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MLIS SEMESTER II  
(PAPER – 1)  
RESEARCH METHODS AND STATISTICAL  
TECHNIQUES  
TOPIC – CASE STUDY METHOD  
E-CONTENT



The case study method is a very popular form of qualitative analysis and involves a careful and complete observation of a social unit, be that unit a person, a family, an institution, a cultural group or even the entire community. It is a method of study in depth rather than breadth. The case study places more emphasis on the full analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and their interrelations. The case study deals with the processes that take place and their interrelationship. Thus, case study is essentially an intensive investigation of the particular unit under consideration. The object of the case study method is to locate the factors that account for the behaviour-patterns of the given unit as an integrated totality.

# Characteristics

- Case study is a deep, detailed and intensive study of a social unit;
- It is a method of qualitative analysis;
- It is a comprehensive study;
- In this study all the variables and traits are linked with one another;
- In case study, there are changes for wide variety of units to be selected;
- It preserves wholeness of the units i.e. it is an approach which views any social unit as a whole;
- In case study complex factors are studied; and
- Traits are the subject matter of the study.

# Importance

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- ❑ It helps in formulating valid hypothesis;
- ❑ It is of immense value in forming questionnaires and schedules;
- ❑ Discovering deviant units;
- ❑ It is intensive in nature; and
- ❑ It is very comprehensive.

# Uses

- It helps to collect detailed information about the unit of study and gives clue to new ideas and further research;
- As a tool of analysis, it helps to ascertain a number and variety of traits, qualities and habits confined to a particular instance;
- It helps to identify the peculiarities of a case for observation;
- Case Study method shows the way to deepen our perception and sharpen insights to understand biographies; and
- It is often useful to advance a new interpretation

# Advantages

- Case Study is a deep and diagnostic study. It is acclaimed as a useful research technique.
- It helps to probe the entire life span of a social unit intensively and to analyse the complex factors that are influencing the social unit.
- Case data are vivid, absorbing and tend to reproduce a person's social attitudes and values.
- Case Study facilitates to understand every thing about a social unit and the variety of habits, traits and qualities combined in a social unit.
- Case Study helps to secure a detailed information about the growth of the unit, group structure, individual life pattern etc.,
- The relationship between individual and society is well brought out in the Case Study.
- Case Studies are indispensable for therapeutic and administrative purpose
- It is also easy to generalise cases with the case and helps prepare a plan of action for treatment.
- Case Study is followed for comparison, classification, and analysis and for the formulation of hypothesis leading to further research.

# Disadvantages

- It is inefficient in situations, which are already structured where the important variables are identified.
- It often assumes that all the past experiences of the individual or past happenings in the situation have contributed to the final result.
- It depends upon the recall of others as to what had happened, thereby giving room for fallibility of memory.
- Usually undesirable traits being over-emphasised where by desirable characteristics given a low priority resulting in typical situation.
- There is possibility of getting disturbed due to incompleteness of data in certain circumstances

# Limitations

- Does not provide universal impersonal and common aspects of a phenomenon
- Tendency for a researcher to draw generalisation after studying a few cases, which may not be relevant to all situations
- Tendency to over-emphasise the unique or universal events which are seldom comparable
- Collected subjective data do not lend themselves to quantitative check
- Time consuming, costly and wasteful in certain cases
- Sometimes case study is loose and unsystematic and the generalisations drawn from few cases are not always accurate
- Temptation to ignore the basic principles of research design is often seen.





***THANK YOU***