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Importance of Case Study Method in Management

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Abstract-

Case study is an ideal methodology when a holistic, in-depth investigation is needed. Case studies have been used in various investigations, particularly in sociological studies, but increasingly, in instruction. Yin (1984), Stake (1995), and others who have wide experience in this methodology have developed robust procedures. Whether the study is experimental or quasi-experimental, the data collection and analysis methods are known to hide some details. 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. The term "case study" is often used loosely, as an impressive but redundant synonym for "study". But the difference between a case study and a study is methodologically significant. Indeed, the distinction helps to clarify the nature of comparative research itself.

Keywords: Investigation, Instruction, Robust, Methodology, Redundant

Introduction-

Management education requires theoretical aspect as well as practical aspect. The case method can efficiently improve understanding of the management process. It helps to enhance students' competence by studying, contemplating and discussing actual situation. A case is a short description, in words and numbers, of an actual management situation. Case recounts as objectively and meticulously as possible real (or realistic) events or problems so that students experience the complexities, ambiguities and uncertainties confronted by the original participants in the case. The classification of cases may be given as: Caselet, Short cases and Long cases; Appraisal or Retrospective or narrative case, Problem or Decision forcing case and Case histories; and cases in various management disciplines.

Concept of Case: Following are some definitions which will clear the meaning of a case:

A case is a short description, in words and numbers, of an actual management situation.

A case is a story. Cases recounts objectively and meticulously as possible real (or realistic) events or problems so that students experience the complexities ambiguities and uncertainties confronted by the original participants in the case .

The name case study is a blanked term describing a selection of facts. Either fictitious or drawn from real life, describing a technical or human relation situation usually in an industrial or commercial setting . It is a segment of history or a piece of reporting and like both history and journalism depends on selection and condensation for its effects.

A case is really distinct from a literary piece. Rather being an example, it has a structure or a series of structure. It has a time structure, and presents sequence of events over the time. Structures may relate to technical. Economic, social, political factors and may present technical, socio-economic. Financial and political details of the organization or the environment.

What does a case include?

The case may be in different formats. They may be formal written case, a lead newspaper article, a movie clip, a radio/TV news story, a picture, a mathematical word problem or a piece of art. It may also include some quantitative material, either interspersed with the qualitative prose or presented as charts; graphs, tables, maps, organizational charts or factory layout plans etc.

If we know what case or case method includes, it will be easy to understand what exactly case is. Cases make students to:

- (i) Differentiate pertinent information from peripheral information
- (ii) Identify the problems and define its context and parameters
- (iii) Identify alternative course of action'
 - a) evaluation of alternatives and working out consequences of each alternative,
 - b) select the most suitable alternative
- (iv) Identify a set of possible solutions
- (v) Formulate strategies and recommendations for action
- (vi) Make decisions and
- (vii) Confront obstacles to implementation.

Features of Case Method:

The rigorous analysis of a case develops the skills of logical thinking, searching for relevant information, analyzing, evaluating facts and drawing conclusions for managerial decision. It reverses the order of learning from 'concept to application' to 'from application to concept'. It has features which include:

1. Providing the participants with the specific facts, rather than general theories or hypothesis to criticize.
2. Helping the participants to seek for relations between facts in a case, to diagnose problem situation(s) and to draw conclusions and propose actions in regard to what to do about them.
3. Seeking the active participation of the participants in reaching a solution or solutions to a problem.
4. Fostering discussions among the participants and opening of free channels of communication among the participants and between participants and instructor. All members of the group are put in the same situation and that provides the participants with exercise in receiving and giving out ideas.
5. Helping the participants to see the difference between making decisions under the burden of responsibilities and just talking about what should be done. where this constraint is absent. '

Participants' Role in Case Method:

For case method to be effective, the participants and the instructor must understand the roles what they are required to play. The participants receive as much as they give, they learn as much as they share their views with others.

Following four guidelines (Four Ps) are a must for the participants so as to derive maximum learning benefits :

- Preparation: Participants should look into the case detail, carry out case analysis - both quantitative and qualitative for purposes of discussion in the class.
- Presence: Participants must be present in the class, for making discussion and analysis meaningful.
- Promptness : Interaction among participants should be free and they must listen and contribute towards discussion without any hesitation.

- Participation : There must be open communication and the discussion should be so steered that it focuses on various aspects of the case and everyone contributes to the discussion. Case discussion should not be taken merely the art of debating but the art of sharpening one's thinking.

Conclusion:

The case study methodology has been subjected to scrutiny and criticism at various times since the 1930's. As a research tool, it has not been a choice that is listed in the major research texts in the social sciences. However, case study is a reliable methodology when executed with due care. The literature, while not extensive, contains specific guidelines for researchers to follow in carrying out case studies. CSR is focused on describing, understanding, predicting, and controlling the individual (i.e. process, animal, person, household, organization, group, industry, culture, or nationality).

Any one or combination of the following purposes may serve as the major objective of CSR: description, understanding, prediction, or control. However, in most situations, deep understanding of the actors, interactions, sentiments, and behaviors occurring for specific processes through time should be taken as the principal objective by the case study researcher. A mental model of a process provided by a participant interviewed in a case study is an emic representation of reality. The interpretation of same process provided by the case study researcher is an emic representation of reality. Ethic representation in CSR often includes description and explanation of emic meaning as well as building composite accounts of the process based on data from triangulation. Triangulation includes: direct observation by the researcher within the environments of the case, and, probing by asking case participants for explanations and interpretations of operational data, and analyses of written documents and natural sites occurring in case environments.

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