

Case study

A case study is a report about a person, group, or situation that has not been studied.

If the case study, for instance, is about a group, it describes the behavior of the group as the behavior of each individual, not the behavior of the whole group.

Case studies can be produced by following an informal research method. These case studies are likely to appear in formal research venues, such as journals and professional conferences, rather than popular works. The resulting body of 'case study research' has long had a prominent place in many disciplines and professions, ranging from psychology, anthropology, sociology, and political science to education, clinical science, social work, and administrative science.

In doing case study research, the “case” being studied may be an individual, organization, event, or action, existing in a specific time and place. For instance, clinical science has produced both well-known case studies of individuals and case studies of clinical practices.

However, when “case” is used in an abstract sense, as in a claim, a proposition, or an argument, such a case can be the subject of many research methods, not just case study research. Case studies may involve both qualitative and quantitative research methods.

Case studies in research may be mistaken for the case method used in teaching.

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