reliability and depth of the research findings through triangulation. Triangulation involves using multiple data sources to cross-validate findings and increase the robustness of the research. By drawing on diverse forms of evidence, researchers are able to construct a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon being studied, ensuring that findings are both detailed and credible (Burnard, 2024). A thorough literature review, along with expert consultations and a well-defined theoretical framework, lays the groundwork for effective case study research. The inclusion of multiple data collection techniques such as observations, document analysis, and artifacts further strengthens the research by providing a multi-faceted understanding of the case, ensuring that findings are deeply rooted in the real-life context.

3. Types of Case Study Research

In qualitative research, case studies serve as a strategic methodology that offers in-depth insights into complex phenomena. A case study, as defined by Rainer & Wohlin (2024), involves an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context using multiple sources of evidence. This method is particularly useful for exploring how and why certain phenomena occur, allowing researchers to gain a comprehensive understanding of specific issues or processes.

Goldsmith (2021) highlights that case studies focus on particular issues or units of analysis rather than attempting to study an entire organisation or system. Burnard (2024) argues that case studies are especially effective for examining specific problems or situations in depth, as this method captures nuanced insights that are not easily quantifiable. The methodological rigor of case studies is strengthened by triangulation, incorporating multiple data sources such as observations, document analysis, and other methods to ensure a more robust and comprehensive understanding of the research problem (Christofi et al., 2024).

de Jong (2024) emphasize that case studies are not intended to be representative of all instances but rather to provide detailed insights into specific cases. The use of diverse data collection methods within case studies allows researchers to capture different perspectives and experiences, contributing to a richer and more nuanced analysis. Case studies as a strategic methodology offer a powerful approach for exploring complex, real-life phenomena. This method allows researchers to examine specific issues in depth while gaining detailed, contextually rich data. The integration of multiple data sources enhances the overall quality and comprehensiveness of the research.

Tasci et al. (2020) categorizes case study research into three primary types which is exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory, each tailored to distinct research objectives and contexts. Exploratory case studies are often utilized as preliminary investigations to explore new or under-researched areas. They are instrumental in formulating research questions and hypotheses. Exploratory case study might be employed to identify key variables, refine theoretical frameworks, or develop initial insights into emerging phenomena (Yin, 2018). These studies are essential for laying the groundwork for more detailed research and can provide the foundation for subsequent descriptive or explanatory investigations. Descriptive Case Studies focus on providing a comprehensive account of a particular phenomenon or process. These studies aim to capture and document detailed observations of specific events or conditions, such as the introduction of a new product into a market or the implementation of a novel organisational practice. The objective of descriptive case studies is to offer a rich, nuanced understanding of the processes and outcomes involved, thereby contributing to the broader knowledge base of the field (Alam, 2021). By meticulously documenting the case, researchers can generate insights into the operational dynamics and contextual factors influencing the phenomenon. Explanatory Case Studies are designed to elucidate causal relationships and the underlying processes that lead to specific outcomes. These studies are particularly valuable for understanding the mechanisms and reasons behind observed phenomena, such as organisational changes or policy impacts. Explanatory case studies seek to answer questions about how and why certain effects occur, often involving a detailed analysis of the interplay between variables and contextual factors (Haynes-Brown, 2023). This type of case study is instrumental in developing theories and models that explain complex phenomena. In the present research, a descriptive case study approach was adopted. Observations were conducted across four distinct organisations, with a focus on systematically reporting their processes, practices, and outcomes.

This approach was chosen to provide an in-depth examination of specific instances, allowing for a detailed analysis of how different organisations implement and manage particular practices or strategies. The descriptive case study facilitated a comprehensive understanding of the phenomena under investigation by capturing the rich, contextual details of each case. This method enabled the researcher to identify patterns, variations, and insights that contribute to a broader understanding of the subject matter. By utilizing the descriptive case study approach, the research aimed to offer valuable insights into real-world applications and practices, thus contributing to the existing body of knowledge and informing future research directions.

According to Yin (2018), case study research is a powerful method for exploring, describing, and explaining complex real-world phenomena. The approach is particularly well-suited for business, social sciences, and organisational studies. Yin classifies case study research into three main types such as exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory. Each type serves a specific function within the research process, helping to answer different kinds of research questions and providing different kinds of insights.

