

When to use Qualitative Case Study Research

Broad Rationale

- To answer 'how' and 'why' questions (issue based questions)
- Little is known about the phenomenon
- Current perspectives seem inadequate,
- Lack of empirical evidence
- Current knowledge conflicts common sense
- Serendipitous findings emerge during a study, which calls for more research.

Rationale for choosing Single Case Study Research.

- 1) **A critical case** – wherein the case chosen is critical for studying the phenomenon; for instance, if you wish to study how an organization became bullying free through changing organizational culture, it is important to identify such organization which claims to be bullying free and have established credible standing among the fraternity and employees for its efforts
- 2) **An unusual or extreme case** – wherein the case chosen deviates from the established norms; for instance, when lockdown was imposed worldwide many organizations were severely impacted. However, if one organization was able to increase its revenue while the competitors face losses, it becomes an unusual case and hence can be studied using a single case study design
- 3) **A common case** – wherein the study can capture everyday phenomenon; for instance, how street vendors market their products in a particular location, can be studied by capturing data from a single street vendor.
- 4) **A revelatory case** - it has not been accessible earlier and the academic fraternity had little knowledge about the same – for instance how corporate governance frauds are conducted.
- 5) **A longitudinal case** – For instance, studying a single social entrepreneurship enterprise from its inception to its success, can provide complex insights into multiple dimensions of entrepreneurial growth of a social enterprise.

Rationale for choosing Multiple Case Study Research:

- 1) **Replication (also known as Covergence)**– wherein the studying two or more case units can provide theoretical replication; for instance, if the same intervention for

curbing workplace bullying has provided positive results in two different organizations, hence, taking those two organizations to study how and why the intervention worked may provide replication of findings, thus establishing theoretical replication.

- 2) **Contrast (also known as Divergence)** – wherein the two cases within the same context contrast with each other; for instance, the same intervention to curb workplace bullying, works in one organization while fails in the other. Studying these organizations can reveal how and why the intervention succeeded in one while failed in other organization, hence extending the theoretical implication of the phenomenon of workplace bullying interventions.

Both converging and diverging issues offer the researcher to probe further which may lead to the formulation of new understanding of the phenomenon and/or generation or extension of new theory.