Tutorial 6.1

# Reporting Your Case Study Methodology

# as an Independent Research Article

As discussed in Chapter 6 of *Case Study Research and Applications* (6th ed.), the formal case study report will include some description of your case study methods. Even if your audience is only likely to want an abbreviated version of this description, you could consider composing a more extended version, which might then appear as an appendix to the report or, better yet, be submitted for publication as a separate research article (e.g., Dasgupta, 2015). Such an effort would produce a welcome benefit, both contributing to the work of other researchers and preserving the detailed procedures for your own future reference. Your reputation for doing quality case study work would not suffer, either.

Along these lines, Christine Benedichte Meyer (2001) produced an illustrative methodological treatise that appeared in the journal Field Methods. Meyer embedded a discussion of her own methods—used in a case study of two mergers in the financial industry in Norway—within the broader range of methodological choices and concerns that arise when doing a case study. In other words, she used her case study to illustrate important methodological principles, thereby justifying the work as an independent article.

For instance, Meyer discussed the advantages of using the case study method because it enabled her inquiry to explore issues such as the power struggles between the merging organizations, the complexity of the process of integrating the merging organizations, and the cultural integration occurring over an extended period of time. None of these topics would have been easily addressed by using other methods. She also discussed how she “bounded” the cases, including her decision to concentrate on the core businesses and her exclusion of the business units that were less affected by the merger, as well as her detailed criteria for defining the persons to be interviewed within the merging firms.

Analytically, Meyer showed how she used analytic generalization to interpret the significance of the findings, also acknowledging that some findings “could not be explained either by the merger and acquisition literature or the four theoretical perspectives” [that had been presented as part of her study] (p. 343). Not overlooked were the problems she encountered, including her inability to gain access to all the documents that she had requested. In all, the general issues raised by the article, along with the concrete illustrative experiences, contribute to a valuable and highly readable methodological article.

## Briefly Annotated Reference for Tutorial 6.1

Dasgupta, M. (2015). Exploring the relevance of case study research. *Vision*, *19*, 147–160. Describes her methodological journey in starting and completing an actual case study.

Meyer, C. B. (2001). A case in case study methodology. *Field Methods,* 13, 329–352. Illustrates the methods used in a case study and the choices that arose and how they were confronted.