Exploratory Case Study

An exploratory case study is often used as a preliminary step in the research process. The primary goal is not to draw definitive conclusions but to explore a topic in depth, generating hypotheses or research questions that can be tested in future research (Yin, 2018). This type of case study helps researchers gain familiarity with an unfamiliar topic or phenomenon. It is especially useful when there is limited existing research on the subject or when the topic is broad and needs to be narrowed down (Peel, 2020). In business-related research, an exploratory case study might involve examining a new market trend, such as the adoption of novel technology in an industry. The goal would be to identify key issues, challenges, or gaps in knowledge that would later form the basis for a more structured study.

Organisations that want to explore how artificial intelligence (AI) could be integrated into its customer service operations, an exploratory case study could involve reviewing how other companies are using AI in customer service, observing current practices, and interviewing managers and experts (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The results could lead to the formulation of specific hypotheses or research questions, such as, "How does the implementation of AI impact customer satisfaction compared to traditional methods?".

Exploratory case studies primarily investigate new or unfamiliar research areas, focusing on uncovering insights, identifying key patterns, or generating ideas that have not been fully explored in existing literature (Bell et al., 2022). Rather than aiming to provide definitive answers, this type of case study serves as a preliminary step, helping researchers gain a deeper understanding of the subject. It often leads to the development of more structured, comprehensive research studies. Exploratory case studies typically employ qualitative data collection methods such as interviews and observations, allowing researchers to gather detailed, rich information from real-world settings. These findings help shape and refine hypotheses or research questions that will be tested in future, more structured research. This makes exploratory case studies invaluable for laying the groundwork in research areas where little prior knowledge exists.

Descriptive Case Study

A descriptive case study is used when the objective is to provide a comprehensive description of a phenomenon, event, or situation. This type of research does not aim to answer "why" something happens but rather "what" happened and "how" it unfolded (Lindgreen et al., 2021). The goal is to provide a detailed account of the context, processes, and outcomes without necessarily establishing causal relationships. Descriptive case studies are widely used in business, especially to describe how products, services, or processes evolve within a specific context. Case studies that might track the life cycle of a product after its launch, detailing customer reception, sales trends, marketing strategies, and product modifications, provide invaluable insights for businesses. By analysing these elements, researchers can identify patterns that influence a product's success or failure, assess the effectiveness of various marketing approaches, and understand how customer feedback informs product enhancements.

This comprehensive approach allows companies to adapt their strategies in real time, ensuring they remain responsive to market demands and consumer preferences. Ultimately, such case studies not only contribute to academic knowledge but also offer practical guidance for businesses seeking to optimize their product offerings and improve overall performance. Case studies that employed the method to observe and document business processes in different organisations focus on providing detailed accounts of how these organisations adopted new sustainability practices. Through observing real-time interactions, analysing internal documents, and interviewing staff, it's possible to outline the step-by-step processes the companies followed, without necessarily concluding why specific challenges emerged or how they might be addressed (De Villa & Langley, 2024).

The documentation included how the launch of an eco-friendly product was executed, from initial brainstorming sessions to the marketing and distribution phases. By detailing the challenges, strategies employed, and outcomes, the case study painted a clear picture of what transpired without attributing specific reasons for the product's success or failure (Bell et al., 2022).

A descriptive case study also aims to provide a detailed account of a particular phenomenon, focusing primarily on answering "what" and "how" questions. Rather than seeking to establish cause-and-effect relationships, this type of research is concerned with offering a thorough description of the subject under study. Descriptive case studies can involve various data collection methods, including interviews, observations, and document analysis, to gather comprehensive insights from different sources (Collins et al., 2024). The data is then compiled into a narrative format, allowing researchers to capture the nuances and complexities of the case. This approach is particularly useful for understanding specific processes or outcomes in real-world contexts, as it offers a rich, in-depth portrayal without making definitive causal claims. By describing phenomena in their natural settings, descriptive case studies can serve as a valuable tool for illustrating real-world examples, making them especially helpful in fields like business, education, and social sciences.

Explanatory Case Study

An explanatory case study goes beyond description and exploration to explain why certain phenomena occur. This type of case study is used when the researcher seeks to understand the causal relationships that shape particular outcomes (Butcher & Yodsuwan, 2024). It is particularly useful when investigating processes within organisations, where decisions, actions, and results are all interconnected. Explanatory case studies often involve complex, multi-faceted phenomena where several variables interact with one another. The goal is to build an in-depth understanding of the dynamics involved in a particular situation, such as how management practices, organisational structure, and employee behaviour contribute to business performance. Explanatory case study might focus on understanding why a particular company's management practices lead to better employee performance compared to competitors. Researchers might examine factors such as decision-making structures, leadership styles, training programs, and employee incentives to explain why certain outcomes are achieved (Adinew, 2024).

In a business context, explanatory case studies are valuable when exploring how certain strategies or processes influence broader outcomes. A case study might investigate the impact of a company's new supply chain management system on both efficiency and profitability. The researcher would consider not only the changes made but also the factors that influenced these changes and how they led to improvements (or failures). An explanatory case study focuses on uncovering "why" and "how" causal relationships exist within a particular context. It aims to explain the underlying mechanisms and processes that contribute to certain outcomes, making it especially useful for understanding complex, interconnected variables. This type of case study often requires a mixed-methods approach, collecting both qualitative data, such as interviews and observations, and quantitative data, like statistics or performance metrics (Pérez Bentancur & Tiscornia, 2024). By analysing these diverse data sources, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the dynamics at play, identifying how different factors interact to produce specific results. Explanatory case studies are valuable in fields where processes are multifaceted, such as organisational behaviour, public policy, or healthcare, as they provide detailed insights into the factors driving outcomes, helping to illuminate the intricate relationships between variables.

4. Designing and Piloting Interview Questions

Designing effective interview questions is essential for collecting rich, qualitative data in research, particularly when employing methods such as semi-structured interviews. The process begins by clearly defining the research objectives, which serve as a foundation for formulating questions that align with the study's goals. A well-defined objective not only clarifies what the researcher seeks to discover but also guides the selection of topics and themes to be explored during the interviews. In crafting the questions, a variety of types can be employed to elicit diverse responses.

Open-ended questions are particularly valuable, as they encourage participants to share their thoughts and experiences in their own words. Probing questions are essential for digging deeper into specific areas, allowing researchers to explore nuances. Organizing questions hierarchically is another effective strategy. By starting with broad, general inquiries, researchers can create a comfortable environment that encourages participants to engage openly. As the conversation progresses, more focused sub-questions can be introduced, enabling deeper exploration of key topics. This structure not only helps in maintaining the flow of the interview but also ensures that critical areas related to the research objectives are adequately addressed. Using clear and accessible language ensures that all participants comprehend the questions, which is vital for collecting valid data. Avoiding jargon or overly technical terms can prevent misunderstandings, particularly when interviewing individuals from diverse backgrounds or industries. Additionally, maintaining a neutral tone is important; leading questions can bias responses and compromise the integrity of the data collected.

Once the questions are drafted, piloting them with a small group of representative participants becomes crucial. This pilot phase serves multiple purposes as it helps identify any ambiguities or confusing language, tests the effectiveness of the questions in eliciting the desired information, and provides an opportunity for refinement based on participant feedback. Selecting pilot participants who reflect the larger population enhances the relevance of the insights gained. Conducting these pilot interviews in a similar setting to the main study ensures that the questions not only elicit the desired information but also promote a comfortable and engaging dialogue. Observing how participants respond during the pilot can provide valuable insights into the pacing and flow of the interview, allowing researchers to make adjustments to enhance the overall experience. Feedback from the pilot interviews is instrumental in refining both the structure and wording of the final interview guide. This iterative process of designing, piloting, and revising questions ultimately enhances the quality and depth of the data collected, contributing to the robustness of the research. By ensuring that the interview questions are well-crafted and thoroughly tested, researchers position themselves to uncover meaningful insights that can illuminate the complexities of the phenomena under investigation.

Data Collection

Implementing the case study involves collecting data through various methods, including observations, document analysis, and artifact examination. Each method contributes to a comprehensive understanding of the case. Observations are essential for gathering real-time insights into processes, behaviours, and interactions within their natural context. This method allows researchers to see first-hand how events unfold, providing a rich source of qualitative data.

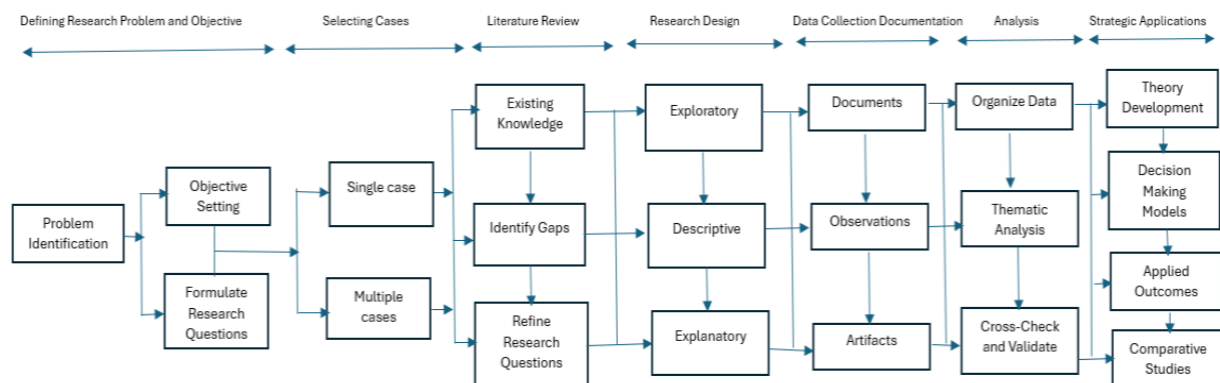
Observations can be participant or non-participant, depending on the researcher's role in the setting. This direct engagement enables a deeper understanding of the dynamics at play and the contextual factors influencing the case. Document analysis involves reviewing various textual materials relevant to the case, such as official reports, policy documents, meeting minutes, and organisational records. This method helps corroborate data from other sources and offers historical or contextual background. Analysing documents allows researchers to track changes over time, understand organisational structures, and gain insights into the decision-making processes within the case study context.

Artifact examination involves studying tangible objects related to the case, such as tools, technologies, or products. Artifacts provide concrete evidence of practices and can illuminate the interactions between users and their environment. Analysing these objects can reveal insights into the functionality, design, and impact on the processes being studied. Combining these methods enhances the robustness of the data collected. Triangulation, or the use of multiple data sources, increases the validity and reliability of findings by allowing researchers to cross-verify information. This comprehensive approach ensures that the research captures a multi-dimensional view of the case, leading to a more nuanced understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Effective data collection in case study research requires a thoughtful combination of observations, document analysis, and artifact examination.

Essential Stages and Applications in Case Study Research

Figure 1 outlines a structured approach to conducting case study research. It begins with defining the research problem and objectives, where researchers set clear goals, formulate preliminary questions, and identify any knowledge gaps. Next, cases are selected either as a single case or multiple cases based on their relevance to the objectives. A literature review follows, helping to refine research questions by assessing existing knowledge. The research design is then established, determining if the study will be exploratory, descriptive, or explanatory. Data is collected through multiple sources such as documents, observations, and artifacts to provide a well-rounded perspective. In the analysis phase, data is organized and examined through thematic analysis, with validation methods to ensure reliability. The final stage, strategic applications, leverages the findings for theory development, decision-making models, applied outcomes, and comparative studies, making the research findings broadly applicable.

Figure 1. Key stages of case study research process



Data Analysis

Data analysis in case study research is a crucial phase that involves systematically examining and interpreting the collected data to uncover insights, patterns, and relationships relevant to the research questions. This process typically includes several key steps. First, the preparation of data involves cleaning it to ensure accuracy and organisation, which may involve reviewing and correcting inconsistencies, as well as transcribing qualitative data collected through observations or recordings into text format for further analysis. Next, coding the data begins with open coding, where researchers break down the data into discrete segments and assign initial codes based on the content, allowing for exploration of various aspects without preconceived notions. After initial coding, axial coding is employed to identify relationships between codes, refining categories and linking related concepts.

The thematic analysis follows, where researchers group the codes into broader themes that capture significant patterns within the data, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the main findings. This stage also involves continuously reviewing and refining the themes to ensure they accurately reflect the data and relate to the research questions, which may include revisiting the raw data to validate the identified themes. In cases involving multiple instances, comparative analysis helps identify similarities and differences across cases, providing insights into how contextual factors may influence outcomes.

Researchers then interpret the themes and patterns identified in the analysis, relating them back to the research questions and theoretical framework, while also considering the context of the findings to analyse how the data reflects specific circumstances and contributes to broader theoretical discussions. To enhance the validity of the findings, triangulation is employed, integrating multiple data sources such as observations, document analysis, and artifacts, which helps corroborate findings and provides a more nuanced understanding of the case. Data visualization techniques, including charts, graphs, and conceptual maps, are utilized to present the findings in an accessible manner, clarifying complex data relationships and facilitating effective communication of results. Finally, the analysis is compiled into a structured report or presentation, where researchers clearly articulate the research questions, methods, findings, and implications, ensuring that the report effectively conveys the insights gained from the case study. Overall, data analysis in case study research is an iterative and reflexive process that requires careful attention to detail; by employing systematic coding, thematic analysis, comparative techniques, and triangulation, researchers can derive meaningful insights that contribute to a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under investigation, enhancing the credibility and richness of the research findings and providing valuable contributions to the field.

Reporting Case Study Findings

The final step in case study research is documenting the findings in a comprehensive report. The report should include a detailed description of the case, encompassing its context, background, and the specific phenomena being investigated. It should outline the research process, including the methodologies employed, data collection techniques, and analysis strategies, providing transparency into how the study was conducted. The report must highlight the insights gained from the case study, offering a complete picture of the research outcomes and emphasizing the significance of the findings in relation to the research questions. In addition to presenting the findings, the report should reflect on the implications of these results, discussing how they contribute to existing knowledge in the field and their potential impact on practice, policy, or future studies.

This section can explore how the findings align with or challenge existing theories and provide recommendations based on the insights gathered. Moreover, the report should identify any limitations encountered during the research, acknowledging factors that may affect the interpretation of the results or the generalizability of the findings. This transparency enhances the credibility of the research. The report should suggest directions for future research, proposing areas that require further investigation or questions that emerged during the study. This forward-looking approach helps to establish a foundation for ongoing inquiry and emphasizes the importance of continuous exploration within the subject area. By thoroughly documenting the findings and contextualizing them within the broader landscape of research, the final report serves as a valuable resource for scholars, practitioners, and policymakers alike.

In academic research, especially in case studies, theory development, decision-making models, applied outcomes, and comparative studies are key outputs that contribute both to theoretical advancements and practical applications. Case studies often provide the empirical foundation for developing or refining theories. Through in-depth analysis, researchers can identify new variables, relationships, or patterns, which can lead to the proposal of new theories or the modification of existing ones. This contributes to the broader academic discourse by offering fresh insights into complex phenomena.

The insights from case study research can be distilled into decision-making frameworks or models that practitioners can use in similar contexts. These models help organisations or policymakers make informed decisions by providing structured approaches to problem-solving, risk management, and scenario planning based on real-world data. Case studies generate applied outcomes by translating theoretical insights into practical recommendations or best practices. These outcomes are directly applicable in real-world contexts, providing organisations with actionable strategies to address challenges, improve processes, or enhance performance. This bridges the gap between theory and practice, ensuring that the research has tangible, real-world benefits. After analysing a single case, researchers can build on their findings by conducting comparative studies, which involve analysing multiple cases across different contexts.

This approach allows for cross-case analysis, enhancing the generalizability of findings, and providing a broader understanding of the issue. Comparative studies also help validate theories by testing them in diverse settings, making the conclusions more robust. By focusing on these key outputs—theory development, decision-making models, applied outcomes, and comparative studies, case study research not only advances academic knowledge but also provides practical tools and strategies for real-world applications. Best practices are the optimal strategies or methods identified through evidence-based research that yield the most effective results within a specific context. These practices are context-specific but can serve as benchmarks for other similar cases or organisations. Recommendations, on the other hand, provide forward-looking guidance on actions that practitioners, policymakers, or researchers can take to address identified challenges or improve processes. Recommendations often include policy reforms, operational improvements, or suggestions for future research. Together, best practices and recommendations offer practical implications for real-world applications and strategic guidance that can drive change, enhance performance, and inform decision-making in similar scenarios.

Conclusion

Conducting case study research offers a comprehensive approach to exploring complex phenomena within real-world contexts. As the landscape of research continues to evolve, case studies remain a vital method for generating rich, contextualized insights that are often unattainable through other research designs. By understanding the different types of case studies, exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory researchers can select the most appropriate methodology for their specific objectives, ensuring that their studies are both relevant and rigorous.

The structured process outlined, from defining the research problem to reporting insights, emphasizes the importance of thorough preparation, including comprehensive literature reviews and careful data collection. As the field has increasingly embraced technological advancements, the integration of digital tools for data collection and analysis such as online surveys, data analytics software, and qualitative coding tools has enhanced the efficiency and depth of case study research. These innovations allow researchers to analyse larger datasets and uncover patterns that may have previously gone unnoticed.

Moreover, the growing emphasis on interdisciplinary research underscores the need for case studies that integrate perspectives from multiple fields. Overall, case study research not only enhances academic discourse but also provides practical implications for professionals and organisations, enabling informed decision-making and fostering innovative practices. In today's rapidly changing business environment, organisations are increasingly turning to case studies to learn from both successes and failures within their industries. By analysing real-world examples, businesses can adapt their strategies, mitigate risks, and capitalize on emerging opportunities. As researchers continue to navigate the complexities of their topics, the methodologies and frameworks discussed here will serve as essential tools for producing impactful and meaningful studies. The continued evolution of case study research, supported by advancements in technology and an interdisciplinary approach, will empower researchers to address contemporary challenges and contribute to a deeper understanding of the intricate relationships that shape our world. The enduring relevance of case study research lies in its ability to provide nuanced insights that inform both theory and practice, making it an indispensable method for researchers and practitioners alike.

Credit Authorship Contribution Statement

This research was conducted solely by A.S., who played a central role in all aspects of the research process, including conceptualization, data collection, analysis, interpretation of findings, and writing of the manuscript. A.S. is responsible for ensuring that all descriptions accurately reflect the contributions made.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The author declares that there are no conflicts of interest related to this research.

References

- [1] Adinew, Y. (2024). A comparative study on motivational strategies, organisational culture, and climate in public and private institutions. *Current Psychology*, 43(13), 11470-11492. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-023-05259-9>
- [2] Alam, M. K. (2021). A systematic qualitative case study: questions, data collection, NVivo analysis and saturation. *Qualitative Research in Organisations and Management: An International Journal*, 16(1), 1-31. <https://doi.org/10.1108/QROM-09-2019-1825>.

- [3] Alejandro, A., & Zhao, L. (2024). Multi-method qualitative text and discourse analysis: A methodological framework. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 30(6), 461-473. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10778004231184421>
- [4] Alvesson, M., & Sandberg, J. (2024). The art of phenomena construction: A framework for coming up with research phenomena beyond 'the usual suspects'. *Journal of Management Studies*, 61(5), 1737-1765. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12969>
- [5] Amadi, A. (2023). Integration in a mixed-method case study of construction phenomena: From data to theory. *Engineering, Construction and Architectural Management*, 30(1), 210-237. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ecam-02-2021-0111>
- [6] Bell, E., Bryman, A., & Harley, B. (2022). *Business Research Methods*. 6th Edition, Oxford University Press.UK. ISBN: 978-0198869443.
- [7] Burnard, K. J. (2024). Developing a robust case study protocol. *Management Research Review*, 47(2), 204-225. <https://doi.org/10.1108/MRR-11-2021-0821>
- [8] Butcher, K., & Yodsuan, C. (2024). Building "causal realism" in experimental studies within hospitality and tourism. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 36(1), 259-273. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-09-2022-1187>
- [9] Christofi, M., Hadjielias, E., Hughes, M., & Plakoyiannaki, E. (2024). Advancing research methodologies in management: Revisiting debates, setting new grounds for pluralism. *British Journal of Management*, 35(1), 24-35. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8551.12791>
- [10] Cleland, J., MacLeod, A., & Ellaway, R. H. (2021). The curious case of case study research. *Medical Education*, 55(10), 1131-1141. <https://doi.org/10.1111/medu.14544>
- [11] Cole, R. (2023). Inter-rater reliability methods in qualitative case study research. *Sociological Methods & Research*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00491241231156971>
- [12] Collins, C., Neely, M. T., & Khan, S. (2024). "Which Cases Do I Need?" Constructing Cases and Observations in Qualitative Research. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 50. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-soc-031021-035000>
- [13] Collins, C. S., & Stockton, C. M. (2018). The central role of theory in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 17(1), 1609406918797475. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406918797475>
- [14] Cornelissen, J. P. (2023). The problem with propositions: Theoretical triangulation to better explain phenomena in management research. *Academy of Management Review*. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2022.0297>
- [15] Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approach*. 5th Edition. Los Angeles, SAGE. USA. ISBN: 978-1506386706
- [16] Creswell, J. W. & Poth, C. N. (2018) *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design Choosing among Five Approaches*. 4th Edition, SAGE Publications, Inc., Thousand Oaks. USA. ISBN: 978-1506330204
- [17] Dahal, N. (2023). Ensuring quality in qualitative research: A researcher's reflections. *The Qualitative Report*, 28(8), 2298-2317. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2023.6097>
- [18] de Jong, J. C. (2024). Imagined constituents: Minoritized citizens' evaluations of political representatives in Germany and the Netherlands. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 1-25. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2024.2362457>
- [19] De Villa, M. A., & Langley, A. (2024). Doing process research in international business. *International Business Review*, 33(5), 102316. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ibusrev.2024.102316>
- [20] Dunwoodie, K., Macaulay, L., & Newman, A. (2023). Qualitative interviewing in the field of work and organisational psychology: Benefits, challenges and guidelines for researchers and reviewers. *Applied Psychology*, 72(2), 863-889. <https://doi.org/10.1111/apps.12414>
- [21] Ebneyamini, S., & Sadeghi Moghadam, M. R. (2018). Toward developing a framework for conducting case study research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 17(1), <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406918817954>
- [22] Eisenhardt, K. M. (2021). What is the Eisenhardt method, really? *Strategic Organisation*, 19(1), 147-160. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1476127020982866>
- [23] Erükçü Akbaş, G., & Karataş, K. (2024). Femicide in Turkey: A document analysis of News from 2011 to 2019. *Journal of Social Service Research*, 50(1), 54-72. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01488376.2023.2271958>
- [24] Farquhar, J., Michels, N., & Robson, J. (2020). Triangulation in industrial qualitative case study research: Widening the scope. *Industrial Marketing Management*. 87, 160-170. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.indmarman.2020.02.001>

- [25] Fife, S. T., & Gossner, J. D. (2024). Deductive qualitative analysis: Evaluating, expanding, and refining theory. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 23. <https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069241244856>
- [26] Goldsmith, L. J. (2021). Using Framework Analysis in Applied Qualitative Research. *Qualitative Report*, 26(6). <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2021.5011>
- [27] Flick, U. (2022). *An Introduction to Qualitative Research* (7th Ed.). Sage Publications. Germany. ISBN:978-1529781328
- [28] Haynes-Brown, T. K. (2023). Using theoretical models in mixed methods research: An example from an explanatory sequential mixed methods study exploring teachers' beliefs and use of technology. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 17(3), 243-263. <https://doi.org/10.1177/15586898221094970>
- [29] Hendren, K., Newcomer, K., Pandey, S. K., Smith, M., & Sumner, N. (2023). How qualitative research methods can be leveraged to strengthen mixed methods research in public policy and public administration? *Public Administration Review*, 83(3), 468-485. <https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.13528>
- [30] Johnson, J. L., Adkins, D., & Chauvin, S. (2020). A review of the quality indicators of rigor in qualitative research. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, 84(1), 7120. <https://doi.org/10.5688/ajpe7120>
- [31] Kogetsidis, H. (2024). Dealing with complexity—the contribution of problem structuring methods to management science. *International Journal of Organisational Analysis*, 32(2), 272-285. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJOA-01-2023-3562>
- [32] Lim, W. M. (2024). What is qualitative research? An overview and guidelines. *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 14413582241264619. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1441358224126461>
- [33] Lindgreen, A., Di Benedetto, C. A., & Beverland, M. B. (2021). How to write up case-study methodology sections. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 96, A7-A10. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.indmarman.2020.04.012>
- [34] Lloyd, S., & Gifford, R. (2024). Qualitative research and the future of environmental psychology. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvp.2024.102347>
- [35] Mäkelä, P., Boaz, A., & Oliver, K. (2024). A modified action framework to develop and evaluate academic-policy engagement interventions. *Implementation Science*, 19(1), 31. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13012-024-01359-7>
- [36] Masuku, M. (2024). Library and information science and the positivist paradigm: Some critical reflections. *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science*, 56(3), 698-711. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09610006231161324>
- [37] Melchert, T. P., Halfond, R. W., Hamdi, N. R., Bufka, L. F., Hollon, S. D., & Cuttler, M. J. (2024). Evidence-based practice in psychology: Context, guidelines, and action. *American Psychologist*, 79(6), 824. <https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0001253>
- [38] Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation* (4th Edition). San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass. ISBN: 978-1-119-00361-8
- [39] Naeem, M., Ozuem, W., Howell, K., & Ranfagni, S. (2023). A step-by-step process of thematic analysis to develop a conceptual model in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 22, <https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069231205789>
- [40] Nisar, M. A., & Masood, A. (2024). Governance by artifacts: Theory and evidence on materiality of administrative burdens. *Public Administration Review*, 84(6), 1052-1066. <https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.13821>
- [41] Nordfält, J., & Ahlbom, C. P. (2024). Utilising eye-tracking data in retailing field research: A practical guide. *Journal of Retailing*, 100(1), 148-160. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretai.2024.02.005>
- [42] Papparini, S., Green, J., Papoutsis, C., Murdoch, J., Petticrew, M., Greenhalgh, T., Hanckel, B. & Shaw, S. (2020). Case study research for better evaluations of complex interventions: Rationale and challenges. *BMC Medicine*, 18, 1-6. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12916-020-01777-6>
- [43] Peel, K. L. (2020). A beginner's guide to applied educational research using thematic analysis. *Practical Assessment Research and Evaluation*, 25(1). <https://doi.org/10.7275/rvr5-k983>
- [44] Pérez Bentancur, V., & Tiscornia, L. (2024). Iteration in mixed-methods research designs combining experiments and fieldwork. *Sociological Methods & Research*, 53(2), 729-759. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00491241221082595>
- [45] Perkumienė, D., Atalay, A., Safaa, L., & Grigienė, J. (2023). Sustainable waste management for clean and safe environments in the recreation and tourism sector: a case study of Lithuania, Turkey and Morocco. *Recycling*, 8(4), 56. <https://doi.org/10.3390/recycling8040056>
- [46] Pu, S., & Lam, J. S. L. (2023). The benefits of blockchain for digital certificates: A multiple case study analysis. *Technology in Society*, 72, 102176. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techsoc.2022.102176>

- [47] Rahimi, S. (2024). Saturation in qualitative research: An evolutionary concept analysis. *International Journal of Nursing Studies Advances*, 100174. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnsa.2024.100174>
- [48] Rainer, A., & Wohlin, C. (2024). Reporting case studies in systematic literature studies - An evidential problem. *Information and Software Technology*, 107501. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.infsof.2024.107501>
- [49] Riazi, A. M., Rezvani, R., & Ghanbar, H. (2023). Trustworthiness in L2 writing research: A review and analysis of qualitative articles in the Journal of Second Language Writing. *Research Methods in Applied Linguistics*, 2(3), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rmal.2023.100065>
- [50] Savin-Baden, M., & Major, C. (2023). *Qualitative Research: The Essential Guide to Theory and Practice*. Routledge. ISBN 978-1032456379
- [51] Smith, B. (2018). Generalizability in qualitative research: Misunderstandings, opportunities and recommendations for the sport and exercise sciences. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 10(1), 137-149. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2017.1393221>
- [52] Tabron, L. A., & Thomas, A. K. (2023). Deeper than wordplay: A systematic review of critical quantitative approaches in education research (2007–2021). *Review of Educational Research*, 93(5), 756-786. <https://doi.org/10.3102/003465432211300>
- [53] Tasci, A. D., Wei, W., & Milman, A. (2020). Uses and misuses of the case study method. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 82(4). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2019.102815>
- [54] Thumvichit, A. (2024). Illuminating insights into subjectivity: Q as a methodology in applied linguistics research. *Applied Linguistics Review*, 15(2), 531-554. <https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2021-0205>
- [55] Vila-Henninger, L., Dupuy, C., Van Ingelgom, V., Caprioli, M., Teuber, F., Pennetreau, D., Bussi, M., & Le Gall, C. (2022). Abductive coding: Theory building and qualitative (re)analysis. *Sociological Methods & Research*, 53(2), 968–1001. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00491241211067508>
- [56] Wallwey, C., & Kajfez, R. L. (2023). Quantitative research artifacts as qualitative data collection techniques in a mixed methods research study. *Methods in Psychology*, 8, 100115. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.metip.2023.100115>
- [57] Welch, C., Paavilainen-Mäntymäki, E., Piekkari, R., & Plakoyiannaki, E. (2022). Reconciling theory and context: How the case study can set a new agenda for international business research. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 53(1), 4-26. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41267-021-00484-5>
- [58] Wieland, A., Tate, W. L., & Yan, T. (2024). A guided tour through the qualitative research city. *Journal of Supply Chain Management*, 60(1), 3-12. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jscm.12315>
- [59] Wood, L. M., Sebar, B., & Vecchio, N. (2020). Application of rigour and credibility in qualitative document analysis: Lessons learnt from a case study. *The Qualitative Report*, 25(2), 456-470. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2020.4240>
- [60] Yao, A., Chan, N., & Yao, N. (2024). Understanding consumer behaviour in physical environments: An interpretivist methodological framework. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, 27(3), 449-470. <https://doi.org/10.1108/QMR-08-2023-0100>
- [61] Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods* (6th Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. ISBN-13978-1506336169